

Diplomacy and Colour Psychology: the Tie Case Study

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ABSTRACT

High policy and diplomacy as its part have the common the history with sign systems. Colours are anchored in historical and political context associated with the traditional colour symbolism of the European Old World. Psychologists prove that colours do evoke certain emotional responses in people. So it is nothing new for politicians to be paying attention to what colours they choose for a public appearance. The point of concentration of attention upon men's suit is a necktie. The George W. Bush's and Tony Abbott's examples demonstrate the crucial importance of their neckties color choice for their political carriers. The blue-white-red triad, as well as in the United States and the British Commonwealth, has been adopted in some other countries, so the general rules of the political etiquette of colour work for them. The national colours of other countries offer plenty of opportunities to express yourself in the protocol of national events.

KEY WORDS: Color psychology, diplomacy, dress code, necktie, sky-blue

POVZETEK

Visoka politika in diplomacija delita skupno zgodovino znakovnega sistema. Barve, kot del znakovnega sistema, pa so zasidrane v zgodovinski in politični kontekst, povezane so pa s tradicionalno barvno simboliko evropskega starega sveta. Psihologi pa dokazujejo, da barve vzbujajo določene čustvene odzive

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pri ljudeh. Tako ni nič novega, da politiki namenjajo ogromno pozornosti temu, kakšno barvo izberejo za svoje javne nastope. Glavna točka koncentracije, pri moški obleki, je kravata in George W. Bush in Tony Abbott dokazujeta, da je barvna izbira njune kravate izjemnega pomena za potek njune politične kariere. Modro-belo-rdeča triada, je bila tako v Združenih državah Amerike, kot tudi v britanskem Commonwealthu, sprejeta kot splošni simbol in prav zaradi tega te barve uporabljajo tudi politiki. Nacionalne barve drugih držav ponujajo možnost za izražanje sebe na protokolarnih in državnih dogodkih.

KLJUČNE BESEDE: barvna psihologija, diplomacija, pravila oblačenja, kravata, nebeško modra

INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of the paper is to show the influence of the color psychology on the public perception of a high politician and the color scheme of the modern politician's suit, in particular, the color of the necktie as a detail of the politic dress code. For this it is important to examine the history of sign systems, their 'atavisms' and their role in political life, to look over the history of the emergence and development of the color psychology, to give examples of connotations of different colors, to explore the role of necktie colours in public opinion about politicians through examples of US presidents and the Prime Minister of Australia.

Diplomacy has a very long history. It emerged with the appearance of tribal society, the first exchange of products and the settlement of borders of tribal areas for hunting and gathering. Even primitive people came to the conclusion that differences are better addressed through agreements. So here were the germs of initial, primitive diplomacy, based on universal principles of common sense, with diplomats being either senior members of the community whose voices were listened to or their chosen emissaries.

Here the part played by signs in the business of negotiation was particularly important. How could a negotiator recognize

that the person talking to him was someone of appropriate rank? Messengers -negotiating on behalf of chiefs and priests would use various signifiers to indicate and verify their powers - clothing, signs, badges, gifts, etc. For this purpose primitive society had its own sign system of removable and non-removable decorations, which at a glance gave a clear indication of the person's age, position in the kinship system, the events in this person's life and achievements.

A colour sign system played not a small role in this. The symbolism of colour in the cultures of the peoples of the world is very diverse and varies from period to period, depending on the technical capabilities of a particular society to reproduce colours in clothes and other attributes of the human image. In European culture (when viewed as a whole from Antiquity onwards) there have been several changes in the socio-cultural perception of colour; among the latter it is worth mentioning the appearance of iconographic symbolism, heraldry, the language of flowers (*floriography*), and the language of the fan (*fanology*).

Floriography has long historical roots. Plants and flowers were used as symbols in the Bible - in the Song of Songs, and some other texts. In Western culture, William Shakespeare ascribed emblematic meanings to flowers, especially in *Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*.

