

**Visual Representation of Women in Politics:
An Intercultural Perspective**
(based on Hillary Rodham Clinton, USA and Yulia Tymoshenko, Ukraine)

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Abstract

Approaches of representing gender in visual media are symptomatic of the existing range of cultural values, stereotypes and ideological directions in a given society. Nowadays "the most striking change is in the mass media's images of what constitutes successful, and thus hegemonic, masculinity and femininity" (Gal, 2000, p. 83), which continues to be redefined in response to social, economical and historical processes.

Photography, as an indispensable tool of capturing and reflecting cultural phenomena, is used in this research to demonstrate cultural specifics of gender representation in the political sphere in the society of the USA and Ukraine. Both Hillary Rodham Clinton and Yulia Tymoshenko, being front-line political representatives of their countries, serve as elected embodiments of women's expectations and visions. Importantly, they also represent visual projections of women's national identities of their societies.

Issues of public appeal, image construction and self-fashioning are addressed in this research of the phenomenon of women political leaders and their respective role in the cultural development of their societies.

Keywords: gender; representation; femininity; Yulia Tymoshenko; Hillary Clinton; intercultural

The pursuit of power is rarely regarded as gracious. The first few female leaders were considered so unusual, they were associated with either male qualities, or metal. However, such labels displayed a longstanding inability to imagine women handling power. Therefore, their ambitious intentions were interpreted at times as an ugly trait, their exercise of authority as abnormally forceful, even their determination was considered as a sign of psychological concern.

"Today more than 50 women have been elected prime ministers and heads of state, from Chile's Michelle Bachelet to Germany's Angela Merkel" (Baird, 2008, p. 37), however, since 1980s and to nowadays, according to Baird, disillusioned voters seemed to pay attention to something different – being truly feminine was seen this time as an asset by those who wanted women to prove they could change politics.

Across the globe, women entering positions of political leadership have learned that playing to stereotypes can endear them to voters at critical junctures in campaigns, especially when it is their likeability, and not their competency, that is in question. In Baird's opinion, "like men, women have exploited their gender

when it suits them" (2008, p. 37). Thus, feminization of politics reveals familiar layers of incongruities or representation, a search for effective self-fashioning and behavioral strategies in order to stand competition. Issues of public appeal, image construction and self-fashioning are addressed in this research of the phenomenon of women political leaders and their respective role in the cultural development of their societies.

Constructing an Image of a Woman Politician

For this analysis the photos were grouped into categories and placed in pairs to facilitate perception. The main criterion of selecting the close-up portraits (1a,b) and (2a,b) is their neutrality such as absence of signs of party affiliation or national flags, although the images (1a) and (1b) are featured on the homepages of their respective official sites. In such a way the message conveyed is not cluttered by additional information on the background. Thereby, this is an attempt to monitor how distinction can be created with minimum tools of influence. Environmental portraits, on the contrary, employ surrounding elements are a complex system that considered together give the subject character.

However, not only highly defined visual symbols can be of significant importance. A pollster and a political scientist Samuel Popkin coined the phrase 'low information' in 1991; he called it 'low-information signaling' – the way seemingly trivial details have a big impact on political choices" (Smalley, 2008, p. 48). For women candidates these can even include a detail of clothing such as the range of décolletage, change of hairstyle and type of shoes.

Tymoshenko successfully utilizes these fashion approaches in creating her visual image. Moreover, each stage of her political life can be accurately identified according to her appearance, as each point in her career is marked with a change of image. While strengthening her positions in the Ukrainian politics at the beginning of her political career, Tymoshenko had to show that she was a real business lady and a serious player on the political field. Therefore, her basic wardrobe consisted of different business skirt-suits, which were invariably worn with white blouses, while her hair was straight and shoulder-long. After being released from a detention unit, she started growing her hair and softened her style in clothes, and eventually for the elections of 2002 she appeared with the hairdo, that she manifested for the next eight years until nowadays. For the presidential elections of 2006 she turns to the image of a revolutionary and wears leather jackets that remind the fashion of the rebellious 1917. In the midst of the 'Orange Revolution' in 2004 Tymoshenko sports a black and orange sweater with a word 'Revolution' on it in English. At the same time, scores of enthusiastic articles appeared in the press glorifying Tymoshenko as a fiery revolutionary, the Ukrainian Jeanne d 'Arc.

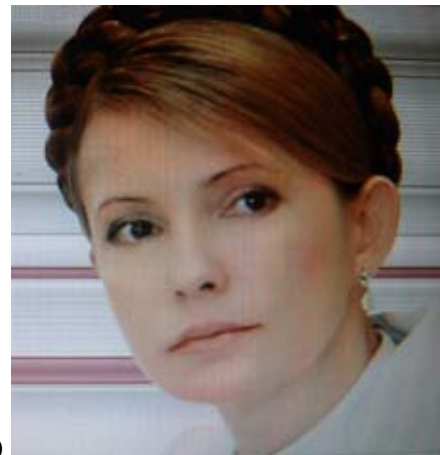
Thus, with the help of visual strategies that comprise “image management, the politician [...] aims to appeal to a mass audience” (Drake, Higgins, 2006, p. 88), which requires a diverse multi-level approach to influence. However, excessive focusing on image does not guarantee political success. As John Corner and Dick Pels observe, “contemporary party politics has come to rely too much on image and spin and not nearly enough in rational argumentation” (2003, p. 11).

