

Abstract

The second Berlin crisis represents one of the important milestones in the development of the Soviet-American relations during the Cold War. After the World War II, Berlin was divided into four occupation zones. Following the establishment of the two German states, this situation resulted in the city being split into the Western and the Eastern part. At the end of 1958, the Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev threatened the Western powers that he would sign a peace treaty with the German Democratic Republic and hand over the control of access routes to the Western Berlin to the East German officials. The following four-power negotiations failed to find a solution to the Berlin question. After the 1960 presidential election, John F. Kennedy became the president of the United States and thereby inherited the Berlin question from his predecessor. The Bachelor's thesis „Analysis of the Decision-Making Process of the Kennedy Administration during the Second Berlin Crisis in 1961“ concentrates on two key events of the crisis development – the first meeting of Kennedy and Khrushchev in Vienna in June 1961, and the closure of the borders between the West and the East Berlin followed by the construction of the Berlin Wall in August 1961. It aims to analyze the U.S. responses to these events using three theoretical approaches – the Rational Actor Model, the Organizational Behavior Model, and the Governmental Politics Model.