

BRATISLAVA INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF LIBERAL ARTS

**LEADERSHIP AND AMERICAN POLITICAL CULTURE IN THE 1950S
AND 1960S**

CASE STUDY: JOHN FITZGERALD KENNEDY

BACHELOR THESIS

BRATISLAVA 2013

PETRA ĎUROŠIOVÁ

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BACHELOR THESIS

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BRATISLAVA 2013

Declaration of originality

I hereby declare that this bachelor thesis has been written only by the undersigned and without any assistance from third parties. Furthermore, I confirm that no sources have been used in the preparation of this thesis other than those indicated in the thesis itself.

This thesis has not yet been presented to any examination authority, neither in this form nor in a modified version.

Date:.....

Signature:.....

Acknowledgment

First and foremost, I would like to thank my supervisor Janet Livingstone for her assistance, patience and guidance during the construction of this thesis.

Abstract

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The purpose of this study is to determine whether political culture, which is effected by different factors such as the structure of society, religion, public opinion, economy or history, could influence the leadership of president. The main period in which these elements will be analyzed are the 1950s and 1960s in America, which was experiencing a period of intense change.

The first part of the thesis will consider the theory part about the inception of political culture in 1600s when first settlers from England came to the New World to set the first colony and new order in the world (Peterson, January 30, 2011). During centuries the political culture did go through various changes and in the 19th century Alexis de Tocqueville and his Democracy in America is partly considered to be the basis for the understanding of political culture of America. The focal point in this thesis is the 1950s and 1960s in America because it would be interesting to examine various elements, including decision-making and the situation the presidents are put into, and how they can be influenced and connected to each other.

The research part of this study will be the case study of John Fitzgerald Kennedy. The primary goal will be to analyze the behavior of JFK and how the Cuban Missile Crisis and the Civil Rights Movements, only marginally, effected how he acted, what were his attitudes.

Abstrakt

Autor práce: Petra Ďurošiová

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Cieľom tejto práce je vymedziť a zistíť, či politická kultúra, ktorá je ovplyvnená rôznymi faktormi, ako napríklad štruktúra spoločnosti, náboženstvo, verejná mienka, ekonómia alebo história, môže ovplyvniť vodcovstvo prezidenta. Hlavná obdobie, v ktorej budú tieto faktory skúmané sú päťdesiate a šesťdesiate roky 20. Storočia v Spojených Štátoch Amerických, pretože ide o dobu plnú intenzívnych zmien.

Prvou časť tejto bakalárskej práce bude obsahovať teoretickú časť o počiatkoch politickej kultúry na začiatku sedemnásteho storočia okolo roku 1600. V tom období, prišli prví kolonizátori z Anglicka do Nového Sveta založiť prvú kolóniu a nový poriadok na svete. Kultúra prešla počas storočí rôznymi zmenami až v devätnásatom storočí. Alexis de Tocqueville a jeho dielo Demokracia v Amerike sú považované za základ pre porozumenie politickej kultúry v Amerike. Ústredným bodom v bakalárskej práci sú päťdesiate a šesťdesiate roky v Amerike, pretože bude veľmi zaujímavé analyzovať rôzne elementy, vrátane rozhodovania a situácií, do ktorých je prezident vtiahnutý a ako môžu byť ovplyvnené a prepojené medzi sebou.

Výskumná časť tejto práce je predstavovaná prípadovou štúdiou Johna Fitzgeralda Kennedyho. Hlavným cieľom je analýza Kennedyho správania, jeho postojov voči Kubánskej kríze a Hnutiu za ľudské práva a vedľajšia analýza vplyvov daných situácií na jeho správaní.

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Chapter One

Introduction

“Politics ought to be the part-time profession of every citizen who would protect the rights and privileges of free people and who would preserve what is good and fruitful in our national heritage.”

Dwight D. Eisenhower

Dwight D. Eisenhower was an American president who took office at the beginning of the 1950s at a time when America was trying to recover after World War II. This period was full of paradoxes; it was a time of fear because it was also the beginning of the Cold War, but it was also a time of changes, a time of prosperity, but also a time of failures. Leadership of such a huge country that had to fear many threats and enemies was difficult. The society was stable; consumerism became the leading element everywhere and it influenced the development of political culture.

After Eisenhower, John Fitzgerald Kennedy took over the presidency with the same goals for the future. He said: “Things do not happen. Things are made to happen” (Network, 2013). He had a vision for strengthening American political culture and he wanted to deal with current issues. Was he an example of a functioning leader? How did he cope with situations, which he had to face? His decision making was tough. He was successful in many decisions, but in the end assassinated.

The primary aim in this bachelor thesis is to examine the relationship between leadership and political culture in the 1950s and 1960s in America. At first, it is important to fully understand what the term political culture means. Political culture can be understood in various ways, but its main determinants for the purposes of this thesis are history, economics, and religion. It is a part of every civic society and is divided into three sub-parts. America has a mostly participatory political culture and its roots can be traced back to the 1600s when the first English settlers came to America.

Political culture and leadership are strongly interconnected. By understanding history and the development of political culture, I will be able to analyze the situation and attitudes in the U.S. in the 1950s and 1960s.

Chapter Two

Methodology

This bachelor thesis is built on an interdisciplinary methodology because it integrates two different approaches - that is, comparative politics and international relations. The study as a whole moves between these two types of approaches and combines them when shifting from domestic to international contexts.

With regard to comparative politics, it will consider the facts of the historical development of political culture, which are very important to analyze. By analyzing it, we should be able to make a connection between political culture and leadership and thus provide an example of how political culture also forms leaders.

In terms of the international relations approach, there is a question of how the link between the leadership and political culture works, especially when making political decisions in the realm of foreign policy. Case study research is also part of the international relations method.

This thesis will analyze the intersections between the fields of international relations and comparative politics. It will also include mostly secondary sources to fully provide theory about political culture and leadership. Then there will be the case study on John Fitzgerald Kennedy together with an analysis of the Cuban Missile Crisis.

This bachelor thesis will not focus on chronological development of political culture, but on the main characteristics, which connect it with the main characteristics of leadership.

My bachelor thesis will focus on American leadership and political culture in the 1950s and 1960s, including a case study of John Fitzgerald Kennedy.

Concepts of political culture

Political culture as a term is very complicated to define. It differs according to many authors, but for the purposes of this thesis, the important views are those of Roskin and Almond and Verba.

In general, political culture is measured by various determinants, for example history, economics or society. The development of political culture can be traced back to the 1600s when the settlers from England came to America. After the set up of the first colony, new government and rules had to be established to keep the society together. The Puritans had to obey laws and rules to keep their colony alive. People and government had to cooperate to create advantageous conditions for everybody and that produced a political culture, which remains until today with an only slightly different appearance.

History of the development of political culture

From a historical point of view it is important to mention Alexis de Tocqueville who in the early 19th century first observed that American society changes a lot and that its people create associations between themselves by establishing different clubs in which they support political parties, or by volunteering and showing that they want to participate in public life. That is also why the United States has a participant political culture. The United States is the country this bachelor thesis will look at. In Almond and Verba's work *The Civic Culture* we can see how they define participant political culture. In this type of political system, citizens of a country are open to new opportunities, are willing to discuss politics and are proud of the system they are part of. They think of themselves as competent to participate in public decisions. People are likely to trust people. It is possible to say that this kind of system is the ideal for democracy.

Political culture according to Roskin

Nowadays, according to Roskin, every society has its values and norms, which are provided to its people. Furthermore, the basis of political culture is in society, in its people and in what they think how the government works and how it should work in reality, what the functions of government should be or how the politicians should behave toward the society and its benefits. Political culture is created and shaped by public opinion because it looks for basic or general views of people on government and politics (Roskin, 2006).

