

Social evil threatens the integral development of the human person and of the human society

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This paper discusses social evil as one type of various forms of evil. That is, the Social Doctrine of the Catholic Church offers much scope for theological reflection on evil as a social phenomenon. It provides a socio-ethical perspective within which we can reflect on the reality of evil and its manifestations in the human society. The first part discusses the phenomenon of social evil and a plausible description of its essence in the context of deprivation and threats it poses to the integral human development in society. The second part points out the specific forms of social evil in the present day that threaten human dignity and prevent »full development of the whole man and of all men« (Sollicitudo rei socialis, no. 38; Populorum progressio, no. 42). Certain forms of social evil are increasingly multiplying and becoming a serious obstacle to the integral development of the human person and of the human society. Finally, the question of human freedom arises that reaches its full realization in the choice of good, which confirms the quality of existence. As true human existence cannot be thought of without its spiritual dimension that opens towards the Absolut, the path towards the full development of the whole person, of each individual and of the human society depends on the urgent need for value options.

Keywords: social evil, Catholic social teaching, integral human development, human society, values.

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Introduction

This paper addresses and discusses social evil, one type among various types of evil that exist.¹ Although the phenomenon as such is not unknown in scholarly discussions and there are various approaches and interpretations of it within sociological, psychological, culturological and other aspects, a more thorough discussion on social evil is lacking.

Recent Catholic theology has associated the term with Catholic social teaching, but there »has been little extended theological reflection on the nature and origins of evil as a social phenomenon.«² However, Catholic social teaching offers a scope for theological reflection on social evil. The Catholic Church has established systematic discussions about »the social issue« starting with the work of Pope Leo XIII and initiated the development of its social teaching which allows it to lead the way in comprehensive treatment of the issue among diverse ecclesiastical, religious and secular institutions. Although the matter of social evil cannot be equated with the social issue itself, within the treatment of the social issue there has also been an established tradition of »identifying and condemning«³ various types of evil(s).

The development of the Catholic social teaching after the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), especially by Pope Benedict XVI (2005-2013) and Pope Francis (2013) indicates that there are numerous obstacles to the integral development of every human person and the whole human community, and these very obstacles represent various forms of social evil. The intention of this paper is to contribute to the deepening of the topic of social evil from the theological socio-ethical perspective within which we can reflect on the reality of evil and its manifestations in the human society.

1. Social evil

Within Catholic tradition it is possible to comprehend the phenomenon of social evil and the issue of evil in general only in relation to good. To understand good, that is, to define and name good, becomes a necessary condition for understanding evil as that which takes away from good.⁴

¹ This paper is the basis of the presentation given at the *Societas Ethica's* 54th Annual Conference. More information about the Conference and presentations in: Silvija MIGLES, *Societas Ethica 2017. Giving an Account of Evil/Das Böse Verantworten (Obračun sa zlom)*. »Thessalia« Conference Center, Melissatika Volos, Grčka, 24.-27. kolovoza 2017., *Bogoslovska smotra*, 87 (2017) 3, 691-696; https://hrcak.srce.hr/index.php?show=clanak&id_clanak_jezik=280806.

² Neil VANEY, *Evil, Social*, in: Judith A. Dwyer (ed.), *The New Dictionary of Catholic Social Thought*, Collegeville, Minnesota, The Liturgical Press, 1994, 366.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Cf. Dennis Q. McINERNEY, *Evil*, in: Michael L. Coulter et al. (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Catholic Social Thought, Social Science, and Social Policy*, Lanham, Maryland, The Scarecrow Press, 2007, 382-383.

Francesco Viola, a highly regarded Italian emeritus professor of Theory of law, social and political philosophy, provides a description of social evil in his work where he questions the role of legislation in the battle against social evil.⁵ His paper represents a great contribution to discussions about social evil.