The wider interest in the language of flowers finds its roots in Ottoman Turkey, specifically the court in Constantinople and obsession with tulips during the first half of the 18th century. In 1717 the floriography craze was introduced to Europe by Mary Wortley Montagu (1689–1762), the wife of the British ambassador in Istanbul. She described the secret language of love correspondence *selam* (village) - 'language of objects and colors', elaborated in Asia Minor.²

Aubry de La Mottraye (1674–1743) introduced it to the Swedish court in 1727 in his *Voyages en Europe, Asie & Afrique*. Joseph Hammer-Purgstall's *Dictionnaire du langage des*

² Montagu (1763)

fleurs (1809) appears to be the first published list associating flowers with symbolic definitions, while the first dictionary of floriography appears in 1819 when Louise Cortambert, writing under the pen name ‘Madame Charlotte de la Tour’, wrote *Le langage des Fleurs*. In 1830, in St. Petersburg, Russian poet Dmitry Oznobishin published *Selam, or Language of Flowers*, which describes about 400 meanings of plants.³ Floriography was popularized in Europe during 17-19th centuries, and in the United States about 1830–1850.

Fanology - Fan language was the secret code of ladies and gentlemen in Europe. Beginning in the 1500s a common fan ‘sign language’, known to both women and men, arose behind what seemed to be innocent fan fluttering. Fan movements became a way to convey messages about emotions and love based on well-known rules of etiquette, and ultimately these flutterings formed a fan language. This fan language was especially popular in France in the second half of 17-19th centuries and was published occasionally in various magazines and books of etiquette and tutorials. At the end of the 17th century, Huguenot immigrants travelled to England, bringing the craft of the fan with them. By 1711, the craze for expensive fans had become such that Joseph Addison felt the need to mock it roundly in his coffee house publication, *The Spectator*. His article, ‘advertising’ his Academy for the Instruction of the Use of the Fan explains how he drills young ladies in fan etiquette in a military fashion. In 1757 in Paris marquis Caraccioli Duchesne, published *The book of four colors* with a separate chapter describing the language of the fan.

A fan became an essential attribute of the highlife in Western Europe, and in Russia with the Petrine era. In England, the first tutorial on fanology was created by Charles Francis Badini in 1797.⁴ In France, they said: “*Fan dans les mains d’une beauté - un sceptre de posséder le monde*” (The fan in the hands of a beauty - a sceptre to own the world). Many examples show that, if it was impossible to reproduce a colour, people used fresh flowers

³ La Motraye (1727); Hammer-Purgstall (1809), vol. 1, pp.36-42.; Latour (1819); Ознобишин, Дмитрий П. (1830).

⁴ Addison (1711); Badini (1797); Caraccioli Duchesne (1760).

of permanent colours, and even their black-and-white images carried information about the implicit colour. These customs are unknowingly preserved right up to the present in our dress code - in the habit of wearing live flowers in buttonholes and female hairstyles as decorations during special events of high political significance.

Polychrome state and family heraldry, as it was established in the Middle Ages in the circles of the feudal aristocracy, still influences our perception of the mandatory dress code and gamut of colours appropriate to diplomatic negotiations, receptions and other events of a political nature.

COLOR PSYCHOLOGY

Modern globalization, despite the tendency to mix all kinds of eastern and western traditions, has brought no significant changes in the traditional perception of colour in cultures around the world. Colour archetypes are one of the fundamental factors of human perception of Nature with millennia-old roots. In the ancient cultures of many peoples of different regions particular importance was attached to three basic colours: **white**, **black**, **red**.

Such an identity of colour symbolism and the similarity of symbolic meanings of colours among archaic peoples allows one to treat this triad as the colour archetype of human culture.⁵ In most traditional aspects of human life colour triads continue to function right up to the present. It is no coincidence that the colour dyad or triad (certainly of more varied range) is the basis of heraldry; a sign of good taste in the colours of clothing is considered to be a combination of no more than two (rarely three) colours.

According to L. Shalimova, colour symbolism, which permeates ancient mythology throughout the history of human civilization, facilitates a complex of cultural and semantic systems. These systems have played and continue to play a vital role in the organization and administration of social relations. Such col-

⁵ Шалимова (2007а), стр.59, 61.

our-symbolic systems are an integral, vivid and pleasurable part of everyday life of modern civilized society. The centuries-old creation of a social and cultural color sense developed from the primary colour systems – produced by the natural cycles of day and night, the natural landscape, materials and dyes – to colour schemes focused on symbolic meaning and those devoted to the artificially created human cultural environment.⁶

The response of human beings to certain colours and shapes of objects and phenomena was noticed in deep antiquity. To the Enlightenment can be attributed the appearance of colour psychology which takes as its subject the relationship of colour to the mind, and the influence of colour on human mental activity.⁷ J.W. Goethe is considered the founder of this science. In his ‘colour theory’, he argues that colour has a direct impact on the human psyche, attributing certain psychological states to the influence of a certain colour. As ‘positive’ colours he identifies yellow, orange, ochre and vermilion, which create a cheerful, lively, active mood. His group of ‘negative’ colours are blue, lilac and violet, inducing the hectic, soft and melancholic mood.

