Anthropological approach to political culture: The case of Slovenia

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Abstract

Research to date into the political culture of Slovenia has shown that traditional patterns of political action dominate, and that the norms of political culture are still mainly objectively determined. Continuing to retain such traditional forms of social and political action and communication, which strongly influence the social and political decision-making process, can crucially influence the most important political decisions that will need to be taken on the national level. The results of the three dimensions of political culture (subjective, social and objective) show that social complexity has been increasing rapidly, particularly during the transition period. This contributes to the on-going increase of instability in the political system and, as such, represents an objective obstacle to its consolidation and democratisation. The specific role and importance of subjective factors of political culture could only increase on the basis of the consolidation of the political system. Finally, some significant features of rationalisation and modernisation of the political system, which have been revealed in my analysis, could be developed even more if they were not obstructed by the existing competitive pattern of conflict resolution, the increasing role of social and political violence, the antagonism between the interests of capital and the interests of labour, the very low legitimacy of democracy, and inexperienced and insufficiently active voters. To date, there have not been sufficient indications of an independent and autonomous political public in Slovenia.

KEYWORDS: political culture, Slovenia, time series, anthropology, democracy, riots, demonstrations, civic culture

Introduction

The most widespread anthropological discussion framework required for the study of political culture and democracy (Južnič 1994) ties us to the assertion that socialisation – the emergence, learning and transfer of certain social ways of life – and inculturation – the emergence and transfer of the habits, customs and values of a particular culture – emerged before the concepts of socialisation and inculturation were formed. It is possible to assert that such a conclusion regarding subsequent recognition applies to all social and natural phenomena. Scientific understanding of phenomena generally arises only after the particular

social or natural phenomenon has emerged and appeared to people for some time as an un-resolved question or problem. The very logic of scientific research itself, which is a product of Enlightenment philosophy and a modern worldview, teaches us that it is not possible *a priori* to assume any scientific truth on a tangible truth with which we are dealing. In that phenomena and the essence of a particular phenomenon never entirely overlap, that there always remains a difference between what we wish to understand and the understanding itself, that the subject and object of scientific understanding are never identical; this also captures the reason for the emergence of science itself. Man is simultaneously both the subject and object of understanding. The duality or dialecticism of this special position is evident in the recognition that as people we are part of tangible reality, as well as part of symbolic reality, the symbolic and tangible universe (Piaget 1973: 179).

Consequently the requirement facing us is the new-age idea that raises the question of whether scientific understanding is even possible, and if so in what way it is possible and what scientifically understood truths about society and social phenomena are like. In this instance, the phenomenon or subject that we recognise through scientific methods is society and man himself, and consequently the science of society and people, insofar as it constitutes a scientific understanding of society, is itself the subject of anthropological science and part of the scientific truth about human beings as a social, cultural and natural phenomenon. In this aspect, I present a global research model derived from an anthropo-logical conceptualisation of relations among individuals, society and culture.
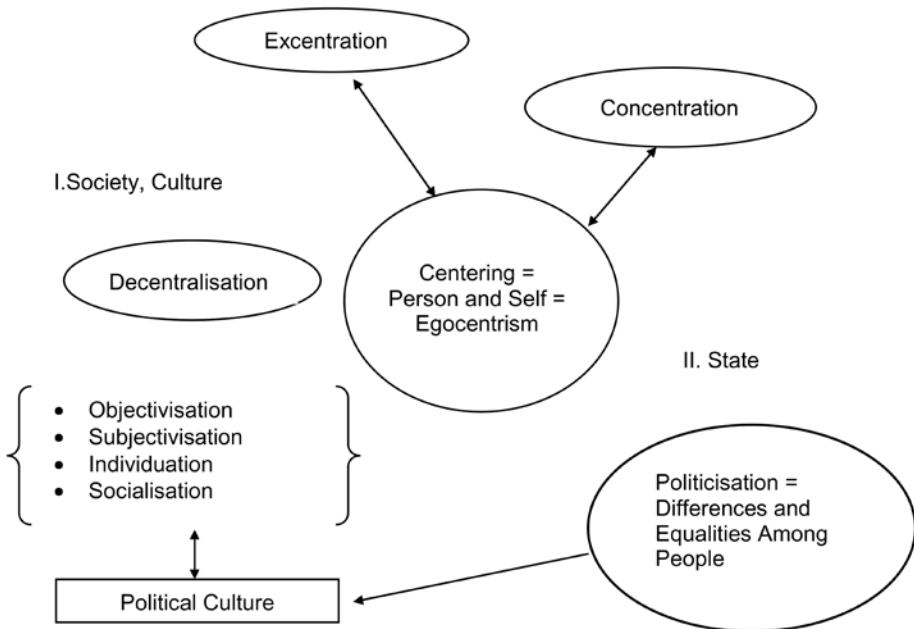

Figure 1: Research model – human in the centre vs. polis, communis, socius

This shows the difference between social and political activity. If others (Lat: *socius*) are the source of social activity, then community (Gr. *politeia*, Lat. *communis*) is the source of political activity. From a theoretical perspective, this involves emphasis on the differences between the human ability to manage objects, themselves and achievements in a decentralised manner, and the human ability for a decentralised and intersubjective, i.e. social, understanding of objects, themselves and achievements.

