

Political Crimes: Theoretical and Applied Aspects of The Problem

Dr. Olena Kindratets

Zaporizhzhia National University

✉ Email: kin-el@ukr.net

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9786-227X>

Abstract

The article discusses one of the types of crimes, specifically political crimes. It emphasizes that the research remains relevant and significant in democratic countries. While conditions have been created in such countries to reduce the factors that lead to political crimes, the occurrence of such crimes has not been completely eliminated. The study aims to clarify the characteristics of contemporary political crimes. The author points out that despite the long history of research into this phenomenon, there is still no universally accepted definition for the concept of «political crime.» In most definitions of political crime, these crimes are typically associated with the pursuit, maintenance, and use of power. The article focuses on the main issues that currently pique the interest of researchers analyzing political crimes, and it presents a classification based on the subjects and objects of these crimes.

Studying both the individuals who commit political crimes and their victims is crucial to understanding the specificities of these crimes. The article draws attention to the fact that labeling actions within the political sphere as «criminal» is contingent upon various factors, including systems of values, established norms and regulations, societal norms, and the influence of media on public awareness. Trust in authorities and their legitimacy also plays a role. Furthermore, the article presents models that demonstrate shifts in attitudes towards revolutions, uprisings, and the reassessment of actions that were once considered «criminal.» These shifts can be attributed to changes in the political and social systems. The author highlights that these alterations could be linked to transformations in the political and social systems.

Keywords

political crime, types of political crime, revolution, uprising, crisis, subject of political crime, object of political crime.

Introduction

Opinions vary on the origins of the term «political crime.» While some scholars argue that the phenomenon gained attention in ancient times, the actual term to describe it emerged in the 19th century. N. Zelinskaya (2005), for instance, links the conceptualization of «political crime» as an offense aimed at authorities to socio-political developments in Western Europe and North America during the mid-18th century. It was during this period that a perception of political crimes as ethically justified transgressions, lacking «absolute criminality,» started to take shape.

Steven Shafer (1971) posits that political crime might be the oldest form of criminality, with instances of political criminals present in the histories of virtually all societies. These figures have existed throughout time, continue to exist, and will persist in the future. Recognizing this, it's also valid to note that certain factors that historically fueled political crimes, such as oppression of ethnic groups and religious intolerance, have seen a gradual reduction over time. Cesare Lombroso and Rodolfo Liaschi highlight this trend, yet they emphasize that these underlying causes haven't entirely vanished (Lombroso & Laschi, 1890).

Debates persist regarding the specificities of political crime, especially concerning when violations of laws by authorities or individuals can be justified by expediency or the greater good (Ross, 2012). The relative nature of political crime, as highlighted by Steven Shafer (1971), contributes to the varied and sometimes inconclusive approaches to defining political offenders and categorizing them among different criminal types. The character of political crimes evolves and adapts; in the era of the information society, modern communication systems empower political criminals to achieve their objectives. The utilization of psychological and information warfare can lead to destabilization and orchestrated chaos (Burmaoglu & Saritas, 2017; Li & Kovacich, 2016; Miller, 2019; Robinson et al., 2015; Straub, 2019). This topic is reflected in the broader discussion of contemporary interdisciplinary research in the social and behavioral sciences (Benedict et al., 2019; Sætra, 2019; Shin et al., 2018; Talwar et al., 2019; Tanner et al., 2017). Proving the deliberate guilt of those involved, particularly for personal gain, and classifying such actions as «political crimes» pose considerable challenges.

The definition of political offenses can vary based on specific legal, cultural, and political contexts. The determination of political crimes is influenced by the laws and regulations of individual countries or international agreements. International bodies, like the International Criminal Court, may contribute to defining and prosecuting political crimes on a global scale. There are several common features and characteristics associated with political crimes. Offenses such as treason, attempts to overthrow a government, anti-state propaganda, and acts against the interests of the state are considered political crimes.

Acts of terrorism, intended to achieve political, religious, or ideological goals through violence, may be classified as political crimes. Political Corruption: Offenses involving the improper exchange or use of material or immaterial advantages to gain power or influence can be recognized as political corruption crimes. Actions that infringe upon the political rights of citizens, such as suppressing the opposition, restricting freedom of speech, or impeding the right to peaceful assembly, may be deemed political offenses.

