ABSTRACT

The purpose of the diploma thesis is to describe and summarize the legal regime of Antarctica including its evolution, functioning and the protection of its environment.

Chapter one of the thesis consists of the introduction with the Antarctic continent including the natural conditions, the history of the discovering, the competition between Roald Amundsen and Robert Falcon Scott to reach the South Pole and the territorial claims of seven states in the first half of the twentieth century.

The second chapter deals with the fundamental document of the legal regime of Antarctica – The Antarctic Treaty. The Antarctic Treaty was signed in Washington on 1 December 1959 by the twelve countries whose scientists had been active in and around Antarctica during the International Geophysical Year of 1957-58. The very important provisions of the Treaty contain international cooperation and prohibition of any measures of a military nature, such as the establishment of military bases and fortifications, carrying out of the military maneuvers, as well as testing of any type of weapons. Antarctica became international space which can not be appropriated by individual states.


The fourth chapter concentrates on the protection of the Antarctic environment. The most important international instrument is The Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty (Madrid Protocol) and its annexes. It provides the complex protection to the environment of Antarctica.