However, the systematic study of the effects of colour on the human psyche began only in the second half of the 20th century. Swiss psychologist Max Lüscher started work in this field in 1947. He came to the conclusion that each colour is specifically perceived by systems of the body, affecting not only the psyche, but also the work of the individual organs of the body.

More recent scientific and practical studies have shown interesting results. For example, red has long been associated with love. And there’s some science to that, too: a study of 2008 found red clothes on women made men feel more amorous towards them.⁸

Results of scientists are briefly published in magazines *New Scientist*, *Psychological Science*. The effect of color impact of the

⁶ Шалимова (2007b), стр.12.

⁷ Goethe (1840), p.85.

⁸ Roy Britt (2009).

red sportsmen' uniform was first demonstrated in 2005 by evolutionary biologists at the University of Durham in Great Britain. In 2009, German scientists, through a series of psychological tests, established that the color of a sportsman's uniform affected the decisions of judges. Researchers discovered that sportsmen wearing red were likely to outperform their opponents, in part because referees felt the red-clad competitors some slack.⁹

At the request of Hewlett Packard the possibility of influencing people's relation to statements printed in different colors was analyzed. The results of the study in Europe showed that different social and ethnic groups reacted equally to the same colour and, in turn, that colour affected internal and external group communication. For example, the colour of the printed text could influence decision-making. Study samples in 9 countries shown questionnaires printed in red, resulted in three times more negative replies (30%) compared with questionnaires printed in black (10%).¹⁰

Later, specialized scientific studies found that it was not just colour that had the strongest emotional impact on the person, but the combination of colours and shapes. For example, the form of a screen on which an object is displayed can determine the process of discerning its particular signals. Similarly, the form of a pictorial surface (square, rectangular, round, oval, triangular) can exercise an organizing influence. Simple geometric shapes are perceived by the viewer faster and remembered better than complicated irregular ones.

Colour is always combined with the geometrical shape. For example, choosing one or other form for his sheet of paper, the artist can pre-focus the viewer on specific areas. It is no accident that tradition favours the drawing of portraits within ovals, where angles do not distract attention from the main thing - the image of the face. "Psychologists do know some of the techniques to attract people by the form given to the object of perception. In particular, an effective way to attract attention is to allocate one ele-

⁹ Lenta.ru (2008).

¹⁰ Циферов (2009).

ment among others by some criterion. Thus, the most prominent corner of the quadrangle becomes the point of concentration of attention, regardless of the spatial position of a focus spot".¹¹

Linear shapes have a certain impact on the perception of information as well. It is believed that vertical or horizontal straight lines are associated with calmness, clarity, and even solidarity and oneness, and curved ones with grace and ease.

If we consider the modern sign system in high politics and diplomacy, we can see that the official costume is the canvas on which the diplomat creates its image, and a necktie is thus a point of concentration. And in terms of the psychology of color, common colors costume details seriously affect his perception by the public.

COLORS AND TIES

If we look at the modern sign system as deployed in high politics and diplomacy, we can see that the official suit is the canvas on which a politician or diplomat creates his image, and a tie is the point of focus. And in terms of the psychology of colour, colour gamut of costume details seriously affects the perception of politics by the public.

For example, in the USA public attention is always focused not only on high politicians and diplomats, but also their appearance. Some important observations of American psychologist Ann Cooper Reedy help us to understand the great role played by suit colour and tie in the general- perception of a politician in the United States. In her book *Off the Cuff* she makes recommendations about the etiquette of political behaviour, and a special section "Color Me Appropriate" is addressed to policy makers and provides some examples of US presidents' clothing and brief advice on the details of clothing and its colours. In the first lines she cites Coco Chanel: "*Never is it more apparent that you don't get a second chance to make a first impression than with your choice of wardrobe*".

¹¹ Зазыкин (1995).

“Before getting dressed for television, squint your eyes at your wardrobe choice. If the small dots or stripes ‘dance’ before your eyes, avoid them for they will strobe on camera and distract from everything you are saying. Large pictures or patterns, as well as prominent plaids or stripes, which will overpower you, should also be avoided.

“To stand out from the background in media and personal appearances, or even show up in color photography, a woman should wear color. Clear, bright, solid color. At the next State of the Union address, notice which senators and congresswomen stand out from the crowd on television. You’ll see them in suit jackets of solid red, peacock, turquoise or cobalt blue, Kelly green, or purple”.

