

Abstract

The purpose of the thesis „Britain at Bay: British Defence Policy between the World Wars“ is to analyse the creation and application of defence policy of Great Britain and its Empire in the interwar period. The author tries to assess and interpret actions of individual government actors as well as actors outside the government. He argues that defence policy promoted by politicians, soldiers, and bureaucrats, was not always a mere result of rational reasoning. There were often cases of defending particular interests, decision-making influenced by emotions and misleading perception of the external world. One of the strongest limitations was Britain’s economic frailty which influenced the British grand strategy in eminent and key way during the examined period. It is well demonstrated on the shift from almost unilateral disarmament after the First World War to the immense armament just a few months before the Second World War. Great emphasis is also put on individual armed branches which bore the main burden of Britain’s and Imperial security. Therefore, it was important to pursue the internal development of the Army, Air Force and the Navy and their operational plans in which they had to deal with gradual emergence of three enemy powers at three different parts of the world. With regard to the complex approach in pursuing goals the thesis is classified as a case study.