Definition of the problem

Every scientific discipline has a different definition of the human individual as a subject and itself, as a method of understanding. The anthropological science with which I am involved defines a human being as a natural, social and cultural being, wherein it is possible to agree with Juergen Habermas (1985: 20), who states that the task of sociology and cultural anthropology is to investigate all phenomenal forms of social action, and not merely selected individual aspects of its systematic action. Sociology must also investigate all forms of symbolic action and all structures of the living world (Ger. Lebenswelt).

Structure of the living world

At the macro, meso and micro levels of anthropological analysis, if such research is conducted using empirical methods and data, one important 'variable' is the status or scope of the theory used to explain social events. Here, I provide a review of some of the most influential theories on political, cultural and social change, and on that basis I incline toward an empirically based theory of monitoring social change using the method of social and political indicators (Habermas 1985; Berg-Schlosser 1996, Flora 1983; 1987; Jodice & Taylor 1983).

On Theory

The relation between a "critical theory of society" and a "theory of social systems" to me represents a framework for opening up analytical questions and, at the same time, also a theoretical starting point for and introduction to the discussion of socialisation science and the genesis of the research concept of political culture and the explanatory power of the research concept in research on democracy. The starting point, where Juergen Habermas' theory of communicative action represents "the paradigm of the individual" and the general theory of social systems of Niklas Luhmann represents the "paradigm of society", is further justified by the prevalence of one and the other approaches in research to date of political culture. Generally, such research efforts are conducted using a systems-theoretical approach to research of political culture, and a social-critical or critical-theoretical approach to such research. Research reports are dominated by the systems-theoretical approach, which (with modern empirical research methodology) introduces to research complex quantitative methods and interaction research models with countless dependent, intervening and independent variables.

If the systems-theoretical approach, the prime proponent of which is Niklas Luhmann, and which is widespread in research, strives to dominate in theory, attempting to

become the "one and only science of society", then in this regard the critical approach is less ambitious and more open to mutual criticism. In the case of the Juergen Habermas' theory of communicative action, the openness of this approach is particularly apparent, as it does not give final judgements on social science, but rather strives to determine its critical criteria.

Critical theory of society – theoretical-analytical model

Taking into account Weber's (1972) distinction between phenomenal forms of Western rationalism, we distinguish among the following components of culture: *cultural value sphere*, such as science and technology, arts and literature, law and morals; *cultural systems of action*, such as science companies, universities and academies, arts companies – institutions for the production, mediation and reception of art and art criticism, legal system – justice, scientific jurisprudence, judicial public, religious communities living according to the principles of ethics with universalist requirements; *central systems of action*, which consolidate the social structure: capitalist economy, modern state and small families; *personality system* with operational dispositions and value orientations typical for methodical lifestyles and appropriate methods of forming a subject (Habermas 1985: 447–5).

Habermas states that only Western societies have developed to the extent that their elements lost their initial constellation in the modernisation processes, so that they can only self-regulate through the relatively autonomous sphere of the economy, public administration etc. In his work, Max Weber described this modernisation as social rationalisation, in which capitalist companies were established on the principles of rational economic action, and the modern state on the principles of rational administration. Both spheres were thus established on the rational-action type. In the sense described above, Habermas distinguishes among the following phenomenal forms of Western rationalism:
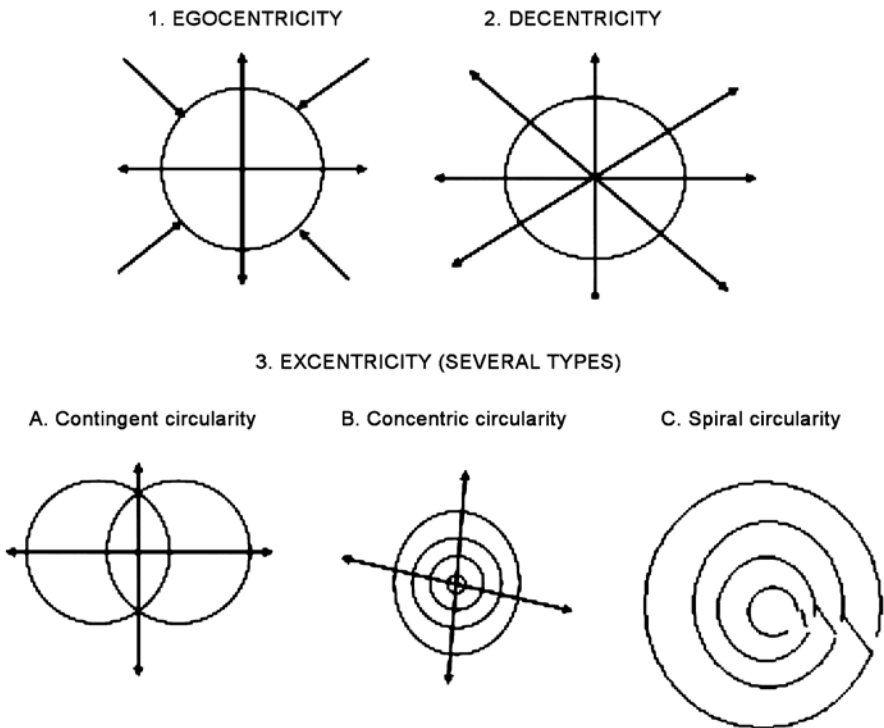
	Cognitive elements	Evaluative elements	Expressive elements
CULTURE	Modern natural science	Rational, natural law	Protestant ethics Autonomous culture
	Science companies (universities, academies, laboratories etc.)	Legal education	Religious institutions Arts companies
SOCIETY	Capitalist economy	Modern form of state	Civic Small families
PERSONALITY	Dispositions for action and value orientation Methodical lifestyle		Counterculture lifestyle