Violations of international humanitarian law during conflicts, including crimes against humanity, can have political implications. Acts of extremism and expressions of hatred directed at specific political or social groups may fall under the category of political crimes. The definition of political crimes is shaped by the specific legal frameworks of individual countries or international agreements, and organizations like the International Criminal Court may contribute to the global understanding and prosecution of such offenses. Political crimes involve unlawful actions aimed at gaining or retaining power, influencing political change, and may manifest in various forms with diverse motivations, all closely tied to the political sphere.

One of the primary characteristics of political crimes is their motivation, which revolves around the pursuit or retention of political power, influence, or control. These crimes typically occur within a political environment, often intertwined with state power, political institutions, and civic structures. Political crimes may involve tactics like manipulating public opinion, utilizing propaganda, disseminating disinformation, and employing other strategies to accomplish political objectives. Many political offenses, including corruption, encompass activities such as acquiring improper benefits, abusing power, and engaging in bribery.

Certain political crimes may be directed against the state, such as terrorism or treason, or they may involve systematic violations of human rights and crimes against humanity. Offenses arising from ethnic or religious conflicts might be categorized as political, as they aim to achieve political goals through group confrontations. Actions intended to interfere in the political processes of other countries may be deemed political crimes, particularly if they contravene international law. Some political crimes may stem from systemic issues, including deficiencies in democracy, the absence of the rule of law, and inadequate control systems. While the characteristics of political crimes can vary based on specific contexts and circumstances, their common thread is their connection to the political sphere and their utilization for the achievement of political objectives.

Methods

Defining political crime is an initial step in the methodology, covering acts for acquiring power, violating political rights, or engaging in terrorism. Key steps include classifying political crimes, analyzing causes, identifying and investigating cases, enhancing the legal framework, developing preventive strategies, and considering the international dimension. This interdisciplinary approach, involving political science, criminology, human rights, and international law, is essential for understanding, predicting, and combating political crimes.

The methodology for political crime research is a comprehensive framework that combines theoretical and practical aspects to understand, analyze, and address illegal actions within the political sphere. The key research areas span diverse perspectives:

1. Socio-economic analysis: Examining the socio-economic context reveals contributing factors, such as resource distribution, economic crises, and social tensions, influencing political crime.
2. Psychological analysis: Considering psychological aspects unveils the motivations driving individuals to commit political crimes. Studying mental states and backgrounds aids in understanding the choices made by these individuals.
3. Network analysis: Utilizing network analysis techniques identifies links and relationships between individuals, groups, or organizations involved in political crime, revealing structures and patterns of activity.
4. Historical analysis: Reviewing the history of events related to political offenses elucidates context and dynamics, providing insights to predict and prevent similar events in the future.
5. Cultural analysis: Examining cultural characteristics and values helps determine how the cultural environment influences political offenses, such as identifying political religious extremism through belief and ritual analysis.
6. Gender analysis: Applying a gender perspective reveals how stereotypes and inequalities impact political offenses, aiding in understanding the structural causes and consequences of political illegality.
7. Communication analysis: Examining communication modes between those committing political offenses uncovers means of influence and manipulation. Analyzing language in political declarations and public statements offers insights into motiva-

tions and goals.

8. Financial flow analysis: Investigating financial flows exposes corruption schemes and financing mechanisms for political offenses. Identifying funding sources and money routes aids in uncovering and disrupting illicit activities.
9. Technological analysis: Applying technological analysis reveals the use of information technology in political crimes, including cyber attacks and social media manipulation.
10. Social media analysis: Examining social media activity unveils public sentiment, information dissemination, and manipulation of public opinion. Analyzing the influence of social media on political views is crucial for understanding potential implications.
11. Biographical analysis: Scrutinizing the personal histories of political offenders provides insight into their identities, motivations, and action dynamics.
12. Scenario analysis: Using scenario analysis enables the development of different possible scenarios, facilitating strategic decision-making to prevent political offenses.
13. Expert analysis: Involving experts from various fields brings diverse perspectives, such as political science, criminology, psychology, or economics, enhancing the understanding of political crime.

