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# The Catholic Church and Croatia's Two Transitions<sup>1</sup>

ALEX J. BELLAMY

The Roman Catholic Church in Croatia has received a considerable amount of criticism, both in Croatia and overseas, for its connection with the conservative nationalism of Franjo Tuđman's regime.<sup>2</sup> For many, the church was a bastion of radical nationalism which promoted intolerance towards Croatia's Serbian minority and failed to speak out against human rights abuse. The church, they argued, promoted a neoconservative revolution dubbed 'retraditionalisation' by Croatian sociologist Josip Županov, which provided legitimisation for the Tuđman government. Furthermore, the western media associated the church with Croatian crimes committed in Eastern Slavonia, Krajina and Bosnia and Herzegovina and emphasised the church's past connections with the fascist regime in Italy and the puppet regime created in Croatia during the Second World War which was responsible for the deaths of up to 600,000 Serbs, Jews, Gypsies and Croatian opponents.

This article attempts to challenge this line of thinking by demonstrating the role of the Catholic Church in the two transitions which took place in Croatia during the 1990s. I argue that the church was split between the rural clergy and the urban leadership.<sup>3</sup> On the one hand there was the conservative nationalist rural clergy, which was indeed responsible for many of the affronts outlined above and discussed in greater detail below. On the other hand, however, the church hierarchy based in Zagreb opposed a narrow nationalist conception of the church's mission in newly independent Croatia. The church was a direct target for Serb propaganda and shells during the 1991–95 war and fulfilled a particular role during this time as a result. However, after 1995 the church in Zagreb – along with the leadership in the Vatican – became a focal point for opposition to the illiberal practices of the Tuđman regime. This role was vital in the build-up to the parliamentary and presidential elections held in 2000. The church encouraged voters to consider human rights and democratisation issues and opposed the scheduling of the election during the Christmas holiday, which the government had hoped to do in order to secure electoral advantage. I argue, then, that the church played a crucial role in Croatia's two transitions: the first from Yugoslav self-management socialism to Croatian democratic authoritarianism,<sup>4</sup> and the second (in 2000) from democratic authoritarianism to liberal democracy. I begin, though, by briefly outlining the relationship between Catholicism and Croatian national identity.

## Catholicism and the National Question

Historicist and statist claims to Croatian national identity were used to support the

so-called ‘foundational myth’ of Croatian identity – the myth of the thousand-year dream, frequently articulated by Franjo Tuđman.<sup>5</sup> This myth fulfils a similar role for Croatian identity to that which the myth of the battle of Kosovo Polje fulfils for Serbian self-identity.<sup>6</sup> According to Celia Hawkesworth, a Croatian sense of historical identity is based upon nineteenth-century concepts which were developed to fuel the fight for independence from the Austrian Habsburgs.<sup>7</sup> Following the idea of ‘invented traditions’ elucidated by Eric Hobsbawm, Hawkesworth argues that the projection backwards of the ‘dream’, by Tuđman and other historians, is a nineteenth-century intellectual construct, a product of what she sees as ‘nationalist atavism’.<sup>8</sup> Important for our purposes is the function of Croatia’s Catholic identity in constructing, disseminating and perpetuating a Croatian national consciousness.

It was Ivo Banac who articulated the idea that the Croatian national ideology was overtly historicist. In tracing literary and historical works which address the Croatian national question, Banac revealed that they postulated legal rather than linguistic or cultural arguments.<sup>9</sup> He accounted for this tendency by suggesting that the early intellectuals and nobles who employed such arguments believed that the idea of historical statehood would carry more favour in the Habsburg and Magyar courts, given the context of the multinational Habsburg Empire.<sup>10</sup> This predilection within the national discourse meant that the vehicles for national integration were the office of the *ban* (governor) and the continuing institution of the *sabor* (parliament). However, Banac suggested that the diminishing jurisdiction of these two institutions in the nineteenth century weakened the conception of the Croatian national body and contributed to the array of national programmes which were disseminated on the eve of the First World War.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, Banac argued that because the nineteenth-century national imagining, which had its roots in the Illyrianism of Ljudevit Gaj, was a direct response to aggressive Magyar nationalism – just as previous imaginings had been directed against other threats – the basis of ‘their national idea therefore could not be, strictly speaking, Croatian’.<sup>12</sup> This was because such ethnic exclusivism ‘could be misunderstood as an expression of narrow Croatian regionalism – of the Kajkavian dialect area around Zagreb, which was generally regarded as Croatia proper at the beginning of the nineteenth century’.<sup>13</sup>

Banac drew several conclusions from his observations of the early articulation of the claim to historical statehood. The most prominent and oft-cited of these conclusions was that the relationship between Croatian national identity and Catholicism was not as clear-cut as some made out.<sup>14</sup> Unlike the Serbian Orthodox Church, the Catholic Church is an institution which has a universalist nature. As such, the Catholic Church cannot be a national institution, as it cannot promote national exclusivity. The borders of Catholicism and Croatianism are substantially different. Thus, according to Banac, Catholicism could not play a significant role either in defining Croatian national identity or as a vehicle for its preservation.<sup>15</sup> He continues, ‘the ideologists of Croat nationhood, almost to the last practicing Catholics, resisted the equation of Catholicism and Croatdom’.<sup>16</sup> The result of this separation was that ‘attempts to link Croat nationality with Catholicism were extremely rare’.<sup>17</sup> Simply put, Banac observed that articulations of Croatian national identity, and the discourse of the historic claim to statehood in particular, were essentially couched in political terms, rather than religious, ethnic or linguistic terms.<sup>18</sup>

### **Church and State in Yugoslavia**

According to Franjo Tuđman, the Croatian Catholic Church was the only organised

force to provide consistent opposition to the communist authorities. Furthermore, Tudjman insisted that in fulfilling this role the church was responsible for nurturing Croatian national identity during the dark period of communist rule.<sup>19</sup> Many within the church itself shared this view of the relationship between church and nation. Friar Ilija Živković, secretary to the Croatian Bishops' Conference and head of the Croatian Catholic radio station, argued that by its very existence the church acted as a voice for the nation and helped to perpetuate the maintenance of Croatian identity, for example by allowing the singing of the Croatian national anthem during church services.<sup>20</sup> Likewise Cardinal Kuharić, head of the Croatian church until his death in 1996, outlined what he believed to be the good of the nation and what the church should try to secure for 'its' people: 'freedom to live and to develop its identity and sovereignty in all areas of life: moral, spiritual, cultural, material, finding its expression in statehood'.<sup>21</sup> Church and nation were thus often seen to be mutually constituent and the Croatian Democratic Union (*Hrvatske Demokratska Zajednica* (HDZ)) government attempted to coopt Catholicism into its conception of national identity. This cooption was welcomed by nationalist elements within the church. For example, in 1992 the Catholic journal *Veritas* published an article in which the author, Josip Beljan, declared that

The cross of Christ stands next to the Croatian flag, the Croatian bishop next to the Croatian Minister of State. ... This was truly again a real war for the 'honoured cross and golden liberty', for the return of Christ and liberty to Croatia. The Church is glad for the return of its people from the twofold slavery – Serbian and communist.<sup>22</sup>

