Political crime and the truth of man: The Slovene case

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Abstract

Political crime is the problem of the socio-political implementation of non-democratic and inhuman violent means to obtain political power over the society. Revolutions and several kinds of terror have utilised such political crime to change the political order and have created numerous victims and societal disorder. Man is an inherently competitive being and prone to rivalry, and it is extremely difficult to convert him to one that cooperates with others. Modern science, technology and the consequently increasingly competitive way of life have led to the increasing exclusion and omission of many people from societal processes. For humanity, today there remains the difficult task of overcoming totalitarian racist, communist and other, for instance, terroristic and exclusivist residues, which are mere means of obtaining political power, and to instead endorse and encourage dialogical, inclusive, and humane thinking. Without deeper spiritual insights and readiness for cooperation, the number of victims of political crime will increase, even today when the world is more sensitive towards victims.

KEYWORDS: political crime, revolution, terror, genocide, victims, dialogue, reconciliation

Introduction

The aim of this article is to illustrate the broadening of political crime in the society of modernity. Usually the problem of the abnormal functioning of a society was the cause of the amplification of political crime in all facets of the life of a society. The customary standards of the societal and political life were suspended according to Machiavellian standards, as a modern modus of political activity, within which the means could be made sacred by the political aims (and gains). The development of the modern society after Machiavelli, whose work The Prince (2003) witnessed a new political course, resulted in modernity with its use of evermore violent means in politics. This development reached its peak in the totalitarian systems of the 20th century, but remains a salient problem of the current society, now in the grip of global economic and financial crisis, which is in reality a moral one. We can say that the totalitarianisms incorporated the instrumentalist view of humanity and embraced political crimes in the highest possible measure. The article deals with these processes of modernity, with specific attention given to the analysis of the

implementations of totalitarian methods by communists in Slovenia. Part I analyses these contents, grounds, and influences of political crime and shows it as a natural consequence of emphasising the modern scientific and competitive picture of man. The perfect, "clean", functionalistic, or untainted picture of humanity – man as a machine (Holbach 2004) – in modern ideological systems is a perfection of this scientific ideology, exploited by politicians for the broadening of political crime.

Man is a dialogical being, but the functionalist picture of man suspends this dialogical essence of man and makes him an easy object for manipulation by ideological systems. Such a process culminated in the totalitarian systems of the 20th century and persists in the technological and economically conditioned way of life of modern society. The (wo)men are involved in processes that dehumanise and humiliate them, because they are perceived merely as means of a system. They remain victims of the mechanisms behind these processes. This is a central claim made and original theoretical contribution of the article.

Part II is a case study of the political crimes performed by the communist regime in Slovenia and a comparison of it with other totalitarianisms, including the modern economic way of life, which excludes increasing numbers of people from societal processes and makes them merely a function of the economic and political processes of global society. This is the main and a highly complex source of present global crisis. A non-dialogical picture of humanity does not allow us to acknowledge that man needs the other, and it needs to take in account that inclusion, and not exclusion, is the proper path towards a complete human being and welfare of the (global) society. The contribution of this investigation is to show the fatal negative consequences of the violations of human rights, caused by the described systems of modernity, and indicate the necessity of dialogical society. This is contrasted with the case of totalitarians and an increasing problem of modern quasi-scientific technological society, which uses humanity as a mere means for the functioning of the system and degrades people to that function. This was always an excuse to commit crimes over individuals and groups, who were not in conformity with these systems. All totalitarian systems, including the communist regime in Slovenia, took power by political crime, and this inherently meant the exclusion of the so-called other from society. Unfortunately, the same is also the case – but in more sophisticated ways – in the modern global processes. Finally, we point to the necessity of reconciliation as a way toward a mutual and inclusive society.

Political crime

Ross claims that

> political crime is an important subject deserving investigation and expla-
> nation, and that a complete understanding can be achieved only when one
> appreciates the definitional issues, history, causes, and effects, is current,
> integrates cases, understands theory, and presents and evaluates relevant
> policy and practices (2003: 157).

Political crime[1] in a very broad sense includes the exploitation of powerless people in unordered societal conditions by diverse actions, such oppression, torture, and murder performed by official or self-proclaimed groups executing governing policies (governments) or by terror groups that strive to gain power by means of subordinating all citizens. The violation of human rights itself is usually not be the primary goal of political crime, but its main aim or aspiration is always to maintain existing political power and to exclude potential rivals from access to political power. Thus, the purpose of such actions in the eyes of those political actors are "to protect" or "to preserve" the societal order, but in many cases this actually means the total protection of the actual ruling class (nomenclature) and establishment of total political dominance. A recent case demonstrating this is the Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, claiming to protect Syria. Within this perspective, the totalitarianisms of 20th century were thus in part consequences of 'the dictated rather than discussed post-war [First World War] settlements' (Snyder 2012: 7).