Combining these methods creates a fully informed analysis of political crime, forming the basis for developing effective strategies to manage risks and counteract such phenomena in the future.

Results

Political crime serves as a subject of interdisciplinary exploration, engaging scholars from law, criminology, political science, and sociology. A key focus for jurists and criminologists revolves around the distinctions and resemblances between political crime and other forms of criminal activity. V. Timoshenko (2011) emphasizes the need for a clear demarcation between criminological investigations of political crime and the analysis of the issue solely from a political science perspective. Nevertheless, there are instances where criminological and political science approaches to studying political crime intersect, as evident in the examination of political repression (Bove et al., 2017; see also Bhasin & Gandhi, 2013; Gooch, 2019; Roberti, 2019; Van Voren, 2015). Notably, criminologist V. Luneev (2005) dedicates a chapter in his work «Crime in the XXth Century: Global, Regional and Russian Trends» to scrutinizing political crimes, including political repression, as one of its subsets.

It's important to highlight that political scientists and sociologists often avoid using the term «political crime» when examining phenomena involving large groups of people. Instead, their focus lies more in understanding the objective and subjective factors underlying these occurrences, the prerequisites and aftermath, participants, and their motivations. Authorities that have been defeated, which typically trigger such acts of public disobedience, tend to label these processes as «political crimes.» Conversely, protesters view the actions of authorities as criminal.

When assessing such processes in the contemporary context, it's crucial to consider their unique origins and evolution within the framework of the modern information society. Emerging information technologies like the Internet and social networks facilitate the task of destabilizing societal situations for interested parties, whether internal or external. However, such actions are seldom classified as political crimes. V. Luneev (2005) observes that the term «political crime» is cautiously employed in associating actions with criminality, based on the rationale that «in the criminal legislation of a democratic society, political motivation cannot be criminalized.» However, this stance doesn't extend to separatism, which is also rooted in political motivation. Separatism is categorized as a crime, specifically as one type of anti-state political crime, where other states might also have vested interests. In the context of hybrid warfare, actions to incite or support separatism within a target country of

aggression are feasible.

Contemporary studies on political crimes delve into both the exploration of their causes, motivations, participants, consequences, and avenues for prevention. These crimes can manifest as either violent or non-violent in nature. Consequently, a considerable portion of research is currently dedicated to the realm of political terrorism. This emphasis stems from the emergence of globalized international terrorism, posing a threat to the security of all countries, including those that are politically stable.

Numerous definitions of «political crime» exist, with a common thread being their connection to power dynamics (acquisition, maintenance, utilization) and their foundation in political motivation. However, implementing these definitions in practice presents challenges due to the emotionally charged and evaluative nature through which this phenomenon is perceived, as acknowledged by researchers.

Types of Political Crimes

According to V. Lunev (1999), various forms of political crime can be grouped into three main types: (a) crimes committed for political reasons by individuals or groups against the established constitutional order, the state's interests, or its legitimate leaders; (b) crimes committed for political reasons by individuals or groups against their political rivals; and (c) crimes committed by the ruling elite of totalitarian regimes for their own political objectives, targeting the people, specific parties, groups, or individuals.

This classification demonstrates that political crimes encompass a spectrum of actions. They can originate from both the state's ruling elite against its citizens and citizens against the state, the political system, or political opponents. In both scenarios, the crimes can be deliberate acts or incited reactions. In times of socio-political and economic crises, large-scale peaceful demonstrations by the populace can trigger an excessive response from the authorities due to their apprehensions about potential backlash from the people. If the use of force to disperse such protests results in casualties, it can create a «self-fulfilling prophecy,» as termed by conflictologists (Stukas & Snyder, 2016). While the state maintains a monopoly on the use of violence, this authority should be exercised in extreme circumstances.

People's uprisings can also be seen as a collective response to the actions of authorities—a form of «collective self-defense» against rights violations, infringements on freedoms, or even physical harm. This type of resistance represents a movement against policies that are detrimental to the people. This raises the question of whether such uprisings should be classified as political crimes. At times, failing to resist such policies has led to significant human suffering, as seen during events like the Holodomor in Ukraine in 1932-1933.