However, there was considerable debate within the church about its relationship with the HDZ government and a good deal of unease about many of its nationalist policies, especially those viewed to be directed against national minorities or offering cover for corruption and criminality within the state. Whilst the leadership of the church, in the form of Cardinal Kuharić and his successor as archbishop of Zagreb, Archbishop Božanić, advocated liberalism and tolerance, and shied away from supporting the HDZ, many priests – particularly in rural and war-affected parishes – continued to advocate a combination of hard-line nationalism and conservative Catholicism which was similar to the president's own view.<sup>23</sup>

Before the formation of the first Yugoslavia there had been a considerable degree of confrontation between the Catholic Church and the Serbian Orthodox Church. The Serbs rejected the ecumenical efforts of Josip Strossmayer, a Croatian Catholic bishop who advocated ecumenism as a basis for Illyrian pan-Slavism and established the Yugoslav Academy of Arts and Sciences.<sup>24</sup> The privileges granted by the Croatian *sabor* to the Orthodox community within the Habsburg 'Military Frontier' (*Vojna Krajina*)<sup>25</sup> caused 'permanent irritation' to the Catholic Church, which generally regarded the Orthodox Serbs as 'schismatic'.<sup>26</sup> The Catholic perception of the whole Yugoslav project was generally negative. According to a tract produced by the Bishops' Conference

For Catholics, the first Yugoslavia was an inauspicious period, marked by discrimination against the non-Serbian population. This led to hostilities during the Second World War involving great bloodshed, with innocent victims of both sides, including a large number of Catholic priests. The post-war communist regime was antagonistic toward the Catholic Church, nationalizing Church property and openly persecuting members of the

Church hierarchy. ... Bishops, priests and the faithful were subjected to various humiliations and pressures.<sup>27</sup>

The same document noted that under communism, ‘attempts to impose atheism on all levels did not wane’.<sup>28</sup> A similar interpretation was offered by Ilija Živković, who argued simply that the church was persecuted by the communists throughout the 45 years of their rule.<sup>29</sup> Whilst this is an accurate description of the initial relationship between church and state in Yugoslavia, by the 1960s the situation had begun to change considerably.<sup>30</sup> Stella Alexander notes that the Vatican adopted a conciliatory line in its diplomacy with the Yugoslavs, which meant that by 1966 it was possible to conclude that ‘there is no doubt that better conditions were eventually secured for the Catholic Church than the Bishops could have obtained in 1960’.<sup>31</sup> Similarly, Sabrina Ramet notes that there were ‘unmistakable signs of a new atmosphere of Church–State relations’ in the 1960s.<sup>32</sup> One of the reasons for this was the regime’s partial rehabilitation of the ‘martyr’ Alojzije Stepinac following his death.<sup>33</sup>

One of the greatest controversies of the *Ustaša* period (1941–45) was over the compliance of the Catholic Church.<sup>34</sup> Vladimir Dedijer argues that the Vatican actively supported the massacre of Orthodox Serbs and provides a substantial amount of evidence of priests and Franciscans who actively participated in atrocities. Furthermore, he maintains that Archbishop Alojzije Stepinac – beatified by the pope in 1998 – actively supported the Pavelić regime.<sup>35</sup> The archbishop’s position was somewhat more complicated than this and some see him as one who supported the cause of Croatian statehood but abhorred the Pavelić regime and helped many people escape from it. After the German invasion and the creation of the Independent State of Croatia (*Nezavisna Država Hrvatska* (NDH)), Stepinac spoke approvingly of the new regime and in particular of Croatia’s newly-found independence, and had a meeting with Pavelić and his deputy, Kvaternik, on 16 April 1941.<sup>36</sup> However, the wholesale deportation of Jews and Serbs seriously worried him. In a letter to the *poglavnik* he wrote that

I am convinced that these things have been happening without your knowledge and that others may not dare to tell you about them. ... I hear from many sides that there are instances of inhumane and brutal treatment of non-Aryans during the deportations and at the camps, and even worse that neither old people, children or the sick are spared ... the measures which have been undertaken would have their full effect if they were carried out in a more humane and considerate way, seeing in human beings the image of god.<sup>37</sup>

Stepinac also forwarded to Pavelić a communiqué he had received from Bishop Mišić of Mostar. Mišić’s report read:

A reign of terror has come to pass ... men are captured like animals. They are slaughtered, murdered; living men are thrown off cliffs. ... From Mostar and Čapljina a train took six carloads of mothers, young girls and children ten years old to the station at Surmanci ... they were led up the mountains and mothers together with their children were thrown alive off precipices.<sup>38</sup>

Marcus Tanner argues that what prevented Stepinac from openly opposing Pavelić was not sympathy for the regime but political naivete. Tanner records an instance when Stepinac enquired whether or not the *poglavnik* knew of the reports of the

killing of Serbs. When he was told that, of course, Pavelić knew everything, Stepinac broke down in tears.<sup>39</sup> However, Stepinac never made a public statement disavowing the NDH, even when he was put on trial by Tito in 1946.<sup>40</sup>

The significance of Stepinac to nationalists and Catholics in Croatia was revealed on the occasion of his beatification. Tudjman commented that the beatification was important for raising the international profile of Croatian Catholics. He added, ‘Stepinac was a holy man and one of the wisest Croats during World War II’.<sup>41</sup> Any visitor to the cathedral in Zagreb in 1999 would have noted the gargantuan portrait of Stepinac adorning the facade of the cathedral and underscoring the church’s attitude towards the former archbishop. Milovan Djilas, the Yugoslav dissident who had been Tito’s right-hand man during the formative years of the communist regime, epitomised the new openness with regard to the Catholic Church in the 1970s when he admitted that it was not Stepinac’s alleged associations with the *Ustaša* which had led to his imprisonment but rather his steadfast refusal to break with the Vatican and head an independent Yugoslav Catholic Church. Djilas explained that ‘if he had only proclaimed [the creation of] a Croatian Church, separate from Rome, we would have raised him to the clouds!’<sup>42</sup> Although the Yugoslav state continued to have misgivings about Catholic activities, particularly pastoral activities, there was a discernible easing of tension between church and state which was not appreciated by the church.<sup>43</sup>

### **The First Transition: From Communism to Democratic Authoritarianism**

Around the time of Croatia’s first elections in 1990 the Catholic Church found itself in a position where it had to defend not only itself but also its Croatian flock from concerted attack from Belgrade. Efforts by the Croatian communists to continue appeasing the Serbian Orthodox Church were seen as a direct affront by Croatian Catholics. For example, in 1989 the Croatian government paid for the renovation of an Orthodox monastery in Knin whilst refusing to give any financial aid for similar schemes involving Catholic churches.<sup>44</sup> In return, in 1991 Croatian Serb Orthodox bishops refused to condemn the Serbian attack on Croatia and its accompanying ethnic cleansing, and one bishop actually saluted the Serb action.<sup>45</sup> Jure Kristo argued that the church faced two challenges at this time. It was incumbent on the church to defend itself and the Croatian people against the hostile chauvinist propaganda emanating from Belgrade and also to play an increased political role in defence of the Croats’ right to self-determination. Thus in 1989 Cardinal Kuharić issued a warning about the destructive behaviour of the Serbian leadership, which he insisted was aimed at abolishing the natural and historical right of Croats to sovereignty.<sup>46</sup> The church attempted to address these challenges in two ways. First, it became active in highlighting the poor human rights conditions in Kosovo and openly supported the demands of the Kosovar Albanians for greater autonomy.<sup>47</sup> Second, and somewhat controversially, the church sought to respond directly to anti-Croatian propaganda, much of which focused on *Ustaša* crimes during the Second World War. The weekly Catholic newspaper *Glas Koncila* started a series of articles in March 1990 which used archival material to show the extent of collaboration between the Serbian Orthodox Church and the Nazi puppet regime in Serbia headed by General Nedić.<sup>48</sup>