How political crime can be performed depends upon the constitutional order of the state. Democratic states usually preserve the political order against attempts to bring disorder (e.g. by acts of terrorism) into normal functioning of such states. However, there are several other political crimes 'committed for the ideological purposes' (Hagan 1997: 3) and these crimes are 'inspired by both ideology and the desire for personal benefit' (ibid.: 26). As a result, political crime is a tremendously complex phenomenon. In a democratic structure, such crimes can be committed with the aim to destabilise political order and make possible that a group or an individual comes to power. For these purposes, totalitarian systems use special corps or secret police, established predominantly by authoritarian regimes to protect the leading political elites. The more a given regime is authoritarian, the stronger the role and the powers of secret police within the regime are: 'In authoritarian regimes the effectiveness of secret police in deterring illegitimate violence (crime in the streets) occurs through legitimate secret police such as Hitler's Gestapo, Stalin's OGPU (later KGB), and Haiti's Tonton Macoutes…' (Hagan 1997: 26). Hagan also points out that the most dramatic examples of crimes by government is the pervasive international violation of human rights: 'Authoritarian and totalitarian regimes of the Left and Right are the least tolerant to political dissent and are thus the biggest violators' (ibid.: 28). There are different kinds of these oppressions, like those performed by "death squads" (South America), "murder units" (South Africa), or massacres (China, 1990). Mass murders or genocides performed by Turks against Armenians (1915–1916), the genocides of the Soviets, Nazis, Pol Pot's Khmers, Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Srebrenica 1995), and Hutu in Rwanda (1994) were unimaginably inhuman and cruel.

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[1]Wikipedia defines the political crime in the following way 'In criminology, a political crime or political offence is an offence involving overt acts or omissions (where there is a duty to act), which prejudice the interests of the state, its government or the political system. It is to be distinguished from state crime when it is the states that break both their own criminal laws and public international law' (Wikipedia, s.v. Political crime). According to our understanding the problem involves both: the threat to state sovereignty (by revolutionary acts) and the breaking of the laws and human rights violations by totalitarian regimes.

All these are tragic parts of the history of 20th century. The killings were performed with highly sophisticated methods, the use of propaganda, and the equipment of modern technology. The common goal of political crime is to exclude the others who are an obstacle to the full political power of one political group. This was the case not only in totalitarian regimes but also with other groups attempting to come to political power using all methods of political crime: terror, killing, and lying to undermine democratic order in societies. The revolutions were the cruellest examples of modern political crimes because they attempted to achieve the anthropological conversion of humans.

Political crimes have been performed throughout history; they increased to mass dimensions within the competitive societies of modern times, which suspended the dialogical dimension of man and systematically caused exclusion of groups or certain individuals. In this sense, there are significant differences between democracy and dictatorship. Democracy and dictatorship are both systems to regulate the individual and societal life of humanity. Each developed techniques to control and to administer people:

> In the parliamentary democracy the rational attitude expresses itself through both discussion and vote on questions of legislation. What is good for the public weal is found by debate through a process of critical discussion that aims at casting light on the various aspects of a debated matter or measure. Parliament is supposed to present the substance of political reason… (Bramstedt 1945: 2).

> There is a general will and general reason, 'the essence of national reason' (ibid.).

> In dictatorship on the other hand, the executive is no longer subject to control by the legislature, nor is the judiciary independent. Legislature and executive are totally in the hands of a dictator and of the bodies appointed by him (ibid.).

There is no general consensus but the will of one or of a few preserving and implementing the general reason – the will of the dictator(s): 'The individual can only act as a tool of a privileged body, such as the Party or the Army, but seldom according to his own lights' (ibid.: 3).

After an introduction of the main posits of the modern competitive society, we will demonstrate how these processes of political crimes were implemented in totalitarian societies of 20th century and, in particular, in the case of Slovenia.

Societal exclusion as a sideway

According to predominating anthropological and sociological theories, man is a complex being; therefore, he cannot be fully analysed, i.e. the whole identity of his inner and outer life remains open yet can never be exhausted. Consequently, humanity should be understood as being mysterious. This represents a problem, for man as a being of reason, because he cannot accept himself as being inherently unknowable:

> Very important is our attitude towards the question: Is human being transcendent? … The awareness of transcendence questions is especially important in our age of outstanding, decided and [the] conspicuous dominance of the scientific form of consciousness (Žalec 2002: 118).

Without investigating the complex problems of transcendence in greater detail, we can say that the transcendence of man could be sustained by dialogical conditions. The complexity of man can be expressed only by way of symbols; the preeminent symbol is human language. In an open dialogue, partners in this dialogue are indispensable in implementing it and in reaching this symbolic stage, which preserves the openness of man, partnership and the inclusion of all. Such a partnership is a necessary condition to address the problem of the mystery of man and to move towards the mystery of a human person. However, man as a free being can also refuse to enter into dialogue and can suspend others, despite the fact that such rejection has negative consequences for him. A man can exclude or subordinate others by not hearing them and by not being sensitive to their needs. This is the case at the level of interpersonal relationships; on the level of society, such exclusion of one group by the other causes societal disorder and conflicts. If dialogical consensus among groups cannot be reached, preconditions for a revolution and consequently for political crime emerge, as the history of all revolutions and totalitarian regimes testifies (Hobsbawm 1996; Pipes 1995).

The total oppressions in the past were consequences of the exclusions of others who were victims of the usurpation of political power. In opposite to this, the right to express one's own opinion[2] is a ground for mutual societal exchange. In totalitarian societies, this right was reduced and limited only to selected parts or groups of the society, who did not allow others to express their feelings and needs. Given such societal exclusion, some groups or individuals are not allowed to participate in societal life. In such conditions, it is urgent to implement the ethical 'model of pluralistic universalism' (Strahovnik 2009: 214), which respects a person as a condition and a subsidiary part of the whole.

