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## US PRESIDENT'S INAUGURATION CEREMONIAL AS A FACTOR IN INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

**Keywords:** state, ruling elite, state image, foreign policy, culture

**ABSTRACT:** The article considers the history and development of the inauguration ceremonies of US presidents. Their role in legitimizing power and their influence on creating the image of the state is evaluated. The very specificity of the inauguration as a social phenomenon makes this ceremonial action a kind of illustration of the cultural condition, mores and tastes of society, national characteristics, becoming a symbolic characteristic of hierarchical differences. Its norms reflect not only ideology, but also the social psychology of society, without an adequate interpretation of which it is impossible to correctly understand the behavior of statesmen in specific situations related to their social status. State civil and military ceremonies, being, as a rule, striking events in the life of the state, have symbolic meaning. They establish a balance between their immediate participants and the highest environment, testify to the stability/in-stability within the ruling elite. Modern ceremonials of the inauguration of world presidents are politics, prestige, and the image of the government in power.

On the example of the inauguration of Donald J. Trump the problem of the influence of the ceremony on the formation of the image of the United States is considered. Particular attention is paid to the image of the politician, as one of the mechanisms of cultural diplomacy. The scenario of the solemn ceremony of initiation into power (2017) is analyzed, a comparative analysis of the texts of the inaugural speeches of Obama and Trump, as program documents of the state's domestic and foreign policy is carried out. The author concludes that the inauguration ceremony, as a form of visual communication technology, is an effective mechanism for cultural diplomacy, which, in turn, helps to develop partnerships between states and solves international problems peacefully.

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The relevance of the study lies in the fact that the norms of a state ceremonial contain not only ideology, but also the social psychology of society, without an adequate interpretation of which it is impossible to correctly understand the behavior of statesmen in specific situations related to their official status.

Each state ceremonial is a program of the current government. Therefore, no matter how sacred the traditions of the initiation ceremony, founded in the United States at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, were kept in the United States, the newly elected president came with his action plan, which pursued very specific goals and tasks caused by internal and external political situations. It would be reckless to follow the traditions of state ceremonial culture to the detriment of the authority of the government and the development of the state.

## INTRODUCTION

The very specificity of the ceremonial action as a social phenomenon makes it a kind of illustration of the cultural state of society, its mores and tastes, national characteristics of the people, a symbolic characteristic of class and hierarchical differences.

The novelty of the research is in studying not only the political, but also the cultural aspects of the inauguration ceremony, their influence on the formation of the image of the state on the world stage.

The relevance of the work. The norms of this or that state ceremonial reflect not only ideology, but also the social psychology of society, without an adequate interpretation of which it is impossible to correctly understand the behavior of statesmen in specific situations related to their official status.

The purpose of the study is to identify the influence of the cultural component of the inauguration ceremony on the image of the state as a whole, and on the image of the political elite in particular, based on the analysis of published sources (regulatory documents, media materials).

## THE EVOLUTION OF THE INAUGURATION CEREMONY IN THE USA (XVIII-XX CENTURIES)

The legitimization of power institutions is always closely associated with various forms of visual communication technologies, which include, in particular, the modern inauguration ceremony. Political symbolism developed in a complex system of borrowings, which were sometimes articulated by the authorities, sometimes became the object of scientific research. To better understand the ceremony and the messages encrypted in it, you need to carefully consider its prototypes and analogues.

Inauguration (from Latin *inauguro* – dedicate) – the solemn taking office of the President of the state. It became a political tradition primarily in the United States and emerged as a counterweight to the European monarchical coronation ceremonials.

The first inauguration took place in New York, capital of the USA at that time, on April 30, 1789. George Washington was elected President of the United States of America. Under artillery volleys and the sound of bells he went into the building where Congress met. Putting his left hand on the Bible, he swore an oath: «I do solemnly swear that I will faithfully execute the office of the President of the United States and will, to the best of my ability, preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States». Then he added the phrase: “So help me God”, after which the presidents officially take office at present.

Another tradition that has survived to this day is the speech of the president. Pronounced then for the first time by G. Washington, it is still considered one of the shortest – 135 words. The first President of the United States can also be considered the founder of the tradition of holding an inaugural ball, at which he performed a minuet.

The first inauguration didn't do without curiosities. So, during the ceremony, the orchestra played the British anthem “God Save the Queen.” In the conditions of the proclaimed independence of the States, such an incident could end in a political scandal, but nothing happened.