Because of the perceived need to defend and promote the rights of Croats and the Catholic Church while they were under concerted attack from the Milošević regime in Belgrade, it was widely understood that the church’s preferred party in the 1990 election was Tudjman’s HDZ. According to Ilija Živković, the tacit support which

Cardinal Kuharić offered to the HDZ depended on his perception that the party was a movement of the Croatian people which would seek to improve democracy and lift the shackles of communist rule, thus freeing the church.<sup>49</sup> Although the church supported the creation of the nationalist-based HDZ and many amongst the clergy actively supported the party or sought election as HDZ representatives, the church hierarchy never openly spoke in favour of the HDZ and often baulked at nationalist statements regarding the linkages between Catholicism and nationalism. Gerard Powers argues that this early tacit support for the HDZ was not surprising given the antagonistic relationship between the church and a Yugoslav state which had often accused it of ‘clerical-fascism’.<sup>50</sup> Both Powers and Sabrina Ramet suggest that the church’s enthusiasm for the HDZ derived from instrumental concerns rather than from ideological affiliation. For example, the church moved swiftly to negotiate with the new government on issues concerning church property which had been confiscated by the communists and on religious education in state schools. Furthermore, as Ramet points out, although Kuharić voiced his opinions about political issues such as the proposed confederalisation of Yugoslavia, ‘church elders warned clergy not to become involved in partisan politics’.<sup>51</sup> A major cleavage emerged concerning this very nation-church relationship. Whilst Tudjman believed the Catholic Church to be a Croatian church, the Vatican understood it to be a global church which was as concerned for non-Croats as it was for Croats.

The role of the Catholic Church in the wars in Croatia and in Bosnia and Herzegovina attracted much attention. Paul Mojzes describes the wars as ‘ethnoreligious’ in character and is adamant that by propagating ethnic Croatian exclusivism the Catholic Church contributed to the spiral of violence.<sup>52</sup> He concludes that ‘the church leadership ... together with Franjo Tudjman, made provocative and foolish moves. They pushed their agenda with no regard to the consequences of their behaviour and certainly have to be seen as being among the culprits for the war.’<sup>53</sup> Similarly Srdjan Vrcan, a Croatian sociologist, agrees that the Catholic Church should be blamed for presenting the political, social and national conflicts in the former Yugoslavia ‘as centuries-long conflicts between essentially opposed human types, types of cultures and civilizations’.<sup>54</sup> Moreover, he argues that the church was guilty of portraying the Croats as ‘quasi-immaculate’ whilst portraying the Serbs as ‘the incarnation of evil’.<sup>55</sup> This seems a little unfair. Clearly, some members of the church and some priests did articulate such a view, which had obvious resonance with the language used by Tudjman. However, although Kuharić tacitly supported the HDZ in the run-up to the 1990 election, the Catholic leadership did not call upon Catholics to vote for them. Furthermore, as I shall show in more detail below, the Catholic leadership criticised Croatian ethnic nationalism and war atrocities committed by Croats, and Kuharić steadfastly refused to demonise the Serbs; and Sabrina Ramet argues that on several occasions Catholic prelates denied that the war could be legitimately described as a religious war.<sup>56</sup>

Whatever the role of the church in supporting Tudjman and propagating the war, there can be little doubt that the Yugoslav People’s Army (*Jugoslavenski Narodna Armija* (JNA)) and Serbian militias systematically targeted it once the war started. According to the Catholic Church, one of the reasons for this was precisely because the Serbs did see the war as a religious or holy war. This was because the Serbian Orthodox Church had stood shoulder-to-shoulder with Milošević. According to Božidar Javorović, the Orthodox Church was guilty of ‘transforming religious ceremonies into great political and national meetings that were completely compatible with Milošević’s meetings and populist movement’.<sup>57</sup> Ramet describes the

destruction of Catholic churches in Croatia by Serbian forces as ‘nothing short of catastrophic’.<sup>58</sup> As early as March 1992, she notes, 117 Catholic sacral objects in the Franciscan province of Split had been destroyed or seriously damaged. By June 1994 around 40 per cent of churches in occupied Croatia had been destroyed or damaged and in 1995 the church provided detailed evidence that the total of such had reached 1426.<sup>59</sup> Ramet goes on to contrast this state of affairs with the fact that in October 1995 it was found that of the 121 Serbian Orthodox churches in the so-called Krajina region, which was occupied by the Serbs between 1991 and 1995 before the war, only five had been destroyed or badly damaged, ‘graphically revealing that the destruction of Catholic churches was the result of premeditated and systematic policy, rather than the random outcome of battles and field action’.<sup>60</sup> The attitude of the church leadership to the war is summed up in Kuharić’s response to Operation Storm in 1995, in which the Croatian army reclaimed the Krajina from Serb rebels. Immediately after the operation, Kuharić concluded that fleeing Serbs had left at the instigation of their own civil and ecclesiastical leaders. He declared:

The fact is that Croatia liberated its territory so that 117,000 expelled Catholic Croats could return. But it is also a fact that the Croatian government did not want the Croatian citizens of Serb nationality to leave their homes. An appeal by the president of the republic to the citizens of Serb nationality, guaranteeing them all rights, freedoms and security and asking them not to leave their homes, was repeated continually. However, I very much regret that people left despite all guarantees.<sup>61</sup>

By October 1995, however, once reports of looting, burning of houses and instances of murder committed by the Croatian army had been made public, Kuharić used an open air mass for 3500 soldiers and officers to condemn the killing of Serb civilians and other crimes committed by Croatian forces.<sup>62</sup>

During the war the church orchestrated humanitarian assistance. The Croatian *Caritas* charity embarked on major disaster relief projects, housing projects for displaced people, and the provision of food aid and health care assistance. *Caritas* sponsored 13,000 children in the region and offered financial assistance for the reconstruction of houses for returnees.<sup>63</sup> In a separate project, Catholics in the United States worked with their brethren in Croatia to put together a team of cardiac surgeons who operated in Croatia during the war.<sup>64</sup>

The Catholic Church was placed in a difficult position by the war. As representatives of an internationalist church, the leadership in Croatia hoped to avoid supporting ethnic exclusivism, but this position became increasingly problematic as the church itself became a direct target for Serbian attack. Furthermore, many amongst the clergy (particularly in rural areas) combined conservative Catholicism with nationalism of the type propagated by Tudjman. The most obvious way in which this alliance was manifested was in the antiabortion campaign which was spearheaded by the church and which received a considerable degree of backing from the HDZ. The Catholic Church began its antiabortion campaign in 1987, noting the decline of the birth rate in the predominantly Catholic republics of Croatia and Slovenia as opposed to the other Yugoslav republics. The bishops in Slovenia, for example, noted that the increase in abortions provided evidence of a general ‘demoralisation’ in society.<sup>65</sup> The campaign was taken up more vigorously by Tudjman in 1994 when he gave the Ministry of Development and Reconstruction (*Ministarstvo razvijka i obnove*) the task of promoting demographic growth amongst Croats and called upon the government to halt the increasing numbers of abortions in

