

Kiti Jurica - Korda

Shots in the Parliament





K

Why was Stjepan Radić assassinated?

T

Module is about Assassination of Stjepan Radić and members of CPP (Croatian Peasant Party) in the National Assembly in Belgrade, July 20th 1928.

The controversy about this topic is that this assassination was perceived among majority of Croats as a way of the current regime to deal with the strongest Croat party and its very popular president. The thesis that it was premeditated was never proven, but the belief it was an organized assassination remained among Croat people, rather than the official version of the event that it was an occasional act of a 'disturbed' deputy, Punisa Racic.

Considering that the assassination happened at the National Assembly of the Kingdom of SHS, it was relevant to all the people living in the kingdom, and even more so since only 6 months after the event King Alexander established a personal dictatorship.



A

Getting familiar with the political atmosphere in the Kingdom of SHS in the 1920s, particularly the relations between the regime and the leading Croat politician, Stjepan Radić. Through critical studying of sources, try to determine the possible causes for assassination in the National Assembly and explain the controversial reactions to that event.



L

- The students will get acquainted with the part of a political atmosphere in the Kingdom of SHS, especially with the policy and actions of Stjepan Radić towards the reigning regime and vice versa.

- The students will develop the ability of analyzing written and photographic sources, ability of making own assessments and critical thinking, creative expression and graphical presenting of the results.

- The students will develop empathy, social sensitivity and they will see to what extent emotions can strengthen the controversy of an event.



T

P 1: The Assassination in The Parliament and its causes (Why was Stjepan Radić killed?)

1st step - After short introduction (depending on student's previous knowledge) the teacher will hand out to students in pairs 6 news headlines. Their task is to sort those 6 headlines by the 'emotional charge'.

2nd step – Teacher divides students in 4 group and gives them sources with questions for analysis. Sources related to possible causes of the assassination. They have to analyze them and answer the key question.

3rd step - Each group presents the answer to their key question. According to the answers the teacher and students make a list of the causes of assassination and write them on the board.

4th step - Students write all causes on the paperboards and arrange them in a diamond shape.

5th step – A brief discussion about the importance of the causes.

P 2: Reactions to the Assassination (What is the reason for the controversial reactions to the murder of Stjepan Radić?)

1st step – Teacher divides students into 8 groups and hands out the sources to them. Each group has a specific role of a person who has own view of the assassination.

Task for each group: From the point of view of your role, prepare a statement as a reaction to assassination and death of Stjepan Radić.

2nd step - Students (one representative of each group-roles) present their statements (reactions) on the assassination and death of Stjepan Radić.

3rd step - Through the discussion, answer the key question:

What is the main cause of the controversial reactions to the murder of Stjepan Radić?



90
minutes




1. C Assassination in the parliament and its causes

Step 1
newspaper headlines to be given to pairs of students

C

The first common state of South Slavs, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, was proclaimed on 1 December 1918. The leading politician among Croats was Stjepan Radic, who advocated republican system, national equality and social justice, and successfully opposed the ruling monarchist system. Although they were getting significant number of mandates in parliamentary elections, prior to 1925 Radic's party abstained from parliamentary work. Radic has been put in detention several times as well. In 1925, he renounced the republicanism, acknowledged the regime and for a short while participated in the government as Minister of Education. In 1927 there came the coalition between Radic's HSS and Independent Democratic Party of Svetozar Pribicevic. The coalition was a very serious opposition to the reigning regime.

Arrange the front pages according to the emotional 'charge' of texts! Comment the origin (region) of the most emotionally charged newspapers.

H N A	T	M P R ć D.
		
<p>"Novosti" – special edition of 20 June 1928 "Novosti" were independent Croatian daily paper</p>	<p>"Jutarnji list" of 21 June 1928. "Jutarnji list" is independent Zagreb daily paper that was issued in Zagreb from 1907 to 1941.</p>	<p>"Politika" of 21 June 1928. "Politika" – daily newspaper issued in Belgrade since 1904. http://scr.digital.nb.rs/zbirka/novina_25_May_2012.</p>
T A	B	T
		
<p>"Novosti" of 21 June 1928. http://dazg.chez.com/flashback_6.htm 25 May 2012.</p>	<p>"Slovenec", slovenian daily political paper http://www.dlib.si/browse/besedila/1 25 May 2012.</p>	<p>"Domoljub", slovenian bi-weekly with educative and fun content. http://www.dlib.si/browse/besedila/1 25 May 2012.</p>

1. C

Assassination in the parliament and its causes

Step 2 - G A

Students to be divided in four groups and sources to be handed out to them.