Consequently, the struggle for the truth (of humanity) is a very wearisome path towards a

> universal ethic based on sense of the commonness of human experience. That misunderstanding of man [man considered just from a partial, e.g. scientific point of view, which excludes other aspects] has generated the wrong kinds of tensions between the full acknowledgement of the plurality of peoples and their cultures and the legitimate hopes for universal ethics, and, connected with that, between ethical truth and cultural determination of ethical value (Gaita 2006: 284).

According to Gaita, it is therefore immensely important to realise that man is an imperfect being, a being that needs others and is ready to acknowledge that he has been completed by them. Gaita stresses that we have to deal with 'preciousness of each

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[2]'Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression…' Art. 19 of Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

individual human being' (2006: 5), but adds to this the thoughts of Peter Winch remarking that 'treating a person justly involves treating with seriousness his own conception of himself, his own commitments and cares, his own understanding of his situation and of what the situation demands of him' (Gaita 2006: 59). The consistent dialogical praxis in society, which includes the mutual respect of other, is the best way to preserve the democratic order and protect people from violations and possible crimes. The question arises of how to best obtain and preserve the true picture of humanity.

The "ideal man" and rivalry

Man is a being of reason, as the Greeks said, but his knowledge is limited, and this is the core problem. According to the Old Testament, a man's cognitive ambition is to 'be like God' (Gen 3:5). Because man is not the all-knowing God and his knowledge remains limited, the acknowledgment of this limitedness is a supposition for the truth of man. This is not primarily a logical question, but a moral one, i.e. the question of acknowledging his moral responsibility to others, which includes the will to share life with the other. The unwillingness to acknowledge this fundamental openness for the truth of human reality is the cause and an impediment to the knowledge of the authenticity of human beings and thus the real humanity (Sloterdijk 2010: 135 ff.). According to Sloterdijk, Greek term epistéme epitomises this openness of man for truths and confirms man's dialogical openness to the other and to the highest Good and to God. However, modern economic and technological processes put forward an impoverished picture of the "ideal man", a man of technical perfection, which diminishes his ability to be open for the other.

The man of modern times is understood as a settled and scientific man, stimulating, guiding and governing the world and himself by means of science. He perceives himself to be great and strong, empowered by science and technique, which are perceived as his "extended organs". Given the influences of scientific innovation, man understands himself as immensely powerful, and this self-perception motivates his faith that he would master and rule the whole world. However, historical and societal limitations did not allow the modern man to fulfil this ideal picture of himself. In her work The Origins of Totalitarianism (1951), Hannah Arendt analysed the history of the totalitarianisms of the 20th century as an usurpation of human rights because of the implementation of this (reduced) picture of scientific-technical man. All societal life in totalitarian states is organised in such a way that it serves only the leading nomenclature, i.e. only the chosen (specific) elite citizens. They usurp to themselves all political power, and in this sense there were no differences between Nazis, Fascists or Communists of the 20th century. All others are excluded and subverted, and are only means for the first and are handed over to their mercy or judgment. As Snyder noted:

> Arendt provided enduring portrait of the modern 'superfluous man', made to feel so by the crush of mass society, and then made so by totalitarian regimes capable to placing death within a story of progress and joy. It is Arendt's portrayal of the killing epoch that has endured: of people (victims and perpetrators alike) slowly losing their humanity, first in the anonymity of mass society, the in a concentration camp (2012: 380).

Snyder asserts that this deprivation of human status was an inhumane way to deal with victims: 'As one of Grossman's (1995: 204-6) characters exclaims, the key to both National Socialism and Stalinism was their ability to deprive groups of human beings or of their right to be regarded as human' (Snyder 2012: 386). According to Arendt and to Zygmunt Bauman (1989), the holocaust would not have been possible without all acquisitions of modernity. In totalitarian societies, only those with official political authentication and confirmation (i.e. those in line with the system itself) were granted the full status and accepted as true and real humans. All others, who differed in any respect, were excluded, demonised, and considered bad. The ideas of racism, nationalism, chosen classes and races, and of "better people" prevailed. Nietzsche was also challenged by these modern tendencies and saw the solution in a strong, powerful man who could strive in the modern, strong systems, overruling them as a so-called super-man. Whereas Nietzsche's point was about an individual, moral man, i.e. the liberated and autonomous man, the revolutions and totalitarian systems implemented this idea of an ideal man, removing "all irregularities" to obtain "clean" territories (as it was the case with Turks in relation to Armenians or Serbs and Croats in relation to each other and to Bosnians). In all these cases, the picture of ideal, clean (racial or class) man was cultivated. Others were not considered to be humans in the full sense of the word. These facts are quite well known but not sufficiently clarified; in many cases, the victims would find their satisfaction in those societies remains distant. A presupposition that only this "ideal and clean" man is the right one was taken as a reason in justifying political crimes over other people who were not in this group. To understand the complexness and robustness of processes of rivalry until modern times, let us examine Girard's contribution to this question.