Croatia, steps which he claimed if not taken would lead to ‘the Croatian people facing extinction’.<sup>66</sup> This campaign was supported by numerous conservative women’s patriotic groups, which converged around the State Institute for the Protection of Motherhood, Family and Children (*Državni zavod za zaštitu obitelji, materinstva i mlađeži*). These organisations included the Croatian Population Movement (*Hrvatske stanovništvo pokret*) and Croatian Woman (*Hrvatska žena*). An article written by a leading member of one of these conservative groups, Don Anto Baković, argued that ‘in terms of abortion we still live in Serbo-communism’.<sup>67</sup> Baković, a Catholic priest and founding member of the Croatian Population Movement, proposed the stigmatisation of childless couples, the abolition of abortion, the prevention of young women of childbearing age from emigrating and the promotion of the concept of the four-child family.<sup>68</sup> However, despite this, the Croatian Catholic leadership denied that the church was making such demands of the state: ‘our Church has up to now not demanded anything’, claimed the editor of *Glas Koncila*.<sup>69</sup> Thus, here again we see that although conservative Catholics and the HDZ appeared to be thinking alike, this did not produce the sort the alliance hoped for by Tudjman in which the church would endorse his party.

The failure of the HDZ fully to coopt Catholicism into its national narrative was made starkly plain during the first papal visit to Croatia in 1994. The pope had originally planned to visit Belgrade and Sarajevo as well as Zagreb, but the Serbian authorities refused to allow the visit to go ahead and the United Nations in Bosnia and Hercegovina refused to guarantee the security of the pope in Sarajevo. Thus a visit which was initially meant to be a peace mission to the Balkans became a papal visit to Croatia.<sup>70</sup> It was clear from the outset that the purpose of the visit was wholly political. The pope began by praising the controversial Stepinac and spoke of the tragedy inflicted upon the cities of Vukovar, Dubrovnik and Zadar by the besieging Serb forces. However, the pope also set himself and the Croatian Catholic Church against the policies espoused by Tudjman and the HDZ, in particular their support for the Bosnian Croats engaged in fighting the Muslims in Bosnia.<sup>71</sup> The pope warned the government against trying to use Catholicism for its own narrowly nationalist ends. In perfect Croatian he warned against ‘the risk of idolizing a nation, a race, [or] a party, and justifying in their name hatred, discrimination and violence’.<sup>72</sup> He urged Croatian Catholics to refrain from acts of vengeance, calling on them to ‘become apostles [of] a new concord between peoples’.<sup>73</sup> Finally, he condemned the Serb aggression against Croatia and the Serbian policy of so-called ‘ethnic cleansing’, but offered the ‘kiss of peace’ to leaders of the Serbian Orthodox Church.<sup>74</sup> There can be little doubting the significance of this papal address, which was given to an audience of up to one million people in Zagreb. The pope openly criticised the government and warned against the central tenet of HDZ nationalism, the positioning of the Croatian nation at the heart of politics. Ostensibly, the pope sided with Josip Manolić and Stipe Mesić, the two senior HDZ rebels who had left the party because of its support for the Croat–Muslim war in Bosnia and Hercegovina (Mesić was subsequently elected president of Croatia in 2000). His stance was reinforced by his oft-proclaimed desire to visit besieged Sarajevo, and by his promotion of Vinko Puljić, head of the church in Sarajevo, to the College of Cardinals.<sup>75</sup> Puljić was an outspoken critic of the HDZ in Bosnia and Hercegovina, who had denounced the formation of the so-called Croatian republic of Herceg-Bosna, called for multi-cultural tolerance, and supported peace and cooperation between Croats and Muslims throughout Bosnia and Hercegovina.<sup>76</sup>

The pope’s visit also acted as a catalyst for the promotion of ecumenical activity in

Croatia. In December 1994 Serbian Orthodox services were performed in Zagreb again, and in 1995 Zagreb Cathedral began making regular use of the ‘ecumenical prayer’ during its services. In 1997 Cardinal Kuharić’s successor, Archbishop Božanić, instigated regular ecumenical meetings between himself and the head of the Orthodox Church in Croatia, Metropolitan Jovan.<sup>77</sup>

The papal visit in 1994 thus revealed the distance between the church and the HDZ, and the inaccuracy of Tudjman’s pronouncements. That distance increased after 1994, to the extent that the church began to criticise the government’s domestic policies as well.

The subsequent positions taken by the church on social issues emphasised the growing divide between the HDZ and the Catholic hierarchy. Immediately after the papal visit Cardinal Kuharić stated that ‘If all those in authority had listened to him [the pope], each in his place ... we would have a far better reputation in the world, a clear conscience and clean hands. As it is, we have only demeaned ourselves.’<sup>78</sup> Jure Kristo suggested that this conflict, which became more apparent after the papal visit, had been bound to occur sooner or later because of the church’s pronounced beliefs in democracy and human rights – beliefs not fully shared by the ruling party. Kristo shows that as early as 1990 the most prominent Catholic publication, *Glas Koncila*, was frequently educating its readership in how ‘democracy is the highest degree of the Gospel’s application in social and state life’.<sup>79</sup> Whilst this early prodemocracy stance can be largely attributed to the strategic interests of the church in seeing the demise of communism, Kristo notes that the Bishops’ Commission also spoke in favour of pluralistic democracy and warned about the danger of the ‘reappearance of fear-inducing methods’ utilised by the communists. Furthermore, in a passage which constituted a direct challenge to the basic assumptions of the Tudjman regime and was therefore overlooked both by apologists for the regime and by those who argued that the HDZ and Catholic Church were part of the same nationalist axis, the Commission demanded that political parties ‘avoid assuming the exclusive right to interpret recent Croat history’.<sup>80</sup>

The extent of the conflict between the church and the HDZ can be seen in the church’s response to Operation Storm in 1995, noted earlier. A sermon preached by Cardinal Kuharić included a teaching very much at odds with the HDZ view of the Serbian ‘other’. Kuharić asked Croats to do as he did: ‘If the opponent burns my house, I will guard his. If he demolishes my church, I will protect his. And if he kills my father, I will safeguard the life of his father.’<sup>81</sup> Following a Catholic conference on ‘The Church, Democracy and General Welfare in Croatia’ in 1995 the director of the Croatian Catholic Information Agency, Živko Kustić, was quoted by the independent daily *Novi list* as declaring that some Croatian nationalists had embraced a form of Nazism. He continued:

In a bar in Zagreb I saw a sign reading ‘no admittance to Serbs’. This is a stab into the heart of democracy ... in Croatia there are even official newspapers of neo-fascist and neo-Nazi parties with the following motto below their names: ‘Damned be Serbs, Muslims and Jews, wherever they are’.<sup>82</sup>

More recently, Kuharić’s successor as archbishop of Zagreb, Archbishop Josip Božanić, used his Christmas address to the nation in 1998 to denounce the ‘sinful practices’ of the government, focusing particularly on corruption.<sup>83</sup>