Perception of Political Crimes

It is important to highlight that the assessment of identical actions carried out by the same individuals or groups can vary based on the perspective of the evaluator, the value system, the repercussions of these actions, ideological beliefs, propaganda, and the media coverage of events. Throughout the existence of the Soviet Union, for instance, perceptions of Communist Party leaders underwent changes. During the period of Stalin's repressions, many figures who were once considered «heroes of the revolution» were branded as enemies of the people, effectively being treated as political criminals. Subsequently, during the «thaw» era, with the declassification of certain documents from the time of Stalin's repressions, former «prosecutors and judges» found themselves labeled as «accused» of committing political crimes.

The policy of «glasnost» introduced by M.S. Gorbachev in the 1980s further illuminated the crimes committed by the authorities against their own citizens. Similar transformations

occurred in the nations of the former socialist bloc. However, it's worth noting that various countries and even different regions within the same country exhibited varying levels of readiness to accept this «new» historical truth. Such disparities can be attributed to differences in political subcultures, life experiences, and value systems. Many individuals struggled to part with established stereotypes, often as a means to avoid cognitive dissonance. In these situations, defense mechanisms like displacement (essentially «forgetting» distressing or traumatic information) came into play.

The acknowledgment of the Communist Party's activities as criminal had implications for numerous citizens of the Soviet Union, given the party's widespread membership. In 1990, a year prior to the USSR's collapse, the party boasted 19 million members, a number that dwindled to 16 million by 1991. Ordinary members of the party were generally not involved in shaping party policies, and many among them, along with their family members, were also victims of those policies. Nonetheless, the party's indictment for crimes triggered complex emotions in these individuals. Some experienced fear, while others grappled with a sense of injustice. From their standpoint, they themselves hadn't committed any crimes as party members; on the contrary, they believed they had contributed significantly to societal progress.

During the era of perestroika, the perception of the 1917 revolution also underwent shifts. This change in perspective was evident in the use of the term «October Revolution» rather than «Great October Socialist Revolution» (the full official name in the USSR), as well as the removal of the holiday «Anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution» from the list of public holidays (this occurred in Ukraine in 2000). Nevertheless, there are individuals who remain in disagreement with the policy of decommunization.

The matter of the «justness» of popular uprisings against authorities has garnered attention from numerous scholars. Throughout history, protests against oppression and governmental violence have been vindicated through various lenses. In the Middle Ages, the justification rested on the belief that rulers had transgressed «God's laws,» while in the Modern Age, discourse centered on breaches of the «social contract.» In contemporary times, the focus has shifted to violations of human rights and freedoms outlined in the Constitution, which designates the people as the wellspring and bearers of power.

Can an insurgency against power-holding «representatives of the people» who employ violence and terror be deemed criminal if alternative avenues for resolution are scarce? Evaluating such scenarios is intricate and consistently prompts debates, not solely within society but also among scholars. These scholars are not isolated from the societies in which they live, thereby influencing their perspectives. Rendering judgment in such instances is perpetually equivocal. Scientists, as representatives of distinct groups, harbor particular interests that shape their interpretations of revolutions and uprisings. Some perceive these events as outcomes of objective factors, while others construe them as products of conspiracies, leading them to label such occurrences as political crimes. This quandary, known as a problem of objectivity in socio-political understanding, was explored by M. Weber (1904).

The preamble to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the UN General Assembly on December 10, 1948, underscores the importance of safeguarding human rights through the rule of law to prevent individuals from being forced into rebelling against tyranny and oppression as a last resort (United Nations, 1948). Does this imply that if legal protection of human rights falters, individuals should resort to rebellion as a means of self-defense against tyranny and oppression? Although this defensive approach finds validation in the writings of certain historical thinkers and contemporary scholars, the majority of scholars tend to advocate for more conventional methods of asserting one's rights.

Societal instability stemming from either revolutions, uprisings, or mass protests constitutes a political crisis, a bifurcation. At this pivotal point of bifurcation, anticipating the trajectory of societal development and identifying all potential risks becomes arduous.

Subject of Political Crimes

Understanding the nature and characteristics of political crimes inherently involves comprehending the individuals behind these actions (subjects). Therefore, a comprehensive exploration of political crimes necessitates the examination of the personalities of political criminals. These subjects can encompass those in positions of power striving to maintain their authority through any means necessary, segments of the population or individual citizens attempting to unlawfully alter the constitutional order, and opposition politicians employing illicit methods to seize power.