President Reagan was fond of wearing brown suits, which many believed was a subtle way of reducing the intimidating power of the office for a would-be folksy president. “A navy blue suit is thought to radiate sincerity while gray is the power color. The darker the gray suit, the more power. Black is usually saved for funerals and Las Vegas. The key to giving an impression of environmental consciousness is khaki or breen (brown-green)”.¹²



*What do you feel about this appearance of Mr. Putin?*¹³

According to A. Cooper Reedy, “a business attire, as compared to business casual, is still very much a uniform, a man’s tie is his signature statement. For a woman – it is her jewelry”.

¹² Cooper Ready (2004), p.114.

¹³ Image is taken from: Pravda-tv.ru (2014).

Politicians, of course, love to gain advantages. Neckties are one way they try to do that.¹⁴

We can agree with this statement – in a crowd of people during any political event, the men at first glance stand out primarily for their ties. Observing American presidents over the last 20 years gives us a lot of interesting food for thought. Particularly outstanding in this regard was George W. Bush. In 2003, journalist Roger Mudd for the first time spoke of ‘the blue tie phenomenon of the George W. Bush administration’.

USA CASE

As Mudd noticed, not since George Schultz, Ronald Reagan’s secretary of state, wore the same necktie four days in a row back in 1983, had there been anything quite like such a scandal – until the occurrence of ‘the blue tie phenomenon of the George W. Bush administration’.¹⁵

Mudd devoted an interesting telecast to Bush’s neckties, and it has opened a stream of articles and telecasts on this subject. Journalists have created blogs about presidents’ ties and their colours; on forums and social networks there is lively discussion about ties during television appearances and debates. In 2009, psychologist Leatrice Eiseman organized The Pantone Color Institute.¹⁶

In the United States, increased interest in the psychology of colour even overtook Feng Shui, very popular since the late 1990s.

The phenomenon began soon after the President’s inauguration, when America’s chief executive would show up from time to time wearing a tie whose colour was unknown in Washington, D.C. - not the familiar power red or the Ivy Leaguer’s stripe or the diplomat’s polka dot or even the bureaucrat’s

¹⁴ Shales (2004).

¹⁵ Mudd (2003).

¹⁶ Pantone Color Institute (2009).

standard silk foulard, but a blue that seemed more at home on a teenage girl's bedroom wall than on a necktie.

It was a blue that sent a signal: "I, George Bush, am from Texas. I wear cowboy boots. I wear blue jeans. I talk with a twang. But that doesn't mean I can't be sensitive once in a while".

As Washington has discovered about this administration, once a signal goes out from the Oval Office, it's heard and heeded from the west wing "all the way to fish and wildlife". Quietly but without hesitation, the men of this administration began to add to their tie racks those blue cravats that branded them as George Bush men (the President's press secretary, his political guru, Karl Rove, the attorney-general, other cabinet secretaries, their Secret Service escorts, even deputy secretaries...) "The blue buzz naturally reached California"¹⁷.

When the president gave his State of the Union speech in January, he could look down on a bevy of blue-tied Republicans. The gallery was awash with blue neckties. The blue tie had become, it seemed, a badge of loyalty.



Only a very few have dared to hold out. Among them was Sen. Barack Obama, it is worth mentioning, who wore what appeared to be a black suit and coal gray necktie. Since we're seeking meaning in colour choices, his ensemble could be construed as a sombre statement on the tough economic times.

(Images are taken from sources ¹⁸)

"Power red turned to powder blue". For five of his State of the Union addresses, the President wore a blue tie with a dark suit. He also favoured the colour for news conferences and state ap-

¹⁷ Mudd (2003).

¹⁸ Бульвар Гордона (2013); Blog.nola (2008); Leblogdjetliberte (2016).

pearances over the years. When he picked a vibrant royal blue, on both sides of the political aisle many others followed suit.

Mudd and other journalists and critics' sarcasm was quite clear – his blue tie marked the beginning of the end of a fashion era.

