

## ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

The aim of my thesis is to research the definition of a crime against humanity and its development mainly from the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century till this day *via* analysis of legal instruments and comparative and historical method. Norms prohibiting the commission of crimes against humanity and defining the content of these complex crimes are international customary norms. Hence, the norms are non-written and as such undergoing a constant development in time. Since there is no multilateral Convention aiming exclusively at prohibiting the commission of these crimes and defining them, we need to extract the substance of the definition of crimes against humanity from various other sources. These so called material sources of law, which I used in my thesis, were mainly the Statutes of international criminal tribunals (IMT, ICTY, ICTR and SCSL) and the International Criminal Court (ICC) as well as their case law. The outcome of my thesis is a summary analysis of all the elements that need to be fulfilled in order to define a crime as a crime against humanity in current international law.

The norms defining crimes against humanity and prohibiting their commission are already rather well established in international law. Due to the fact that crimes against humanity are still being committed in various parts of the world, the international community remains focused mainly on their effective prosecution. Therefore, the second part of my thesis examines the obstacles that states of the international community face on national and mostly international level while attempting to achieve justice.