Political culture is strongly influenced and connected to public opinion and as we know public opinion is changeable. People quickly change their opinions according to current issues and their political preferences. Political culture has had to adapt to these things and many studies show that political culture is quickly changeable too. In one of the significant pillars of the 1950s and 1960s in America it did not matter whether the government was functioning or the economy stable or not; in the period of growth and stable politics, the public opinion was strong and influential and has the tendency to turn into political culture; in the other case it had opposite consequences.

Leaders are also very important in the process of political culture. Why? Because, a leader is the person who decides about the laws and decides about the country's direction in international and domestic matters, as well. Society is important to him, because people, citizens, are the ones who vote for him. A leader is supposed to provide the best possible conditions for citizens and, in so doing, tries to gain their votes (Roskin, 2006).

We can measure political culture in a few ways. One of them is, for example, that governments change a lot, because during elections, one party wins and the other loses. It is important to see which one is more successful because this is when people's preferences and public opinions become apparent. It is important to find out what the regime in a country is in reality, not "on paper" and what people think of it.

Another significant point is that society is made up of mass cultures, subcultures and elites. Society is not uniform, but consists of different social layers. In democratic countries, leaders representing democratic governments often come from big, wealthy families who constitute a strong social elite. Usually these are better-educated, wealthy people, who are more interested in public life participate in it more actively. This itself may seem like a contradiction because they do not represent "normal" voters, "normal" people who create the political culture itself. It is ironic, but in the 21st century it is very common and nothing

unusual. Elites influence the political culture more than anything with their backgrounds because typical voters can tell their opinion only through elections, or in extreme cases through demonstrations and protests, and their participation in politics is not very effective (Roskin, 2006).

As was mentioned above, the studied country in this work will be America. While creating the definition of political culture, it is better to look at America and its citizens from a typical realist view. Americans are self-confident and proud people who want to have the biggest word. Americans in general are satisfied with the way of how the government works and how the democracy is implemented, but on the other hand, America is a country with people from different countries all over the world and not everyone has the education, status or money to be active in politics.

Political culture according to Almond and Verba

This was just a simple description of how political culture developed and looks according to Roskin. For this bachelor thesis, the description by Almond and Verba is far more important. At the end of 1950s and the beginning of 1960s these two authors contributed with a work entitled *The Civic Culture Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations* in which they described civic and political culture, how it works and its main characteristics using the five biggest and powerful countries in the world as examples.

At the beginning, the 1950s and 1960s were crucial times not only in America. Society was full of consumerism, the country had to deal with new order in the world. There was huge universal pressure on the country and on its citizens too. They had to cope with new laws and orders. The culture was in bad shape, which reflected on its character and had the need to change its course. Culture change has acquired a new significance in world history (Almond and Verba, 1963). New public policy was being made and culture was a part of it. But it was not clear what political character would emerge. The surest assumption was that there would be a political culture of participation in America. Why? Because of the way of thinking that

was spreading around the world widely – that man does not want to be politically irrelevant but he wants to be politically active and participate in the political system.

This assumption of political culture of participation was uncertain because there was no knowledge of the mode in which it will spread but there were two possibilities – democracy or totalitarianism. In democracy ordinary man would be able to participate in decision making as influential citizens; while in totalitarianism he would have the role of participant subject. To make one of the systems work, political culture had to be in accordance with the concrete mode but the transfer of political culture from Western-style democracies to the new nations is difficult for two reasons. The first is that only democracy provides ordinary citizens with security, freedom and individualism. On the other hand, however, the working principles of democracy where elites make decisions and create laws are cultural components, which go against the idealistic visions with which democracy tries to provide its citizens. The second one is the problems which nations have to face like new social systems, new inventions and technologies because they are afraid that these new kinds of revolutions will turn people into tools for new discoveries and so on.

The development of political culture in America began after a few major battles in the 19th century. Although the first steps were made with the arrival of the Puritans in the early 1600s, the most significant changes happened in the 19th and 20th centuries with the development of culture, infrastructure and of the course of democracy. This is because the expansion of this type was faster in the United States than in Britain. That is, Britain, which Almond and Verba consider to be a good example for illustrating political culture, has been developing for a few centuries. It is the combination of modernity and traditions. Britain is a huge island, and that is what makes the country somehow secure. During the time of national unification and when there was absolutism there, it was able to tolerate the classes and aristocracy and their respective functions in order to be more autonomous than the rest of Europe where the other states rest next to each other. The most significant step Britain has made is the separation of Church and State. This huge step meant that the beginning of toleration of religious diversity, which was at that time one of society's biggest challenges, somehow continues until today. The other significant step concerned the economy, specifically that the merchant class was forming and there was involvement by the aristocracy and courts in trade and commerce. The society became equally divided into countryside and towns, including merchants and aristocracy, and this helped to transform the simple feudal system into a parliamentary

tradition. Thus, Britain completed its era of absolutism without any harm. During this process political culture was shaped and this helped to make radical changes in the society. The aristocracy was able to communicate with merchants and find the way to improve their relationship so they established the principles of parliamentary supremacy and representation. There was still a fight between the aristocrats and secularists but the desire for a prosperous state put an end to it. From all of this, the third culture emerged, the political one: “a pluralistic culture based on communication and persuasion, a culture of consensus and diversity, a culture that permitted change but tolerated it” (Almond and Verba, 1963). For us, it is important to mention that, even though the United States does not have a long history, its political culture has very similar characteristics as that of Britain, excluding features specific to the latter’s national history and social structure.

The previous section was devoted to the history of political culture and how it developed according to Almond and Verba. These two authors then describe different approaches on how to understand the political culture or how to look at it. This one is based on the insights of psychology, which essentially means that of all the characteristics of culture, the focal point is the citizen – i.e., the “democrat”, the person who wants to actively participate in political life and is inevitably part of political culture. Every “democrat” has a list of “democratic character qualities”. The first thing on the list is an “open ego” - that is, the attitude towards other human beings. Then several other qualities follow, including: the capacity for sharing values with others; multi-value orientation; confidence and trust among the people in the same society; and freedom from anxiety. As this is written it seems that understanding this criteria is very easy, but in fact these criteria or list of characteristics are very hard to handle. Do people act according to these characteristics in real life? Are they really important? It is generally thought that people usually try to behave according to the values and norms of society, but in many cases they fail (Verba, G.A., 1963).

Almond and Verba offer a theory about democracy and what should be done in order to make it work. The theory is called the “sleeping dogs” theory of democratic political culture. The theory says that people do not pay very close attention to politics, but when something scandalous happens or crisis takes place, people start to care about the politics because they actually can see that it has huge effect on their lives. And leaders realize this because people can vote them out of office during elections. They try to put everything that happens “under the rug”, meaning they use the rule of anticipated reactions. They realize that to win the

office they must often ask themselves questions about the public's potential reaction, even they would prefer that the public not react at all – they want the dogs to be asleep (Verba, G.A., 1963).

To fully understand political culture it is important to know what types of political culture exist. Almond and Verba are comparing the political cultures of five different nations. There are many concepts and theories. Political culture is taken as the “political culture of a nation”. It is significant to mention that the biggest focus should be put on the relationship between the psychological and political character of a nation. Study of Almond and Verba is focused on the “cultural-personality” or the “psycho-cultural approach”, taking into account the last twenty-five years of theories.

Political culture in theory

Political culture is based on the combination of approaches and concepts from sociology, anthropology and psychology. In reality, it means that if we understand how a political system emerged, we become more interested in the social process and the society as a whole.

Political culture has, among others, two general concepts. The term political culture refers to specifically political orientations:

- a) attitudes towards the political system and its various parts
- b) attitudes towards the role of the self in the system

As was mentioned above, it is a set of social processes and objects and it is nothing unusual; in general it can be normally compared to religious, economic or any other culture.