To a much greater extent the organizers of the ceremony feared that the fact of the inauguration in New York would cause dissatisfaction within the country, as residents of other states would decide that political

leaders in the city would have more opportunities to influence the President.

In the new capital of the United States – Washington (the federal district of Columbia, on the territory of which the current capital of the United States is located, was formed in 1790, and the states of Maryland and Virginia shared their lands for its formation) Thomas Jefferson, who won the presidential election twice, was the first to take the oath. He brought a number of interesting details to the ceremony. So, the first time he walked from his house to the Congress building, and the second (in 1805) he rode from the presidential house to the venue of the ceremony. On the way back the orchestra and navy men joined the procession. Completing the ceremony with a concert, fireworks and a military parade has become a tradition.

As for the inaugural celebrations, in 1809 everyone could buy tickets to the ball with the participation of the President and his wife on the occasion of assuming the position of James Madison (the ticket cost \$4). The second presidential term of J. Madison began when the United States was at war with the British Empire. His speech was devoted to criticizing the British, who during the hostilities barbarously burned the Capitol. The building was restored in 1819 and then rebuilt many times.

In 1829 the inauguration ceremony was first held in the Eastern portico of the Capitol. After a crowd of about 20 thousand spectators crushed President Andrew Jackson's escort and blocked the approaches to the doors of Congress, forcing him to leave the building through a window, bodyguards began to guard all subsequent US presidents and separate their route from the public. Traditional handshakes have also been canceled to ensure the safety of the country's leader. This happened after in 1865 Abraham Lincoln was forced to shake six thousand hands to people who came to greet him, which brought himself to complete exhaustion.

In 1981 Ronald Reagan first held an inauguration on the West Capitol Terrace. Currently the ceremony is considered a "national event of a special level of security" (the term was introduced by Bill Clinton).

Not only the course of the ceremony underwent changes, but also the date of its holding. Since the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century the next president of

America took office on March 4. And in 1937 Franklin Roosevelt first pronounced the text of the oath on January 20, as the 20<sup>th</sup> amendment to the US Constitution adopted by Congress, established that each new President takes power on that day, thereby shortening the period between elections and taking office of the country's leaders.

One of the most striking inaugurations of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was the inauguration of John Kennedy in 1961, who, appositely, became the last President of the United States to be at the ceremony in a top-hat. Of all the inaugural speeches, it was his speech that received the greatest fame. In it John Kennedy said the words that later became winged: "Do not ask what your country can do for you. Ask what you can do for your country." For the first time poet Robert Frost, four times awarded the Pulitzer Prize, the most prestigious US award, spoke at this celebration.

Only nine inaugurations took place in the United States without special triumphs, as vice presidents took power, replacing the dead or deceased heads of state.

Despite the fact that compared to the XVIII century, the inauguration ceremony has not changed much, it has undergone a number of significant changes that correspond to historical needs.

### **INAUGURATION CEREMONIES OF BARACK H. OBAMA (2009 AND 2013)**

In 2009 Washington hosted the inauguration of the 44<sup>th</sup> US President Barack H. Obama, the first aframerican to take this post. The general ideology of the celebrations was reflected in the phrase that was spoken once in A. Lincoln's Gettysburg speech "The New Birth of Freedom", which contained the famous definition of democracy as "the government of the people, from the people and for the people".

Barack Obama like Abraham Lincoln went to the inauguration by train from Philadelphia to Washington to commemorate the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of the first US President after the Civil War, who abolished slavery in 1863. Along the way, in Baltimore, B. Obama spoke to 40 thousand of his supporters. The pre-inaugural festivities also included the

celebration of Martin Luther King's Day, an ardent advocate for the rights of black Americans. On January 20, after an inaugural prayer and a short musical program, the President swore an oath over the Bible, which Lincoln had once sworn upon. Then he went into the office of the head of state in the Capitol and signed a Decree on the celebration of the Day of Reconciliation and Renewal on the day of the inauguration of American presidents.

After that a gala dinner was held for 230 guests, which was attended by all senior government officials. At the reception they were offered three favorite dishes of A. Lincoln, made according to recipes of the 60s of the XVIII century (Chronicle, 2009). At the end of the dinner B. Obama went to the White House, where the parade was held – the final of the ceremony. After the solemn part the musicians performed at the concert, supporting him during the pre-election race.