Viola describes social evil on the basis of its origin, structure and effects. An example of social evil which is defined on the basis of its origin is social inequality. Organized crime is an example of evil which is social in its structure. The social character of evil is most evident in the effects or influences which it has on the social and societal life, in the destructive consequences that affect concrete people in large numbers. Viola points out that the quantitative determinant is not as relevant as the index of the detriment it represents to the fundamental determinants of the life in communities and in society. The concept of social evil presupposes good of life in society to particular goods of individuals and it is not accepted by everyone, which allows for the possibility of conflict between common good and private life. Furthermore, Viola gives three possible definitions and understanding of social evil which depends on the concept of the relation between the individual and the society: 1. absorption of an individual in society (social evil as a prototype of human/moral evil); 2. instrumentalization of social life for particular needs (social evil corresponds with poor performance of social institutions); 3. fulfillment of every individual life requires common good/common goods that can only be achieved through social life (social evil as integral part of moral evil).⁶

The outlined description is a great starting point for a theological socio-ethical discussion on social evil within the perspective of the realization of the good of social life. Integral human development in society is a comprehensive and original concept through which the Catholic Church contributes to the understanding of the quality of human and all other existence, which is realised through those goods which truly develop and perfect a human being. Among essential human needs there is also the human longing for fulfilment of that true good, that is, for the development of those lifestyles which will lead to its realization in togetherness with all other human beings. »But he is also capable of evil« (*Centesimus annus*, no. 25); either as an individual, or as a member of a group (on the level of communities, structures) one is capable of destroying and impeding true development of a neighbour and community. Social evil is therefore positioned in the context of deprivation and harm that it can cause to the integral human development in society because it perverts and destroys integral development of the human as a person, both in his private and public life. In other words, it is possible to detect social evil because there

⁵ Cf. Francesco VIOLA, La lotta del diritto contro i mali della società, in: V. POSSENTI et alii, *Seconda Navigazione. Annuario di Filosofia 1999*, Bene, male, libertà, sv. 1, Milano, Leonardo Mondadori, 1999, 197-217; http://www1.unipa.it/viola/Lotta_del_diritto.pdf (25.04.2018).

⁶ *Ibid*, 199-200.

is a common understanding of what is good for human life in its social and societal dimension and the essential category is »the integral development of the human person and of the human society«.

In the Catholic social teaching the concept of the integral human development in society has been developed since the time of Pope John XXIII. It includes the call »for respect for the full richness of social life«⁷. That means that the integral human development in society cannot be reduced »to mere economic growth. In order to be authentic, it must be complete: integral, that is, it has to promote the good of every person and of the whole person« (*Populorum progressio*, no. 14). According to Pope John Paul II, the question of the authentic and integral human development »is not only a question of raising all peoples to the level currently enjoyed by the richest countries, but rather of building up a more decent life through united labour, of concretely enhancing every individual's dignity and creativity, as well as his capacity to respond to his personal vocation, and thus to God's call« (*Centesimus annus*, no. 29).

The fundamental dimension of the good in human society is represented by the quality of being, both in its ontological-transcendental dimension, and in its moral dimension which strives to confirm the existence, its enrichment and design – with the aim of leading a happy life. The moral good of social life is represented by an active endorsement and realization of fundamental natural goods and integral human development. It is achieved through mutuality of relationships and supportive actions which lead to equal opportunities for fulfilment and development.⁸

In its social teaching the Catholic Church does not accord the right to a 'more human' existence to individuals or individual groups, it stands for the good of every person, the whole person and whole human communities. It is not committed to the good of Catholics, Christians or believers, it wants and seeks the good for every human person. The originality of the development theory as it is developed in the Catholic Church is in tendency for spiritual and

⁷ UNITED STATES CATHOLIC BISHOPS, *Economic justice for all. Pastoral Letter on Catholic Social Teaching and the U.S. Economy* (1986), no. 99, http://www.usccb.org/upload/economic_justice_for_all.pdf (25.04.2018).

⁸ The central structure of the concept of the integral human development as considered in Catholic social teaching is very concisely and completely described by Benedict XVI: »the decisive issue is the overall moral tenor of society. If there is a lack of respect for the right to life and to a natural death, if human conception, gestation and birth are made artificial, if human embryos are sacrificed to research, the conscience of society ends up losing the concept of human ecology and, along with it, that of environmental ecology. It is contradictory to insist that future generations respect the natural environment when our educational systems and laws do not help them to respect themselves. The book of nature is one and indivisible: it takes in not only the environment but also life, sexuality, marriage, the family, social relations: in a word, integral human development« (*Caritas in veritate*, no. 51).

human perfection of the life in the human community (*Centesimus annus*, no. 29).⁹