Source 1

I N B S 24 N 1918, SHS
K S M S R :

You, Gentlemen, do not care at all that our peasant, and especially Croat peasant, do not want to hear anything more about a king or a tsar, and the same goes for the country imposed on them... But I do know that you will not win the Croats of the idea, and it will be so because the whole Croat peasant world is against your centralism, just as it is against militarism, it is for the republic and for the national agreement with Serbs...

Our Croatian peasant – and they make 90% of the Croats – has become whole mature person in the war, and it means he will not serve anyone anymore, not be slave to anyone, be it a foreigner or a 'brother'... They want in this great time the state to be organized in a free republican principle and just human (social) basis.

Stjepan Radić: *Politički spisi*, Zagreb, 1971., str.323-335

Source 3

R 1919 1925. T 1925:

All party rallies are banned, archive has been seized, and warrant for the arrest of Mr. Radić and a couple of other party leaders was issued. The Decree was based on a fact that the party, joining the peasant international, became a part of the Third Communist International (which the Croats always disputed), that it had illegal relations with Macedonian revolutionary committee and that its members were responsible for the subversive propaganda in the army. Five party leaders were arrested, but Mr. Radić managed to escape the arrest in time and he was subsequently found, shamefully hiding in a small niche in a wall, in his nephew's apartment.

Britanci o Kraljevini Jugoslaviji, uredio: Ž. Avramovski, Zagreb, 1986, str.311.

Source 2



T O R b P

a/ a / 8/032-1. (15 Ma 2012)

Q A:

1. What kind of state, even before uniting, Radić advocated in the sense:
 - a) Of state (political) organization
 - b) Of national relations with other South Slavs
 - c) In the social sense
2. Why was Radić arrested in 1925?

K A:

Why and in which way the regime tried to prevent political work of Radić?

1. C
Assassination in the
parliament and its causes

Step 2 - G B
Students to be divided in four groups and sources to be
handed out to them.

Source 1

R

1920-1927

K

SHS

	1920	1923	1925	1927
Democratic Party	92	51	37	61
Peoples' Radical Party	91	108	143	112
Communist Party	58			
Croatian (People republican) Peasant Party	50*	70*	67	61
Independent Democrats			21	22
Other Croat Parties	6	1	0	2
Other parties	122	84	47	57

* Elected deputies of HRSS did not take part in the work of the parliament in 1920 and 1923.

A

,

/

C

Q

B:

Make a question to analyze the election results!

K

B:

What election results the Radic party had?

1. C

Assassination in the parliament and its causes

Step 2 - G C

Students to be divided in four groups and sources to be handed out to them.

Source 1 S R

H , 5 D 1927:

We have tied-up the corruption. Even if our Peasant party did nothing else before the world, except showing that our country has a face like you, that it is a country of honest people, that we hate thieves, it would still be a great thing. It could have cost me my life, and perhaps it will. I have received letters in which they tell me: I will kill you! They spoke in public: Pasic died, Radic should be killed. If we don't have our man for that, we will find a Croat."

*Newspaper "Dom", 19 January 1927.
"Dom" was a paper of Radic's party since 1904.*

Source 3

T J P -M , V
V , 17 J 1928
R P :

Yet, if you think someone is undermining the country from within, then your first duty was, and is, to kill on the same day Svetozar Pribicevic in Belgrade and Stjepan Radic in Zagreb."

Source 2 R C

There should be an organization of

The first, Adriatic-Danube area, that would include all central-west parts without Slovenia, but with Montenegro. The second area, Serb-Moravska (Central Serbia), third area South Serbia, and fourth area – Slovenia. Each region would control everything regarding economy, culture and social care. Belgrade would keep the legislation and executive power on the large scale, while all regulations (laws) that deal with life and cooperation would go down to the areas.

Hrvoje Matković: Povijest HSS-a, Naklada Pavičić, Zagreb, 1999, str.248. (Matković citira Radića prema listu Riječ, 134/13.VI. 1928.)

Source 4 S J S

In its long struggle for state independence, the Serbs got the real cult of state idea, and it was enough to say that federalism may question state unity and the Serbs would instantly be against it."

Slobodan Jovanovic, Jugoslovenska misao u prošlosti i budućnosti, Beograd 1939, str 3.

Q C:

1. Why was Radic receiving threatening letters?
2. What Radic proposed for re-composition of the country and why was it considered as undermining the state from within?

K C:

Whose interests Radic endangered with his critiques and proposals, and what kind of threats he got because of it?

1. C

Assassination in the parliament and its causes

Step 2 - G D

Students to be divided in four groups and sources to be handed out to them.

