Abstract

The aim of this master’s degree thesis on the topic of the Criminological Aspects of Hate Crime is to offer a comprehensive perspective on hate crime from the criminological point of view.

The first chapter is introductory and concerns itself with the phenomenon of hate crime in general. It deals with the theoretical definition of hate crime, its specific characteristics that distinguish it from other types of crime and it also includes a typology of hate crimes. Subsequently, it focuses on the international, European and Czech substantive legal regulation.

The second chapter concerns itself with the related term of extremism. It defines the main ideas and manifestations of right wing and left wing extremism and it also focuses on the current situation and extremist scene in the Czech Republic. During the examination of the right wing political extremism, the terms of racism, nationalism, ethnocentrism and xenophobia are explained. Then, religious extremism and terrorism are briefly described. Finally, the last subchapter deals with the etiology of extremism.

The core of this thesis lies in its third chapter that concerns itself with hate crimes from the criminological perspective and examines phenomenology, etiology and control of this criminality. The phenomenological subchapter focuses on the forms of bias criminality, its structure, typology and demographics of its perpetrators and the demographics and victimization of its victims. The second subchapter examines the etiology of hate crimes, i.e. the possible causes and criminological factors contributing to the genesis of this criminality. Then, the etiology of bias from the perspective of social psychology is briefly explained. This chapter is closed with the subchapter on the control of hate crimes, i.e. preventive and repressive measures that can lead to a decrease in criminality or prevent its increase.

The last, fourth chapter is concerned with violence against the homeless – a phenomenon that is quite unexplored criminologically. First, it briefly explains the term of homelessness and describes current demographics of homeless people in Czech Republic. Then, it focuses on the attacks against the homeless, its most common forms and the perpetrators of these attacks. The last subchapter describes the legal regulation of this issue in the United States.
The thesis also contains annexes, comprising of an overview table of relevant provisions of the Criminal Code regulating hate crimes, tables and graphs depicting the criminality rate, the clear-up rate, structure and dynamics of the registered criminality in the past few years, an overview table of the typology of perpetrators and summaries of few selected publicized cases of attacks against the homeless in the past few years.

Hate crimes are a manifestation of intolerance and therefore a grave social issue. They may only amount to an insignificant proportion of total criminality but this type of criminality is estimated to have a very high latency. It can be expected that on the account of the recently passed Victims of Crime Act the registered hate crimes rate will increase in the future despite the trend of decrease registered in the past two years due to expected decrease in latent criminality.