Fashion critics and political pundits over the years have read all sorts of connotations into Bush's penchant for shades ranging from robin's egg to sky. "Could it be a tribute to the Texas bluebell or a sly reminder that he's a ranch owner who favors blue jeans and cowboy boots rather than pinstripes and lace-ups?" Blue brought out a resistance in the South. The fashion consultant in Rubenstein's in the centre of New Orleans David Rubenstein said: "Bush's blue tie never caught on as a fashion signal in New Orleans. Down here, there are two colors that curry much more favor. The political power tie in Louisiana has always been purple and gold".¹⁹

Notes and anecdotes on the subject appeared in social networks: "I Will Never Ever Buy A Light Blue, Sky Blue or Baby Blue Necktie Again... thanks to Bush. Is that the ONLY color tie he ever wears? I'm sick of looking at it and I don't even want to see it on myself or on my partner. What's 15 inches long and hangs beneath an asshole? - Bush's tie".²⁰

It was predicted that, regardless of its meaning, the blue tie trend would expire on Election Day. «It runs its course as a fashion statement. It was a powerful signal, but as Bush's time in office wanes, his fashion influence wanes».²¹

However, the predictions appear to have been wrong. The blue colour range continues to figure strongly in the ties of politicians.

Even then, in the early 2000s Ann Cooper Reedy drew attention to Bush's tie in a positive way: "Notice the president's tie. Although solid red or very smallpatterned red ties with white

¹⁹ Langenhennig (2008)

²⁰ DU Lounge (Archives) (2004).

²¹ Langenhennig (2008).

shirts and navy suits are very popular in Congress for their obvious theme of red, white, and blue, did you notice President George W. Bush's choice of ties after 9/11 and throughout the war with Iraq? He chose a series of sky-blue ties that seemed to be an antidote for the fear and hatred of war. A red tie would have merely inflamed the situation, although red is thought to be persuasive in other situations²².

Leatrice Eiseman, author of the book *Color: Messages and Meanings*²³, said the shade of the blue is important when seeking symbology. "If it's sky blue or deep blue, it has a meditative quality," she said. « The more vibrant blues have much more excitement. Maybe the choice of the brightness of the tie was chosen to generate excitement... From a psychology standpoint, it was a very good choice... Overall, blue is America's favorite color... For the most part, people associate it with (being) steadfast and constant, always there, dependable”.

Why, in fact, was there such a problem? The fact is - in the United States since the mid-1940s, the colour red and its various shades has been considered as the main symbol of force, power, nobility; it is one of the colours of the American tricolor and the colour of the Republicans. What do politicians' red ties really mean?

Red, the more traditional power colour in Washington, connotes a dynamic, powerful feeling, Eiseman said. "It's all of those great things a politician wants to embrace"²⁴ In both business and political spheres, the crisp white shirt/red necktie combo has been adopted as some kind of ultimate American power aesthetic.²⁵ Candidates are constantly under the microscope, obviously, and strength is of the essence.

While red has come to have this significance, thanks to everyone from Reagan to Trump, it wasn't always the case. As with

²² Cooper Ready (2004), p.114.

²³ Eiseman (2006).

²⁴ Langenhennig (2008).

²⁵ Esquire (2010).

politicians, coloured accessories can have a convoluted past that many would consider best kept under wraps.

Colour psychologists, studying the history of socio-cultural perception of colour in the United States, found that British physician and psychologist Havelock Ellis wrote in 1915 of a very different symbolism: "It is red, that has become almost a synonym for sexual inversion, not only in the minds of inverts themselves, but in the popular mind. To wear a red necktie on the street is to invite remarks from newsboys and others... Male prostitutes who walk the streets of Philadelphia and New York almost invariably wear red neckties. It is the badge of all their tribe. Among my classmates, at the medical school, few ever had the courage to wear a red tie; those who did never repeated the experiment".²⁶

By the 1960s, this connotation had rapidly started to fade fast. Soon TV anchors and politicians were adopting a ruby-red to add splashes of colour to the rather stiff figures they cut on TV. During the Nixon/Kennedy debate, Tricky Dick opted for a famously miserable brown ensemble, while Kennedy sported the classic combo for perhaps its breakout moment: black suit, red necktie, perfect hair. And we all know what happened there, Nixon's sweating and all.²⁷ Later, in 2004, George W. Bush stuck to red for every major speech in the beginning of his second term. In 2010, it was the Obama uniform: crisp white dress shirt / perfect ruby necktie.

However, colour psychologists believe that in high-stakes politics and business, there are only two colours for ties: **red** and **blue**. According to Roy Britt, sure, you might spot **purple** or **yellow** now and then, but those are clear statements of aloofness, be they calculated or careless. Few world leaders or CEOs want to be seen as aloof.²⁸

²⁶ Ellis (1915), vol. 2, pp.122-125.

²⁷ Esquire (2010).

²⁸ Roy Britt (2009).