Although the church hierarchy moved against the HDZ government, the nationalist combination of church and party remained strong in many rural parishes. Slaven Lerotic maintained that the church was deeply divided between a liberal-

minded urban leadership and conservative-nationalist rural priests and followers who mobilised themselves behind the HDZ's most conservative elements in movements such as the antiabortion campaign.<sup>84</sup> The extent of the division within the Catholic Church in Croatia can be seen in relation to responses to the alleged appearance of the Virgin Mary in the Bosnian village of Medjugorje. The apparitions began at precisely the time when the Bishopric of Mostar was attempting to assert its authority over the Franciscans who ran many parishes in that area. The Virgin Mary appeared to youngsters who were being taught by the Franciscans and the Catholic authorities were forced to abandon their efforts to exert control. Subsequently the Catholic authorities in Zagreb and Sarajevo unsuccessfully attempted to debunk the apparition claims. Medjugorje became a major site for Christian pilgrimage and the Franciscans retained their status both in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Croatia.<sup>85</sup> This episode is one example of extensive and deeply-felt schisms within the Catholic Church in former Yugoslavia, extending beyond the secular realm of nationalist politics into the metaphysical realm of faith and Christian belief.

The Croatian Catholic Church played a vital role in redefining Croatian national identity in the 1990s, but not necessarily the role prescribed for it by the HDZ. During the communist Yugoslav period the Catholic Church perceived itself, and was perceived by many Croats, to be a defining characteristic and symbol of national identity.<sup>86</sup> Furthermore, the suffering of the church under a state which sought to crush it (or at least to force it to sever its links with the Vatican) was seen as emblematic of the wider suffering of the Croatian people. The 'martyrdom' of Stepinac was particularly important in this respect. Because the church had had its properties seized and its activities extensively curtailed by Tito's regime, it was a keen supporter of democratisation and saw the HDZ as a movement of the Croatian people against communism. However, it is important to note that whilst conservative-minded priests openly advocated support for the HDZ and many joined its ranks, the church leadership never specifically identified itself with Tudjman and indeed spoke out in favour of pluralism and against monoethnic politics. The HDZ believed itself to be the party of the church, and Tudjman accorded the church a leading national role. This role was enhanced in 1991–99 when chauvinist Serbs deliberately targeted the Catholic Church and thousands of Catholic buildings were systematically destroyed. However, the role of the Croatian government in the Croat-Muslim war which erupted in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1993 caused the church hierarchy in Zagreb, in tandem with the Catholic Church in Sarajevo, to condemn violent manifestations of Croatian nationalism. The antigovernment stance of the church on the Bosnian issue was supported by the pope's visit to Zagreb in 1994. After 1994 the church went on to criticise Operation Storm, corruption and the government's poor record on human rights. However, whilst the HDZ was unable to coopt the leadership of the Catholic Church to support its nationalist doctrine, substantial elements of the conservative-minded rural priesthood actively supported the nationalist cause.

### **The Second Transition: From Democratic Authoritarianism to Liberal Democracy**

President Franjo Tudjman died on 10 December 1999 after a long battle against stomach cancer. Shortly before his death, prayers were frequently said for the president in churches across Croatia.<sup>87</sup> Although his party was deeply unpopular in the polls (and was subsequently heavily defeated in the January 2000 election), the

president retained a good deal of personal authority and respect, particularly in rural Croatia. In the village of Veliko Trgovisce, for example, churchgoers expressed warm regard for Tudjman and said that they did not believe that his death was imminent. However, in the space of less than a month, he did indeed die, the HDZ was swept from power in the *sabor* and its candidate for the presidency – the moderate Mate Granić – did not even progress to the second round of the presidential election. This remarkable transition took place in an atmosphere of doubt: doubt as to whether the corrupt officials who had run sections of the Croatian state would relinquish power of their own volition and doubt as to whether a new regime would be able to establish real democracy. The outcome in both these areas has been positive, though of course important challenges remain. The success of this second transition was partly facilitated by the Catholic Church and, in particular, by its leadership in Zagreb.

What struck the world as an about-turn in church policy was made apparent on the occasion of Tudjman's funeral. Although we have seen that the church leadership had moved to distance itself from Tudjman's brand of nationalism, we have also seen that many academics, let alone the western media, had not picked up this fact. In his sermon at Tudjman's funeral Archbishop Josip Bozanić told an estimated 100,000 mourners who had gathered at the Mirogoj cemetery: 'He will enter history as one of the great creators. For all the good Tudjman did ... we express our deep gratitude and let God be his reward.' However, he continued, 'for those things that were less worthy and sinful, let them be forgiven'.<sup>88</sup> This comment expresses the church's disassociation of itself from the regime, which allowed it to pursue an independent path in the subsequent elections: a path which, I argue, partly facilitated the successful second transition.

With the parliamentary elections originally due to take place in December 1999, the church had become involved in the political process some time before Tudjman's death. In November the *Justitia et Pax* Commission of the Croatian Bishops' Conference issued a message to the voters. It began by making it clear that voting was not only a political right but also a social responsibility: 'citizens should consider it their moral, civil and religious duty to vote'.<sup>89</sup> Even this innocuous opening was significant, because most political analysts believed that a low turnout would substantially improve the HDZ's electoral standing since it could rely on a greater core of votes than the other parties. The bishops' statement went on to identify points which citizens should consider before casting their votes. They should look at the problems confronting Croatia 'honestly and responsibly'. Specific issues which they should consider included 'ways to foster further democratisation, social justice and the general welfare of the nation and of each and every individual'.<sup>90</sup> The statement noted that whilst multiparty democracy had taken root, the mentality of the one-party system, with its incumbent intolerance and monopolising tendencies, remained entrenched. The bishops argued that this mentality should be replaced with the ethical principles of 'the dignity of man, justice, truth, solidarity, freedom and cooperation'. The electorate, they pointed out, had been endowed with a responsibility to select those candidates who upheld these principles. In their conclusion, the bishops issued a parting shot by demanding that the electoral process be in line with European standards.<sup>91</sup>

The antigovernment thrust of this statement is unmistakable. While they did not name any specific party, it is clear that the bishops were referring to the HDZ's authoritarianism and its failure to promote democratisation and general social welfare. In case anyone had failed to appreciate the thrust of what the bishops were

arguing, they delivered a pastoral message to the faithful only two weeks later. In a direct reference to the corruption which had become endemic within the HDZ<sup>92</sup> the bishops called upon the voters to ensure that those they chose to enter the *sabor* had ‘the integrity and capability to answer the needs of the current Croatian state and its citizens in the best possible way’.<sup>93</sup> More tellingly, they advised that in judging amongst the (many) candidates ‘people should try to discern who is advocating tolerance and dialogue, development of a social and law-governed state, justice, and concern for the unemployed, the young, the poor and the old’.<sup>94</sup>

During the election campaign the church openly opposed the government on one issue – the timing of the election. Whilst on the whole church leaders opted to give advice to the faithful without ever recommending particular political parties, they believed that they could speak out on the issue of timing because it had a direct impact on religious holidays. In October and November the HDZ dropped strong hints that the elections would be held on 28 December – in the middle of the church’s designated Christmas holiday. The HDZ had three principal reasons for wanting a Christmas-time date, other than the fact that the time allowed by the Constitution for an election was fast running out. First, the government believed that fewer people would turn out to vote in the holidays and that this would reduce the number of votes for the opposition whilst maintaining the solid core vote for the HDZ. Second, the government would be able to placate the church by announcing a voluntary hold on the election campaign, which the other parties would feel morally obliged to adhere to as well. The HDZ calculated that the lower the amount of campaigning, and the fewer the opportunities for the opposition to criticise the government, the greater its share of the vote would be. Third, the government calculated that at Christmas many Croats from the diaspora would be in Croatia. As around 80 per cent of the diaspora has tended to vote for the HDZ, they believed that this would enhance their electoral chances.