Among the pioneers delving into the study of criminal personality was Cesare Lombroso (1978), who classified political criminals as «criminals by passion.» According to Lombroso (1978), class and social fanaticism play a substantial role in political crimes. Criminals of passion exhibit heightened affectivity, making them prone to committing serious offenses under unusual and tense circumstances. However, fully concurring with this perspective proves challenging. In many cases, political crimes perpetrated by those in power against the populace are executed by calculating, rational, and composed individuals.

Discussion

Numerous scholars have taken an interest in the impact of value systems on the conduct of political criminals. Notably, Steven Shafer (1971) observed that the influence of values and morality is more conspicuous in political crimes compared to other types of offenses. The preservation of societal stability and its governance considerably hinge on established value systems. Amidst conditions of anomie, the once-deterrent nature of conventional behavioral norms erodes, and actions once condemned might lose their stigma. Consequently, what previously constituted a political crime could undergo a shift in perception.

In his work titled «Political Crime and the Political Offender: Theory and Practice,» Nikos Passas (1986) delves into the political motivations of criminals across various historical periods, spanning from antiquity to the 19th century. Through his exploration, Passas (1986) arrives at the conclusion that the inspiration behind such acts, societal attitudes toward this category of crime, and the public image of these political criminals have undergone shifts and transformations. Notably, there existed a time when political criminals, distinguished by their noble and altruistic motives, commanded respect that set them apart from ordinary criminals (Passas, 1986).

The transition in perception of former political prisoners in post-Soviet countries during the era of perestroika and glasnost is an illustrative case. This transformation was palpably manifested in the early «post-perestroika» elections. Individuals who had been previously labeled as political criminals assumed roles as influential figures in public opinion, garnering support in elections to governing bodies. This phenomenon underscores the influence of media coverage on shaping public opinions regarding actions and individuals. Importantly, certain breaches of the law pursued with «noble goals» can still be regarded positively by the populace, even if official sources of information present differing perspectives on these acts. This phenomenon is intrinsically tied to the level of trust placed in the government's legitimacy and media credibility.

Object of Political Crimes

When political motivations behind the actions of authorities are not readily apparent and remain concealed, categorizing such actions as political crimes becomes a challenge, even if they result in significant harm to large segments of the population. Contrastingly, the task is less complicated when it's evident that the authorities are intentionally targeting and

suppressing political opponents or societal groups, as witnessed in the 20th century within countries governed by totalitarian regimes.

These repressive measures were often directed at specific groups based on ethnic, social class, religious, or ideological factors, or were arbitrarily selected to induce fear within the population. The purpose behind the Holodomor in Ukraine during 1932-1933 is subject to multiple interpretations. It might have been an attempt to eradicate Ukrainians, given their majority presence in the rural populace. It could also be construed as a method of «penalty» Ukrainian peasants. The rural landscape of Ukraine accommodated not only Ukrainians but also individuals from other nationalities. The peasantry expressed their dissent against collectivization policies and *prodrazverstka* in the 1920s, often disregarding council elections.

In the viewpoint of V. Lunev (1999), the Soviet regime's «political criminality» could be viewed as a repressive strategy against the populace that did not share the Communist Party's political ideologies or actively opposed them. Lunev (1999) emphasizes that from this standpoint, those subjected to repression ought to be seen not as criminals, but as victims of political arbitrariness. The political motive underlying repressions, such as the Ukrainian famine, was evidently to compel acceptance of any actions or policies endorsed by the authorities, even if they starkly contradicted societal interests. This objective was largely fulfilled, as the fear of similar tragedies influenced people's conduct for years to come. During the initial stages of *perestroika*, scholars remarked upon the conservative nature of Ukrainian society. The process of shedding «social fear» in Ukraine was gradual and incremental.