Anthropologists, sociologists and other theorists who address this topic have different views/concepts of cultures. Anthropologists call it “the psychological orientation toward a social object.” By this the authors mean how the citizens who are part of the society, feel and perceive the information, knowledge and situation around them; that the society has internalized on cognition, feelings and we can also assume how the citizen evaluates the culture. Cultural change is part of the process, so as the conflicts of political culture are more

common because we are more able to compare them with the conflicts of political culture of another nation.

This conflict of political culture based on the psychological approach is more understandable and offers other possibilities to explore the relationships between features or components of political culture. The example could be that we can define and explore the development of a citizen from early childhood through puberty when he starts to think more independently, even though his opinions are still influenced by his parents, friends and other people who come into contact with him. Nonetheless, he has to decide for himself what he prefers through adulthood when he has to take care of himself as a full-fledged citizen. Whether he is alone or he has got family, his attitudes and behavior are influenced by social changes, by his personal situation or his background. The elements that differentiate him vary. But his adult decision making is in essence rooted in how he was influenced in childhood when he was ‘transformed’. The psychology of a person, not only in political decision-making, but in general, is very calculative. People are easily influenced by objects around them, even though they do not know them, and they have the tendency to believe untruths. Huge influential factors, such as television, radio or the Internet are the most significant factors which people consider to be good. By listening or watching we try to adapt ourselves to new trends, which are followed by many in different countries and we are somehow losing our self-preservation. The latter is fundamental for our decision-making. In politics, this feeling is much stronger. Forming political preferences or, in other words, the development of one’s political attitudes, is also influenced by social and political circumstances around one.

“Political culture of a nation is the particular distribution of patterns of orientation towards political objects among the numbers of a nation” (Verba, G.A., 1963). If we are going to say this, at first we have to define modes of political orientation and classes of political objects.

Political orientation is pointed on inner aspects/forms of objects and relationships. There are three types of political orientation:

- a) cognitive orientation – the knowledge of political system, its inputs and outputs, the knowledge of roles and the function of roles which belong to the people who are part of the political system
- b) affective orientation – the emotional part, people’s feelings about the political system, connected to performance of citizens and to personnel

c) evaluational orientation – opinions and valuable judgments of political objects which consider the combination of standard rules and criteria while the emotions (feelings, perception) are part of it.

These three types of political orientation, somehow determine what kind of citizens exist. Without this basic understanding of political orientation we cannot define what political culture is.

The inevitable parts are also objects of political orientation. To characterize them, we have to define from the broader parts to narrow ones, from defining a political system to a more concrete definition of political objects and cognition and evaluation must be considered in this process as well. To classify the objects, you have to look at the political system in general and what ordinary citizens think, what are their cognitions and evaluations, using two types of political orientation. The results vary, according to citizens, state could be weak or strong, corrupted or not. Then it is important how the state perceives itself, how the state takes itself as a political actor. This part focuses on the personnel, on the part where the roles of people working in government are valuable; what is the quality of norms of personal obligations of people and so on. The most important fact is to know how to distinguish between these components (Verba, G.A., 1963).

We distinguish between three classes of political objects:

- a) Specific roles and structures – executive system, bureaucracies or legislatures
- b) Incumbents of roles – concrete people (administrators, legislators) and how they perform their jobs
- c) Particular public policies – enforcements of decisions or just decisions

How we treat these decision and structures depends on whether they are part of “inputs” or “outputs”. Inputs are usually media, political parties or interest groups. These inputs or political objects often focus on the demands from society vis à vis political institutions and their transformation into authoritative forces. Output or administrative process, on the other hand, means how these authoritative forces are used in practice. The example could be the courts.

There are four aspects of how to determine political culture:

1. System as general object – which means what knowledge does the citizen have about the nation he lives in? General information, history, where it is located or how many inhabitants the country has. What is his position towards the attitudes of the country? What does he think about the country?
2. Input objects – what do citizens know about the political system, the roles and attitudes, about policy and policy-makers? What do they think about the policy proposals, about the leaders, therefore people who represent them and other citizens and about the whole structure of the political system? The typical representatives, not including citizens are government, media or nongovernmental organizations.
3. Output objects – what influences citizens; what do they think about the structures, individuals and decisions that are influencing them? What are their opinions?
4. Self as active participant – How do they perceive themselves as members of the political system they live in? What do they know about what they can do, what are their rights and obligations, what are their strategies of access to influence? What do they think of themselves regarding what they are able to do? How are their political opinions and judgments created?

Political culture is always measured according to a population, this means according to society. Society is mixed and, as mentioned earlier, is based on cognitive, affective and evaluative orientations of citizen towards the political system in which they live. Ordinary citizens are observers of the system and by perceiving information they evaluate the system, its inputs and outputs and themselves as political actors.

In understanding the theory of political culture, we differentiate between the three types of political culture:

- a) parochial political culture
- b) subject political culture
- c) participant political culture

In the parochial political culture, there are no specific political roles. Also, the citizen is not active in any way similar to the media, government or nongovernmental organizations. There is nothing what would influence citizens to participate or to politically act. There are no expectations from the political system, and, in fact, the absence of expectations is obvious. The parochial political culture is part of every political culture. It is more common in

traditional political systems where there is no specialization of roles. Cognitive orientation is not needed in this system, on the other hand, affective is used – citizens could interpret their feelings about the system. The example could be the African tribes in which no concrete political role is determined because there is no chief or shaman because of political and economic roles – no “shamanship“ or "headmanship" is necessary (Verba, G.A., 1963).

In the subject political culture there is a high tendency of interest towards the political system and towards the factors that influence citizens, while citizens themselves are not active like the objects of input, that is, the media or non-governmental organizations. The relationship between the citizen and the state is passive (it is oriented on democracy).

The orientation of citizen is only affective in terms, which are convenient for citizens. The third type of political culture is participant. This type of political culture is typical for America and, therefore, is very important for this bachelor thesis. In this type of society, all members of society are oriented toward the system as a whole. They want to be active, participate in political matters and in administrative matters as well. They care about every aspect of the political system and about themselves too as individuals. The leader is interested in the law-making authorities. Citizens tend to be active because of their affection and evaluations of the system (Verba, G.A., 1963).

These three types of political culture are somehow connected but not uniform, mostly because of the fact that the parochial type must be a part of every new type of political culture. It could be compared to a generation chain where one aspect is connected to the new one and it goes on and on in the same way. Every political culture has its subcultures.

An example of political culture

America is an example of the Subject-Participant culture. The significant features are the instilling of national loyalty and the requirement of obeying authority. During the transformation from subject to participant political culture, if the authorities survive without any harm, they can contribute to common development of the democracy. This type of political culture creates an opinion that populations require concrete input orientations, and

citizens need orientations, which would help them. The participant orientations spread very slowly over the society, which means that they spread only over part of the society. This in turn means that society is not self-confident and is mostly without extensive experience (Verba, G.A., 1963).

In reality, it could suggest that America as a country does not have a very long history. But as part of the general facts, we know that America is strong in terms of multiculturalism because people from different world cultures and from different places live in the U.S.

Multiculturalism is on a high level and of course, society is divided into classes. Because of multiculturalism and coastal states, people who live in the border states are influenced by the political culture of neighboring countries and create subcultures. These subcultures probably consist mostly of illegal aliens. In other words, people who have illegally migrated from their motherlands and see greater perspective in life in the U.S. Since these countries are developing their political culture as well, it is really important to ‘take care’ of them in a sense that for example they should live up what they deserve even though they are not legal citizens. In my opinion, the immigration policy of the U.S. is not so comprehensive and not strict enough to deal with these illegal aliens. Despite this, they try to find jobs, to be active in public matters and feel like real Americans. And the fact is that mainly these people either suffer or are exploited as a result of decisions made by government. These people are basically involved in the creation of political culture as well.