Table 1: Phenomenal forms of Western Rationalism in the Modern Age
(Habermas1985: 237)

Hypothesis

Human culture and the understanding thereof succumb to the law of constant change, wherein even the concept of change itself gives in to changeable knowledge. Scientific truth is something that can never be finally verified or falsified and is thus subject to endless verifications of methods, recognition processes and the validity of the findings themselves.

The science of society and man does not therefore assume that it is possible to finally recognise objective reality and its laws, but rather assumes that findings are themselves only part of this reality (Popper 1973). Consequently, any conclusion always remains open to question and can therefore function only as a criticisable explanatory system (*Deutungssystem*) (Habermas 1985; Luhmann 1984). Nevertheless, there is a general rule for social-science research, which is the logic of the conditional, under which

Legend:
1. Egocentricity is the personality trait that consolidates the social ego of individuals.
2. Decentricity is the ability of individuals to understand themselves and the world around them.
3. Excentricity is the ability of individuals:
    A. to understand one another in mutual contingency
    B. to create social circles, groups
    C. in terms of thinking and action to be open or closed to their social environment

Figure 2: Research model – social and personal characteristics of human beings

scientific debate is separate from other types of debate on and in society (Schutz 1971: 6, 45, 49–50). It differs primarily in that it selects a subject, defines the objectives and methods, designs assumptions and the scope of conclusions, even before we actually start research in a methodical and systematic manner.

A systematic and planned approach to comprehension, methodical doubt and hypotheticals, the principle of the verifiability and relativity of every scientific finding and formed empirical method of thought, which is critical in relation to both objective reality and itself, and which is reflected in awareness of the deficiencies and fallibility of own knowledge and at the same time the changeability of the tangible world with which we deal: these are the fundamental aspects of the scientific debate on human culture and society that particularly distinguish this debate from other, more or less ideological debates.

Social science, furthermore, cannot come up with any generally valid conclusions, applicable and established at all times, regarding society and culture. However, this science can point out those cultural characteristics of human beings and social entities, egocentric (centred in self), decentric (centred outside self) and excentric (circles around self) that are common to human beings and that represent the necessary conditions for the definition of the social and cultural dimensions of individuals, and by which people are essentially different from other living beings. This problem is represented schematically in the research model shown in Figure 2.

Method

On the basis of the hermeneutic method, I carried out a criticism of sources in order to determine the national-culturally determined set of indicators for appropriate operationalisation, formalisation and scaling of concepts of democracy and political culture. On this basis, I compared them with the operationalisation and set of indicators from international research already underway. The system of national indicators was combined with a system of intercultural indicators so as to enable their empirical comparison and the verification of their mutual effects in the multivariate research space.

I relied on the methodology of scientific research sometimes referred to as double hermeneutics (Giddens, 1989: 165–70). This methodology follows the scientific requirement for greater respect for theory, both in the design of research concepts and in the construction of empirical models and interpretations of empirical research results. Here, we require a broad elaboration of theoretical sources that must become constituent parts of the research concept and justify a particular research strategy by producing explicit hypotheses originating from theoretical sources and assumptions.

The hermeneutic method follows from the assumption that a particular area of scientific interest can be read as an open book and that humans are creatures in which both the method and objective of the findings are already captured. In this sense, any intercultural research is a hermeneutical problem that includes the mediation of all substantive frameworks as the most determinative methodological instruction in research. Such research does not exclude the logical possibility, e.g. of comparing the validity of the theory that illness is caused by germs with the theory that states that illness can be cured by magic rituals. Quite

the reverse, such understanding of social facts is a necessary condition for this dialectic possibility. The hermeneutic method is therefore particularly important for comparative consideration of cultures, which includes any consideration of political culture.

The methodological procedures whereby I discover the characteristics of the phenomena I research can be more accurately described as follows: I strive for such a conceptualisation and empirical operationalisation of variables as will be pragmatic-inductive (Mill 1843; Berg-Schlosser 1996; Tilly 1984; Przeworski 1970; Teune 1970 etc.). The variables selected should be as universal as possible and should enable intercultural comparison. Such a requirement for universality of indicators must be seen as a debate on the difference between universal and particular rationality, which arises not only due to the difficulties occurring in collecting empirical data for analysis, but also due to the selection of various research strategies that can arise on the basis of the same theoretical assumptions and viewpoints. Thus, a particular researcher, starting from the same theoretical position, may select entirely different relevant variables from another researcher, with regard to the defined problem. Therefore, as far as possible, universal selection and operationalisation of variables is carried out on the following basis: a) critical analysis of basic theoretical concepts, where I opted to apply Habermas' (1985) theory of communicative action; b) analysis of previously determined empirical relations among observed sizes and proportions of research phenomena; c) a combination of the two approaches, with "scientific intuition" – long years of experience dealing with the problem I am observing – also a deciding factor (Bajec 1977: 29).