At times, deliberate information withholding can place people in jeopardy, as exemplified by the aftermath of the Chernobyl disaster in the Ukrainian SSR. Could this be justified by the aim to avert panic? Evidently, political motives are also entwined in such actions, driven by the desire to maintain political stability and power. In neighboring countries, including those within the socialist camp like Czechoslovakia, immediate measures were undertaken to safeguard the population from radiation, and through informative campaigns, panic was averted. In contrast, Ukraine not only disseminated inaccurate information about the accident's magnitude but also organized mass events involving numerous children. A notable instance was the International Workers Day' demonstration in Kyiv.

The privatization of state assets, leading to the emergence of a small group of oligarchs in Ukraine, exhibited certain traits of a political crime. This oligarchic group continues to wield substantial influence over state policies. The outcome of power oligarchization was the transformation of a nation with considerable potential wealth into a society where the majority finds themselves within the «lower» class. A portion of the elite, comprising former Soviet *nomenklatura*, capitalized on their access to power during times of general crisis, societal transformations, and administrative upheaval to amass personal wealth. Gaining control over the privatization process enabled them to acquire assets that were previously state-owned (Kindratets, 2012).

There are several key concepts and theories that contribute to the understanding of political conflicts:

1. Political Realism: The realist approach to understanding political conflict assumes that states work for their own self-interest and security. According to this theory, conflicts arise from the struggle for power, resources, and influence between sovereign actors.
2. Liberalism Theory: The liberal approach views conflicts as the result of misunderstanding and lack of communication between states. Liberals believe that international institutions, economic interdependence, and diplomacy can reduce and avoid conflicts.
3. Constructivism Theory: Constructivists view conflicts as the result of social constructs, identities, and ideologies. According to this theory, conflicts arise because of differences in perception of the world and understanding of oneself and others.
4. The power politics theory: This theory suggests that conflicts arise from the struggle for control over resources, territory, and power. Power and resource capture are considered key factors in political conflicts.

5. Postcolonial theory: The postcolonial approach highlights the impact of colonial history on contemporary political conflicts. It is noted that many of the conflicts are the result of former colonial events, including borders, ethnic divisions, and economic problems.
6. Negotiation Theory: This approach emphasizes the importance of diplomatic negotiation and engagement in conflict resolution. Rather than emphasizing misunderstandings or conflicts of interest, this theory emphasizes the potential for conflict resolution through negotiation and cooperation.

There are several authors who contributed to the development of some concepts:

- Political Realism: Hans Morgenthau (2008) contends that conflicts are an essential component of state relations, originating from the competition for power, security, and resources.
- Liberalism theory: Michael Doyle (2011) advocates the idea that fostering economic interdependence, democracy, and international institutions could mitigate conflicts.
- The power politics theory: Douglas Lemke (2008) posits that the primary drivers of political conflict are the acquisition and control of resources, power, and other values.
- Engagement Theory: Joseph Hewitt, Jonathan Wilkenfeld, and Ted Robert Gurr perceive conflicts as outcomes that arise from the involvement of various actors, including civil society and mass social movements (Hewitt et al., 2010).
- Territorial Dispute (boundary dispute): According to Niall O Dochartaigh (2015), conflicts may stem from disputes and contentions over territorial boundaries and resources.
- Morton A. Kaplan (2005), a political scientist, explained conflicts through the lens of systems analysis.

The concept of «political crimes» encompasses various aspects and theoretical approaches.

Theoretical Aspects:

- Theory of Power and Legitimacy: Examines how power is used, its legitimacy, and whether citizens' rights are violated in the commission of political crimes.
- Social Counterrevolution Theories: Explore how political crimes can arise in the context of social discontent and efforts to maintain or change the existing order.
- Criminology and Sociology Theory: Analyzes political crime based on criminological and sociological principles, considering the causes of crime and the interaction of social factors.
- Theory of Corruption: Within this framework, political crimes related to the misuse of power and personal gain are studied.
- Theory of International Relations: Considers political crimes in the international context, examining their connection to international conflicts, terrorism, and other forms of interaction between countries.

Applied Aspects:

- The consideration of political crimes includes defining and criminalizing actions perceived as a threat to public order.
- Legal Remedies and Penalties: Involves the development and application of legal means to prevent and punish political crimes.
- International Courts and Tribunals: Set legal precedents for the trial and punishment of political crimes at the international level.
- Implementation of Strategies and Measures: Aims to prevent and control political crimes through proactive measures.
- International Cooperation: Focuses on collaborative efforts to identify, investigate, and punish individuals responsible for political crimes.