In the 1950s and 1960s political culture was quickly developing. The times were not stable. Instead, they were full of political fights and the Civil Rights movement. The question of education become more important, and the racial fights between the African-Americans and white people in one way helped but, on the other hand, made the shape of political culture worse (Verba, G.A., 1963).

Chapter Three

Political leadership

This chapter has to begin with the definition of political leadership. Why is it so important to know what the main characteristics of leadership and leaders are? Why is a role of leader so important? Who is the typical representative of a leader? These and many other questions will be raised in the next few paragraphs.

According to general opinion, the definition of leadership is very diverse. There is no single, accepted definition. This bachelor thesis will look at the definition of leadership from the point of view of international relations.

According to *The Concise Oxford English Dictionary*, a leader is “the person who leads or commands a group, organization or country” (Oxford, 2009). He causes the course of action to change because he decides about issues. He is the top leader who has a responsibility for the country’s direction in international and domestic issues. A leader motivates others, which means that motivation and goal setting are the most crucial attributes in defining leadership (Press, 2013) (Hudson, 2005).

Leadership in theories of international relations is taken simply as the art of influencing people, organizations or institutions for a specific reason or purpose; which is in order of the domestic or national character. According to integrative theory, which concerns the psychological point of view, leadership is “a process of social influence in which one person can enlist aid and support of others in the accomplishment of a common task” (Chemers, 1997). More simply put, leadership cannot be defined as a group of organized people who share common goals. It is more the work of an individual, the features of his character and about his personality. Furthermore, cooperation with advisors and others is necessary, because sometimes leadership is hard to handle and work team is much more effective. This, of course, depends on the situation.

Leadership is a very complicated process, which requires a long-term strategy. To be a good leader one has to have charisma, social skills and power from information or the ability to use the power of information he has in his hands. A president has huge access to huge amounts of information, which gives him an advantage over all ordinary citizens and other leaders. Nevertheless, his challenge is to interpret the information, use it to his advantage and present it convincingly to the public. Also, many things depend on the economic, social or cultural background in the country. It is based on the study of behavior, visions, power, functions or values.

“Leaders are not made, but born.” This quotation is the typical example that to become a good leader, one has to have some feeling and attitudes that one is somehow “born” with. It is not easy to be a good leader of a small group, or, of a country as huge as the United States.

Leadership in the United States

This bachelor thesis concerns the study of the United States. There, the typical example of a leader is the president. The president is supposed to be a representative element and the one who holds the executive and legislative power in his hands. He makes the final decision in terms of signing new laws or making major foreign policy decisions. The main representative of the Supreme Court of the United States said: “the president alone has the power to speak or listen as the representative of his nation.” A leader is the one who represents the whole society, its needs and desires.

The US political system is a federal system, which means that power is divided between the national or the main government of the whole country and each specific state. So basically, every state has its own leader but this work is interested in the most important of them – the president. In the 1950s and 1960s, during the hard times of the Civil Rights Movement, the Vietnam War or the Cuban Missile Crisis, while the country had to deal with dozens of other domestic issues, the role of the leader was becoming stronger.

Foreign Policy Analysis contains a part about the “*Psychological and Societal Milieux*”. Why is it important to mention “the milieux”? It’s important because it creates the essential part of international relations theories about leaders and leadership. It says: “The mind of a foreign

policy maker is not a tabula rasa: it contains complex and intricately related information and patterns, such as beliefs, attitudes, values, experiences, emotions, traits, style, memory, national, and self-conceptions. Each decision-maker's mind is a microcosm of the variety possible in a given society. Culture, history, geography, economics, political institutions, ideology, demographics, and innumerable other factors shape the societal context in which the decision-maker operates," (Foreign Policy Analysis, 2005). It says that it is a mixture of psychological and social features, which operate within different modes of behavior. Every person is different, but the main features, which a leader should have, are honesty, competence, determination, vision, fair-mindedness, intelligence, inspiration, ethics and many others. These qualities make a leader the person they are. The mixture of psychological and societal features could also be called an "operational code" (Foreign Policy Analysis, 2005). If we want to define the operational code, we should be able to look deeply into the core of political beliefs of a leader and what he thinks about a given situation or conflict in the world. We should look at his or her potential assumptions on how to influence the course of these events or how strong he or she is and how much power is wielded together with the style of pursued goals.

Like political culture, political leadership concerns various aspects and fields, like parental, business, international, scientific, educational, cultural, medical or the field of technology. It is significant to mention them because all these aspects influence the behavior of leaders. A leader's beliefs and values or background are essential. Why? Because all these factors make up the personality of a leader.

A leader is responsible to his or her citizens. It is more common in the U.S. than in the European countries to put a greater emphasis on politics. For example, if a citizen of the United States is not satisfied with the way he has been treated while dealing with state institutions or is not satisfied with the policies of a specific politician, he can write a letter to that politician and the politician must deal with what the citizen wrote. Since it concerns the politician's image and reputation, he has to care about what citizens have in mind because they vote for him in the elections. Americans are in fact proud of their knowledge of the political system and their interest in politics. They at least need to know that their concerns about specific issues are being taken into account and that they can somehow change the results of a possible course of events. If something like this happened in the European countries, I think that if the issue were on the international level, probably the European

Union would deal with the problem. However, if the example were Slovakia, nothing would happen because politicians in general do not care about citizens at all. The overall assumption would be that the leader is responsible towards citizens, because the leader is the one in charge who can change the course of things and on whom citizens can rely.

Definition of leadership

One of the theories of international relations expressed by the *Ashgate Research Companion* gives us a few elements, which basically define political leadership. The following must be taken into account:

- Personality of a leader - cultural and ethnical background
- Character of people who interact with the leader on different levels
- The societal and organizational structure of society – the environment in which the leader works and lives in general – political climate, institutions, norms, general culture and inevitable part is also political culture
- The set up of failures and achievements of a leader and followers together
- “the nature of the leader’s interpretive judgment” – which basically means the situations which must be defined by the leader in order for people/followers to believe and accept them
- The means which leaders use to interpret their own and their followers desires and techniques they use to persuade people in order to maintain their position as a top leader
- The results of leadership - whether they are real or just symbolic

These are a few elements that will be used in the next chapter. They will help us to analyze John Fitzgerald Kennedy’s behavior and general function during his short political career.

There are two more substantial factors, which need to be considered in order to fully define political leadership. The first one is followership and the second one is power. According to Ashgate Research Companion, the process of followership “evolves into a real interactive process, in which the two parts are mutually constitutive and ‘dialectically’ related as a whole that is greater than the sum of the parts. Leaders affect their follower’s attitude, beliefs, demands and needs; and the followers affect the leader’s style, qualities, beliefs and motivations, as they both transform the environments and are reflectively transformed by their own actions” (Ashgate Research Companion). In other words, in a sense leaders and their followers are interconnected because they somehow have to fulfill their mutual desires.

Leaders have to take into account what citizens need because when citizens are satisfied with the way they are treated then they return this good will to the leader. What do I mean by this? That is how we say it in everyday life – when both sides are satisfied, it is a good result. In this situation both sides are taken care of and the cooperation is good in that everyone gets what he or she deserves and wants. In this case, when a citizen is pleased, then leaders have to know or have a feeling that the citizen will follow them. This means, for example, that their decision making was successful and now they can be sure that in the next elections or something else, they will have the support of their followers. Thus, their decision making and problem solving will be followed and they will have the power in their hands to make changes and resolutions. They will confirm their position in domestic and international matters as well. Followership influences both sides and, on the other hand, challenges a group’s way of life and its values. Leaders should interpret the problems of citizens, find a way to solve these problems or promote personal visions and solutions, which could respond to problems.