I therefore placed the derived empirical models in relation to the selected global research model and attempted as broadly and accurately as possible to analyse and define individual elements in their mutual multi-causal relationships.

From such methodological requirements, I also expected significant methodological theoretical achievements, primarily through the use of various statistical methods. I thus strived for a consistent connection between historical-sociological, diachronous-vertical research and synchronous-horizontal monitoring and comparative research, where (in my view) it is only possible to find the intersection of any generalisation on empirical foundations.

Instruments and variables

I devoted the greatest scientific research effort to the social and historical determinism of the processes of democratisation and political inculturation – the socio-historical circumstances that formed and continue to form the political culture, with the emphasis on analysis of political, social and cultural indicators in Slovenia. I therefore researched the importance and influence of major social and historical events that are anchored in the personal, social, political and national consciousness in Slovenia, and that objectively influence the political culture of the population. The Slovenian political culture is also determined by economic crises and natural disasters – in a sense, this is a general development rule of the modern world, which is increasingly degrading natural wealth. Economic exploitation contributes to a cyclical crisis of the global capitalist system. In Slovenia, too, political parties are being established in Slovenia to defend nature.

Both economic policy and economic development are influential factors in political inculturation, both on individual development levels and on their actual phenomenal forms. This is a task that continues to demand special and additional interdisciplinary research and cooperation, certain aspects and outlines of which I presented in the chapter on social factors that influence the political and civic culture. Research to date into the political culture in Slovenia led me to conclude that our personal, social, political and national character is more determined by objective historical circumstances than by the action of subjective agents of political socialisation.

I considered the question of the stratification and class structure of Slovenian society in connection with the formation of political parties, and in this regard also the influence of this structure on the political culture. The predominant determinism of processes, contents, forms and methods of political socialisation and inculturation by objective factors of political culture support the hypothesis that the political culture in Slovenia remains largely egocentric and operates as an unconscious, irrational and residual element in modern political processes and conflicts.

I also attempted to verify this hypothesis through current monitoring of the dynamics of cultural, economic, social and political indicators. In this regard; I also deal with scientific research through the unconscious, and all that objectively determines our position and action. In this sense, it is possible to assert that the action of subjective agents of political socialisation in Slovenia is particularly unsuitable and ineffective. (see Kolenc1993: 173–238)

The emancipation and civil-democratic potential of agents of political socialisation is only just developing in Slovenia, a matter that I synchronously analysed through discourse analysis, analysis of social, political and cultural indicators and through comparative analysis of European dimensions.

Time series 1953–1993	Social reactions
Definition of indicator	Name of indicator
Absolute frequency	profile of protests
Absolute frequency	profile of social unrest
Absolute frequency	profile of armed conflicts
Absolute frequency	frequency of government measures
Absolute frequency	frequency of murders motivated by domestic political violence
Absolute frequency	frequency of changes in government institutions = government stability
Absolute frequency	regular changes of government
Absolute frequency	irregular changes of government
Absolute frequency	frequency of elections

Table 2: Definition of variables

Results

Profile of Slovenia based on time series – social reactions

For the category of the most important political events in modern national history, I formed a set of variables that indicate the profile of the state, as can be seen in the time-series analysis. Such classification and quantification of political events offer us the raw material of systems indicators that measure the national ability to resolve conflicts, the stability of government institutions, and the spread of political freedoms. This sample of indicators can also be evaluated and compared with those measures of economic production or social welfare that provide a general profile of each individual state or group of states.

The World Handbook of Political and Social Indicators (World 1983: 176–199) defines nine indicators that measure changes in the protest potential of a country, penalties and norms, and government changes. These indicators are defined in Table 1. The time-series curves show events that affect protests and government sanctions over time and the number of "political" defeats for dominant political personalities. The curve for changes in government shows something similar. Data are aggregated on a ten-monthly basis over the previous 45 years.

As events we counted certain physical activities at a time and place that often appear in newspapers. In essence, the quantification of reports on political events from newspaper sources is similar to the content-analysis method. Searching through public records requires the formation of phraseology or thesauruses that describe the particular type of political action of interest. We encoded only events with political content. We began encoding political events in January 1993, with a group of social-science students in Salzburg and Ljubljana. Encoding ran until September 1993, when we began to verify and clean up the data, completing this work in April 1994. In line with the instructions in the World Handbook (Jodice & Taylor 1983: 8–15), we conducted the encoding process using the index to the New York Times, which we searched using the geographic principle and marked events. Records of events from this index were supplemented by secondary sources that contained a different combination of events or which contained data compiled from national newspapers. These data were drawn from Keesing's Contemporary Archive, Archiv der Gegenwart, Current Digest of the Soviet Press, and (for the period since 1990) from the national newspapers Delo, Dnevnik and Večer.