*What would the Ukrainian President's choice of purple and stripes tell us?*²⁹

But does it matter whether one wears red or blue? Yes, suggest several studies, including a new one out in 2009 in the journal *Science*. More on that in a moment. First, something on colour.

Now scientists say, red improves our attention to detail. Blue (the other preferred tie colour of choice for business and politics) is thought to boost creativity.

The study leader Juliet Zhu of the University of British Columbia and colleagues tracked the performance of more than 600 people on cognitive tasks that required either creativity or attention to detail. Most experiments were conducted on computers with a screen that was red, blue or white. It appeared that blue and red enhance cognitive performance, but in different ways.

Red boosted performance on detail-oriented tasks such as memory retrieval and proofreading up to 31 % more than blue. For brainstorming and other creative tasks, blue cues prompted participants to produce twice as many creative outputs compared to red cues. This brings us back to the fact that humans relate colours to nature, and in moments of stress or a need to choose they act in accordance with their primitive instincts. For millennia red was known primarily as the colour of fire and danger. Zhu therefore considers that "thanks to stop signs, emergency vehicles and teachers' red pens, we associate red with danger, mistakes and caution. The avoidance motivation, or heightened state, that red activates makes us vigilant and thus helps us perform tasks

²⁹ Images are taken from: F112.ua (2015); MK-London (2015); Politika (2016); File.liga (2014).

where careful attention is required to produce a right or wrong answer”.³⁰

At the same time, Eisenman says, “the sky is blue and radiates over the water, which people perceive to be blue, so there is a consistency to it”.³¹ “Through associations with the sky, the ocean and water, most people associate blue with openness, peace and tranquility... The benign cues make people feel safe about being creative and exploratory. Not surprisingly it is people’s favorite color”.³²

In 2012 the news website *Centives* went through all of the 22 Presidential debates that were broadcast in colour to see if there was any relationship between tie colour and ultimate victor.³³



*The blue-red hybrid that Clinton wore during most of his debates.*³⁴

During American presidential debates the most minute moments of the candidates’ performance are analyzed in excruciating detail – from the way the candidates shake hands to the size of the flag pin that they wear. There is however one other

³⁰ Roy Britt (2009).

³¹ Langenhennig (2008).

³² Roy Britt (2009).

³³ *Centives* (2012).

³⁴ Image is taken from: *Centives* (2012).

important decision that a candidate has to make on the day of the debate: which colour tie they should wear.

Overall candidates have worn a tie with a red base colour 68 % of the time, while blue has only been worn 16 % of the time. The other 16 % of the time candidates have worn a third colour, or a combination of colours.³⁵

Reagan was the only candidate who could be successful in a black tie. He wore one in his only debate against Carter, and for one of the debates against Mondale, four years later. Both Dole and McCain tried to follow in his footsteps by trying out black ties, and both went on to lose the election.

Americans were asked why in recent years they have only seen red and blue ties on presidential candidates? Some might argue that candidates will choose those ties that best reflect their party's identity, meaning red ties for Republicans, and blue ties for Democrats, but this is only partially true.

Democrats don't seem to think as highly of their own colours and have only worn a blue tie 16 % of the time. This might be because aside from Obama, Democratic candidates who have tried wearing a blue tie have always lost the election. Carter was the first to bring out a blue tie against Reagan in 1980. Carter's defeat was so traumatic for Democrats, that it took 20 years before another Democrat, Al Gore, was willing to try a blue tie... only to lose against Bush.

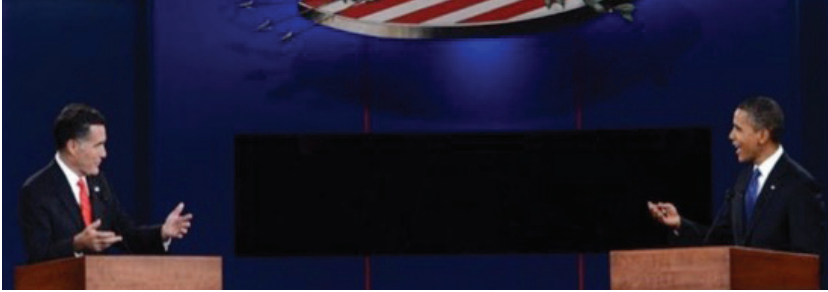
*Republican candidates have worn blue, the colour of the Democrats, 18% of the time. For example, in debates with Barack Obama, Mitt Romney had a bright blue tie – a colour associated with calmness, maturity, and elegance.*³⁶



³⁵ Centives (2012).

