

The relationship between the Catholic church and the National socialism in Germany on the eve of World War II

The diploma work focuses on the events in the German Empire in the period from Adolf Hitler's takeover of power in 1933 until the outbreak of world war II. The aim of my work is to depict the relationship between the Catholic church and the National socialist government in Germany.

The work brings out the key moments of the national socialist program and the substantial statements of its representatives which refer to religion and the Church. And at the same time very severe condemnation of the Church. After takeover of power in 1933 the National socialists made the Imperial concordat. In the years that followed the Concordat was systematically being broken, the Church pursued and its activities consistently destroyed.

The work outlines the gradual liquidation of the political Catholicism, the Centre and Bavarian folk parties, liquidation of the professional and youth associations and the Hitlerjugend step-up. It follows the effort to discredit the Church with preachy means which were pursued against it.

On the background of these repressions the work deals with the development of the attitudes and official statements of the German bishops. Ranging from the condemnation before the year 1933 through cautious statements in the years 1934 to 35, attempts to recon ciliate when negotiating with Hitler in 1936 and unequivocally negative attitude in 1937 as far as calling for obedience of secular power at the beginning of the world war.

The church was always returning to its original attitude – the national socialism is irreconcilable with the Catholic dogmatics.

Key terms:

- German episcopate
- Adolf Hitler
- Pius XI.
- Reich Concordat
- „Mit brennender Sorge“
- Church and National Socialism