Abstract

This bachelor thesis deals with movements of “progressive priests” where Catholic Priests and Laics participated and which existed in some satellite states of the Soviet Union. It describes this phenomenon on example of Association PAX and so called “Patriotic Priests” – two Polish Catholic movements in 1945–1956. The work shows both groups in a context of state-church relationship and describes some reasons why these kinds of movements came into existence.

First part compares situation of Catholic Church in Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary, Central European countries, which belonged to what is called Eastern Bloc and most of their citizens were Roman Catholics. It also refers to an existence of movements similar to “Patriotic Priests” in Czechoslovakia and Hungary and describes reasons why there was such a similarity in state politics against Church in all these countries.

Next chapter analyses two particular examples of catholic movement, which promoted an ideology based on conjunctions of Catholicism and Communism. First of them is a group called “Patriotic Priests”. At the beginning it was a society of priests who helped the Polish resistance in the Second World War, but it changed to a movement which organized all collaborating priests. It should have separated leaders of Polish Church who were closely connected to Vatican and lower clergy.

Second, there was “Association PAX”, which published some catholic newspaper and later it had a monopolistic position in this kind of the press. PAX was also an only tolerated Christian political subject in late 40’s and 50’s. Both movements competed with official Church Leaders and had many privileges. This work wants to answer some questions as how did these movements work, what motivated them and how most of the Catholic Polish society reacted.

Keywords

PAX, Patriotic priests, Poland, catholic church, communism