The data thus arranged was analysed using the time-series method, while their adequacy was verified using tertiary and quaternary sources – historiographical and social science studies or "longitudinal case analysis". Individual profiles are treated as measures of social democratic changes – as those important factors that form the objective dimension of political culture in Slovenia. These events are triggered by subjective and social action, but overwhelm this action, becoming some form of "invariant", a necessary and lawful reality, particularly if interpreted as indicators of social and political stability.

Firstly, the profile of protest demonstrations (see Figure 3), which indicates a predominantly irrational although not very violent method of conflict management, shows that this method of conflict resolution in the immediate past – since 1945 – was not very common, although in 1955 and especially in 1987–1990, we see a rising curve of protest demonstrations in Slovenia.
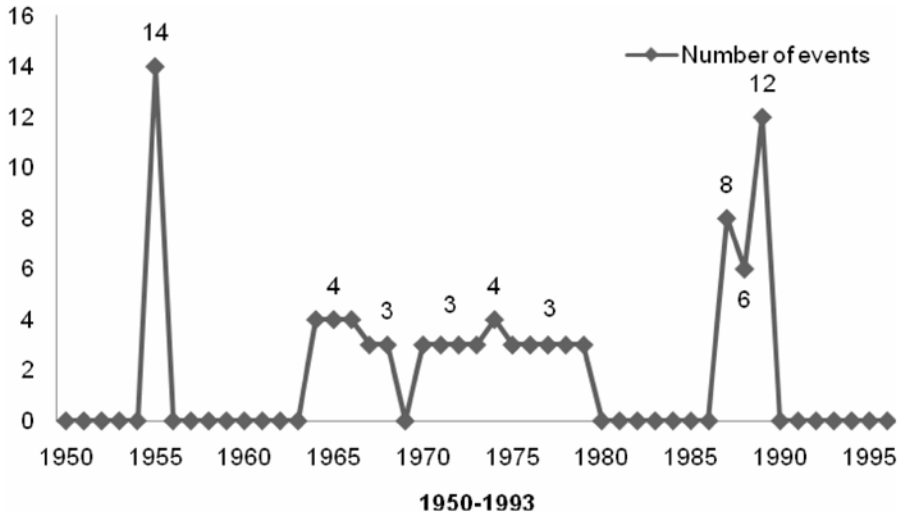
Figure 3: Demonstrations

A similar situation can be seen in Figure 4, where social riots were the method for resolving social and political tensions and disputes. One interesting conclusion is that the frequency of such events grows in the same historical periods as protest demonstrations.
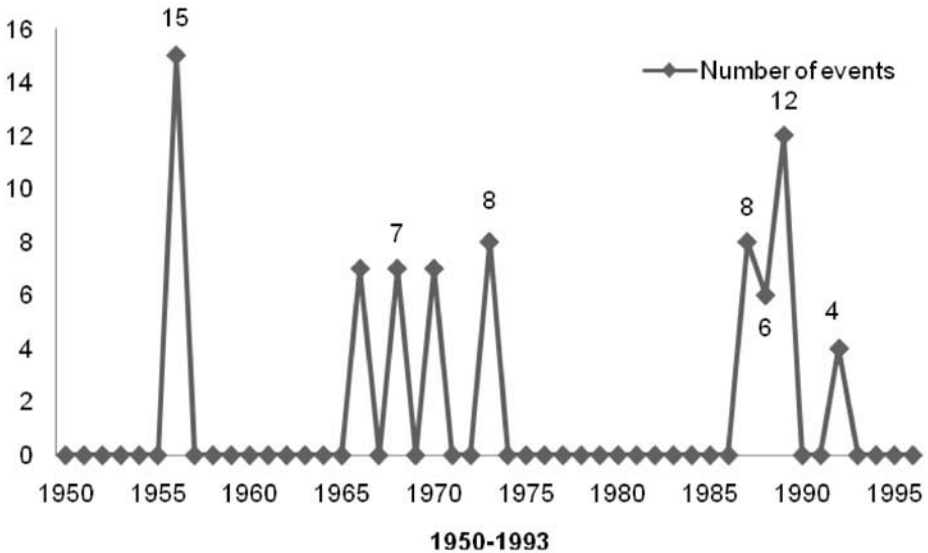