Mimetic theory

One of the main contributions of Girard's mimetic theory consists in pointing out the "anthropological constancy" of rivalry and the "necessity" of the victims for the preservation of societies. According to it, the other and the weak were chosen to be victimised and declared as guilty for unfortunate conditions of society. Because of innocence, harmlessness or not being a danger for society, they were chosen as victims and thus functioned as peacemakers; as bearers of new relations within a society so that the society itself did not need to change, since its 'sins' were transferred on these innocent scapegoats. In contrast with the abovementioned scientific picture of modern man, René Girard (1989) resumed the basic Judaeo-Christian picture of man: every man is a limited being, there is an "original sin", due to which there are no purely good or purely bad individuals; all are involved in victimisation and thus guilty. There are no identifiable class enemies. It is not possible to exclude and not to see the breaches of human existence. Man is a dividuum, a divided being and thus an imperfect being. To obtain this consciousness means to convert (metanoia) and be related to the other as a completeness of oneself; one must be open for real relations to the other. Without this fundamental change of mind, which means to work on oneself, individual and societal reconciliation is not possible. Anybody can change his relations to others, but nobody can do it without acceptance of

the other. This change begins in the mind. If a man is not ready to change his mind, he will persist in the (faulty) habits and customs he already has.

As already mentioned, the Greek term epistéme testifies to a dialogical openness for truths and for the higher Good and/or God. However, modern processes brought to life an economically and technologically "ideal man", who could function perfectly, without any deficits. Yet imperfection and confusion are an unavoidable part of a man's life on Earth. This increases anger, dissatisfaction and unsolved tensions in individuals and in society, and brings about a search for scapegoats, for the weak, who should help to resolve "the mimetic crisis". The modern systems attempted to achieve the perfect status of man through political "standardisations" and the oppressions of individuals and groups. On one side, there are the "proper people", those that are "ours", on the other side the "improper" and "bad", who should be or are excluded. This caused several political crimes. The history of 20th century is full of such sad examples, beginning with Armenians, Jews, Gypsies, communists, anti-communists and others victims of such crimes from Nigeria to former Yugoslavia. The exclusion of many and the preference for the few led to escalation of societal tensions of unimagined dimension we witnessed in the history of 20th century, but those are still the (growing) problems of today's global society. The victims were (and still are) millions of poor people, starving and dying because of numerous diseases. The reason for this is changes in the global society that have caused the downfall of the traditional societal order yet provided no new rules or frameworks for the protection of individuals. This process began with the establishing of a new social class of workers, who were put on the edge of the society and whom the old classes would never truly accept as a part of society. This has caused social disturbances and revolutions. Such a state of affairs has continued in different forms to today. The number of victims of these processes is increasing all over the world, including after the fall of communist systems. The Girardian theory gives an answer to the tendencies to solve the societal rivalries on account of the increasing number of innocent victims in modern society.

Truth of man and victimisation

According to René Girard's later work, I See Satan Fall Like Lightning (2001), people presume that victims are necessary and because of this they systematically design frameworks to justify them. Despite this, we today express extensive (though many times merely rhetorical) care for victims, yet we cannot be proud of such expressions of care. The criminal history of the 20th century testifies that the readiness for cooperation and for reconciliation is far too minimal to resolve these complex problems of humankind. There exist new and remarkably subtle methods of victimising the innocent. We need only point to the billions of poor people condemned to starvation. After the fall and end of totalitarian regimes, new methods have appeared to victimise numerous groups and nations. We are witnessing masses of victims, and there are many political and media mechanisms to conceal these crimes. We can paraphrase Girard (2001) by saying that the old myths have been replaced by new (modern) ones – as is testified by the history of modern totalitarianisms – which are cultivated by global media decision-makers and

totalitarian tendencies in the economic world, supported by politicians (Kurz 2003). Numerous rivalries are taking place in this time of economic crisis, and the number of victims of this crisis of humanity is increasing, as Immel and Tränkel (2011) indicate. The consequence of this development is the exclusion of most people from the goods of this earth, who are these modern victims. Let us look at it from the economic point of view, in pure numbers: there are 10 million millionaires, who possess over 39 billion dollars. In contrast with this, 2.6 billion people are left with and have to share only 1.4 billion dollars (ibid.: 56).

One crucial point of Girard's theory is that we (humans) are not ready to acknowledge the whole truth of man. Instead of acknowledging the limitedness of ourselves, we are accusing others, usually those who are in no position to take revenge on us. The way to cover the truth is a myth, a violation of innocent as the way to solve the societal (mimetic) crisis. Despite the fact that today we are more open for the truth, the search for the truth presupposes a readiness for dialogue and an acknowledgement of limitedness of oneself and openness for other. As Girard (2001) sees it, prohibitions and religions are made to protect society from new outbursts of violence. Christianity, with its personal and dialogical origins, is a model for cooperation and for suspending rivalry and turning it into mutual understanding. This contrasts with the consumer society of modernity, in which enjoyment plays a crucial role. Girard especially points out the violent danger of sexuality, which has a decisive role in these processes: 'All this regulations serve to endow both sexuality and violence with the same centrifugal force. In many instances, the sacrificial deviations of sexuality and violence are virtually indistinguishable' (1979: 220).

The mimetic crisis of the society is a point of rivalry in which victims were offered. In the case of modernity, the crisis tends to be solved by total and long-term control over rivals. Political crime is obtaining new images and developing new, more fine-grained and subtle methods of control over society. The rapes of rivals' women are not only violence against them but at the same time a treading down of their dignity. They lose their own homes and property; perhaps they become pregnant and then expelled from their relatives' homes and out of their communities.