³⁶ Tie-a-tie (2012). Image is taken from: Tie-a-tie (2012).

In addition to being America's first black President, Obama has the distinction of being America's first Democratic President who can pull off blue ties, having worn one in a debate against McCain. And here we see the strong influence it had on American public opinion, 'the President of the Blue Tie'.³⁷



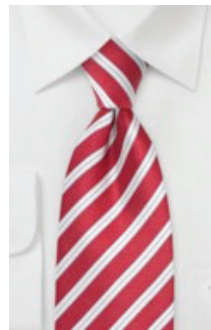
Americans were asked for votes for 10 different ties for each candidate: what tie colors would each party's supporters choose. The statistics (400 people voted) showed 3 things:

Democrats Like Blue Ties (54 % of all votes were for a blue tie on Obama, followed by red taking 29 % of the vote. Bright blue ties were preferred over dark and more conservative navy blue neckties).

The Most Popular Ties for Each Candidate were even voted:



The light blue textured (on the left) tie was the most popular choice among Democratic voters receiving 29 % of all votes, while the bright red "power tie" (on the right) was the top choice among Republican voters (31 % of all votes).³⁸



(Images are taken from sources ³⁹)

³⁷ Image is taken from: Centives (2012).

³⁸ Tie-a-tie (2012).

³⁹ Image is taken from: Tie-a-tie (2012).

Republicans Like Red Ties (Republican voters picked out a red tie over 80 % of the time. Blue only received 10 % of the votes). Republicans are more conservative. While Democrats could picture Obama wearing purple, turquoise, teal, and other trendy coloured ties, Republicans only voted for blues and reds – other tie colours appeared to be unimaginable choices for a President in the eye of the Republicans.

THE AUSTRALIAN SKY-BLUE TIE CASE

In Australia, the sky-blue tie has found a very different meaning.



Tony Abbott - Australian politician, leader of the Liberal Party (and automatically opposition leader from December 1, 2009), Prime Minister of Australia from September 2013 to September 2015. Tony Abbott's blue ties represent a strange act of defiance. (AAP Image: Quentin Jones ⁴⁰)

In Australia, a difficult situation prevailed before the election in 2013. At the time, the 2010 elections had led to the formation of a parliament without a majority (the first time since 1940). Prime Minister

⁴⁰ Image is taken from: Green (2014).

Julia Gillard - the first woman in the history of Australia to be prime minister - and the head of the Labor Party retained power by combining with a single deputy from the Green Party and three non-party members of parliament.

She changed her fellow party member Kevin Rudd in 2010, but lost in the intra-party elections in June 2013, and again gave way as leader of the party - and, accordingly, as Australian Prime Minister - to Kevin Rudd.

On October 8th, 2012, Ms. Gillard appealed to the parliament with a speech on "Women for Gillard" - what is now referred to as "Gillard's misogyny speech"⁴¹ - slamming Mr Abbott for being sexist. Ms Gillard's speech put gender at the centre of the campaign for the September 14 2013 poll. In June 2013, the opposition leader Tony Abbott decided to wear pale blue ties to soften his image. "The ones he has worn since June 2013. Without exception. Every day. With an almost obsessive discipline. Tony Abbott's blue ties aren't just shiny swathes of silk - they are crafted and premeditated reminders of all that he replaced"⁴².

Journalist Jonathan Green, considering the situation in his article «When the blue tie - is more than just a blue tie» says: "To me it marks him as a politician compulsively obsessed by the finest detail of political messaging, and more than that, a man prepared to sacrifice himself utterly to the rigor of that discipline, to surrender even something as small, simple and silly as the choice of a tie in the morning to the necessities of political craft. And that in turn erodes confidence in almost everything else he does. What else can be trusted?... What is heartfelt, when even this small detail of dress is designed as a subconscious supplement to the daily message? That degree of calculation must be all pervasive".

New elections to the parliament were scheduled on September 14, 2013, which the opposition could potentially win (and indeed won) with Tony Abbott then taking the position of -Prime

⁴¹ Sydney Morning Herald (2012).

⁴² Green (2014).