This leads me to the second factor, which is power. As I mentioned earlier, power in a leader’s hands can influence the course of events that take place because he is the manager of these events in specific situations. This bachelor thesis will show this in the case study on JFK in international affairs where Cuban Missile Crisis will be analyzed. In essence, power refers to a dynamic where A has to influence the behavior of B, so that B is in accordance with A’s wishes. So there is a potential relationship being made between them, which means that power may exist, but not be used. In other words power is potential so as the relationship between A and B is potential. Leaders use power to attain group’s or citizens’ goals. When these goals are achieved that power becomes the means, which helped to reflect the concrete achievement. The power is legitimate; a leader gets this type of power as a result of his

position in the hierarchy that is a part of an organization. This kind of power is very common in considering political leadership as it is in other types of leadership. Legitimate power gives a leader rights and responsibilities.

To sum it up; followership and power work together to try to create some relationship between the follower and the leader in which a mutual consensus is being created under various conditions. The only thing left is how the leader of the follower uses this power in order to achieve his or her dreams and needs.

To sum up the previous paragraphs, the question of leadership and the leader is very open and complicated because of many diverse factors that influence it. The path of a leader is strewn with many everyday surprises and challenges. Of course, it is crucial to mention that a leader is not in the decision making position alone. He has got many advisors, lawyers, technicians, strategists and other people who work concretely for him. He is supposed to use his personal qualities, abilities and skills to perform the best way possible alone and together with his fellow ‘co-workers’, taking into account, of course, that his position is higher than theirs.

What is the connection between the political culture and political leadership? What could be the reflection of this relationship on a country’s democracy and its society? Culture and leadership are closely interconnected; they share similar essential elements. Society is not uniform and therefore the radius of influence changes from poor classes, through the middle class to wealthy society. Democracy, on the other hand, was at that time extremely challenged because of the international situation at the beginning of the 1960s during Kennedy’s presidency.

Chapter Four

Case study of John Fitzgerald Kennedy

This chapter is dedicated to John Fitzgerald Kennedy and to the question of how he reflects American political culture.

“The epitaph on the Kennedy administration became Camelot a magic moment in American history, when gallant men danced with beautiful women, when great deeds were done, when artists, writers and poets met at the White House and the barbarians beyond the walls were held back” – Theodore Harold White (LoveToKnow).

This quote is one of many, which very deliberately talks about the period of John Fitzgerald Kennedy’s presidency. In general, Americans still remember what they were doing on the day JFK was assassinated. They speak about this period very kindly. What does that show us? What could be the real meaning of it? Was JFK’s presidency really going so well or do Americans just pretend that they are satisfied with this period? Was JFK really such a good leader? And as I asked in the previous paragraphs; could John Fitzgerald Kennedy be the product of American political culture?

JFK was born into a big, wealthy and powerful family with a strong political background. The family was respected among other Boston families and they were Irish Catholics. At first, he did not even know that someday he would become the youngest president America had ever had. After graduating from Harvard, he was a lieutenant commander in the Second World War. Unfortunately, his older brother Joe died during that war and this was a kind of driving force for his political career. He became a senator in Massachusetts in 1946 and, after a few years in politics, Kennedy became a member of the U.S. Senate in 1952. He was a member of the Democratic Party, which then chose him as their next candidate for the presidential elections in 1960. Lyndon Johnson, his future ‘right hand’, became his Vice President. In these presidential elections he beat Richard Nixon and became the youngest and only Catholic president of the United States ever.

The period of JFK’s presidency is also called the era of Camelot‘. Why? Immediately after JFK’s assassination his wife Jacqueline talked to a reporter where she characterized her

husband's presidency as Camelot (Joseph, 2000). It tries to reflect ideal happiness, because it refers to the seat of the court of King Arthur and Knights of the Round Table. Kennedy's wife refers to her husband's presidency as an era of Camelot, because it was the first period of hope and optimism in U.S. history after the Second World War and the only thing she wanted was to preserve her husband's memory for every American citizen.

According to Seymour Hersh and his work *The Dark side of Camelot*, John Fitzgerald Kennedy was the most charismatic leader American had ever had. He was, on the one hand, a very powerful, self-reliant, strong and confident man, but on the other a very weak one. He was limited by his attributes and beliefs, by the features of his character. Kennedy was a very charismatic person and the magnetism, which emanated from him made it really difficult to say no. Unfortunately this was very strong in his relationships with women, resulting in innumerable affairs. This caused a decrease in his popularity in a sense. Opinions really vary. In my opinion, which is based on books and works about JFK, he was in fact very successful in some ways and not at all in others. He assumed the presidency during a time when America was recovering from the Second World War, but during the 1950s there was the arrival of new possibilities for citizens and the country too. The economy was booming and people realized that new opportunities were open for them and they could improve their living standard. Most citizens were applying for jobs, building or buying their houses and a new wealthy middle class was emerging. This new well being was experienced by many, with the exception of African-Americans, who realized that the conditions they were living in were not fair and that their rights were being violated. This is how the Civil Rights Movement started.

Various authors have said that JFK was running from his commitments. I think that perhaps although he was not able to deal with the domestic issues like the Civil Right Movements, he was quite a brilliant leader. He was very popular politician. During his Inaugural speech, he talked about the most important point in this bachelor thesis – that Americans should become more active as citizens, both in politics and society as well. The famous quotation of him is: "Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country" (Columbia Point). This pronouncement became the core of his later acts. In my opinion, he fulfilled the criteria, which represented the classical vision of every American dream – big family, success, a house and other attributes that the role of president provided to him.

Kennedy was a Catholic, a democrat. Without the support of every Catholic in America, and mostly those who meant something, he could not have won the elections and be as successful in a way he was. He was basically challenged as a Catholic president because the modus operandi has changed for the first time in the history of American presidents.

John Fitzgerald Kennedy looked like a prototype of an ideal president – with a perfect family background, social status and education; and strictly speaking, he was. Unlikely the situations that happened during Kennedy's presidency and the people who were around him, influencing him the whole time, he would have not have been assassinated and only given as an example of how ideal president should look like. I personally think that he was a very balanced kind of president. He had his moods, attitudes and weaknesses like any normal man and in the role of president, these features were much more highlighted. On the one side, he was a strong leader with good logical and tactical skills (because he used to be a lieutenant), which were exhibited in the incident of the Bay of Pigs. The Bay of Pigs was a failure for the Kennedy administration but when I say JFK had good tactical and strategic skills, I mean that it concerned the organization of a military action. As a leader he could use them mostly in a situation like this. On the other side, Kennedy made somewhat of a mistake in domestic politics, which I mentioned earlier. He should not have distanced himself so much from the Civil Rights Movement (Miller Center), which was considered the biggest domestic issue at that time. The overall assumption is that he was quite experienced, but in fact, maybe he was not experienced enough. This made him look and act less reliable than was expected during the times challenging America.

"John Fitzgerald Kennedy seemed to have it all; looks, charm, intelligence, a sense of humor, power, and the Kennedy fortune. He was a man's man and a woman's man. He was also impatient, self-absorbed, zealously loyal to his family, a womanizer, an adulterer, physically unhealthy, dishonest, and extremely reckless. John Kennedy was a notorious penny-pincher who never carried cash and thus was never able to pay his share of a restaurant or a bar bill" (Hersh, 2009). According to this extract from the book about JFK's presidency, it seemed that JFK was successful in many ways, but on a personal level, quite an unbalanced person. Despite all the stories based on the real experiences of people who came into contact with JFK where he is described as the most charismatic and successful leader the Americans had ever had, he probably inherited something negative and bad traits from his ancestors and these remained with him. For example, his grandfather became rich after illegally selling alcohol

during Prohibition. Two generations passed and the Kennedy family became Ivy League, Harvard educated intellectuals, most of them active in politics.

