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## **An Image Plain as It Is**

The typical feature of a real political leader is that whenever he is losing, or winning, he is always at the top of the world. Despite the critical situation, he manages to find a way out and to resist the obstacles which have been set on his way. One of the brightest examples of the politician whose ambition to take the first position despite the circumstances is Barack Obama, the 44th President of the USA. Like every person engaged in politics, Barack Obama has the legend of his own, a myth called to bring the country together and lead it to the economical and cultural prosperity. Built on certain elements of his speech and behavior, it drives to certain effect which has the most striking result on people. Due to specific communicational strategy, this is what could be called " the tactics of the winners".

Taking a closer look at the picture, it is possible to suggest that one of the strongest messages of cultural and ideological character which Obama sends to the audience is his vision of the USA as a strong country with huge economical and political influence. Quite a powerful iconic sign, it was used by Obama in the most reasonable way. Indeed, considering his ideas listed in a number of studies, it becomes obvious that the political strength of the country is his head aim. Emphasizing that all the forces which he applied were driven for the U. S. to achieve the certain stage of well-being, Obama is most convincing: Our campaign was not hatched in the halls of Washington.

It began in the backyards of Des Moines, in the living rooms of Concord, on the front porches of Charleston. (Cohen 65) With his gestures, and with that specific expression in his eyes, Obama seems to convey the same idea in the

picture, as if saying, there is the way to do things right, and I can show it to you, people... Indeed, the gestures which Obama makes breathe with the energy of the leader who is capable of getting people out of the political mess.

### **The Myth That Supports the Colossus**

Because of the impressive and effective signs which Obama uses to create the vision of striving for the better future, he seems so successful and persuasive. One of the core reasons for the force which the picture is breathing with is the gestures which the USA President makes. This contributes to the myth which is created in the greatest way. With the palms always open for the people to see them - an extremely important psychological move determined to show clear and good intentions - Obama is taken as the most honest person in the Earth, whether this is so or not.

“ Obama’s trademark demagoguery” (Tarpley 159) can also be read in the picture; although the image cannot either move, or utter a word, it is clear that the President speaks, and he speaks “ big words”. One of the features of his, the unceasing willingness to share his ideas and to recruit as many new adepts as possible can be observed in the picture through the gestures and the facial expression of the president. One of the core ideas of his peculiar philosophy, the feeling of righteousness, is what the expression of his face tells to the most attentive spectators. Looking into his eyes, one can see the pride on belonging to his nation, the feeling for justice and for the rightness of what he believes in and what he is doing.

His facial expression is an indexical sign itself, breathing with the feeling of justice and patriotism. That is why the ideas which Obama communicates can be heard even looking at his image.

## **Reading the Messages of the Picture**

With help of the legend which stands behind him, Obama can create an image of a politician competent enough to cope with the business of the international importance. One of the components of his image, the accuracy and attention to the tiniest details, can be traced in the picture as well.

Because of the well-thought image, the strict and straight lines of his suit, as well as the angle which the photographer caught the president's face at, the image of the politician who is greatly concerned with the world's fate is complete. Taking a brief look at this picture is enough to understand that such man does not make mistakes - which Obama counts on. Another important issue in the picture which adds to the idea of patriotism and the reliability of the United States is the national symbols taken in the camera focus. Indeed, the photographer caught the national flag and the image of the national coat of arms into the camera shot. With help of these details, the idea of the USA as the country of great political influence and the incredible authority has been increased times. This gives people the hint on the history of the USA, the battles which the States had to face to achieve the freedom which the people have been striving for for so long. Creating the code for people to decipher as the idea of the States' strength and influence, Obama contributes to the idea of the country integrity and unity. One more idea which can be interpreted from the picture, namely from the way in

which Obama addresses the problem of the Egyptian crisis, is his concern of the world political issues as carefully as the ones of the United States.

The mimics, the expression in his eyes and the way his lips move show that his tactics is the so-called “ active listening”, which is also the feature of his “ responsive” politics. One could argue that the ideology of Barack Obama could be considered too pushy and positioning the United States as the world authority. However, it is quite reasonable for a politician to take the active position so that the country which he represents could be considered worthy. Among the things which an eye catches instantly is the fact that Obama does not gesture in the picture.

An important iconic sign, it brings people’s memory back to their ideas of the most influential politicians whose words were enough to enflame the crowd. Showing that he is completely self-assured and certain of his methods and means to control the world political situation, Barack makes an impression of a perfect politician. Conveying the ideas and ideology of his party, Obama creates the specific world in which he has built the model of the right state. As Brill says, To accomplish so much, Obama needed the respect of other state representatives. He had a gift for reaching out to opponents to find agreement. “ What drove him was policy issues,” said Miner.

“ But he realized that government involves compromise. Barack was so talented that he compromised from a position of strength.” (Brill 38) The signs in the picture, namely the facial expression and the calm look of Barack’s eyes, show the readiness for the compromise, which is the key sign

of the picture. One of the key symbolic signs, this is the means with which he reaches the top success.

## **Conclusion**

With help of indexical and symbolic signs in the picture, the photographer has managed to express the whole ideology of the party in a single picture. With help of certain signs, the picture looks most convincing and makes one believe in the man depicted. The multiple details which have been expressed in certain way in the picture have helped to create the image of a politician who wins even when he loses, which shows the impact of the signs which a picture can convey.

## **Works Cited**

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