First, wartime gives men an opportunity to show their power over women, although otherwise men are dependent on women, who are actually more powerful (Creveld 2003). Second, warriors could perpetuate the dominance over the rivals through the raped women and conceived children, probably future slaves. Within such perspectives, these activities should take place collectively and ritually, so that they become a sacred value, i.e. in this sense, this is a key strategy of so-called sacred wares. It must happen in a sacred rite and as a public ceremony. A performance is perfect if a tormenter succeeds to persuade his victims to collaborate and to confess their guilt: 'The mimetic collaboration of victims with their executioners continues in Middle Ages and even into our time.… In our own times all forms of Stalinism find viperous victims who will confess far more than is asked of them' (Girard 1989: 64). Political crimes of modern totalitarianisms were apt to humiliate the people to suitable poses of obedience and to involve them to cooperate

and, to create such preconditions for political mass crimes, in which the "other" was removed. All these violent processes and rival activities of man need regulations and have ritual and sacred dimensions; through them, the old religious dimensions were replaced by ideological ones of the totalitarian systems of modernity or consumer society, which present themselves an aureole of sanctity and unavoidability; a destiny, which came upon the whole. The mythical form does not allow a rational (critical) discussion and thus shuts the door to the truth. All have to submit themselves the logic of this sacrosanct order, regardless of victims.

The Slovene case – an abnormal status

Ordinary people and experts equally agree that the communist societal status was an abnormal one. This is the case of all mimetic processes. The perpetrators of revolutionary methods can better carry out their crimes on innocent victims in such abnormal societal circumstances. The consequences of criminal methods and other negative sediments of totalitarian communist regimes are so deeply rooted in the souls of the people that they still preserve some such patterns of thinking and acting – even long after the formal downfall of the system. The change of minds is extremely difficult, because the mentioned anthropological turn was carried out; people cannot realise (or even imagine) in what kind of world they have lived: the normal traditional virtues and values were replaced by anti-virtues and values, such as killing, lying, or stealing. The Soviet revolutionary methods of totalitarian oppression and subordination were replicated in Slovenia and in other communist revolutionary regimes. The communist oppression overflowed all aspects of the life of society. The leading ideologist of Slovene revolution, Edvard Kardelj, wrote the following to the head of Yugoslav communists Tito about the methods of the so called Security-intelligence-service (Varnostno-obveščevalna služba; VOS) during World War II:

> almost every day denunciators and loyal slaves of occupiers, etc. are going down.… No police protection can save those, who are targeted by VOS. They fear VOS like the devil, in it is exactly this – besides National Safeguard (Narodna zaščita) and partisans – that establishes Liberation Front (OF) as genuine authority (Ferenc 1962: 325–6).

After World War I, Slovenes were a part of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. Communists increased their societal actions in the multinational Yugoslav society, burdened by unsolved inter-national and social problems. The Soviet Union presented to them a model of communist methods for taking over power in an uncertain social environment. In Moscow, they were trained to spread terror and to implement those methods at home. Circumstances like those in Russia during and after World War I appeared in Slovenia during World War II. Historians (Pipes 1995; Hobsbawm 1996) agree that the revolution in Russia could not have occurred without World War I. The same applies in the case of occupied Slovenia after 1941.

Slovenia was occupied by three totalitarian regimes. After World War I, Fascist Italians took one third of the territory the Slovenes lived on, and Fascism's crimes began in the early 1930s. In 1941, the Italians, Germans and Hungarians occupied Yugoslavia

and thus all Slovene regions. The Fascist and Nazi terror began immediately. The Nazis removed and deported many intellectuals: teachers, priests, mayors, etc. Moreover, the Fascists began to imprison Slovene activists who were resisting Italianisation.

At first, immediately after the Nazis' occupation, Slovene communists cooperated with their occupiers (because of Molotov-Ribbentrop pact in 1940), but after Hitler attacked the Soviet Union they started a revolution. Afterwards, they – together with "left" Christian and liberal groups – slowly began to establish The Slovene Liberation Front (Osvobodilna fronta), which was a Trojan horse to carry out the revolution in Slovenia. In the part of Slovenia under the Italian Fascist authority, the communists began with revolutionary oppression over Slovenes. Several democrats, especially Christians were executed. As a reprisal for such Communist attacks, the Italian Fascist occupiers killed several Slovene activists as hostages. Some of them were denounced by the Communists. In a similar way, Christians and democratic members of the Liberation Front faced the threat of execution if they did not submit themselves to the Communist power. Priest Jože Oražem stated on the conference of priests in Novo Mesto that:

> the members of the Liberation Front were propagating mistaken principles and pursuing godless ideas.… If these usurpers endanger people's freedoms, limit their movement … then a physical self-defence against them [the communists] is permitted … as well as to organised defence of the villages and neighbourhoods from unjust tyrants (Archdiocese archives 1942: F 37).

At the deanery conferences of Ljubljana and Trebnje, priests reported numerous killings of priests and religious people and stated:

> Every shepherd of souls is doing his best, mostly by himself or in within a decidedly limited circle. There is no community any more. Even both sadly assassinated priests[3] couldn't be buried properly; they still lie in the forest in a grave dug out by themselves (Archdiocese archives 1943: F 37).