When the idea of a Christmas election was first floated the church expressed strong opposition and demanded that the election be over by the first week of December. A church spokesman contended that a Christmas election campaign would ruin the holiday atmosphere – a time when families should be able to relax together.<sup>95</sup> In a sermon Archbishop Božanić argued that elections at Christmastime ‘do not conform to Croatian Catholic traditions and humanitarian sensibilities’.<sup>96</sup> Commentators at this point believed that whilst the government had not shown itself to be concerned with public opinion on other issues, Tudjman would succumb to the point of view of the church. However, Tudjman’s illness and subsequent death resolved the issue, delaying the election until 5 January.

Despite this cloaked opposition to the government, the church remained split between the urban and rural clergy and the independent press remained sceptical about its role in the democratic process. According to a poll carried out by the government-controlled newspaper *Hrvatski obzor* 75 per cent of the population believed that the church had actively supported the HDZ in the 1995 election.<sup>97</sup> This perception was not helped by the persistent opposition of sections of the clergy to the Social Democrats (*Socijaldemokratska partija*) (SDP) – the former reformist communists) and the Social Liberals (*Hrvatska socijalno-liberalna stranka* (HSLS)). Many held the opinion that a victory for the SDP-HSLS would mean a return to communism and would threaten the standing of the church. Friar Ante Kekez, a Franciscan from near Zadar, publicly expressed this view, insisting that ‘communism is a society without god, and liberalism does not have a soul’.<sup>98</sup> This was a view deeply at odds with that of Božanić, who used the New Year mass at Zagreb

Cathedral to condemn the government for its ‘corruption’ and ‘sinful practices’.<sup>99</sup>

Despite the sceptical views expressed by many analysts in Croatia and abroad, the Croatian Catholic Church did in fact help facilitate the second transition, from democratic authoritarianism to liberal democracy. True, the church was deeply divided and there remained a significant proportion of clergy who actively supported the HDZ, fearing that a change of government would ultimately lead to a reversion to communism. However, the church was instrumental in creating the conditions for the possibility of a successful second transition. It was outspoken in outlining the characteristics needed of a representative in the *sabor* and in criticising the corrupt practices of the government. It also refused to express official concern about linkages between the SDP and the former communists (a key feature of the HDZ campaign, until it was pointed out by *Feral Tribune* that the HDZ leadership included as many former communists as the SDP leadership), reassuring many voters that a successful change of regime was a possibility and would not necessarily destabilise Croatia.

## Conclusion

Many writers on the Croat-Serb war insist that religious affiliation was crucial to this ‘ethnic war’. Paul Mojzes, for example, describes the war as an ‘ethnoreligious war’ in the title of his book. Similarly, Michael Ignatieff argues that ‘Croats’ explained that ‘the root cause of the bloodshed in the Balkans is that they are “essentially” Catholic ... while Serbs are “essentially” Orthodox’.<sup>100</sup> This reading is based on the conceit that the war was essentially ‘ethnic’ rather than ‘political’ – a conceit ably exposed by David Campbell with regard to Bosnia<sup>101</sup> – and also on a particular Croatian nationalist understanding of the church. When Ignatieff uses the word ‘Croat’ he means Tudjman, the HDZ and its supporters. The leadership of the Catholic Church in Croatia did not concur with Ignatieff’s reading. Whilst supporting the idea of an independent Croatian state free from communism, the church actively spoke out against the abuses connected with a narrow conservative nationalist reading of the nation. What was particularly interesting about the position of the church leadership was that it frequently invoked the nation in order to rebuke the government. The HDZ was accused of bringing shame upon the Croatian nation and by implication of being anti-Croatian because of the policies developed from its doctrine of Croatian national identity. As a global institution, the church could not be a national church for Croats and thus Croatian membership of the church was perceived as demanding certain norms of behaviour, including an appreciation of the equality of all people before God. There was therefore a major disjunction between the internationalist vision of the Catholic Church and the centrality of the Croatian nation for the HDZ. This meant that the Catholic Church became an institutional centre from which alternative visions of Croatian national identity were disseminated. However, because of the debates and splits within the church this was a far from coherent or structured vision.

## Notes and References

- <sup>1</sup> I would like to thank Friar Ilija Zivković, Daria Mateljak Bartulin and Slaven Lerotic for their help with the research which led to this article.
- <sup>2</sup> Paul Mojzes is perhaps the most consistent critic. See Paul Mojzes, ‘The Roman Catholic Church in Croatia and its contribution to nationalist sentiment’, *Religion, State and Society*, vol. 21, nos 3–4, 1993, pp. 391–93; Paul Mojzes, *Yugoslavian Inferno: Ethno-*

*religious Warfare in the Balkans* (Continuum, New York, 1994); and Paul Mojzes, 'The role of religious communities in the development of civil society in Yugoslavia, 1945–1992', in M.K. Bokovoy, J.A. Irvine and C.S. Lilly (eds), *State-Society Relations in Yugoslavia* (Macmillan, London, 1997).

<sup>3</sup> The urban-rural split was an important factor in Yugoslav society and, many argued, a key determining factor in shaping the course of the war. See John Allcock, *Explaining Yugoslavia* (C. Hurst, London, 2000), and Mary Kaldor, *New and Old Wars: Organized Violence in a Globalized World* (Polity Press, Cambridge, 1999).

<sup>4</sup> Vesna Pusić devised the concept of dictatorships with democratic legitimacy in order to explain Tudjman's style of rule. See Vesna Pusić, 'Dictatorships with democratic legitimacy', *East European Politics and Societies*, vol. 8, no. 4, 1994.

<sup>5</sup> I outline Tudjman's understanding of the 'centuries-old dream' thesis in Alex J. Bellamy, 'Breaking the curse of King Zvonimir: the nationalist narrative of Franjo Tudjman', *Slovo: Journal of East European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies*, no. 12, 2000.

<sup>6</sup> On the significance of the Kosovo myth for Serb national identity, see Noel Malcolm, *Kosovo: A Short History* (Macmillan, London, 1998), and Thomas Emmert, *Serbian Golgotha: Kosovo 1389* (East European Monographs, London, 1990).

<sup>7</sup> Celia Hawkesworth, 'The palindrome scandal and the Yugoslav war', in Robert B. Pynsent (ed.), *The Literature of Nationalism* (Macmillan, London, 1996), p. 224.

<sup>8</sup> loc. cit.

<sup>9</sup> ibid., p. 74.

<sup>10</sup> loc. cit.