Figure 4: Social riots

From 1990 to 1993 (see Figure 5),armed conflict was often chosen as a method for resolving political conflicts. These events represent something objective (undesirable) and entirely different from previous situations in the last fifty years. At the same time, this is also the largest change recorded when the data are viewed retrospectively.
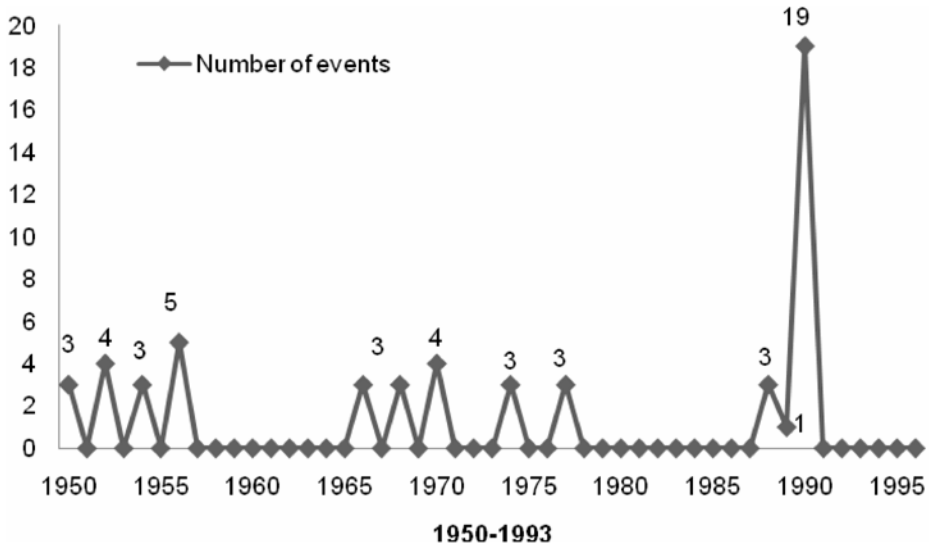

Figure 5: Armed conflict

The profile of political defeats shows that in future this variable could have a greater influence on the situation in the Slovenian state. From the data in Table 3, it is entirely clear that this type of conflict resolution has become increasingly common in the last five years, and there are even signs that it could become one of the most important methods for more rational resolution of political antagonism.

Government measures (see Table 3) are also becoming an increasingly common method and means of attempting to resolve social and political problems in a more rational manner. Traditionally, this was very often used in the past, particularly after 1989.

All types of changes of government (see Table 3), except irregular replacement of the executive branch, could be one of the rational instruments for resolving conflicts that could contribute to the stability of the political system. Changes to the executive branch and the frequency of elections are the most common means of changing the government architecture, as are regular replacements of the government, particularly in the period after 1990.There are at least three conclusions that can be drawn from the time-series analysis showing the country profile.

Firstly, the social, economic and political changes taking place in Slovenia are very frequent and rapid. The professionalisation of political activity has also advanced in leaps and bounds. Such developments can be considered to be a process of accommodation to the new historical situation and to the challenges of the age caused by major changes

in the global economy and politics. Viewed as a whole, this process can be assessed as a positive characteristic of the profile of the Slovenian state, as such transition characteristics convince us that the transition to a more democratic political system – and consequently a more democratic political culture – is happening not in a revolutionary but in a reformist way. The presence and prevalence of rational procedures in resolving political problems could, in the future, contribute to growth in a rational social potential in a newly formed state. This is largely a new move in Slovenian political culture, if we recognise that Slovenia, viewed from a historical perspective, is one of those countries or regions where democratic regimes were defeated on several occasions under economic crisis conditions. We can thus expect that, with the growing capacity of the government to stabilise the political system and preserve the institutions of the democratic political regime, forms of democratic behaviour and democratic political culture will also grow.

Secondly, the fairly frequent changes in government and regular replacement of governments in recent years, and the new constitutional charter adopted in 1990 based on the best European democratic tradition, which legalised a proportional electoral system, can be considered positive changes, given the characteristics of the overall profile of the state. In this regard, it is very important to emphasise that there have been no irregular replacements of the government. If we view this data as an indicator of the objective dimension of political culture, we can then reasonably assert that the effective action of state institutions (e.g. the executive branch)can have a decisive influence on the successful transition to a democratic political system. In contrast, the same indicators could strengthen traditional and fragmentary and non-participatory forms in the political orientation of Slovenian citizens, particularly at lower – meso and micro – levels of the social system. The growing role of the executive branch does not lead to greater democratisation of the political system as a whole, viewed over an extended historical period, since at the same time and as a consequence, the roles of other influential factors of political culture decline – particularly the influence and power of civil society actors. In any event, the greater efficiency of state institutions indirectly increases the specific role and relative weight of the subjective dimension of political culture, which is then more likely to lead to more participatory forms of political decision-making at lower levels of the political system and in other social subsystems.

Thirdly, the competitive form of conflict resolution unfortunately remains dominant, and this is the main negative characteristic I observed in the data of the Slovenian country profile. It is clear that armed conflict is more often used to manage conflicts than protest demonstrations and social unrest. We have to take into account the fact that the civil war in nearby Bosnia and Herzegovina and Slovenian independence are objective historical facts that have influenced the current political mindset and actions among Slovenian citizens. We must, therefore, consider the contradiction and discrepancy between the growing role of political freedoms and the growing role of violent conflict resolution as an important determinant that will affect the political culture in the future.

Possible neutral, negative and positive effects of individual events during the period of transition to democracy are shown schematically in the table below:

| | Effects / Events | |
	Method of conflict resolution	Spread of political freedoms
Protests / demonstrations	-	+
Social riots	+	-
Armed conflict	-	-
Political defeats	-	+
Government measures	0	0
Changes to government	+	+
Regular replacement of government	+	+
Irregular replacement of government	n/a=+	n/a=+
Elections	+	+

Legend: The symbols +, - , 0 indicate the influence of transition variables that can have a positive, negative or neutral influence with regard to the extent of changes in political culture (adapted fromTaylor & Jodice 1993).