Victims of terror in Slovenia

The Slovene communists imported the revolutionary methods and implemented them in the wartime period of 1941–1945 and afterwards. The propaganda machinery worked according to Lenin's directive: 'In my opinion it is necessary to use the capital punishment for all phases of plotting' (Löw 1999: 241). Industrial development introduced substantial disproportions in the society, divided it and prepared grounds for revolutions. Workers were the bearers of the "modern development", but they received the least of its benefits while peasants lost their basis for survival.

After the war, the "real power" of a state of terror was established throughout societal life. This was a stage for political crime. Nobody was safe or free. All people were to come under the control of the Communist Party and its secret police. The Yugoslav, so-

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[3] Parish priest Franc Nahtigal in chaplain Franc Cvar from Šentrupert na Dolenjskem have been forcefully taken away and murdered on June 18th 1942.

called social self-government socialism was actually a deception, because the decisions in the society were controlled and the details planned by the leading communist class. Consequently, the system needed a vast number of co-operators of secret police to control all relevant participants of the social processes. About a half of the total population was involved in this total control system (the full data is difficult to obtain, because some archives were destroyed or are inaccessible; Wikipedia, s.v. Udba.net).

Special attention was given to the Roman Catholic Church as a prime societal enemy.[4] Among Christians, the Christian socialists were also specially persecuted, since they were initially the co-organisers of the Liberation Front together with Communists. Because obedience among Slovenes was at the outset trained into them by the Catholic Church and Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, the Communists had a much easier task in subordinating Slovenes in these unnatural circumstances. It was possible to impose and sustain totalitarian order in Slovenia and in other similar countries because of obedient people, as Hannah Arendt (1951) and Zygmunt Bauman (1989) have emphasised.

The communists continued to terrorise people. The final number of victims of political crime in the occupied Slovenia during the World War II when revolution was carried out is not yet established. During the war, there were several thousand civilians killed or executed, some of whom were killed with the cooperation of all three totalitarian powers:

> In all this time, Nazi repressive authorities shot about 3,500 hostages, approximately 7,500 people were killed by military and police units during the cleansing and reprisals, about 2,000 died in exile, and more than 8,000 in concentration camps. The Nazis were directly responsible for the deaths of at least 32,000 people on present Slovene territory (Mlakar 2010: 124).

In addition to these Nazi victims, there were mobilised Slovene soldiers of the Wehrmacht, out of which about 10,000 died on Germans fronts across Europe and in North Africa' (ibid.).

Moreover, there were several victims of other nationalities (Jews, etc.) Many of the victims of Nazi and fascist terror were denounced by the Communists. The latter killed many Slovenes during the war as well; most of their Slovene victims were killed after the war and are listed below. These victims were Slovenes who opposed communism. After the war, members of the German-collaborating Home Guard units (Domobranci) – some of them together with their families – and other civilians were handed over by British army forces in Austria to Yugoslav communists. About 15,000 of these soldiers were killed in 1945 and buried in mass graves around Maribor, Celje, Kočevje, and Škofja Loka. In the following years, several thousand civilians were also killed in these and other places. More than 7,000 Germans living in Slovenia from before the war were expelled to Austria; their property was nationalised. More than 20,000 Slovenes went in exile: to

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[4] Many priests were killed after the war as a result of show trial processes. Bishop Anton Vovk was attacked on a train on a journey to Novo Mesto in January 20th 1952; gasoline was poured over him, and he was set alight. He survived, but the attack left serious consequences for his health.

Austria, Argentina, Canada, the USA and other countries. The peasants and other land owners were expropriated, many of them imprisoned, some killed. In the territory of Slovenia, members of other national groups, German-collaborating soldiers and civilians – Croats, Serbs, Albanians, Russians, Germans, Hungarians etc. – were killed and thrown in mass graves. In Slovenia, there are nearly 1,000 mass graves left from that period, and many of them have still not been investigated. Over 100,000 people are buried in them (cf. Hančič & Podberšič 2010: 48–62). In addition, the usual terror scenes were promulgated: the people lived in constant fear for their lives; the future under communism was uncertain (Snyder 2012: 10 ff.). All people had to submit themselves under the political terror and pressure of the totalitarian dictatorship.

These perturbations of modernity, generating so many victims in Slovenia and in other places of the world could not have happened without the modern capitalistic way of life and general development of modern science and technology. They stimulated the modern system's thinking and tendencies to subordinate people to perform the societal changes on account of the most poor, who were the victims and have to bear the heaviest part of these changes. To do this, the revolutionary circumstances had to be established, and the revolutionists were well trained to do just that; therefore, modern times are the times of revolutions (Hobsbawm 1996). Most of the revolutionary states were facing societal disorder and the revolutionary terrorist's attacks established a culture of fear and pushed society into lawless state and anarchy. In all revolutionary societies the established values were replaced by violent mechanisms, so that the revolutionary government was unable to bring peaceful solutions, as in Russia after 1900 and then 1917. Pipes (1995) analyses this and shows such tensions in the Tsarist Russia, characterised by a general hostility or even hate and the lack of readiness of different societal groups to cooperate. The first revolutionary acts were in this way a logical consequence of this disorder and then provided nourishment for de facto never-ending revolution. Snyder (2012) shows the parallels between Nazi and Soviet terror against national and class enemies and subjugated peoples. Grossmann (1995) states that this period of modern revolutions, perturbations in a moment caused the destruction of all that humanity had cultivated, caressed and carefully constructed over countless millennia.