Theological socio-ethical reflection on »the nature and the origins of evil as a social phenomenon«¹⁰ has its foundation in the traditional differentiation between physical and human (moral) evil where moral evil should also be observed in the social dimension of human existence. Human person as a social being by its nature tends to live and maintain life within diverse forms of human communities. Life in community represents one of the fundamental goods of human development and justice represents a general law of preservation and advocacy of all forms of relationships in human community. As the integral human development depends on the integration of the individual and the social element, any discussion on social evil should be taken only with the understanding of the interdependence of these two elements. Namely, the description of social evil implies a relationship between individual life and social life whose preservation depends on the orientation towards the common good. This is an integral approach which observes social evil on the anthropological-personalistic level that is not considered »in the narrow individualistic frame« but is aware of societal conditionality and relations – the relationship between a human person and the material world.

This is the context for the consideration of the issue of those forms of social evils that go beyond the individual's agency and that are a consequence of the responsibilities of formal and informal groups, as well as the issue of evil influences of the social structures and cultural trends on the individual's choices. In the words of Viola; we cannot consider only those »phenomena that disrupt public law and order (such as corruption and crime) as social evil, this issue also directly pertains to private life«¹¹ which, in pluralistic societies, implies a more powerful interaction between the public and the private.

Thus, social evil allows for the possibility of conflict between common good and particular good, global and local, between the whole and a part. This especially came to light in 2014 when Pope Francis tweeted: »Inequality is the root of social evil«. Although he had previously already stressed: »Inequality is the root of social ills« (*Evangelii gaudium*, no. 202), Pope's tweet resonated much stronger. Disapproving reactions that had followed, both within the Church and from the external environment, are an indicator of the failure to recognize

⁹ Two helpful papers on the understanding of the integral human development in the light of the Catholic social teaching: Wolfgang GRASSL, *Integral Human Development in Analytical Perspective. A Trinitarian Model* (2013), http://www.academia.edu/3623708/Integral_Human_Development_in_Analytical_Perspective_A_Trinitarian_Model (25.04.2018); Ludovic BERTINA, *La doctrine catholique du 'développement humain intégral' et son influence sur la communauté internationale du développement* (21.III.2013), <https://poldev.revues.org/1320#text> (25.04.2018).

¹⁰ Vaney, *Evil, Social...*, 366.

¹¹ Viola, *La lotta del diritto contro i mali della società...*, 198-199.

the concept of equality, i.e. inequality that in Catholic social thought cannot, under any condition, be reduced to a mere economic question but is rather associated with a failure of justice in realising its main aim to give others all that belongs to them on the grounds of equality. That which essentially belongs to the subject not on the grounds of political-legal expressions, but on the grounds of fundamental natural goods of human development. It is interesting to note that although Pope Francis does not theologially explain social evil, he does however, provide an excellent background to discussions on social evil. What I intend to suggest is that the Catholic social teaching itself contains a wealth of impulses for discussion on social evil.

Social evil denies the common foundation of the good – the development of a whole individual person. It stems from the absence of the sense of social morality which is a corrective to individualistic morality. In its systematic approach to the treatment of social issue, Catholic social teaching sees it as the exclusion of people from the possibility of achieving fundamental natural goods and of the integral development. Its manifestations in the human society are, as Aquinas points out, a consequence of the human will which »freely chooses the vacancy of being«¹² and which, in the context of cultural, economic, political and other relations in the society neglects their moral and social-ethical development.¹³

2. Obstacles to the integral development of the human person and of the human society

Nowadays, certain forms of social evil represent severe obstacles to »the full development 'of the whole individual and of all people'« (*Sollicitudo rei socialis*, no 38; *Populorum progressio*, no. 42). Those forces threaten human dignity and prevent the full development of life in the society. That is to say, certain forms of social evil are increasingly multiplying and in doing so, they are becoming a serious obstacle to the integral development of the human person and of the society.

This primarily pertains to social structures, cultural trends and various spheres of social interaction that inform social life »and regulate the life-chances of people at a given time and place«.¹⁴ Pope Francis asserts: »A certain

¹² McNerny, *Evil...*, 383.