Table3: Profile of Slovenia based on time series

From the results shown in Table 3 we can conclude that political defeats (political deaths), changes in governments, regular replacement of governments and elections are the positive events and effects that best support the spread of political freedoms, but at the same time armed conflict and political defeats are the events with negative impacts that influence irrational conflict resolution and to the largest extent contribute to the dominant competitive form of conflict management in Slovenian society.

Such a distribution of the main categories in the country profile leads us to the conclusion that rational forms of political orientation are better supported by the higher than by the lower levels of the political system, while, in consequence, irrational, emotional and ideological orientations are being established and reinforced on horizontal cross-sections of society. These events are not consciously promoted through subjective, inter-subjective and social action of agents of political socialisation, but are rather fostered by the rapidly changing, objective, contradictory and uncontrollable complexity of reality itself. Such characteristics influence the objective, social and historical circumstances that in the future could become the greatest problem for the establishment and consolidation of more democratic forms of political behaviour and action, and (at the same time) a barrier to establishing a survival image of the democratic political regime in Slovenia. The burden of past historical events has a very important influence on the political culture of Slovenian citizens. The lack of a state-forming tradition is particularly important in this context.

Discussion and conclusion

In future, much work will have to be done in the political culture in Slovenia to demystify and de-taboo certain issues that burden the present. Part of the anthropomorphisation of the physical world is, for instance, the attitude of Slovenes towards their own history and its interpretation. In observing the factors of the general historical background, it appears that their influence on the formation of civic and political culture is both very strong and

dispersed. Such factors as historical memory, the consciousness of a shared identity, (the importance of the central region), the share of the periphery, the importance of church history, the period of the emergence of the state, the character of state-forming traditions, the significance of major historical events anchored in the collective memory, and the consolidation of democracy reveal that these heavily burden the contemporary political culture.

In Slovenia, these factors are still rather the subject of various day-to-day political disputes and the cause of social disintegration rather than factors of cohesion of the population. Such influence of history on the modern political processes and political culture certainly does not contribute to consolidation of democratic elements in the political culture of Slovenia. The general historical background of a country is also simultaneously a basis that, one way or another, is rooted in the historical consciousness of the population, in the formation of the political culture that represents either an encouragement or a barrier to stable democratic development of the country. The relatively small size of the Slovenian territory, and the dispersed population, the existence of a strong central region, and the large shares of the periphery do not serve to propel development. The formation of historical consciousness was strongly influenced by the counter-Reformation activities of the Catholic Church. Meanwhile, the state was only established in modern times.

Because of all of this, democratic forms of governance are still not consolidated. All of these factors strongly affect the subjective dimension of politics and the political culture of citizens and political elites which(without consolidated democratic institutions with their own rationalisation potential) cannot overcome these historical circumstances and features in a very short period of time.

Historical circumstances favourable to the development of democracy and the consolidation of democratic institutions usually arise over centuries. External factors of influence represent a similar burden of the past. During the First World War, Slovenes were on the losing side; before the war, they were ruled by the inflexible, absolutist Austro-Hungarian regime. Slovenes were on the winning side in the Second World War, but at the cost of internal political division, which continues to burden daily political life today. Before the Second World War, Slovenia, together with the rest of Yugoslavia, was an economic and agrarian appendage to Germany, while its western region, Primorska, was part of fascist Italy. Consequently, there was very great economic dependence. After the Second World War, Slovenia became the internal market of the Yugoslav state, and its economic development became dependent on central planning within that federation. Even after 1991, Slovenia was still very economically dependent, as some 70% of economic trade was linked to the countries of western Europe (the European Union), while the dominant ideology continued to support a pattern of value orientations that is more exclusive than inclusive. The two ideological "supersystems", Marxism and Catholicism, continue to compete for dominance. In the 20th century, the state was indirectly or directly involved in all major military conflicts in Europe, and in 1991 it fought for its independence using military force. All of this contributed to the formation and preservation of non-democratic, competitive forms in resolving political conflicts and reduced the rational potential of mass and elite political culture.

Issues associated with certain ethnic minorities, such as the Roma, are mystified and rendered taboo, while issues associated with gender and sexuality, often in connection

with the special rights of women, such as abortion rights, remain mystified. The relationship to authority itself remains taboo, as people in Slovenia mostly continue to fear authority, which they see as something high above them and unreachable, and they often curse it. Vlado Miheljak aptly described Slovenes' attitude to authority when he said:

The average Slovene is convinced that it's all lies, corrupt, spoilt. In the eyes of the public, all businesspeople are tycoons, all bankers breach confidentiality, all judges have sold their souls, all doctors are negligent or overpaid, all teachers are unmotivated, all priests (with perverse exceptions) are paedophiles, all politicians are paragons of evil etc. In short, the whole system is corrupt and broken (2009).