These attitudes of his made him the person he was; on a personal and official level as well. Unfortunately, he gained his popularity mostly because of his attitudes and not so in his role as president, even though he made quite a few important decisions. The important words are ‘seemed to have it all’. Why? Yes, in reality he was one of the most charismatic and popular presidents the United States ever had. But if you look at his life more deeply, you can see that above all, despite his charisma and success and enormous likeability, his life lacked the critical norm of morality. He had contacts with the head of the American mafia at that time or he had several lovers when the public knew about them. This dark side of him in a way influenced his position as leader and, as president because some of the domestic issues at that time were handled by the mafia. In addition to those positive qualities he had, he was corrupted, self-centered and, he did not like to be under someone else’s control. He was a realist and Democrat in one ‘package’.

The other important point is John Fitzgerald Kennedy’s position vis a vis politics and the question of whether or to what extent he was a “product” of American political culture. It is essential to distinguish between idealists and realists although we cannot say that the idealistic line concerns domestic policy and the other way around with the realistic line. Both are important on the same level, but we must determine which approach is better for a specific situation, whether it includes wars, economic issues or domestic issues. As shall be mentioned later, the contrast between the realists and idealists according to the general theories of international relations is that realists see only power and in every situation they want to survive as winners, because power for them is the primary goal. Whereas idealists prefer to seek cooperation between states and common benefits for states from that cooperation. During his presidency JFK had to deal with serious international matters and his stance towards the situations that took place, such as the Cuban Missile Crisis, shows both realist and idealistic traits. On the one hand, the U.S. wanted to protect their country, from being destroyed by Cuban missiles; but on the other hand they wanted to end the grudge between the U.S. and the Soviet Union such that both countries would be winners. These events had more of an existential nature for the whole nation more than being targeted to specific people. They were less influenced by domestic issues but by various determinants of power in foreign affairs.

The Civil Rights Movement

The way Kennedy handled the events of the Cuban Missile Crisis was courageous. On the other hand, the way he handled the Civil Rights Movement was laughable. The essential basis of the Civil Rights Movement was that African-Americans were striving to reverse centuries of social and economic hardship. Activism against legalized racism was growing. The south of America was mainly problematic, because most of African-Americans lived there. There were strikes and street fights about how African-Americans were treated. For instance, the most widely known issue was that African-Americans were not allowed to sit in the same part of the bus with Caucasians. Other issues included the right to compete for the highest jobs, eat in restaurants, shop in stores or stay in hotels of their choosing or to make choices regarding where they wanted to live. These fights for improvement of the civil rights of African-Americans and the desire to stop racial segregation was somehow difficult to handle for Kennedy. Mostly, he separated himself from solving these issues at the end, because he was not successful. Kennedy tried to solve these racial issues the hard way – with the army. Kennedy invoked some of the highest powers of his office to send troops to the southern states when the fights achieved their peak with the issue of racial integration of schools. Meanwhile, the violence was increasing. What was essential about Kennedy's leadership in these situations was that whenever the situation became violent, he intervened. The Civil Rights Movements is an example of this.

As I mentioned above, Kennedy was blinded by his personal opinions about African-Americans and their position in society and that did not give him much room to behave correctly. How is the American political culture connected to the Civil Rights Movements? I think that it is somehow rooted in history. From the early beginnings, Americans fought for their freedom and rights several many times. So we can assume, that the idea and volition is rooted in them, it is also rooted in their position towards politics. The example could be that citizen is active, participatory and very positive towards politics. It reflects the political culture, which is also positive. Concerning JFK, the fights of African-Americans and Kennedy's attitudes towards them were not really persuasive and in my opinion did not slightly reflected the American political culture. Kennedy did not represent other citizens, except African-Americans to help to stop the racial segregation issues. In my opinion, the connection between citizens and JFK and the attitudes of both toward racial fights was not

clear. Although, he had passed bills about racial segregation, they only became laws after his assassination. The fact, that the bills became laws after his death was not a sign of Kennedy's weakness, but shows that he was not courageous enough to persist and try to pass them immediately to calm the situation. However, these situations proved to him that it is hard to be a leader during such difficult situations as, for example, "when a group of black and white civil rights activists known as the Freedom Riders boarded buses and attempted to break segregation codes by traveling together through violently racist regions of the South. When the Freedom Riders reached Montgomery, Alabama, they were attacked by a white mob; after fleeing to the First Baptist Church in Montgomery, the mob followed, threatening to storm the building" (Shmoop Editorial Team, 2008) (PBS, 1996-2010).

Kennedy issued an order to protect the Freedom Riders but then stopped and did not want to take any other steps to alleviate the situation. This is where his personal views are reflected. Kennedy took the necessary steps, but nothing more. Instead, he ceded responsibility to the governor of the state and did not think of how the incident would end. This shows us how really unconvinced he was when it came to dealing with the Civil Rights Movement and racial segregation.

Now it is important to mention something from the previous paragraphs - specifically, his behavior towards women. JFK was merciless with women, he did not care whether his lover was a prostitute or a woman from high society, he was only interested in satisfying himself. What is important is that Kennedy did not consider women to be equal to men as. He must have lacked some kind of love in early childhood or had some syndrome or disease. And he treated others the way he treated women, according to Hersh again: "He not only considered women as less than equals, he often referred to the poor, the Blacks and to the Jews, as "poor bastards". He showed almost no empathy and, like the majority of people of his time, accepted inequalities based on race, gender and religious belief" (Hersh, 2009) (History Site).

As a leader, Kennedy mostly distanced himself from racial issues. Why? Probably the movement of African-Americans was rising so rapidly that it became unstoppable. The other option could be that JFK was undecided about what to do. Although he tried to enact laws that would improve, if not resolve the situation with racial issues, he was not successful, because the civil rights bill, which he introduced only became law after his assassination. In other words, he basically did not focus on passing new bills, but on the enforcement of existing

ones. Kennedy tried to uphold the laws on the Civil Rights Movement on many levels – for example, he appointed African-Americans to some positions in his administration.

In general, Kennedy's desire was for a solution, which would end the Civil Right Movement democratically and show the United States to be a democratic country where communism never appeared. The reality was the exact opposite – intolerance and oppression were mostly shown to the world.

To sum it up, immediately during his inaugural speech he said that he was a huge supporter of civil rights. He wanted the United States to be a free and democratic country, where no racial issues ever appeared (Peters). Kennedy sometimes made the mistake of personally distancing himself from problems, leaving them in the hands of his administration. The small successes during this tense time came when some of his proposals for enforcement of laws passed. But I have to say that he showed his less able or weaker parts in the racial issues of the Civil Rights Movement. Domestic issues were an area of weakness for him, but they were balanced by his successes in international affairs.

The Cuban Missile Crisis

“Nuclear catastrophe was hanging by a thread... And we were not counting days or hours, but minutes.“ (Oracle)

The Cuban missile crisis could also be described as “dangerous 13 days in the history of mankind.“ (TV, 2012) starting on October 16th, 1962. Defense Secretary Robert McNamara wondered whether he “would live to see another Saturday night“. (Chomsky, 2012) If this catastrophic event had occurred, it would have meant the beginning of a nuclear war in which, in reality, there would have been no winner. We can only guess about the results– they were deciding the destiny of human mankind.

