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*American eyewitnesses opinions on Nazi Germany (1933-41)*

Summary

The purpose of my dissertation is to analyze American eyewitnesses opinions on Nazi Germany in the inter-war years (1933-1941), particularly during the years from the rise of Nazism in 1933 to America's entry into World War II in December 1941. The dissertation is a study of the memoirs, diaries, interviews and other works of U.S. citizens who were in Germany during the thirties and early forties. It analyzes their perceptions of the changes which occurred during that period.

The dissertation is composed of seven chapters, six of them dealing with different aspects of Nazi State. The first chapter is the introduction and covers the issue of the American Experience in Germany during the Weimar Republic (1918-1932). The second chapter focus on "Gleichschaltung" (coordination) of public life in Germany after 30 January 1933 and American observers attitude toward Nazi rose to power. This chapter examines also the American visitors opinions on the events of the Night of the Long Knives (30 June -2 July 1934), a violent purge of political and military figures and the consequences of the unexpected death of president Paul von Hindenburg (2 August 1934). The third chapter deals with the issue of anti-Semitism and the persecution of the Jews in Germany. The purpose of the fourth chapter is the presentation of the fate of the Churches under Hitler. The fifth chapter covers the issue of "lights and shadows" of new German realities. Many of American observers paid attention to, for example, Nazis social programs or entertainment offered by "Strength through Joy" (KdF). This chapter is focused not only on social and economic changes but also described creation of police state in Germany. The six chapter refers to the issue of propaganda in the Third Reich. Particular attention is paid to the use of mass celebrations, such as the Nazi Party conventions, the Summer Olympic Games in 1936 in Berlin as means of manipulation. The last chapter concentrates on the years 1939-1941. Chapter looks specifically at the Americans' views of the censorship, political manipulation, their observations concerning the growth of a resistance movement. The last part of the chapter is cover the issue of Germany's attitude towards Americans in Reich.

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