<sup>11</sup> ibid., p. 75. The different nationalist programmes are discussed in Mirjana Gross, 'Croatian national-integrational ideologies from the end of Illyrism to the creation of Yugoslavia', *Austrian History Yearbook*, nos 15–16, 1974; Mirjana Gross, 'On the integration of the Croatian nation: a case study in nation building', *East European Quarterly*, vol. 15, no. 2, 1981; and Mirjana Gross, 'The union of Dalmatia with Northern Croatia: a crucial question of the Croatian national integration in the nineteenth century', in M. Teich and R. Porter (eds), *The National Question in Historical Context* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1993).

<sup>12</sup> Ivo Banac, *The National Question in Yugoslavia: Origins, History, Politics* (Cornell University Press, London, 1989), p. 76.

<sup>13</sup> loc. cit.

<sup>14</sup> For example, Michael Ignatieff contends that one of the only salient differences between Croats and Serbs is that the former are Catholic and the latter Orthodox Christians. Michael Ignatieff, 'The narcissism of minor difference', in Michael Ignatieff, *The Warrior's Honor: Ethnic War and the Moral Conscience* (Vintage, London, 1999), p. 38.

<sup>15</sup> Banac, *op. cit.*, pp. 66–67.

<sup>16</sup> ibid., p. 108.

<sup>17</sup> loc. cit.

<sup>18</sup> Banac, *op. cit.*, p. 276.

<sup>19</sup> Tudjman is cited by Sabrina Petra Ramet, *Balkan Babel* (Westview, Boulder, 1999), p. 135.

<sup>20</sup> Author's Interview with Fr Ilija Živković, Zagreb, 7 July 1999.

<sup>21</sup> Cited by Jure Kristo, 'The Catholic Church in a time of crisis', in Sabrina Petra Ramet and Ljubiša S. Adamovich, *Beyond Yugoslavia* (Westview, Boulder, 1995), p. 435.

<sup>22</sup> *Veritas*, nos 9–10, 1992. Cited by Mojzes, *Yugoslavian Inferno ...*, p. 130. For more on the links between Catholicism and Croatian nationalism, see Pedro Ramet, 'Religion and nationalism in Yugoslavia', in Pedro Ramet (ed.), *Religion and Nationalism in Soviet and East European Politics* (Duke University Press, Durham, NC, 1989).

<sup>23</sup> Author's interview with Fr Ilija Živković.

<sup>24</sup> See Mark Biondich, 'Stjepan Radić, Yugoslavism and the Habsburg monarchy', *Austrian History Yearbook*, no. 27, 1996.

<sup>25</sup> The Military Frontier was an area on the Habsburg-Ottoman border which was ruled

- directly by Vienna. It was populated largely by Serbs who had migrated north to avoid Ottoman rule. They were granted special privileges in return for providing a permanent military presence on the frontier. In the 1870s the frontier was formally abolished and the region placed under the control of Zagreb. See G.E. Rothenberg, 'The Croatian military border and the rise of Yugoslav nationalism', *Slavonic and East European Review*, no. 43 (100), 1964.
- <sup>26</sup> Jasmina Udovički, 'The bonds and the fault lines', in Jasmina Udovički and James Ridgeway (eds), *Burn this House: the Making and Unmaking of Yugoslavia* (Duke University Press, Durham, NC, 1997).
- <sup>27</sup> *The Catholic Church among the Croats* (Press Office of the Croatian Bishops' Conference), p. 1. English-language document. Thanks to Anthony London of the OSCE mission to Croatia for forwarding this document to me.
- <sup>28</sup> *loc. cit.*
- <sup>29</sup> Author's interview with Fr Ilija Živković.
- <sup>30</sup> Mojzes, 'The role of religious communities ...', p. 216.
- <sup>31</sup> Stella Alexander, *Church and State in Yugoslavia since 1945* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1979), p. 242.
- <sup>32</sup> Ramet, *Balkan Babel*, p. 146. See also Paul Mojzes, 'Religious liberty in Yugoslavia: a study in ambiguity', in Leonard Swidler (ed.), *Religious Liberty and Human Rights in Nations and in Religions* (Ecumenical Press, Philadelphia, 1986), pp. 25–26.
- <sup>33</sup> For the story of Alojzije Stepinac's controversial life, see Stella Alexander, *The Triple Myth: A Life of Archbishop Alojzije Stepinac* (East European Monographs, New York, 1987).
- <sup>34</sup> The *Ustaše* were the Croatian fascists who brutally ruled Croatia and Bosnia during this period and were responsible for the murder of hundreds of thousands of Serbs, Jews and Croatian opponents. See Jonathan Steinberg, 'Types of genocide? Croatians, Serbs and Jews, 1941–5', in David Cesarani (ed.), *The Final Solution: Origins and Implementation* (Routledge, London, 1994), p. 176.
- <sup>35</sup> See *ibid.*, pp. 349–85.
- <sup>36</sup> John Lampe, *Yugoslavia as History: Twice There Was a Country* (Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 205.
- <sup>37</sup> Cited by Alexander, *The Triple Myth ...*, pp. 71–72.
- <sup>38</sup> *ibid.*, p. 80.
- <sup>39</sup> Marcus Tanner, *Croatia: A Nation Forged in War* (Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 1997), pp. 155–56.
- <sup>40</sup> Lampe, *op. cit.*, p. 218.
- <sup>41</sup> Tudjman quoted in *Croatia Weekly*, no. 35, 1 October 1998.
- <sup>42</sup> Djilas is cited in O. Aleksa Benigar, *Alojzije Stepinac: Croatian Cardinal* (Ziral, Rome, 1974), p. 639.
- <sup>43</sup> For more details on the complexities and incoherence of church-state relations in the second half of Tito's reign see Pedro Ramet, 'Catholicism and politics in socialist Yugoslavia', *Religion in Communist Lands*, vol. 10, no. 3, 1982.
- <sup>44</sup> Kristo, *op. cit.*, p. 434.
- <sup>45</sup> *loc. cit.*
- <sup>46</sup> Kuharić made this argument in a speech to the *sabor* in 1989. *loc. cit.*
- <sup>47</sup> Mojzes, 'The Roman Catholic Church in Croatia ...', p. 392. On the human rights problems in Kosovo during the 1980s and 1990s see Alex J. Bellamy, 'Human wrongs in Kosovo 1974–1999', *International Journal of Human Rights*, vol. 4, nos 3–4, 2000.
- <sup>48</sup> Ramet, *Balkan Babel*, p. 276.
- <sup>49</sup> Author's interview with Fr Ilija Živković.
- <sup>50</sup> Gerard F. Powers, 'Religion, conflict and prospects for reconciliation in Bosnia, Croatia and Yugoslavia', *Journal of International Affairs*, vol. 50, no. 1, 1996, p. 231.
- <sup>51</sup> Ramet, *Balkan Babel*, p. 158.
- <sup>52</sup> Mojzes, 'The Roman Catholic Church in Croatia ...', p. 393. These ideas are extrapolated

more fully in Mojzes, *Yugoslavian Inferno* ...

<sup>53</sup> Mojzes, ‘The Roman Catholic Church in Croatia ...’, p. 393.

<sup>54</sup> Srdjan Vrcan, ‘Religion and churches and the post-Yugoslav war’, in J. Coleman and M. Tonka (eds), *Religion and Nationalism* (Orbis, Maryknoll, NY, 1995), pp. 63–64.

