Lečić and “Stjepan Radić u hrvatskoj politici 20. stoljeća” (“Stjepan Radić in 20th Century Croatian Politics”) by Branka Boban. The conception of Stjepan Matkovic’s text, “Elementi moderniteta u programima i programatskim spisi- ma hrvatskih političkih stranaka od početka 20. stoljeća do početka prvoga svjetskoga rata” (“The Elements of Modernity in the Programmes and Programmatic Documents of the Croatian Political Parties from the Beginning of the 20th Century to the Beginning of World War I”), methodologically differs from the vast majority of these texts in collected papers and stud- ies. Marijan Matičić’s study “Hrvatska iskustva i parlamentarizm u 20. stoljeću” (“Croatian Experiences with Parliamentarism in the 20th Century”) is important for our understanding of both the current social relations and “transition torments”, although talking of non-experience would most certainly be more accurate. Only one text is expressly dedicated to the period of the royal and first joint state introducing a key disconnection, and by the title — “Hrvatska u prvot Jugoslaviji — bine značajne položaje te je li na djelu bila kriza vlasti ili drža- ve” (“Croatia in the First Yugoslavia — The Important Features of Its Position and Was This a Crisis of Government or State?”) by Mita Ko- le. The international context between the two World Wars is presented in relation to the most frequent “object of trade” with Croatian territo- ries by Stjepan Ilić in his “Talijansko i srpsko vlasti u Hrvatskoj i Bosni i Hercegovini” (“Italian and Serbian authorities in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina”) and TIHOMIR CIPEK’s “‘Stoljeće diktatura’ u Hrvatskoj u prvim dekadama 20. stoljeća (in The Shade of Two Eagles. Contributions to the Clerical-National History of Croats in the First Decades of the 20th Century)” published by Golden marketing - Tehnička knjiga, Zagreb, 2005, 359 pages.


The most recent book by Zlatko Matijević consists of a series of detailed discussions which analyse the history of political parties and political history of the Croatian nation in the first three decades of the 20th century. The focus of his attention are political activities of the organ- isation of Croatian Catholics who tried to rise to chal- lenges of new social movements, the unsolved national question and governmental and legal changes. The symbolic title of the book reveals an aspiration to explain their political behaviour under the two monarchical rules which marked the first half of the previous century. This approach is methodologically justified as it pro- vides an insight into continuous activities of individuals and political groups who arose from one administrative system, but then they attempted to realise their ambitions about the envisaged union in a new state. One of the thus far peculiarities of Croatian historiography was that the objects of research were almost exclu- sively limited to one state, which is why the results were considerably scarce. True reactions to great changes were not clearly seen, the thread of tradition in expressions of the already established people — as well as the way in which public discourse changed — remained undetected. Thus, Matijević’s detailed inclusion of time and space provides very useful results and a series of data which cast off the senti- mental side of history. In this book such treat- ment is given to both “Yugoslav clericalism” and, to a certain extent, Radić’s narcissism in politics, but neither one has been fully dis- cussed so far.

the lack of financial independence as well as the marginal position of administratively unconnected Croatian states. Thus, Croatia’s confrontation with modernity reflected the frustration which was the result of unfulfilled political and economic demands. Within this belated and crises filled Dual Monarchy, Hrvatski katolički pokret (the Croatian Catholic Movement / HKP) was established. The author refers to it critically and systematically in the context of its political goals. Introductory studies emphasise foreign influence on its establishing, clearly define the year of its establishing and refer to all models of its activity. Thus, Matijević describes Middle-European origins of Catholic movements, considering, above all, German states, where the Catholics founded the Zentrum Party, and Slovene lands in which the Christian-social idea put down its roots. Furthermore, he concludes — providing convincing arguments — that HKP was established in 1903 when the Bishop of the island of Krk, Mahnić, started the magazine “Hrvatsko slovo” and in 1908 when the first Croatian Catholic Meeting was held. He thoroughly analyses numerous institutions which marked the development of the movement in its formative period until the World War I. Associations such as “Pjeve duštvo” (Pius Society) the Croatian Catholic Academic Society “Donauq”, chora of spiritual youth et al. as well as readiness to alert the public media (“The Jutro Daily”, “The Bijelčice Novine Daily”) witnessed serious organisational efforts and aspirations not to restrict the movement to closed groups of intellectuals, but to enter different social classes, particularly the youth which was — in its today’s form, it must fall” (p. 93). The old-fashioned Monarchy and rule the majority of Croatian states. At the National Council of the Slovenes, Croats and Serbs, the Rev. Janko Simnik — the future Bishop of Krka and — stated that “employing the strategy of ‘national unity’ should — lead to an ‘unidentified nation’” (page 43). Thus, Matijević lucidly proves that “if there were any clericalism at the time, its function was only to constitute the Yugoslav state, therefore — Yugoslav clericalism” (page 46).