Victims of modern terror

This period of crisis and social revolutions of modernity still persists. There are modern slaves in new "democratic concentrations camps", not only in Guantanamo but in several other places in the world. The people imprisoned there do not have the freedom of movement. There are those who are sexually abused and subjected to other kinds of slavery (Kurz 2003: 180 ff.; Cacho 2011). The victim has become a phenomenon of global dimensions: from modern slaves at the beginning of the modern times, to workers, women and children as excluded classes of society. Today, these processes culminate in the status of global workers. The new political crimes are much more sophisticated. Many people are victims of the luxuries of the modern consumer society: organised trade of modern slaves (for instance women and children for prostitution), wars and drugs (Cacho 2011).

The modern victim is entangled in the wealth of modern production system, which also produces masses of them. Political terror is still implemented over Palestinians, Tibetans or people inhabiting the Nuba Mountains in Sudan, and other peoples in different parts of Africa etc.; all these today remain open problems. There are many signs that Christians in several Islamic countries are targets of attacks because unsolved socio-political problems, mostly originating from clashes of the societies with (so-called) modernity.

The problem has global dimensions. The (sometimes conscious) indolence of leaders and institutions of society (governments, aristocracy, the new class of capitalists, churches) causes revolts of poorer classes, peasants and workers, whose position is becoming increasingly unbearable. Today, these processes culminate in the status of global workers (or better people around the globe without any means for survival) and other parts of society and are among causes for the problem of terrorism. Increasing numbers of people are victims of these processes; such conditions are inhumane because they cause an increasing number of victims of modern consumer society: the majority of poor global masses, but especially starving people, children and (young) women exploited for prostitution, slave work, wars and drug production and trafficking. Such an unnatural status of society is the most deeply rooted and influential cause of the financial crisis. All these societal problems cause exploitation and crime (trafficking with people, organised prostitution, trade of arms and un-transparent financial streams).

The rival relations among individuals and groups tend towards exclusion and cause an increasing number of victims. The new myths of 'Progress' and the 'Global Market' hinder the cooperation and inclusion, and establish 'intrinsic hunting of people', 'democratic concentration camp' as 'migrant's oases', and 'zones of racism' (Kurz 2003: 202 ff.) All this is an excuse for establishing new victims, who are not accepted as human partners. The terrorist status of modern global society with different revolutionary and extraordinary global circumstances represents the preservation of the rival modern methods and is the cause of the masses of victims of modern global world. Without cooperation, mutual understanding and implementations of dialogue, no future for the global world is possible. The earth is a common place for all people, and we have to secure to them the possibility to take part in global processes and be included in the common humanity. These means that, in the Girardian sense, we have to take care that none of us will be a victim of these processes, but could instead benefit from them.

The (difficult) way of reconciliation

The way to reconciliation and the halting of victimisation is possible, because people have predispositions for good, but it is extremely difficult and possible only via the cultivation of dialogue (Ricoeur 2004: 491) and with the will for truth. Ricoeur observes that in the 'ultimate act of trust there is no recourse but to assume an ultimate paradox proposed by the Religions of Book' and which Ricoeur finds 'inscribed in the Abrahamic memory' (2004: 490).

In order to choose this way of reconciliation, we need to implement normative and ethical guidelines for the world policy (Küng & Senghaas 2003). A "consequent illumination" is necessary, which means deepening of the personal and societal (spiritual)

life and cultivation of human rights. This is a way to protect "powerless" people, to avoid their humiliation and to secure everywhere the respect of human dignity and the conditions to develop humanity of everybody. Küng and Senghaas (2003) are convinced that education systems and media have a pivotal role in the implementation of human rights in the consciousness of societies. The politicians and other influential people have a duty to genuinely consider which frameworks we should establish to overcome the consequences of the genocide of Armenians, the holocaust of Jews and other nations and groups, and eliminations of "class enemies". In Slovenia and everywhere else, the process of reconciliation is a long and difficult process, which presupposes the conversion of the mind and establishing a readiness to cooperate. The logic of revolution and of crime, based upon lies, oppression and exclusion, should be replaced by the search for truth, freedom, cooperation. The latter are proper values, but in order to implement them we need steady willingness for dialogue at all levels of society and in all individuals.

There is a need for spiritual metanoia (conversion), which is a religious category; we need to combine mystics and politics. Mysticism is, according to Leonardo Boff (2011: 68 ff.), the awareness that we all are children of God, who is our common father. This enables us to take all people as our brothers and sisters, not merely rivals. We also need readiness for political dialogue to work that way, which includes empathy for others and awareness of our interdependence. This endeavour is exceedingly difficult without any faith to see the reality deeper and to limit him/herself in order to build the open society, as Karl Popper (2003/1945) stressed. Undergirding human rights is a shared endeavour for humanity. It is impossible that only some people are bearers of the world's salvation. If we have faith in God, we have deeper reasons to see the truth and to choose the path of reconciliation. This implies an open- mindedness and readiness to dialogue in which different worldviews and religious faith are ready to exchange their point of view to come to a deeper understanding of common reality.