In 2013 B. Obama, like in 2009, had to pronounce the text of the oath twice. January 20 fell on Sunday when inauguration ceremonies are not held because courts and other official institutions are closed. Therefore B. Obama took the oath at a private ceremony earlier, and on Monday January 21 only repeated it. Taking the oath the President laid his hand on two Bibles at once. One of them was used in 1861 by A. Lincoln, the other – died at the hands of a hit man M.L. King.

As you know, the President's speech at the inauguration is a program document that defines the state's policy for the next few years. In 2009 the main goal of the speech of B. Obama most likely was to consolidate national and patriotic traditions. The words "heritage", "courage", "patriotism" were often repeated in it.

In 2013 in his 19-minute speech the President called not to "mix rhetoric with integrity, turn politics into shows, consider labeling serious discussion. We must act. We must act, knowing that our work will not immediately bear fruit." He emphasized the need to support the middle class and reduce income inequality. The key was his phrase: "We will support democracy everywhere – from Asia to Africa, from the American continent to the Middle East, because our interests and our conscience encourage us to act in the interests of those who seek freedom." B. Obama called on Americans to realize that "our work will not be perfect, that

victories will be incomplete, and that it will continue in four years those who stand here and those who will be in 40, and in 400 years". The president reminded his compatriots that he did not take the oath to the party, but to the country and God. At the end of the official part the guests were invited to a gala dinner, after which a parade was held with the participation of representatives of all types of the US armed forces. The parade was attended by eight thousand people, military personnel, schoolchildren, school orchestras and artists.

Then the president and his wife participated in inaugural balls, the number of which decreased from ten in 2009 to two in 2013. The Presidential Ball was attended by 20 thousand military men and veterans. The dance of the first couple of the country was broadcast live by all the major news channels. For many viewers the dance of the first Afro-American president with his wife on the floor with a state coat of arms was a demonstration of unlimited possibilities for every US citizen.

It is important to note that all the components of the inaugural celebrations carry a definite political meaning. Everything starting with the copies of the Bible on which the President swore and right up to the choice of the repertoire of the inaugural concert – pop, country, latinos, rock coexisted in it - corresponded to the main idea of the celebration: the 44<sup>th</sup> President of the United States will serve for the good of his country, in which every citizen, regardless of political, religious, racial or sexual affiliation, has equal rights and opportunities. The traditional Negro songs "Changes are coming", "We will overcome", as we can assume, were not performed at the concert, so that US citizens do not have the impression that the president remembers and honors the struggle of african americans for their rights, while the contribution to the development of democracy of other peoples who formed the American nation are not so obvious to him.

### **INAUGURATION OF DONALD J. TRUMP (2017)**

Barack Obama's successor – Donald John Trump (born June 14, 1946) – became the oldest newly elected president in US history (previously the record belonged to Ronald Reagan, elected at the age of 69). During the

election campaign Trump did the impossible – he “defeated” Hollywood, which during the difficult periods of American history formed the national idea of the state. The “stars” of American cinema – Robert de Niro, Mark Ruffalo, Alec Baldwin took part in the anti-Trump protests in New York. And singer Cher called Trump “an incredible daffodil”. Trump “outplayed” the great actors, he created his Hollywood, his “dream factory”, thereby proving that “the truth is the best propaganda”. He expressed the real problems of the population of not only “multi-story”, but also of “one-story” America and won.

D. Trump’s team raised \$90 million for the inauguration ceremony (\$55 million and \$43 million, respectively, were raised for the first and second inauguration of B. Obama). Despite record costs Chairman of the inaugural committee Thomas Barrack said the Trump team wanted to avoid the “circus atmosphere” during the ceremony and stick to the “get back to work” principle. Probably the “circus atmosphere” in this case meant the participation in 2013 in the traditional parade of representatives of sexual minorities who openly declared their rights. We dare to suggest that neither the president himself nor his assistants would dare call “the circus” the elements of B. Obama’s inauguration, dedicated to the memory of A. Lincoln and M. L. King. Moreover D. Trump himself took the oath on the Bible of Abraham Lincoln and the Bible, which his mother gave him after graduating from Sunday school in 1955 (6 interesting facts, 2017).