In his two texts, the author describes in detail the roles of two people whose ideas differed from the ideas of the HKP members. These two were the Bosnian archbishop Josip Stadler and Ivo Pilar, a reputable Croatian intellectual and one of the first theoreticians of Croatian modernism. His study entitled “Jutrola pitanje” (“The Southern Slav Question”, Vienna, 1918) left a deep trace in analyses of the strained relations in the South-Eastern Europe, especially between the Croats and the Serbs. In that part of his book, Matijević provides a detailed historiographic survey on how historians and publicists wrote about Stadler, which helps him refer to the fact that views of the past were, for a long time, influenced by the official ideology. The Bishop’s statement from November 1917 — which drew attention to the dangers of constituting a union of Southern Slav nations and proposed tighter connections between the Croats of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Croats of Banovina — is analysed by Matijević in great detail. In that context, the Bishop’s criticism of “Svibanjska deklaracija” (“the May Declaration”) is clearly presented, as it helps the author present the ideas of leading Croatian politicians. Part of the book, devoted to Pilar’s political life, is a continuation of his approach to the question of the Croatian politicians’ adapted solutions to challenges of problem solving in the South-Eastern Europe. Anxious about the possible results of the World War I, Pilar, supported by the archbishop Stadler’s authority, aimed at reconstructing the Monarchy and preserving the unique Middle-European region administered by the “black eagle” as the best solution to the problem of the then overall development of the Croatian nation. Pilar’s political circles required the reform of the Monarchy as an indispensable precondition of the pro-Habsburg orientation, as within the Monarchy the Croatian nation was neglected in many respects. The way out was seen in the Croatian solution to the Southern Slav question (p. 89). In reality, it meant admitting the complexity of the national problem in the South-Eastern part of the Monarchy. The proposition to the rulers of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy was to administratively connect all Croatian lands, including Bosnia and Herzegovina. Namely, Croatian politicians had a strong case for supporting the centralist solution, i.e. the loyalty to the ruling Dynasty, for the already given reason that all territories on which Croats lived belonged to the existing union. The main obstacle to changes, Pilar saw in the politics of the Austrian and Hungarian authorities which remained on the conditioning agreement and kept postponing unavoidable changes. The second important determinant of his political views was his critical evaluation of Serbian politics. Observing the war surroundings, Pilar perceived the restraint of the Serbs outside the Kingdom of Serbia, expecting the Central powers to win the war, thus enabling the realisation of the Great Serbian Empire, achieved by the “white eagle”. Not less ominous were his views on the realisation of the Yugoslav idea outside the Habsburg Monarchy, as he maintained that it eliminated the idea of Croatian statutory right from the political scene. Part of Matijević’s study, dedicated to Pilar’s activity, contains descriptions of his communication with the Emperor and King Karl I (Charles IV), general Stepan Sarkotic, the influential Hungarian politician Istvan Tisza, the Minister of Finance Alexander Spitzmüller and others. It shows his great struggle to win the pillars of the Monarchy over to new solutions. Pilar’s activities clearly show his awareness of the unsurmountable obstacles to the realisation of Croatian interests. One of his lectures — held in Vienna on the eve of the Monarchy’s breakdown — witnesses it. What he said then was: “The Monarchy can fulfill its life mission only if it — for all those remnants of states and nations who still have the power of life — continues to remain a safe haven. Unfortunately, the old-fashioned Monarchy failed to accomplish the task and therefore, in its today’s form, it must fall” (p. 95). The breakdown of the Monarchy marked the end of the pro-Monarchy political ideas of both Ivo Pilar and his circle of followers. Soon after the breakdown of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, the Croats confronted new challenges which greatly influenced their development in the entire 20th century. In the chapter entitled “Pod belim orlom” Karadorvić (“Under the White Eagle” of the Karador-
The third chapter discusses the reform movement of the part of the lower Catholic clergy in Croatia (1919-1924), which led to the establishment of the Croatian Old Catholic Church. That religious community’s past comprised conspirative discussions of unsatisfied individuals within the Roman-Catholic clergy, several separate and uncoordinated reform streams and the acceptance of old Catholicism as the only possibility of making the demands of the unsatisfied clergy legal. Although this reform movement was led within the Catholic church, the then politicians in power took advantage of the situation and tried to promote their political interests. In 1923, the Government legally recognised a new religious community. Its first Bishop was Marko Kalogjerić. The study on Croatian Catholicism is enriched with ten documents which are its integral part.

Matijević’s book successfully answers numerous questions on the history of Croatian church as well as Croatian national history in the first decades of the 20th century. It clearly presents problems analysed by certain elitist circles from Croatian politics, and several crucial events of Croatian history. The results of researches fill the void in historiography not only when the Catholics in politics are analysed, but also those respectable individuals who marked one of the most turbulent times in the region.

- Stjepan MATKOVIĆ