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<p>Tiivistelmä-Referat-Abstract</p> <p>This thesis focuses on slavery as an example of a past injustice and how the issue came up in the World Conference against Racism in Durban (WCAR), South Africa, held 31 August – 7 September 2001. The legacies of slavery, slave trade and colonialism and their implications almost ruined the whole WCAR conference as African countries raised the issue of slavery on the agenda of the conference. They wanted an apology for slavery and reparations for it. Not surprisingly, the issue was a red cloth for the United States and Western European countries with colonial pasts.</p> <p>The WCAR process and also the experiences from the national truth commissions and trials in transitional situations have showed that not only economic factors but also the issues of the past are important to people. As slavery and past injustices in general do seem to have consequences even today, in this thesis I will try to answer to the questions what has been done in order to amend the past wrongs, especially for slavery, and what other alternatives there might be available in solving the problem that such issues have presented.</p> <p>I will look at the slavery in the context of dealing with the past. In the last three decades there are several examples of states which after abuses of human rights or transitions to a more democratic regime have dealt with their difficult past. I will present a short overview of the practices from the reality, and look into the different ways to deal with the past. Two methods are taken into closer examination, i.e. trials and tribunal and truth commissions. From this point of view I will examine whether the methods and proceedings applied so far in the domestic use may be appropriate also on the global scale.</p> <p>A part of the scientific significance of this work arises in the connection of two, at least so far quite separate discourses, namely the discourse of dealing with the past and the discourse on global (distributive) justice. In the theoretical framework I will examine probably the most important work in the field of distributive justice, namely John Rawls' A Theory of Justice, published in 1971. Distributive justice is about allocation of present and future recourses, but pays no attention to history and memory in its definition of justice. This is where this thesis brings something new to the field of global justice.</p>		
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