The ceremony ended with the US anthem performed by 16-year-old singer with Ukrainian roots Jackie Evancho, then president D. Trump and Vice president M. Pence went to the Capitol for a traditional reception, at which the president asked the audience to applaud the Clinton couple. At the end of the reception a parade began on Pennsylvania Avenue from the Capitol to the White House. On the same day three official inaugural balls took place. (Inauguration of Donald Trump, 2017).

It should be noted that D. Trump’s inauguration took place on the background of protest movements that could not affect the ceremony. At the same time, it was obvious that they could affect the content of the president’s inaugural speech, which in itself was a historical event, a program document for his presidential term. But Trump does not depart from his principles and speaks of real US problems: “For many decades we have



enriched industry in third countries to the detriment of production in the United States. We subsidized foreign armies, while at the same time reducing our own armed forces. We defended the borders of foreign states and at the same time refused to defend our own borders (probably this is about the border with Mexico. Author note). And we spend trillions of dollars on overseas projects, while the American infrastructure has deteriorated and collapsed.” (Trump’s Speech, 2017).

To change the situation, according to the president, it was necessary to implement the idea: “America comes first,” and for this, each decision in the field of trade relations, taxation, immigration policy should be implemented “... in the interests of American workers and American families. We will protect our borders from the destroyers from neighboring countries who make our products, steal our companies and destroy our jobs.” This part of the speech, in all probability, is addressed not only to the Mexican government, but also to the People’s Republic of China. Trump offers the population an anti-globalist slogan: “Buy American goods and hire Americans”. (Trump’s Speech, 2017).

As for relations with other states the United States is not going to “impose its lifestyle on anyone,” but let it “... shine and set an example. We will shine for anyone who wants to follow us.” At the end of the speech D. Trump, under deafening applause, repeated his famous slogan: “We will make America great again.” (Trump’s Speech, 2017).

The United States has significant potential to “shine and set an example,” but the availability of resources does not always imply the possibility of their successful implementation. Communicative technologies are not universal. Citizens form their attitude to the country not only through the media, there are other mechanisms of public diplomacy, including the image of a politician.

As you know, not only for the American but also for the European establishment the personality of D. Trump is ambiguous. 93% of Washington residents voted for Hillary Clinton. (Mirzayan, 2017). But Trump does not seek to please the intellectual elite. His audience is “ordinary” Americans and citizens of other countries who understand and are close to the statements of Trump-writer, whose books on business topics (15 books) have been distributed around the world in millions of copies.

(Interesting facts). In one of them, with the very eloquent title “Thoughts at large and no brakes!”, he writes: “Life is a tough fight, and if you want to come out of it as a winner, forget the word “no”, learn to work with your fists, respond with strike to strike, never give up and count your every move. This is the only way to achieve big goals, but you should not set others!” (Trump, Zanker, 2009, p. 312).

It should be noted the successful work of specialists on the image of the president's wife, who personified traditional family values for Americans. To expand the audience of D. Trump supporters in the Slovenian city of Sevnica, products named after the new US president and his wife went on sale. In one of the restaurants you could try the “Presidential burger” decorated with the American flag and in the shops tourists could buy salami and wine “First Lady”. Against the background of her spouse-rebel Melania Trump in her sky-blue suit was the personification of calm, reliability and hope, no one dares to burn portraits of Mrs. Trump in garbage containers, as was the case with her husband in Brussels. Social media users, who watched the ceremony, compared Melania Trump's outfit to Jacqueline Kennedy's image from Ralph Lauren. It should be noted that, in turn, during the inauguration in Paris the wife of the French president was compared with the first lady of America, Melania Trump. (Aren't you ashamed, madam Macron?, 2017).

## CONCLUSIONS

There are no trifles in politics, its every element, everything – from the politician's comportment and manner of speaking to his program documents – should strengthen the authority of the state, make it more attractive in the eyes of the world community. If the inauguration of B.H. Obama is a ceremony of the nation's intellectual elite whose motto is “preserve the past, honor the present and shape the future”, then D. Trump's inauguration is addressed to those who respect the past but live in the present, that is to the people of America, and not to the Washington establishment.

The billionaire president represents the interests of the majority, although he himself belongs to the minority, he is “a friend among foes,

a foe among friends.” Trump does not strive for political correctness, in his speech he talks about the real problems that the United States faces - illegal migration, banditry, drugs. Unlike his predecessor Trump does not propose supporting democracy around the world, but declares that he wants to return the US to attractiveness using three sources of soft power - values, culture, politics.

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