¹³ »In the context of cultural, commercial or political relations, it also sometimes happens that economically developed or emerging countries export this reductive vision of the person and his destiny to poor countries. This is the damage that 'superdevelopment' causes to authentic development when it is accompanied by 'moral underdevelopment'« (*Caritas in veritate*, no. 29).

¹⁴ Judith A. MERKLE, Sin, in: Judith A. Dwyer (ed.), *The New Dictionary of Catholic Social Thought*, Collegeville, Minnesota, Liturgical Press, 1994., 886.

way of understanding human life and activity has gone awry, to the serious detriment of the world around us« (*Laudato si'*, no. 101). Social evil manifests itself in the network of social (political, legal), economic and cultural relations, but also on the level of relations in daily life in our homes, workplaces and neighbourhoods.

The rich Catholic social tradition offers a possibility for creating a methodological framework within which it is possible to provide a catalogue of various forms of social evil in the contemporary world. We find such a possibility in the social documents of the Catholic Church, especially in the social encyclical of Benedict XVI *Caritas in Veritate* (Chapter 2: Human development in our time). It is the most relevant source document for our subject because it deals with and further develops both the meaning of the integral human development in society and specific obstacles to that development. In 1967, Paul VI dedicated an entire social document to the issue of development. It should be noted that this document *Populorum Progressio* was extensively read and analysed in the socialist circles of that time. Twenty years later (1987), in an anniversary document *Sollicitudo rei socialis* John Paul II pointed out that the situation in relation to the human development had deteriorated. A little over 40 years after *Populorum Progressio*, Benedict XVI also dedicated his social encyclical *Caritas in Veritate* in 2009, to the issue of development. Hence, in a short space of 40 years the Catholic Church has dedicated 3 social documents to the burning issue of development and in them it identified the obstacles to the integral human development in society.

Firstly, these are »forces that cheapen and destroy human life«. ¹⁵ These forces include all offenses against life itself, all violations of the integrity of the human person and all offenses against human dignity; such as murder, genocide, abortion, euthanasia, mutilation, torment inflicted on body or mind, subhuman living conditions, arbitrary imprisonment, deportation, slavery, prostitution, human trafficking, disgraceful working conditions, »all these things and others of their like are infamies indeed. They poison human society« (*Gaudium et Spes*, no. 27). It is of great significance that these obstacles had been pointed out as early as 1965 by the Second Vatican Council. It had been foreseen that these forces which cheapen and destroy human life at the time 'of the development of peoples' would disappear, however, they remain sustained and deepened. Moreover, the life issue has become a stumbling stone to the development of a particular society and its willingness to serve human's true good as well as the development of all peoples through mutual support. Benedict XVI asserts: »One of the most striking aspects of development in the present day is the important question of respect for life, which cannot in any way be detached from questions concerning the development of peoples« (*Caritas in veritate*, no. 28). The core of the authentic development is openness to life.

¹⁵ VANEY, *Evil, Social...*, 366.

There are also voiceless injustices which subject people and peoples to various forms of oppression and reduce their possibility to be heard. This refers to, in particular, migrants, low income workers and farm workers, refugees, ethnic minorities, the abandoned.¹⁶ It is significant that the Catholic Church has been developing a kind of catalogue of obstacles to the integral development of human person and society since 1970s, unlike various initiatives that were introduced much later. Catholic social teaching has continuously addressed those social injustices which impede the right to the development of every individual and all peoples. In that sense, Pope Francis has been strongly emphasising the need for coordinated and effective responses from political communities, civil society and the Church to all challenges caused by the vast humanitarian crisis of the 21st century. Two issues arise from this crisis: the integration issue and the issue of development programs in countries affected by dramatic emigration. This prompted that Pope Francis decided to set up the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, with a Section dedicated exclusively to migrants, refugees and victims of human trafficking.¹⁷ The integral human development in society puts great demands on advocacy, integration and long-term solutions which could encourage comprehensive human development, in both individual and social aspect.

