

## **Abstract**

The thesis is focused on presentation and evaluation of the development of foreign policy of the Habsburg Monarchy during the Crimean War in years 1853/4-1856. Its traditional position between Russia and the Western powers and complicated complex of internal problems prevented Austria from being involved with either side of the conflict. The policy of neutrality, adopted by Prussia and the German Confederation during the war, on the other hand, could not ensure sufficient protection of the Austrian interests concerning the Eastern Question. For this reason, the Habsburg Monarchy decided for its own independent policy, based on escalating pressure on Russia and attempts at restricting the war aims of Great Britain and France to an acceptable limit, and thus achieve a peace treaty as soon as possible to prevent the extension of the war and a potential wave of revolutions. The main instrument of this policy was the menace of Austrian military action against Russia and on the other side maintaining of hope of the Western powers for this action. German policy of Austria concentrated on defending its position within the German Confederation and using of German allies for demonstrations directed against Russia, which, however, were not very effective due to the reluctance of the German states. The disintegration of the Vienna system during the Crimean War, different interests of the powers and the undervaluation of the Austrian policy during this period induced Vienna's isolation in the post-war years.