<sup>55</sup> *loc. cit.*

<sup>56</sup> Ramet, *Balkan Babel*, p. 277.

<sup>57</sup> Božidar Javorović, ‘Causes and goals of Serbian aggression against Croatia’, in Ilija Živković (ed.), *The Wounded Church in Croatia: The Destruction of the Sacral Heritage of Croatia (1991–1995)* (Croatian Heritage Foundation and Croatian Conference of Bishops, Zagreb, 1996), p. 67.

<sup>58</sup> Sabrina P. Ramet, ‘The Croatian Catholic Church since 1990’, *Religion, State & Society*, vol. 24 no. 4, 1996, p. 349.

<sup>59</sup> *ibid.* and Živković, *op. cit.*, p. 400.

<sup>60</sup> Ramet, ‘The Croatian Catholic Church Since 1990’, p. 349.

<sup>61</sup> Cardinal Kuharić is cited in Živković, *op. cit.*, p. 250.

<sup>62</sup> *loc. cit.*

<sup>63</sup> ‘Croatian Caritas’, in *The Catholic Church in Croatia* (Press Office of the Croatian Bishops’ Conference, Zagreb, 1999), p. 26.

<sup>64</sup> See Joseph Kerrigan and William Novick, *Healing the Heart of Croatia* (Paulist Press, New York, 1998).

<sup>65</sup> Vlasta Jalušić, ‘Women in post-socialist Slovenia: socially adapted, politically marginalized’, in Sabrina P. Ramet (ed.), *Gender Politics in the Western Balkans* (University of Pennsylvania Press, Pennsylvania, 1999), pp. 117–18.

<sup>66</sup> Franjo Tudjman is cited in Obrad Kesić, ‘Women and gender imagery in Bosnia: amazons, sluts, victims, witches and wombs’, in Ramet, *Gender Politics* ..., p. 201.

<sup>67</sup> Quoted in Tatjana Pavlović, ‘Women in Croatia: feminists, nationalists and homosexuals’, in Ramet, *Gender Politics* ..., p. 138.

<sup>68</sup> Ramet, ‘The Croatian Catholic Church since 1990’, p. 346.

<sup>69</sup> *loc. cit.*

<sup>70</sup> Ramet, *Balkan Babel*, p. 281.

<sup>71</sup> On the Croatian contribution to the war in Bosnia and Hercegovina see Michael A. Sells, *The Bridge Betrayed: Religion and Genocide in Bosnia*, revised edition (University of California Press, London, 1998).

<sup>72</sup> Cited in Ramet, *Balkan Babel*, p. 281.

<sup>73</sup> *loc. cit.*

<sup>74</sup> *loc. cit.*

<sup>75</sup> *loc. cit.*

<sup>76</sup> I am grateful to Jasmina Husanović, whose guided tour around Sarajevo brought these points to my attention. Paul Mojzes argues that Bosnian Croat Catholic leaders supported a united Bosnia-Hercegovina only as a way of protecting those Croats who lived outside the boundaries of the so-called ‘Herceg-Bosna’. See Mojzes, *Yugoslavian Inferno* ..., p. 76. Mojzes fails to give much evidence for his claim, and fails to address the consistent line of the Bosnian Catholic Church, which predated the establishment of Herceg-Bosna. For a more detailed and accurate account of the Bosnian Catholic Church and its support for a unified multiethnic Bosnia-Hercegovina see Branka Magaš, ‘Croat Catholics divided’, *The Tablet*, 17 July 1993, p. 908.

<sup>77</sup> ‘The aftermath of the pope’s visit in 1994’, in *The Catholic Church in Croatia*, p. 39.

<sup>78</sup> Cited in Powers, *op. cit.*, p. 232.

<sup>79</sup> *Glas Koncila* is cited in Kristo, *op. cit.*, p. 437.

<sup>80</sup> Cited in *ibid.*, p. 440.

<sup>81</sup> Cardinal Kuharić is cited in *Glas Koncila*, Zagreb, 3 January 1996. I am grateful to Fr Ilija Živković for bringing this to my attention.

<sup>82</sup> Živko Kustić is cited in Ramet, ‘The Croatian Catholic Church since 1990’, p. 348.

<sup>83</sup> Author’s interview with Fr Ilija Živković.

- <sup>84</sup> Author's interview with Slaven Lerotić.
- <sup>85</sup> For more on this see: Mart Bax, 'The Madonna of Medjugorje: religious rivalry and the formation of a devotional movement in Yugoslavia', *Anthropological Quarterly*, vol. 62, no. 2, 1990; Mart Bax, *Medjugorje: Religion, Politics and Violence in Rural Bosnia* (VU University Press, Amsterdam, 1995); and Pedro Ramet, 'Factionalism in church-state interaction: the Croatian Catholic Church in the 1980s', *Slavic Review*, vol. 44, no. 2, 1985.
- <sup>86</sup> For more on the experiences of Slovenia see Danica Fink-Hafner and John R. Robbins (eds), *Making a New Nation: The Formation of Slovenia* (Dartmouth, Aldershot, 1997).
- <sup>87</sup> 'Tudjman's condition stabilises', BBC, 14 November 1999.
- <sup>88</sup> *The Times*, 14 December 1999.
- <sup>89</sup> This statement was reported in detail on the nightly Croatian news programme 'Dnevnik', 11 November 1999. Recorded and translated by Terna d.o.o., a private news monitoring company based in Zagreb.
- <sup>90</sup> *ibid.*
- <sup>91</sup> The 1997 elections had been described by the OSCE as 'free but not fair'.
- <sup>92</sup> On corruption in Croatia see Ivo Bičanić, 'Privatization in Croatia', *East European Politics and Societies*, vol. 7, no. 3, 1993, and Nevenka Čučković, *The Grey Economy and the Privatization Process in Croatia* (EACES, Varna, Bulgaria, 1998).
- <sup>93</sup> Pastoral message reported on Dnevnik , 30 November 1999.
- <sup>94</sup> *ibid.*
- <sup>95</sup> Reported in *Novi list*, 5 October 1999.
- <sup>96</sup> *Jutarnji list*, 29 September 1999.
- <sup>97</sup> *Hrvatski obzor*, 27 September 1999.
- <sup>98</sup> *Jutarnji list*, 29 September 1999.
- <sup>99</sup> *ibid.*
- <sup>100</sup> Michael Ignatieff, *Blood and Belonging: Journeys into the New Nationalism* (Vintage, London, 1994), p. 14.
- <sup>101</sup> Frustratingly, however, whilst Campbell dismisses an ethnic reading of the Bosnian war, his account of the role of Croats is extremely monolithic: All Bosnian Croats are portrayed as rabid nationalists. Although Campbell is interested in exposing the potential for a non-ethnic politics, nowhere does he mention Stjepan Ključić, the leader of the HDZ in Bosnia and Herzegovina prior to Mate Boban. Ključić, interestingly, espoused a multiethnic Bosnia and shared many platforms with Izetbegović and Silajdžić, before being removed from his post by Tudjman. See David Campbell, *National Deconstruction: Violence, Identity and Justice in Bosnia* (University of Minnesota Press, London, 1998).