Building on this long tradition, in 1987 Pope John Paul II emphasised the growing irresponsibility at different societal levels and in the field of planetary interconnectedness, in particular in the form of political and economic relations (*Sollicitudo rei socialis*, no. 42). This irresponsibility prevents a comprehensive plan of human endorsement and development as well as finding a solution to economic problems. As examples of such irresponsibility we can mention: high tariffs, focus on short-term profit, the search for a solution to a human problem in a mere technological dimension. Pope Benedict XVI argued that economic development is important and positive but the issue of true and integral development cannot be solved solely by economic improvement: »On this point too, there is a convergence between economic science and moral evaluation. Human costs always include economic costs, and economic dysfunctions always involve human costs« (*Caritas in veritate*, no. 32). The necessity of »further and deeper reflection on the meaning of the economy and its goals« indicates actually that the development issue still »remains an open question«, »all the more acute and urgent« question (*Ibid*, no. 32-33).

We have, in the modern times, been struggling with contemporary forms of »imperialism« and long-term neo-colonialism that has been informed by various »forms of idolatry: of money, ideology, class, technology« (*Sollicitudo rei*

¹⁶ Cf. WORLD SYNOD OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS, *Justice in the World*, (30.XI.1971), <https://www.cctwincities.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Justicia-in-Mundo.pdf> (25.04.2018).

¹⁷ Cf. POPE FRANCIS, *Address to participants in the international forum on »Migration and peace«* (21.II.2017), <http://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/en/bollettino/pubblico/2017/02/21/170221a.html> (25.04.2018).

socialis, no. 37). As a point of convergence, the issue of corruption is inflicted on both rich and poor countries together with various forms of illegalities that have led new sections of society to new forms of poverty. In the words of Pope John Paul II, this reveals »the true nature of the evil which faces us with respect to the development of peoples« (*Ibid*).

Further »situations of human decline, to say nothing of the waste of social resources« are caused by »downsizing of social security systems« (*Caritas in veritate*, no. 25), which put solidarity of the welfare state at risk, endangering mostly the question of human labour and the rights of workers, leading to problems of work insecurity and unemployment, and consequently, insecurity of life itself. In this context, citizens find themselves in permanent trepidation before political decisions of their governments that are directed either to budget cuts or they disregard income growth that is one of the main sources of social inequality. Ultimate life insecurities of the present day are also a consequence of injustice of poor distribution of the universal goods destined for all. Such forms of injustice are preceded by scarcity of institutional social resources, which lead to hunger and food shortages. Organized crime is, theologically speaking, a special form of »structures of sin« that threatens institutional social resources and poses severe pressures and threats, suffocates the freedom of action of fundamental institutions and »industrially« creates new – contemporary forms of slavery such as forced labour, forced child labour, children-soldiers. In the words of Pope Francis: »We all know how justice is caricatured in these cases, do not we? Justice is blindfolded, but the blindfold keeps falling and covering her mouth«. ¹⁸ Therefore, the judiciary role (of course uncorrupted) is of the highest importance: »Yet only through the work of judges does justice become seen as the primary mark of life in society«. ¹⁹

Lastly, the ecological disease of our planet should be considered. Pope Francis places this issue in the heart of the Catholic social teaching today, as it moves away from physical evil towards great social evil caused by the exploitation of natural resources and inappropriate protection and preservation policies, an evil that brings about grave consequences for the integral development, including its sustainability and future. The fundamental imperative is the call for reflection to raise awareness of »integral ecology«, which is capable of providing »an integrated approach to combating poverty, restoring dignity to the excluded, and at the same time protecting nature« (*Laudato si'*, no. 13).

¹⁸ POPE FRANCIS, *Statement to the »Judges' summit against human trafficking and organized crime«* (3.VI.2016), https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2016/june/documents/papa-francesco_20160603_summit-giudici.html (25.04.2018).

¹⁹ *Ibid*.

3. Value options as a starting point

The inevitable question is – how do we go on? Can the situation be radically changed? Not only is it difficult to answer those and similar questions, but there also seems to be no attempt in the world that would lead to change. I would like to highlight impulses given by the Catholic social teaching within the church-theological framework. It, above all, calls for issue detecting and dialogue problem-solving. In this context, value options that constitute the basis of life and agency of contemporary people are of great importance.