The comprehensive approach to the study of political crimes combines theoretical reflections with measures to regulate and control them at various societal levels.

Conclusions

This study underscores the theoretical and practical dilemmas inherent in classifying specific actions as political offenses. The divergence lies in the varied valuation of motivations, circumstances, and prerequisites surrounding these actions. Presently, numerous events warrant scrutiny by experts in political crimes. Such endeavors can potentially preclude political crimes and offer solutions to the predicaments arising from them.

Addressing political crime necessitates a comprehensive approach:

- **Legal Framework:** Clearly define political crimes in the law and establish an effective justice system for prosecution.
- **Human Rights Protection:** Safeguard fundamental human rights, including freedom of speech and peaceful assembly. Develop mechanisms to protect human rights defenders and journalists.
- **Institutional Strengthening:** Enhance transparency and accountability in government and institutions. Establish independent anti-corruption bodies and audit services.
- **Civil Society Support:** Foster civil society organizations focused on human rights and political crime monitoring. Encourage citizen participation in decision-making through robust civic engagement mechanisms.
- **International Collaboration:** Collaborate with international organizations and countries to exchange experiences and information on political crimes. Establish international mechanisms to prevent and address political crimes.
- **Education and Information Campaigns:** Conduct campaigns and educational activities to inform citizens about their rights and the risks of political crimes. Promote media education and critical thinking to counter disinformation.
- **Monitoring and Analysis:** Establish mechanisms for monitoring and analyzing political crimes through specialized commissions and research organizations. Regularly publish reports and research findings.
- **Conflict Prevention:** Develop programs and projects to strengthen social solidarity, foster economic development, and resolve social conflicts, contributing to effective prevention, detection, and punishment of political crimes while safeguarding citizens' rights and freedoms.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Funding

The author received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

References

- Benedict, T., Richter, J., & Gast, A. (2019). The influence of misinformation manipulations on evaluative conditioning. *Acta Psychologica*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.actpsy.2019.01.014>
- Bhasin, T., & Gandhi, J. (2013). Timing and targeting of state repression in authoritarian