Source 1

J

"**Punisa Racic**: ... I state now before all of you that Serb interests, other than when there is a war, have never been more in danger than now ... (humming). And gentlemen, as a Serb and a Deputy, when I see the danger for my people and homeland, I openly say I will use other weapon that should protect the interests of Serbdom... (loud noise and protests among the opposition).

Svetozar Pribicevic: Do you want London to hear that you threaten with weapons in here?

Dr. Pernar: You robbed the Beys!

Punisa Racic (getting off the stand): Mr. Speaker, I ask you to punish him, or I shall (yelling and protests). Whoever tries to stand between me and Pernar will get killed! (great noise). In that moment he really went for the gun. Minister Vujicic who is sitting behind him in the ministerial bench grabs his hand in the attempt to prevent him from shooting. Obradovic jumped as well in the same moment, but Racic, physically extremely strong man, pushed Obradovic away and shots echoed in the room..."

Josip Horvat: *Politička povijest Hrvatske 2 str.342-343 (prema novinskom izvještaju)*

Source 2

"Mr. Racic was completely calm that day. There were no interventions from his lips... Late Pavle Racic was also very calm... Only Mr. Grandja and Mr. Pernar showed some temper that day, as they were very revolted with murder threats... The whole atmosphere was very charged. Everybody were sensing something bad was coming, but nobody thought that one of the biggest tragedies since the establishing of the country would happen so quickly."

Politika, no. 7236, 24 June 1928.

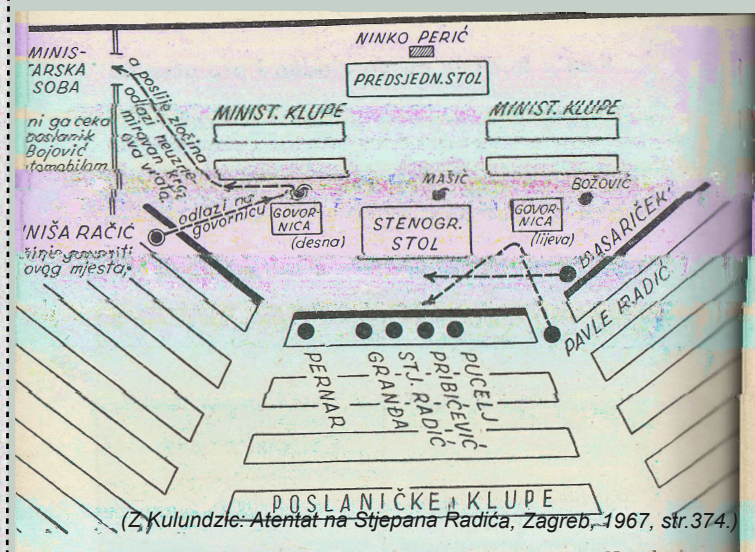
Source 3

Politika, no. 7232, 21 June 1928. on page 7, under the title **R** , gives the last sentence of Punisa Racic before he left the Assembly hall waving with gun in his hand. He cried: **L S ! L G S** .

Source 4

R

P . 7236 24 J 1928



Q

D:

1. What served to Punisa Racic as a cause for the assassination?
2. What was the description of the atmosphere in the Parliament just before the accident?
3. What do you think, was Racic moving during the speech from his seat to the stand planned in advance?

K

D:

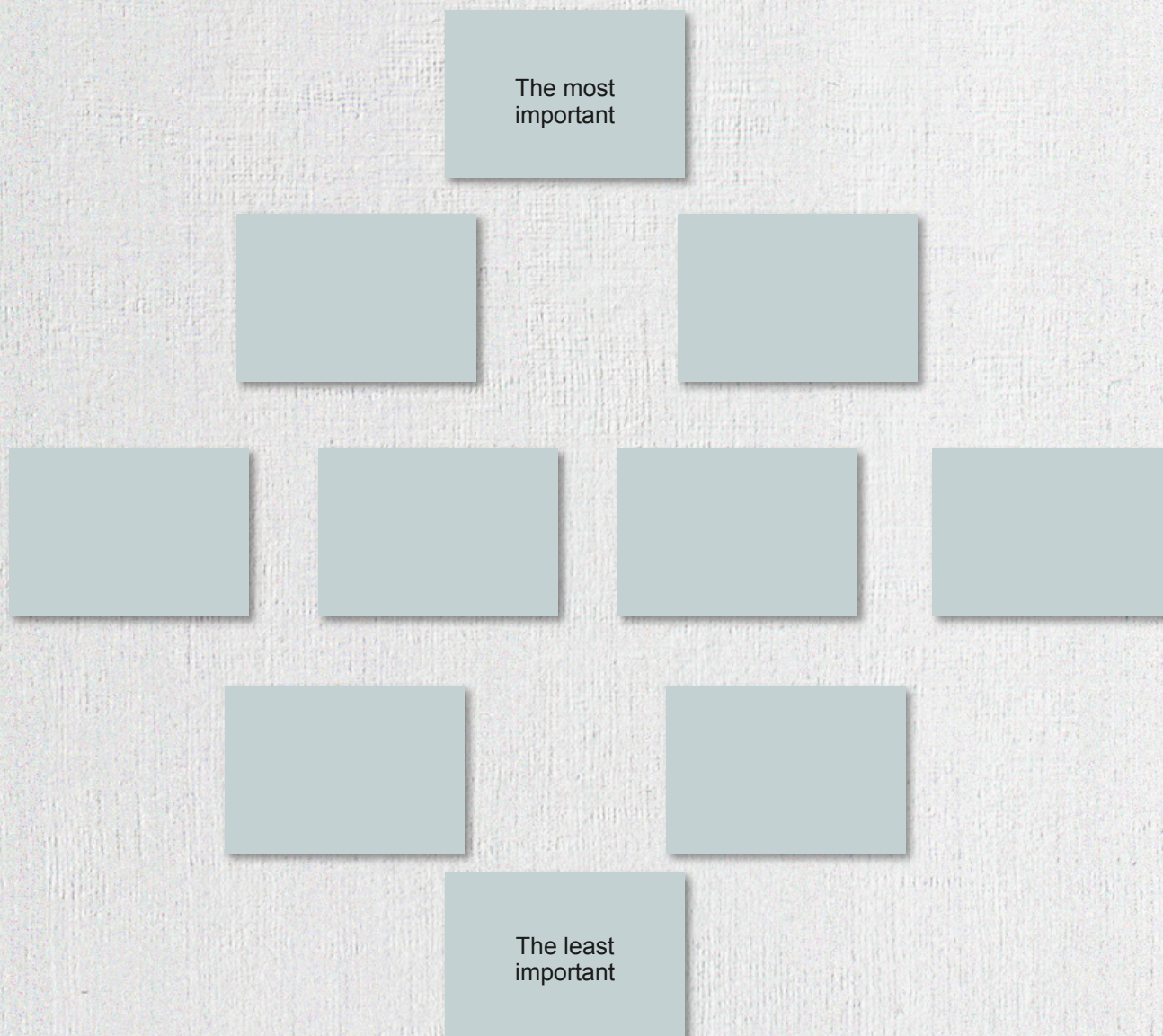
Can the event itself offer a conclusion about some of the causes for the assassination?

1. C
Assassination in the
parliament and its causes

After all groups finish their tasks, the teacher writes down on the board answers to key questions for each group. According to the answers, jointly make a list of 10 possible reasons for the assassination.

Students mark all the listed reasons separately on pieces of paper. Student's task: Order the possible causes/reasons in the 'diamond' according to the importance!

D



2. C Reactions to assassination

Students to be divided in 8 groups (roles) of 3-4 students, and hand them out the sources.

T : According to the 'roles' make a statement as a reaction to the assassination and death of Stjepan Radic

Group 1

M C P R

Justified anger of the whole Croat public over the murder of Croat people deputies in Belgrade parliament came to its full expression in yesterday's demonstrations in Zagreb, as well as in other parts of Croatia. Bitterness was infinite, so it was a real miracle there were no more serious consequences other than twenty injured during the demonstrations...

The article is taken from the paper of Croat Party of Right, 'Croat', in the column 'the Zagreb cronicle'.



http://dazg.chez.com/flashback_6.htm (25.05.2012).

Group 2

S D

Sekula Drljevic, a controversial historical person in Montenegro, in the parliamentary life of the kingdom of SHS he was one of the leaders of Montenegro federalist party, and in the elections of 1927 he was elected a deputy from the list of Croat Peasant Party. In his *Political records* under the date 20 June 1928, he wrote his perception of the assassination:

"From the ambush, according to premeditated plan, there was a crime of murder over the Leader and a Teacher of Croat people and his colleagues. The Leader died in the moment when the Croat people vested all its hopes in his victory, and he fell a victim of the criminals in the moment when the villains saw the possibility of victory over the Croats only in his death."

Dr. Sekula Drljević, Politička misao; izabrana djela, uvodna studija, izbor tekstova i dokumentarnih priloga Danilo Radojević, Podgorica 2007. godina, str.296.