We live at a time of numerous possibilities for interaction and dialogue. They, above all, enable development of culture and intercultural dialogue, that is, development of identity, lifestyles and value options. The formation of lifestyles and value options is not a simple task because consumeristic and emotivistic mentality restrict value vantage and narrow down the good of social and societal life to the issue of particular rights and goods which prevent value agreement. Pope Benedict XVI recognizes the severe danger of »commercialization of cultural exchange today«, which either leads to »cultural eclecticism« or to »cultural levelling« (*Caritas in veritate*, no. 26). The consequence of commercialization of cultural wealth is the loss of cultural identity »by which the individual defines himself in relation to life's fundamental questions (...) When this happens, humanity runs new risks of enslavement and manipulation« (*Ibid*). Further to this, Pope Francis underscores the necessity for cultural ecology »a foundation upon which to build a habitable city« (*Laudato si'*, no. 143-146), where the problem-solving would not come »through uniform regulations or technical interventions« (*Ibid*, no. 144) but through active, flexible and dynamic participation of all members of the community.

That will not be possible without humanism that would be »capable of bringing together the different fields of knowledge, including economics, in the service of a more integral and integrating vision« (*Ibid*, no. 141) where there will be enough space for everyone and where all members of a particular society strive to the common good. The narrow vision of the human person, which goes for such value options that deprive us of moral and spiritual forces necessary for the promotion of the integral human development, is detrimental to authentic development of persons and their relationships in public sphere. In particular, it is visible in the two opposite extremes, in »unhealthy« secularism and religious fanaticism plus fundamentalist terrorism that deprive us of the transcendental dimension and belittle spiritual and human wealth. Any form of ideological exclusiveness undervalues spiritual, moral and human wealth and prevents authentic progress and development. Deprivation of spiritual and human wealth impoverishes reason, resulting in the fragmentation of knowledge, calculation and experiment. The knowledge »can certainly be reduced to calculation and experiment« (*Caritas in veritate*, no. 30), however, can it

resolve, as such, obstacles that prevent the authentic development of our world? The complexity of the process of the integral development of the human person and the society, as well as the multiplication of various forms of social evil demonstrate that solutions cannot be found only within a mere technocratic paradigm, eliminating values that created the world and that people in it carry within themselves.

There are two key elements: the human person and structures. The starting point for constructive, long-term and fundamental changes is in authentic value options of people and in the transformation of structures. As Francesco Viola points out social evil has two faces: on the one hand it is a consequence of moral responsibility of the human agency, and on the other it is a structure of social life in conflict with its own goals of the human existence. The fight against social evil needs to go in two directions: through education and virtue formation and through prevention and transformation of structures.²⁰

It is about a dialectical formation of the human person and society, which is manifested in the processes of externalization and internalization of moral formation.²¹ It is certain that the human person is »conditioned by the social structure in which he/she lives, by the education he/she has received and by the environment. These elements can either help or hinder living in accordance with the truth« (*Caritas in veritate*, no. 38). Prevention and transformation of structures, therefore, imply endorsement of potentials that enable social structures to create the conditions for shaping the common good, for direction toward the good of life in society, for moral development of the person and its character building.

None of the above can take place if primarily there is not any authentic evaluation of unique human capacities: knowledge, human will and responsibility, and if there is no major evaluation of value options introduced into structures through human persons. The contemporary human person stands before an (un)soluble situation in relation to the overcoming of social ills that surround it. On the one hand, there are socio-political and economic structures, which expand the catalogue of social evil, and in front of them, it seems, the contemporary person is practically powerless? On the other hand, value options in the modern way of living are so fast-changing that it is increasingly difficult for the individual to cope and consequently loses oneself in its own value options. Existing fundamental structures, such as families, schools and societal communities, do not necessarily provide security to the individual.

In such an un(soluble) situation, the last three Bishops of Rome – John Paul II, Benedict XVI and Francis – point to the very essence of the problem: it is necessary to change both the structures and the human person. People must

²⁰ Cf. Viola, *La lotta del diritto contro i mali della società...*, 202.

²¹ Cf. Daniel J. DALY, Structures of Virtue and Vice, *New Blackfiars*, 92 (2011) 1039, 341-357, 353, <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1741-2005.2010.01355.x> (25.04.2018).

change so that they become able to change the structures in cooperation with one another. Pope John Paul II highlights that the first step on the path of overcoming structural obstacles to the integral development of the human person and of the human society »involves, above all, a moral value« – the decision about fundamental life and spiritual options which determine relation to the common good, the full development »of the whole individual and of all people«. Not pursuing new beliefs and positions, emphasizing merely structural changes »will only ensure that those same structures will become, sooner or later, corrupt, oppressive and ineffectual« (*Evangelii gaudium*, no. 189). It is important not to forget the important truth that structures and institutions by their nature are »instruments of human freedom« (*Caritas in veritate*, no. 17.) and that individuals and people assume their respective responsibilities, jointly and severally. Pope Francis stresses that »A change in lifestyle could bring healthy pressure to bear on those who wield political, economic and social power« (*Laudato si'*, no. 206). Ultimately, human freedom achieves its full realization in the choice of good which sustains the quality of existence both in the individual and the social dimension.