In my opinion, this was a potential war of three men – John Fitzgerald Kennedy, Fidel Castro and Nikita Khrushchev. We could also call it “Three men go to war“, (TV, 2012) according to a documentary about the Cuban missile crisis made a few years ago with the men who worked in JFK’s administration. This is because the leaders of this crisis – were the heart and soul of the crisis. The question is: Why do I think that? In this fourth chapter, the case study, I want to show that it was people - specifically JFK - who were responsible during this crisis. These

people, their decision making and problem solving, together with self-denial and rationality, were the significant elements during the two most dangerous weeks.

One of the closest advisors of JFK, Ted Sorenson (TV, 2012), said that JFK was “a man of few words“. In the following document, he said that when Americans found out about the missiles, JFK was surprised and embarrassed at the same time. That is why I think, that many people consider him an effective, strong leader who remained a rational approach and the steps he undertook saved the world from the biggest catastrophe that could ever occur. He was afraid that the whole Northern hemisphere would be attacked and destroyed by missiles. That could also mean that Kennedy exercised considerable self-restraint. In my opinion, regardless of the situation, Kennedy would also not have been able to do anything without the people who worked around him. Ted Sorenson and Robert McNamara were his closest co-workers and knew him best.

JFK and Khrushchev were totally different; JFK came from a big wealthy half-Irish, half-American family whereas Khrushchev was the son of a poor Ukrainian peasant. That could be the reason that their points of view on the whole situation was so different.

As was mentioned earlier, JFK was the most charismatic president America ever had while Khrushchev’s lack of charisma was alarming. It is important to mention that Khrushchev saw Kennedy as a ”pushover” who would not have the guts to stand and resist the Soviet Union”, according to the words of Khrushchev’s son. Khrushchev was pretty sure of himself; he thought that he knew JFK pretty well, so he installed the missiles in Cuba because the Americans had theirs installed in Turkey. During these maneuvers he did not realize that he could start a world war (TV, 2012).

Both sides thought that the other one was the evil one. At the critical beginning, Kennedy was outraged when he found that there were missiles in Cuba, only 91 miles from the American coast. He would have found the way. One of his closest advisors, McNamara, talked to him immediately after this discovery and they agreed that they have to develop a specific strike plan and also immediately consider the plan’s consequences. They had two options – air strike or quarantine strike. Kennedy immediately organized the EX-COMM, a group of his twelve most important advisors to handle the crisis. The meetings of EX-COMM were secretly recorded by Kennedy himself without the knowledge of his advisors, so they did not know that they were “writing a history” (Chomsky, 2012). After seven days of guarded and intense

debate within the upper echelons of government, Kennedy decided to impose a naval quarantine around Cuba. At first, Kennedy was considering an air strike, but he was not sure how the air bombing would look and how many nuclear weapons could be used because even one can damage hundreds of thousands of people. He decided for the quarantine blockade because he thought that it would be much safer. The island of Cuba was blockaded by the American navy (Oracle, 2012).

In my opinion, this analysis of a situation in which he happened to be the leader of a huge country with millions of citizens showed that he was a courageous person and a strategic thinker, as well as a team leader. He actually thought about the whole situation before he undertook the first steps. He acted according to his instincts and ordered a quarantine blockade of the whole island of Cuba. But there is one important event that took place before - the invasion of the Bay of Pigs in April 1961. It was an unsuccessful effort by American forces to invade Cuba and overthrow its leader. Unfortunately, it was a huge failure because it was meant to be a surprise attack by the Americans, but the Cubans found out about it and waited for the Americans until they landed. This invasion was planned during Eisenhower's presidency. The CIA helped to plan it, but the plan went wrong, resulting in the defeat of the invading forces.

Why is it significant to mention the Bay of Pigs? It's important because this event and the Cuban Missile Crisis are linked. Although the Bay of Pigs was Kennedy's biggest failure, the Cuban Missile Crisis was the exact opposite. The invasion worked as motivation for Fidel Castro to plan a second attack, so when Khrushchev wanted to place missiles there he agreed without any hesitation. The missiles were installed in Cuba, because they could reach half of the East Coast of the United States. Every decision made during the Cuban Missile Crisis was made behind closed doors (Oracle, 2012) (Ask.com, 2012).

To sum up, if we look at the Cuban Missile Crisis and how Kennedy behaved during that time, we have to say, that he was somehow given certain specific conditions about which he had no idea. To get back to the most important question of this thesis, it is also crucial to say how the Cuban Missile Crisis and the American political culture could be connected. The relationships between the Americans and the Soviet Union were on the freezing point, politically and economically too. It is really hard to say how the personal relationship between Kennedy and Khrushchev was affected, but I want to mention a letter, which played a

significant role in the solving of the Cuban Missile Crisis. This letter was written by Khrushchev to Kennedy right in the middle of the Cuban Missile Crisis. It was kind of a reflection of the speech that Kennedy had given the day before, on Oct. 22nd regarding Cuba.

The letter says: “The statement by the Government of the United States of America can only be regarded as undisguised interference in the internal affairs of the Republic of Cuba, the Soviet Union and other states. The United Nations Charter and international norms give no right to any state to institute in international waters the inspection of vessels bound for the shores of the Republic of Cuba.

And naturally, nor can we recognize the right of the United States to establish control over armaments, which are necessary for the Republic of Cuba to strengthen its defense capability.

We reaffirm that the armaments which are in Cuba, regardless of the classification to which they may belong, are intended solely for defensive purposes in order to secure the Republic of Cuba against the attack of an aggressor.

I hope that the United States Government will display wisdom and renounce the actions pursued by you, which may lead to catastrophic consequences for world peace” (American Experience, 1996-2010).

Judging from this letter, I could say that the position of the Soviet Union was mostly a matter of Khrushchev playing with words. If we look at the letter more closely, we realize, that the Soviet Union was putting itself first, meaning that America would in the end become subordinate to the Soviet Union and the latter would become the world’s hegemon. The Soviet Union cared only for its own interests, and I think that Khruschev, given his peculiar personality, did not fully realize that the whole situation could end in the destruction of the world. Khrushchev was trying to turn the whole situation against Kennedy, but as we know from the results, Kennedy was not that successful. Defending Cuba was probably the only way to secure at least the reliability of an idea that they could possibly win the crisis.

Khrushchev also pointed to the Americans as the “aggressor” even though it was Khrushchev who provoked the crisis. Judging from these arguments, I think that on the outside he tried to look like a strong leader with a huge personality, but on the inside he was broken. On the

other hand, Kennedy was, given how the situation ended, a really strong president. More importantly, he stood firm in his opinions and beliefs, even though the whole crisis was ‘falling on his head’. Although, according to his brother Robert Kennedy who worked with Kennedy closely; “The trauma of the experience plus the fortunate outcome have led it to be pictured as one of the supreme achievements of the Kennedy Administration” (Robert F. Kennedy, 1999).

So how could the Cuban Missile Crisis and American political culture be connected? This question is connected to the definition of political leadership from the previous chapter. Political culture was a strong support and provided important conditions for the Cuban Missile Crisis to be stopped in the first place. I think that the American public stood with Kennedy and his administration even though strikes for civil rights were taking place. The other point is that Kennedy had around him an energetic team who cooperated on every level. Kennedy also followed his pursued goals. But the most significant point, which is also mentioned in the previous chapter, is “the nature of the leader’s interpretive judgment”. In other words, JFK defined situations in which he had been and he was so persuasive that people looked to him, followed him and believed him.