Group 3

I M

Ivan Mestrovic, a famous artist who was engaged in politics prior to 1918 and was a member of the Yugoslav Board. "The day after the assassination I met the wife of Admiral Stankovic. She came up to me and told me, in French:

- These Serbs are not only primitives, but they are born villains and lying bastards.
- Then she told me what the local commander, general Trnokopovic, told her husband, after admiral Stankovic said it was a shame to shoot at MPs like that, and in the parliament building, as it can have not only internal but also external consequences. Instead of an answer, the general asked the admiral:
- And is Stipica (Stjepan Radic) dead?
- No, Stjepan Radic is not dead – said Stankovic – but, according to the reports, severely wounded, his nephew Pavle Radic and Djuro Basaricek are dead.
- Oh dear, oh dear, how badly he shot then – said Trnokopovic and added – the consequences will be that shooting will have to be repeated, should he live."

Ivan Meštrović: Uspomene na političke ljude i događaje, Zagreb 1993.

Group 4

S P

Svetozar Pribicevic, a Serb politician from Croatia and Radic's coalition partner, in his book 'King Alexander dictatorship' wrote about Punisa Racic:

"He was born in Montenegro, but he was raised in Serbia, where he spent all his life. Pasic used him for confidential actions in Macedonia and Albania. He was a comit in Macedonia and after the uniting he belonged to chetnik's organization... He joined the Radical party. He was noticed as a promoter of the idea of Great Serbia. He organized Radic's murder upon a higher order he received earlier..."

S.Pribićević: Diktatura kralja Aleksandra, Beograd 1952., fusnota, str.59,60.

2. C

Reactions to assassination

Students to be divided in 8 groups (roles) of 3-4 students, and hand them out the sources.

T : According to the 'roles' make a statement as a reaction to the assassination and death of Stjepan Radic

Group 5

C

Stjepan Radic funeral, 12 August 1928.



<http://www.daz.hr/web/cache/preview/fdb5568d642fbae8f7cae1c3049c69fa.jpg> 15 May 2012.

Group 7

F

- 23 June 1928, the Australian paper The Mail (from Adelaide) wrote about unrest in Zagreb after the assassination in the National Assembly, the police hour introduced in Zagreb because of that, but also...:

„There has been much ill-feeling between the Croats and Serbs in the kingdom of Yugo-Slavia. This led to disorder in Zagreb (capital of Croatia) when it became known that Mr. Stephen Raditch (Croatian leader and chief of the Peasants' Party) had been wounded and Mr. Paul Raditch (his nephew) had been killed by Mr. Ratchitch (another delegate) during a meeting of the National Skupshtina (Parliament).“

- The Manchester Guardian of 10 August 1928 reports on the death of Stjepan Radic.

The author critically speaks about the Balkan mentality where masses follow the leader considering Radic as a successful populist leader. He emphasized high tension between the Croats and the Serbs after the assassination, and concludes:

„The Croats demand Home Rule. With Raditch dead, they will demand it more than ever. ... Yugo – Slavia has now begun the darkest days in her all short history. No one can tell whether she will emerge as a healed or a broken nation.“

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/58553487> 20 May 2012.

Group 6

M S R P

“Meanwhile, in Belgrade there were practically no expressions of grief and the Croats assessed that the reaction to tragic events in Belgrade is completely inadequate. **G** ,

Such assessments did not contribute to calming down the situation. Governments' tolerance of 'Jedinstvo' brought no better results. 'Jedinstvo' was a paper of extreme radicals and in its first edition published a few days before the crime they advocated the 'removal' of Radic and Pribicevic.

Izveštaj britanskog diplomate H.W. Kennarda, Britanci o Kraljevini Jugoslaviji, uredio: Ž. Avramovski, Zagreb, 1986,

Group 8

S G K
SHS

The Release of new Government published at the Parliament session of 3 August 1928:

“The event of 20 June that deserves the hardest condemnation and took two very dear colleagues from us and wounded a few more must not be the reason to stop the legislative cooperation, which is so needed by our state. **T** ,

It is a particular injustice that the whole parliamentary groups, or even worse, the whole part of the nation, are accused without reason for an action they had nothing to do with, and which they condemn like the rest of civilized world. Such unapproved sharpening of relations can only be damaging.“

'Politika', no. 7276, 3 August 1928, page 1

According to their roles, students (one representative of each group) will present their opinion on the assassination and death of Stjepan Radic.

T should be answered through discussion:

What was the main reason for controversial reactions to the murder of Stjepan Radic?