Raimond Gaita speaks about the "love for truth" (2006): 'The deepest values of the life of the mind cannot be taught: they can only be shown, but, of course, only to those who have eyes to see' (Gaita 2006: 231). These eyes are the eyes of the heart. Mahatma Gandhi (1987: 134 ff.; 155 ff.) stressed this in the context of the importance of the Christian teaching of Beatitudes. He actually worked out a practical synthesis of Indian doctrines of non-violence and Gospel's Sermon on the Mount (Beatitudes) of the New Testament. The Beatitudes are a forgotten chapter of Christian tradition. In short, the Spirit of Christ is a spirit of pure heart, of truth and justice, of non-possession and non-violence. There is no alternative to metanoia, to any conversion of the mind, even when it could be grounded on different religious or worldview conceptions, if we want to make changes in the crisis of this world. These changes imply the changes of mind and the readiness to meet the other in an empathic and dialogic way. Despite this seeming to be pure idealism, there are no other possible ways for solving the aforementioned problems. Nevertheless, there are many people ready to move in this way of change, in the direction of development of the world towards humanity. Vojko Strahovnik suggests 'a model of global ethics' – in a form worked out by Robert Audi (2007) – as the way to achieve this change:

Audi combines (moral) virtue theories, Kantian ethics and utilitarianism and supplements them with moral intuitionism. Virtue theories focus on 'being a good person', developing virtues that constitute good life and happiness, and subsequently try to work out what the conduct must be like in relation to that kind of virtuous person. Kantian ethics focuses more on rules or a moral law one must follow in order to pursue the right thing. Respect and dignity of a person are important here. Utilitarianism is also a rule-based moral theory, but one which evaluates acts in relation to their consequences, especially regarding well-being, happiness and reducing suffering of persons and community as a whole (Strahovnik 2009: 213).

Christianity has worked out a concept of dignity of the human person through the discussions about the personality of Jesus Christ at the first Christian councils. The Christian idea of the person as grounded in God has dominated through the history of Christian world and influenced the modern conception of a human being as a person with his dignity and rights. This is the most influential tradition in the last two thousand years. It is a form of transcendent personalism: 'Transcendent personalism provides good reasons to tolerate many other and different views' (Žalec 2011: 113).

Respectful behaviour needs profound sources. The conversion to dialogue and to partnership is the most important "change of mind", which opens the way for dialogue to become a decisive motive of humans. Thus, respect of the Charter of Human Rights and practicing of the universal morality is possible only by supposition of orthos logos (the right reason). The metanoia (conversion) as a Christian universalistic term is not applicable in the present secular society, which thinks in racial categories (Ocvirk 2012). To make a decision for non-violent behaviour towards others and to fully respect the rights of every living being, man needs faith and hope. This faith is grounded on the supposition of a deeper insight into reality, which is usually understood as a religious act, known in different forms in several religious and other traditions.

If in the past (before modern times) there were religiously founded rules and rites to secure the societal order and to prevent the escalations of violence, this is no longer the case and it is necessary to invent new rules, probably grounded on human rights.

Today, the individual is lost in the open global world, and this groundlessness makes him vulnerable for political and other manipulations, which can lead to political crimes, performed by individuals, groups, nomenclatures or state's oligarchies. This new socio-political order – co-created by mass media – does not provide an individual with an autonomous response to this complex situation. Because of this, an individual is the victim of these processes. Post-modern man is increasingly lost in the global world, a world with weak personal ties that are unable to properly shape his behaviour. A Nietzschean ideal of man could and should be universalised in the sense that all people are invited to realise the moral ideal of man. However, this is not a man of technology, science, political (totalitarian) or consumer systems, but a humane man. Such a solution is not easy to reach. There is no 'hyper-policy' (Zimmermann 2008: 157) as an instrument of regulating this situation. This means that there is no all-pervading formula to reach the truly human social order. The only possible way to reach it is the "struggle" for dialogue,

which means the interpersonal communication (in truth and love) between people and between man and God.

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Povzetek

Politično hudodelstvo je problem socialno-politične uvedbe ne-demokratičnih in nehumanih nasilnih sredstev, da bi dosegli politično moč nad družbo. Revolucije in različne oblike terorja so s takšnim političnim hudodelstvom spremenile politični red in povzročile številne žrtve in družbeni nered. Človek je tekmec in težko ga je spreobrniti k temu, da bi sodeloval z drugimi. Moderna znanost, tehnika in posledično rast tekmovalnega načina življenja so vedno bolj vodile do izključevanj in izključitve številnih ljudi iz družbenih procesov. Težka naloga človeštva je zdaj preseči totalitarne rasistične, komunistične in druge npr. teroristične in izključevalne usedline oziroma stranpoti sodobnega mišljenja ter podpirati oziroma sprejeti dialoško in vključevalno razmišljanje. Brez globljih duhovnih uvidov in pripravljenosti za sodelovanje se bo tudi v sodobnem, za žrtve bolj občutljivem svetu število žrtev političnega hudodelstva le še povečevalo.

KLJUČNE BESEDE: politično hudodelstvo, revolucija, teror, genocid, žrtve, dialog, sprava

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