Chapter Five

Conclusion

The Cuban Missile Crisis ended on the 28th of October 1962. There was no concrete winner, because both sides agreed on the results. The northern hemisphere and the entire U.S. was saved from the biggest possible catastrophe. Kennedy showed his rationality and got through all the disagreements. I dare say that he somehow reflected two huge contrasts; he became president at an interesting time in America's history since the end of the Second World War. At the beginning, there were the Civil Rights Movement, other social movements and other domestic issues, the beginning of the Vietnam War and last, but not least, also the Cuban Missile Crisis. These events were huge contrasts that he had to decide about. We can say that he was an example of the evolution of American political culture. As I mentioned earlier I think that as a leader Kennedy was a balancing kind of leader. But given the analysis of the Cuban Missile Crisis, he did his job, of course supported and persuaded by his closest advisors and EX-COMM. To this effect, he showed realist traits. Again; why is it so important to identify what type of international relations theory he represented? Because that is the way I can answer the most important question of this bachelor thesis – whether Kennedy could be or was the result of American political culture during that harsh time of his presidency. As argued, he showed realist traits. Kennedy, as a leader of the rival country and together with the Soviet Union, one of the strongest countries, withdrew the main characteristics of the realist theory of international relations. Realists are shaggy and they look only for the power because that is their primary goal; to gain power and to survive as the strongest among states. They were not idealists, because they did not want to help other states and achieve some common cooperation; but they looked after their own needs. America had to keep its place in the world as a strong and democratic country and prevent the Soviet Union from realizing their plans. Political culture during the 1950s and 1960s was at once strong and weak. I think that inherently, Kennedy was the product of American political culture and it was reflected in the situations he had to face. He fulfilled the main characteristics of a leader mentioned in the third chapter: he was fair-minded and forward-looking, although sometimes blinded by his own personal views (the Civil Rights Movement and his own racial issues, for example). Nonetheless, he was intelligent enough to deal with military interventions in Cuba

or with solving domestic issues. I think that he was not very ethical, given his prejudices against women and African-Americans, but he was competent and determined – otherwise he would not have ‘won’ the Cuban Missile Crisis. And last, but not least, he was inspiring. Many people admired him and he is the example of an ideal president of the U.S. He fought for what he believed in and he was able to express his opinion no matter how difficult the situation was.

The crucial decision-making about which steps JFK should undertake during the Civil Rights Movements and also the Cuban Missile Crisis showed that, in the final analysis, he understood the society of his time and he was able to subordinate everything to achieve the best possible results. I think that he was successful; he was a prophet of American political culture. He stuck to his beliefs and persuasions and he knew how much power he had and the strength he could use. He stuck to his defined goals. I think that basically he fulfilled these criteria of an ideal political leader. So I can say that inherently he was the product of American political culture.

Resumé

Prvá kapitola sa zameriava na predstavenie témy celej bakalárskej práce, hlavnú hypotézu a metodológiu bakalárskej práce. Hlavnú hypotézu predstavuje otázka: Môže byť John Fitzgerald Kennedy „produktom“ americkej politickej kultúry? Aké sú hlavné faktory, ktoré ovplyvňujú politickú kultúru v Amerike a aké je medzi nimi prepojenie s Johnom Fitzgeraldom Kennedym? Toto sú hlavné otázky, na ktoré sa bakalárska práca snaží odpovedať. V nasledujúcej časti prvej kapitoly je vysvetľovaná metodológia, t.j. na vysvetlenie a opis sa používa interdisciplinárna metóda, čiže spojenie komparatívnej politiky a teórií medzinárodných vzťahov. Taktiež hovorí o analýze Hnutia za ľudské práva a Kubánskej krízy, ktorá je súčasťou štvrtnej kapitoly.

Druhá kapitola sa zaoberá základnými, všeobecnými faktami o politickej kultúre, ako je prezentovaná a ako pretrváva v Spojených Štátoch. To je reflektované na príkladoch teórií politických teoretikov Almondu, Verbu a Roskina. Rozoberá politickú kultúru, jej hlavné charakteristiky, faktory, ktoré ovplyvnili jej vznik a vývoj. Na začiatku sa venuje histórii a hovorí, o prvých kolonizátoroch v Novom Svete, v dnešných Spojených Štátoch, a o zakladaní prvej kolónie, v ktorej vznikala politická kultúra. Politická kultúra je vymedzená napríklad historiou, náboženstvom alebo ekonomickými podmienkami. V ďalších častiach je opísaná z pohľadu Almondu a Verbu, ktorí sa jej venovali vo svojom diele o občianskej kultúre. Rozoberali politickú kultúru a jej hlavné charakteristiky, ktoré ukázali na príkladoch piatich najväčších krajín sveta – USA, Veľká Británia, Mexico, Nemcko a Taliansko.

Nasledujúcim autorom je Roskin, ktorý sa taktiež venuje politickej kultúre, ale viac na úrovni spoločnosti. V poslednej časti je Amerika ako príklad subject-participant kultúry a hovorí, že na základe politickej kultúry a jej teórie, Američania v skutočnosti veria, že dokážu zmeniť politický systém.

Tretia kapitola pozostáva z definície politického vodcovstva a základnej charakteristiky vodcu. Venuje sa charakteristike lídra ako prezidenta a jeho základným charakteristikám. Podľa Oxfordského výkladového slovníka je líder „osoba, ktorá velí iným ľuďom,

organizáciu alebo krajine“. V ďalšej časti rozoberá definíciu politického vodcovstva z pohľadu teórie medzinárodných vzťahov, napríklad, aby sme správne charakterizovali lídra musíme poznať jeho osobné, poprípade etnické pozadie. Ďalej štruktúru spoločnosti – akí ľudia tvoria spoločnosť, inštitúcie a rôzne normy; aké sú schopnosti lídra a či dokáže presvedčiť ľudí, aby ho nasledovali a v neposlednom rade či má charizmu. Taktiež sa snaží odpovedať na otázku aké je spojenie medzi politickou kultúrou a politickým vodcovstvom.

Štvrtá kapitola sa zaobráva prípadovou štúdiou Johna Fitzgeralda Kennedyho v konkrétnych situáciách a analýzou jeho schopností počas obdobia jeho kariéry prezidenta. Analyzuje jeho konkrétné správanie v špecifických situáciách a následky jeho správania a rozhodovania sa. Téma sa dotýka aj Kennedyho osobného života, jeho rodinného a kultúrneho zázemia, pretože ide o faktory, ktoré tvoria a odzrkadľujú politickú kultúru v Amerike. Taktiež sa venuje otázke či boli Kennedyho predstupy voči Afro-Američanom alebo chudobným ľuďom prekážkou pri jeho rozhodovaní počas Hnutí za občianske práva. Nasledujúca časť štvrtnej kapitoly sa venuje analýze Kubánskej krízy, ktorej súčasťou je aj list, ktorý napísal Chruščov Kennedymu počas Kubánskej krízy. Taktiež aj Kennedyho zlyhania v invázii v Zátoke Svíň, ale na druhej strane úspechy pri ukončení Kubánskej krízy. Poukáže to na pozitívne ako aj negatívne vlastnosti a postoje Kennedyho, ktoré sú aplikované v príkladoch v prípadovej štúdie.

Piata kapitola sa venuje záveru a odpovedi na hypotézu stanovenú v úvode tejto bakalárskej práce. Môže byť John Fitzgerald Kennedy „produkтом“ politickej kultúry v Amerike? Podľa môjho názoru, áno. Kennedy splňal kritériá ideálneho politika a vo väčšine situácií, ktorým čelil sa snažil dosiahnuť najlepší výsledok. Bol zanietený, kompetentný a odhodlaný dosiahnuť čo najlepšie výsledky, aby Spojené Štáty ostali medzi najsilenejšími demokratickými krajinami a svete. John Fitzgerald Kennedy neodmysliteľne patril k politickej kultúre, priam ju tvoril a bol jej súčasťou. T.j., Kennedy bol a je „produkt“ americkej politickej kultúry.

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