- elections. *Electoral Studies*, 32(4), 620–631. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2013.07.011>
- Bove, V. M., Platteau, J., & Sekeris, P. G. (2017). Political repression in autocratic regimes. *Journal of Comparative Economics*, 45(2), 410–428. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jce.2016.11.004>
- Burmaoglu, S., & Saritas, O. (2017). Changing characteristics of warfare and the future of Military R&D. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 116, 151–161. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2016.10.062>
- Dochartaigh, N. Ó. (2015). Territorial conflicts. In *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences* (pp. 214–220). <https://doi.org/10.1016/b978-0-08-097086-8.96039-2>
- Doyle, M. W. (2011). *Liberal Peace: Selected Essays*. Routledge.
- Gooch, E. (2019). Terrain ruggedness and limits of political repression: Evidence from China's Great Leap Forward and Famine (1959–61). *Journal of Comparative Economics*, 47(4), 827–852. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jce.2019.08.001>
- Hewitt, J. J., Wilkenfeld, J., & Gurr, T. R. (2010). *Peace and conflict 2010: executive summary*. Paradigm.
- Kaplan, M. A. (2005). *System and process in international politics*. John Wiley and Sons.
- Kindratets, O. N. (2012). Oligarchalization of the power: the causes and consequences. *Gileia: Scientific Bulletin*, 65, 476–481.
- Lemke, D. (2008). Power Politics and Wars without States. *American Journal of Political Science*, 52(4), 774–786. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-5907.2008.00342.x>
- Li, R., & Kovacich, G. L. (2016). Introduction to Global Information Warfare. In *The Information Systems Security Officer's Guide* (3rd ed.). <https://doi.org/10.1016/b978-0-12-802190-3.00013-0>
- Lombroso, C. (1978). *Los anarquistas* [The anarchists]. Júcar.
- Lombroso, C., & Laschi, R. (1890). *Il delitto politico e le rivoluzioni in rapporto al diritto, all'antropologia criminale ed alla scienza di governo: Con 10 tavole e 21 figure nel testo* [Political crime and revolutions in relation to law, criminal anthropology and government science: With 10 tables and 21 figures in the text]. Fratelli Bocca.
- Luneev, V. V. (1999). *Politicheskaya prestupnost v Rossii: proshloe i nastoyashee* [Political Crime in Russia: Past and Present]. *Social Sciences and Contemporary World*, 5, 66–79.
- Luneev, V. V. (2005). *Prestupnost XX veka: mirovye, regionalnye i rossijskie tendencii* [Criminality of the XX century: world, regional and Russian trends] (2nd ed.). Wolters Kluwer.
- Miller, C. (2019). Inside the information wars. *New Scientist*, 244(3252), 38–41. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0262-4079\(19\)31973-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0262-4079(19)31973-6)
- Morgenthau, H. J. (1948). *Politics among nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*. A.A. Knopf.
- Passas, N. (1986). Political crime and political offender: Theory and practice. *The Liverpool Law Review*, 8(1), 23–26. <https://doi.org/10.1007/bf01079483>
- Roberti, P. (2019). State capacity and repression: A model of colonial rule. *European Economic Review*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.euroecorev.2019.01.007>
- Robinson, M., Jones, K., & Janicke, H. (2015). Cyber warfare: Issues and challenges. *Computers & Security*, 49, 70–94. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cose.2014.11.007>
- Ross, J. I. (2012). *An introduction to political crime*. Policy.
- Sætra, H. S. (2019). The tyranny of perceived opinion: Freedom and information in the era of big data. *Technology in Society*, 59, 101155. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techsoc.2019.101155>
- Shafer, S. (1971). The Concept of the Political Criminal. *The Journal of Criminal Law, Criminology, and Police Science*, 62(3), 380–387. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1142177>
- Shin, J., Jian, L., Driscoll, K., & Bar, F. (2018). The diffusion of misinformation on social media: Temporal pattern, message, and source. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 83, 278–287. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2018.02.008>
- Straub, J. (2019). Mutual assured destruction in information, influence and cyber warfare: Comparing, contrasting and combining relevant scenarios. *Technology in Society*, 59,

101177. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techsoc.2019.101177>
- Stukas, A. A., & Snyder, M. (2016). Self-Fulfilling prophecies. In *Encyclopedia of Mental Health* (2nd ed., pp. 92–100). <https://doi.org/10.1016/b978-0-12-397045-9.00220-2>
- Talwar, S., Dhir, A., Kaur, P., Zafar, N., & Alrasheedy, M. (2019). Why do people share fake news? Associations between the dark side of social media use and fake news sharing behavior. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 51, 72–82. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2019.05.026>
- Tanner, C., Fishman, E. K., Horton, K. M., & Sheth, S. (2017). How technology is changing news and our culture: Lessons from Elections 2016 and Davos 2017: Tech, Media, and the Newsroom of the Future. *Journal of the American College of Radiology*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jacr.2017.06.025>
- Timoshenko, V. (2011). Politichni Zlochyni yak Element Politichnogo Zhittya [Political crimes as an element of political life]. *Actual Problems of State and Law: A Collection of Scientific Papers*, 43, 174–179.
- United Nations. (1948, December 10). *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>
- Van Voren, R. (2015). Fifty years of political abuse of psychiatry – no end in sight. *Ethics, Medicine and Public Health*, 1(1), 44–51. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jemep.2014.12.001>
- Weber, M. (1904). Die «Objektivität» sozialwissenschaftlicher und sozialpolitischer Erkenntnis. *Archiv Für Sozialwissenschaft Und Sozialpolitik*, 19(1), 22–87.
- Zelinska, N. A. (2005). Ponyatie «politicheskaya prestupnost» [Concept of «political crime»]. *Actual Problems of State and Law: A Collection of Scientific Papers*, 25, 491–497.

Author Biography

Olena Kindratets is a Doctor of Political Science, Professor, Professor of the Department of Political Science at the Zaporizhzhia National University.

This is an open access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC4.0) which allows reusers to distribute, remix, adapt, and build upon the material in any medium or format for non-commercial purposes only, and only so long as attribution is given to the creator.