

(Post)modern state in a criminological perspective

Zoran Kanduč, LL.D., Institute of Criminology at the Faculty of Law, Poljanski nasip 2, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia

The state is an organisation (a complex of institutions) that enjoys a very bad reputation today, due to widespread, deeply rooted and well known phenomena such as corruption, clientelism, privatisation, "feudalisation" of public resources and functions, the manipulation of people by the means of public relations services and the mass media, non-transparent (non)adoption of crucial decisions/measures and a great class bias (manifested on the one hand by a generous inclination, support and assistance to rich/privileged groups, and on the other hand, by increasing pressures on actual and potential providers of manpower by political and legal means, through control of the market and by means of ideological propaganda). An important reason for the low status of state (legal and political) structures is also undoubtedly a fear of seeing the return of "absolute evil" (Badiou), i.e., an authoritative or "totalitarian" state, the threat par excellence to "human rights". This threat has given rise to appeals (by liberals as well as by conservatives) for the "(self)limitation" of the state (or at least appeals not to interfere with the main social processes) and to focus rather on the micro-management of risks (and abstain from radical interventions in the structural epicentres of actual and "symbolic" violence). An a priori resistance to virtually all authority, even democratic collective authority, has paradoxical, even terrifying repercussions, above a grotesque tolerance toward capitalist totalitarianism *stricto sensu*, i.e., toward a socioeconomic system which aims - and unfortunately very successfully! - at the subordination ("penetration") of the entire individual's personality (all his working and consumer potentials), starting in early childhood. The results of such a cynical and fatalistic attitude are evident: a permanent omni-crisis situation of the capitalist economy, social polarisation, fragmentation and atomisation, chronic insecurity and instability, escalation of criminal and structural (systemic and institutional) violence, a painful degeneration of culture, fanatic competition for consumer and hedonist status and identity symbols, supposed to distinguish the narcissist "elite" from the "flock" (i.e., from socially insignificant, inferior losers in a feverish, uncompromising and never-ending individualist and competing "war of all against all").

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