Such value and emotional attitudes towards the social and political system, democratic institutions and the actors of political life are far from a rational, considered attitude to the social environment, and to authority in particular. It is almost a view of politics and the whole system that conceals rather than reveals or discloses real social conditions, with people almost thinking that the world of Slovenian society and politics is dominated by imaginary, supernatural forces that would have to be summoned for help.

Questions of attitudes towards mass media, and crimes from the recent and remote past fought over now by one ideological-political force in Slovenia or the other, are taboo, and it is almost forbidden to talk of social revolution and historical revolutions, without which it is impossible to understand the past, let alone today's fights and conflicts. And so it goes on.

We should therefore in the future modernise the whole economic, cultural, political and social subsystems, as often emphasised by France Bučar, and put the right people in the right places in Slovenia. In the future, we will have to act according to Socrates' and Marx's principle that society will only be successful when it elects qualified people. The division of labour in Slovenia continues to be dominated by negative than by positive personnel selection. There is considerable clientelism, corruption and cliquishness. Perhaps it would be wise to repeat what Anton Trstenjak said of Slovenian society. He emphasised the following characteristics of the Slovenian "modern man": a) a tendency towards alienation instead of originality; b) a tendency towards assimilation as a consequence of smallness and poor historical experiences (Illyrianism, pan-Slavicism, Germanisation, Hungarianisation, Italianisation, Yugoslavism etc.); c) inactivity and indiscipline due to forced collectivisation and industrialisation and the process of proletariatisation of the agricultural population; d) loss of traditional values (honour etc.), the bearer of which was always agriculture; e) levelling and uniformity of regional characteristics into a pan-Slovenian character, which is the only positive acquisition; f) heroism in WWII has still not replaced the subservient character of Slovenes; g) the banditry of "hajduci", which is associated with the traditional justness (*pravdarstvo, pravdaštvo*) among Slovenes and is a special characteristic of the non-autochthonous "mass consumer culture" and "materialistic acquisitiveness". Trstenjak concluded his analysis as follows: 'There is certainly no doubt, we have activated modern man, so that he is dangerous to himself and to the whole world' (Trstenjak 1986: 704). Thus, he writes about the "border" character of Slovenes:

Even during the old Yugoslavia, there arose among Slovenes a Yugoslav consciousness, stressing that Slovenian is a dialect and not an independent national language. It is probably in the character of a nation, particularly the Slovene nation, to tend towards imitation, adaptation and mingling with other nations... Slovenes are a "border" nation, al-

most a majority live in the "border region", where they adapt to others (Trstenjak 1986).

In the present era, in a Europe without borders, the future challenge will be to ensure that Slovenes form their own nation state, one that is internally multicultural and externally intercultural and European. To achieve such objectives, we must decentralise worldviews and views of our own history and our own nation.

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Povzetek

Dosedanje raziskovanje politične kulture v Sloveniji je pokazalo, da prevladujejo tradicionalni vzorci političnega delovanja in so zaradi tega norme politične kulture še vedno in pretežno objektivno determinirane. Nadaljnje ohranjanje takšnega tradicionalnega načina družbenega in političnega delovanja in komuniciranja, ki močno vpliva na način družbenega in političnega odločanja, lahko tudi v prihodnosti odločilno vpliva na niz najpomembnejših političnih odločitev, ki jih bo potrebno sprejeti na nacionalni ravni. Rezultati opazovanja vseh treh razsežnosti politične kulture kažejo, da v Sloveniji skokovito narašča družbena kompleksnost, posebno še v prehodnem obdobju, kar prispeva k nadaljnjemu naraščanju nestabilnosti političnega sistema. Takšna nestabilnost predstavlja objektivno oviro za njegovo konsolidacijo in demokratizacijo, saj bi le na osnovi konsolidacije političnega sistema lahko narasla tudi specifična vloga in pomen subjektivnih dejavnikov politične kulture. Nekatere značilne poteze racionalizacije in modernizacije političnega sistema, ki sem jih razkril v analizi, bi se lahko razvile še bolj, če jih pri tem ne bi ovirali prevladujoči kompetitivni vzorec razreševanja konfliktov, naraščajoča vloga družbenega in političnega nasilja, antagonistično razmerje med interesi kapitala in interesi dela, zelo nizka legitimnost demokracije ter neizkušeno in ne preveč aktivno volilno telo. Bolj natančno rečeno, ne razpolagamo z nobenimi indici, ki bi kazali na to, da obstaja v Sloveniji neodvisna in avtonomna politična javnost.

KLJUČNE BESEDE: politična kultura, Slovenija, časovne vrste, antropologija, demokracija, družbeni nemiri, demonstracije, državljanska kultura

IN MEMORIAM: JANEZ KOLENC

With great sadness we learned about the death of Janez Kolenc – Vanč, on 11 May 2012. Janez was a kind, warm, tolerant person and a devoted colleague. Slovene Anthropological Society has lost a great scholar and analyst of Slovenian and European politics and one of its most loyal members. The paper, presented here, was accepted for publication months ago and we regret that Janez left us before he could see it published, but we take it as an honour to present his last work to wider public and pay tribute to his memory. May you travel well, Janez.