Minister as the leader of the leading party. Julia Gillard warned in that famous speech of the prospect of an incoming Abbott government:

”On that day, the 14th of September, we are going to make a big decision as a nation, it’s a decision about whether once again we will banish women’s voices from the core of our nation’s political life. I invite you to imagine it. A prime minister – a man in a blue tie – who goes on holidays to be replaced by a man in a blue tie. A treasurer, who delivers a budget wearing a blue tie, to be supported by a finance minister – another man in a blue tie. Women once again banished from the centre of Australia’s political life”.⁴³

The day after winning the election, not only liberals, but most of the Labor Party appeared in parliament in blue neckties of different shades. Since then, the majority of the Australian public opinion have taken it to have offensive connotations, “as a permanent sign that he, Tony Abbott, would prove that he could govern for all of us regardless of the colour of his tie or the sex of his cabinet”. From this moment a bright sky-blue tie has appeared to be associated with the conservatism of Tony Abbott’s gender politics and sexism: “No longer a tie, now a permanent reminder in a swathe of silk of all that he replaced. Because that’s what Tony Abbott is wearing round his neck, day in, day out, in every public appearance: a small strip of cloth that says «Julia Gillard». Trophy, albatross or just a nuanced uniform, part of a calculated suit designed to indicate stylised power”.⁴⁴

Tony Abbott wore blue ties for two years - from September 2013 to September 2015, when he lost the intra-party elections and had to cede the position of Prime Minister to the Labourists.

CONCLUSION

Thus, as we see from these examples, senior politicians in the US and in Australia are very serious about their personal and party image, and well aware of how much they can influence

⁴³ Sydney Morning Herald (2012).

⁴⁴ Green (2014).

the situation in the country not only by their actions, but also by their appearance, and by the way they reveal their overt and covert political intentions.

Tony Abbott's sky-blue colour scheme, as we see, has led to a similar result as the tie worn by George W. Bush. At some point, the stability of the blue begins to exert a negative pressure on the public consciousness. It should be noted that colours are firmly anchored in a specific historical context associated with the traditional colour symbolism of the European Old World and the state symbols of the United States and Australia. Both examples are from countries with a common British past. In modern times blue was once associated with the blue blood of British nobility ('blue blood' pointing to the blue veins that show through the skin of the well-groomed aristocrat, unlike the calloused and tanned hands of the labourer), while red represented the red blood of the Guards ('Red Coat' - the ubiquitous nickname of a British soldier).⁴⁵

*Prime Minister Yatsenyuk and his wife at the Independence Day service, Kiev, Ukraine, August 24, 2015.*⁴⁶

Guidelines regarding colour options for formal occasions, of course, are directly dependent on the national colours. The blue-white-red triad, as well as in the United States and the British Commonwealth, has been adopted in some other countries, so we can say that the general rules of the political etiquette of colour work for them. The national colours of other countries offer plenty



⁴⁵ Никитина, Демьяненко (2012).

⁴⁶ Image is taken from: BBCcCNN (2015).

of opportunities to express yourself in the protocol of national events. For example, the colours of Ukraine - a sky-blue and yellow – occur naturally in the dress code of Ukrainian politicians. However, this is true only if they are used in combination. Used individually, a sky-blue or yellow tie carries with it only its own socio-cultural connotations.

The psychological and emotional effects of colours are definitely nothing new. In fact, psychologists have been researching the meaning of colours for decades, if not centuries, and evidence does indeed prove that certain colours do evoke certain emotional responses in people. So it is nothing new for presidential candidates to be paying attention to what colours they choose for a public appearance.⁴⁷

At a certain level high politics and diplomacy converge, in that any president, prime minister, king, or church potentate will find themselves having to perform the functions and tasks of foreign policy. Taking a broad definition of diplomacy, every leader in high politics or global business is a diplomat; diplomacy penetrates all levels of society, and every person travelling abroad is also acting as a diplomat at his own particular level of communication.

However, on psychological level of the general impact, high-level policy-making and diplomacy diverge. Any foreign policy action or political message is essentially a form of advertising⁴⁸ - self-promotion or state advertising, you might say. In diplomacy, this element should not be present. Diplomacy has its own tasks, also associated with the need to convey the message to the other side. But for a diplomat it is very important to make his interlocutor 'advertise himself', to create the right mood or flow of his thought that forces him to open up and reveal his intentions. Colour psychology plays an important role in this.

⁴⁷ Tie-a-tie (2012).

⁴⁸ Roy Britt (2009).

So the daily choice of a necktie is not as simple as it looks, and should not be made without thought.⁴⁹

Like the Presidents, use colour to subtly accomplish your goals.⁵⁰



(Image is taken from a source⁵¹)

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⁴⁹ Roy Britt (2009).

⁵⁰ Cooper Ready (2004), p. 116.

⁵¹ Atlantic (2013).

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