

Lateran Pacts of 1929

Abstract

The Lateran Pacts are a system of three contracts signed by the representatives of the Holy See and Fascist Italy in 1929. Their signing and subsequent ratification put an end to the so-called Roman Question, which had lasted nearly sixty years and posed a problem of the sovereignty of the Holy See. In 1870, the Papal State ceased to exist without a replacement, so that a united Kingdom of Italy could emerge, and the Holy See found itself without its own territory and population, and therefore without its own sovereignty.

Over the next nearly sixty years there were many attempts to resolve this situation, but the efforts were more or less unsuccessful for a variety of reasons. However, all of these efforts had a major influence on the final form of the Lateran Treaties and therefore cannot be interpreted without continuity and knowledge of the development of the solution of the Roman Question.

This thesis not only examines the historical-political situation, but also provides an interpretation of the content of the Lateran Pacts themselves, and presents a legal assessment of the problematic provisions of the Pacts, especially in direct relation to the Constitution of the Italian Republic and other Italian legislation. The topic is therefore not limited in time to 1929 alone, but focuses on the years following the ratification and establishment of the Italian Republic after World War II, as well as the 1985 amendment of the Lateran Pacts and its significance for both the Holy See and the Italian Republic.

Keywords: Lateran Pacts, Roman Question, Vatican City State