

The symposium »The spirit and thought of Željko Mardešić. Metamorphoses of the sacred in the contemporary world«

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On Friday 17 June 2011 a one-day scientific symposium was held to mark the fifth anniversary of Željko Mardešić's death. The meeting under the title »The spirit and thought of Željko Mardešić. Metamorphoses of the sacred in the contemporary world« took place in Zagreb, in the hall »Vijenac« (Wreath) of the Archdiocesan Pastoral Institute. It was organized by the Christian Academic Circle (CRAC) and by the following co-organizers: the Centre for the Promotion of the Social Teaching of the Church of the Croatian Bishops' Conference, the Franciscan Institute for the Culture of Peace in Split, the Section for the sociology of religion of the Croatian Sociological Association, the Catholic Faculty of Theology of the University of Zagreb, the publishing house »Kršćanska sadašnjost« (Christianity Today) in Zagreb, and the Archdiocesan Pastoral Institute in Zagreb. The symposium gathered Mardešić's friends and acquaintances, people familiar with his work, as well as others whose interest was awakened by Mardešić's spirit and thought. The meeting's guest of honor was Mrs. Nada Mardešić, late Željko Mardešić's wife. The symposium was preceded by presentations and discussions about Željko Mardešić's spirit and thought. They took place in Zagreb, at the meetings of CRAC during this academic year, under the leadership of Professor Tonči Matulić, PhD.

The symposium was opened by Tonči Matulić. After the opening prayer, the assembly was addressed in the introductory part by the following organizers' representatives: Ivan Supičić, full member of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts representing CRAC, Gordan Črpić, PhD, representing the Center for Promotion of the Social Teaching of the Church of the Croatian Bishops' Conference, fr. Mijo Džolan representing the Franciscan Institute for the Culture of Peace in Split, Professor Dinka Marinović-Jerolimov, PhD, representing the Section for the sociology of religion of the Croatian Sociological Association, Professor Josip Oslić, PhD, Dean of the Catholic Faculty of Theology of the University of Zagreb, Professor Željko Tanjić, PhD, representing the publish-

ing house »Kršćanska sadašnjost« (Christianity Today) in Zagreb and Tomislav Markić, PhD, representing the Archdiocesan Pastoral Institute in Zagreb.

The first part of the symposium under the title »Man – religion – modernity« was divided into two sessions. The first session was chaired by Stipe Tadić and Tomislav Markić, and the first lecture was held by Ante Vučković (»Željko Mardešić's approach to the phenomenon of hate«). The subsequent lectures were held by Ivan Supićić (»Conscience and guilt in modernity – according to Željko Mardešić«), Dan Đaković (»Love your enemy«), Jure Perišić (»Mardešić: prophet of fair political practice«) and Tonči Matulić (»Željko Mardešić: witness of the forgotten dialogue«).

The Second session was moderated by Siniša Zrinščak and Željko Tanjić. It started with Gordan Črpić's lecture (»The possibilities and difficulties in modernization of the Croatian society from the perspective of Mardešić, Rogić and Županov«), which was followed by Ivan Markešić's (»Was Karl Marx right? Mardešić's critique of the Croatian postcommunist society and its Church«). The lecture entitled »Popular piety as a challenge to the contemporary sociology of religion« was a joint effort of Ankica Marinović, Dinka Marinović-Jerolimov and Branko Ančić. The latter was also the lecturer. The subsequent lectures were held by Vlaho Kovačević (»Metamorphoses of secularization in modernity«) and Stipe Tadić (»The sacred that is not: on immanentistic religions in the contemporary world«). Thus the first part of the symposium was concluded.

The second part, which was entitled »Society – secularization – Council«, consisted of two sessions as well. The first session of the second part, in other words the third session altogether, was chaired by Dinka Marinović-Jerolimov and Mijo Džolan. It started with Ivan Šarčević's lecture (»Mardešić's understanding of political Catholicism«) and was followed by Ante Bekavac (»Željko Mardešić and the Second Vatican Council«), Stipe Odak (»New Pentecost or new spirituality«) and Pavle Kufrin (»Christianity and Secularization as seen by Željko Mardešić«).

The last session was chaired by Dan Đaković and Inga Tomić-Koludrović. The first lecture was held by Ljiljana Matković-Vlašić (»Željko Mardešić and the *Pacifist Challenge (Mirotnovni izazov)*«, the next one by Ante Škembar (»*Memoirs of Željko Mardešić*«) and finally there was a lecture by Jure Gabrić (»Remembering Željko Mardešić«). Each session was followed by a discussion in which the lecturers as well as the audience participated by posing questions, offering answers and making comments. It is worth mentioning and at the same time announcing that the aforementioned lectures will soon be available in written form, in the next issue of our magazine *Nova prisutnost (New Presence)*.

After the lectures, a round table discussion was held on the initiatives for further promotion of Željko Mardešić's spirit and thought. The round table dis-

cussion took place in the Hall I of the Archdiocesan Pastoral Institute under the leadership of Tonči Matulić. It was concluded that Mardešić's work needs to be researched and made available to everyone. It must not be disregarded. Here are some of the ideas that came up at the round table discussion:

- to collect the written legacy and complete the bibliography
- to gather personal, familial and other testimonies
- to identify and research concrete themes
- to establish an institution and an archive which would study Željko Mardešić (but not let his work remain exclusively in an institution!)
- to do research on Mardešić in the context of doctoral studies and to recommend him as a theme of doctoral dissertations
- to organize theme-focused conferences
- to launch scientific projects which would be interinstitutional and interdisciplinary
- to film a documentary
- to create websites with texts and references
- to issue a selection of texts in English
- to publish complete works

It can be said that the atmosphere at the symposium was friendly and almost homely. It was a place of meeting and getting to know other people. A wide range of themes have been examined from the point of view of various scientific disciplines. The symposium was an excellent opportunity for familiarizing oneself with Mardešić's work as well as improving one's knowledge of areas that were the focal points of his reflection. However, the contributions went even further: they enabled us to see him as a man and as a Christian. Mardešić's friends and acquaintances had a valuable role in these contributions because they shared their personal experiences with the participants and revived memories. In conclusion, it can be stated that the symposium confirmed the value and uniqueness of Željko Mardešić. It also emphasized the importance of further research, so that Mardešić's spirit and thought do not fall into oblivion, but become a source of long-term inspiration.

(na engl. prevela Matea Šandor)