Conclusion

Social evil distorts and destructs the good of social life. It originates from and multiplies through social structures, cultural trends and diverse spheres of social interaction. Although it was expected otherwise, contemporary world suffers from multiple manifestations of social evil, obstacles which contradict both the true human development and the development of peoples and parts of the world. Here I am not just referring to growing material disparity between the rich minority and the poor majority, but also to the social evil which impedes integral human development – as a person, a family member, a worker, an intellectual, a cultural worker, or, an athlete. Unfortunately, lately even sports, especially some sports such as football, basketball, handball, depend on capital, profits... It is not that just some people, or peoples and parts of the world have all things in abundance, and that others are deprived and even starve to death, but there is also a widespread delusion that true development is only attainable if the developed become more technologically developed. Pope Francis offers a prophetic warning: »Such an economy kills« (*Evangelii gaudium*, no. 53).

It is a fact that the Catholic Church has openly and clearly addressed the expanding catalogue of social evil. It calls for detection and dialogue as a means of problem-solving in the matters of those great social problems which are mostly the cause of contemporary wars, great migrations and current refugee crisis we are witnessing. Catholic social teaching directs to and requests dual

care: of structure transformations and lifestyle changes. Both are important because of their strong interconnectedness and neither one can be ignored.

The unity of these two elements is a condition of integral development, both of the human person and the society. The path toward the full development of the whole person, every individual and human society in the world we live in depends on an urgent need for value options, dialogue that will serve true and integral development, common efforts we will put into »the key to true development«: to build up love in social and societal love and champion the common good. It is the supreme imperative of life in the human community, in Catholic social teaching called »social love«. Finally, this allows true spirituality, spiritual experience of »going out« and growth in »a spirituality of that global solidarity« which is »a key to our own fulfilment« (*Laudato si'*, no. 240).

Silvija Migles*

Socijalno zlo ugrožava integralni razvoj čovjeka i ljudskog društva

Sažetak

Među različitim vrstama zla postoji i socijalno zlo o kojem se raspravlja u ovom prilogu. Naime, socijalni nauk Katoličke crkve omogućuje teološku refleksiju o zlu kao socijalnom fenomenu. Riječ je o socijalno-etičkoj perspektivi unutar koje se želi promišljati stvarnost zla i njegove manifestacije u ljudskom društvu. U prvom dijelu raspravlja se o fenomenu socijalnog zla i određenju njegove biti te ga se smješta u kontekst lišavanja i ugrožavanja integralnog ljudskog razvoja u društvu. U drugom dijelu ukazuje se na oblike socijalnog zla u današnjem vremenu kojima se ugrožava ljudsko dostojanstvo i priječi »puni razvoj čitava čovjeka i svih ljudi« (*Populorum progressio*, br. 42; *Sollicitudo rei socialis*, br. 38;). Naime, oblici socijalnog zla sve se više umnažaju i tako postaju ozbiljnom zaprekom integralnog razvoja čovjeka i ljudskog društva. Na kraju stoji pitanje ljudske slobode koja svoje puno ostvarenje dosiže u izboru dobra kojim se potvrđuje kvaliteta postojanja. Budući da se istinsko ljudsko postojanje ne da misliti bez njegove »duhovne« dimenzije koja ga otvara prema Apsolutnome (usp. *Populorum progressio*, br. 42), hod prema punom razvoju čitavog čovjeka, svakog čovjeka i ljudskog društva ovisi o hitnoj potrebi vrijednosnih opredje-ljenja.

Cljučne riječi: socijalno zlo, socijalni nauk Crkve, integralni ljudski razvoj, ljudsko društvo, vrednote.

(lektor za engl. Sunni Vukelić)

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