Close-Up Portraits: the Skill of Visual Gist



1a)

www.hillaryclinton.com (header; March, 2009)



1b)

www.tymoshenko.com.ua (header; March, 2009)



2a)

www.hillaryclinton.com (by Richard Phibbs)



2b)

www.tymoshenko.com.ua (February, 2009)

In one of his short essays called “Photography and Electoral Appeal” Roland Barthes briefly describes

campaign close-up portrait photos typical for male politicians in the following way:

A full-face photograph underlines the realistic outlook of the candidate, especially if he is provided with scrutinizing glasses. Everything there expresses penetration, gravity, frankness: the future deputy is looking squarely at the enemy, the obstacle, the 'problem'. A three-quarter face photograph, which is more common, suggests the tyranny of an ideal: the gaze is lost nobly in the future, it does not confront, it soars, and fertilizes some other domain, which is chastely left undefined. Almost all three-quarter face photos are ascensional, the face is lifted towards a supernatural light which draws it up and elevates it to the realm of a higher humanity; the candidate reaches the Olympus of elevated feelings, where all political contradictions are solved. (1991, pp. 92-3)

Within the minimalistic framework of close-up shots, the given four portraits of Clinton and Tymoshenko are inevitably found to follow the same pattern. However, on a general scale and contrasting with the description above, women's close-up shots psychologically introduce a softer side, as female subjects do not tend to pose fiercely to deliver an air of invincibility in facing a problem, rather, they as if reassure that in their presence a problem will not appear. In such a way and in spite of the general restraint and neutrality of depiction, "the portrait [...] centrally addresses the issue(s) of identity, self and relationship to others" (Edholm, 1992, p. 159). Social and personal (private) aspects can be distinguished to a larger or lesser degree in every portrait. Thus, to their main goal of depicting the public person and signal the social position, touching upon the issues of social identity, portraits also manage to incorporate information related to the psychological aspect of personality. Close-up portraits manage to do so in a concise and instant way, as they leave nothing else for consideration, therefore, making an effective first impression. However, due to such visual 'brevity', close-up shots sometimes exaggerate emotions, making them the only eloquent focus (for e.g.: raising the chin for a stronger effect of courage, optimistic smiling, etc.)

These emotions sometimes can be the elements that draw the main attention and can be attributed the quality of the 'punctum'. However, this Barthes' term finds only a minimum of possible opportunities to reveal itself within the limits of a close-up portrait, as the difficulty lies in the high level of standardization in this type of photography. It is only in rare cases that such mug-shots can flash an element worth to be called a 'punctum', however, its strength will be only a vague bit as expressive as elements discovered in environmental portraits.

After applying a general look at these photographs, a certain similarity in visual choices can be observed in the colour of the background and attire for the header of the candidates' sites. Both politicians chose light-coloured jackets and plain earrings, as the lightness and hopefulness associated with such colours creates the necessary effect of contributing towards trust and peaceful intentions. A slight shade of innocence also

tends to be conveyed by such a spectrum of colours, which also functions as a sign of moral purity, which is further accentuated by accessories.

With the few elements that are possible to fit into a portrait, accessories and jewellery contribute to the general effect created by a photograph. As Barthes mentions above, even in male close-up portraits accessories such as glasses carry their own function of enhancing the seriousness of the candidate's image. Importantly, both politicians favour pearls as a distinct detail of their style. In many cultures these stones "symbolize purity and spiritual transformation. Simply wearing a pearl reminds the wearer to be honest, pure, wise, and to walk with the utmost dignity. Different colors of pearls bear different meanings. As expected, white pearls symbolize purity, innocence, faith, and honesty. Gold or black pearls symbolize prosperity and riches" (Carmel, 2006). Pearls function for both women as a unifying feature, a universal tool that signals femininity. It transcends spheres and manifests itself in political representation as well as in daily life.

Despite the seeming visual 'brevity', a close-up portrait comprises a range of significant and categorisable elements. One of the thematic paradigms that can be easily identified in these photographs belongs to the sphere of social conventions. The evident opposition of presence and absence of a smile on these close-up portraits confirms, that the social rule of smiling is firmly attached to American culture. The presence of a smile on both photographs of Clinton reaffirms this custom that finds its usage in politics as well. It is a sign that functions as a key for invoking friendliness among the electorate with similar social conventions. Whereas, the absence of smiling in Tymoshenko's case is a deliberate choice, which serves to emphasize her profundity, her serious potential to handle political affairs. Clinton's smile is a bait and at the same time a promise, while Tymoshenko's seriousness is a proof, an affirmation.

Upon application of syntagmatic visual schemes, head positions of both women reveal certain aspects. One of them is Clinton's preference for profiles, and Tymoshenko's - for full-face depictions. Clinton's posture on the header of her campaign site (image 1a) clearly complies with the syntagmatic notion of attributing newness to the right-hand elements of photographs. Her enthusiastic look is directed towards future and expectations. Tymoshenko's face being constantly turned towards spectators is a proclamation of openness of her intentions, a statement of her earnestness. However, not meeting their eyes, her glance seems to imply a shade of detachment. In fact, despite the type of expressed emotions, all of the four portraits are united by the fact that the direction of the look is always past the camera, into the distance. Barthes explains it by stating that such type of gaze is "lost nobly in the future, it does not confront, it soars, and fertilizes some other domain, which is chastely left undefined" (1991, p. 93).

Hairstyles also represent a paradigm, which is rooted in cultural and historical aspects. Strictly defined and permanent statement hairstyle of Tymoshenko combines traditionally enhanced femininity with firmness of

her ideals and stability in delivering her visual representation. Her braid denotes a sign of a higher order, with its references to a halo and a crown. This significant element of Tymoshenko's style is the trademark peasant-style plait, which has been a compulsory part of her image for more than seven years and has earned her an obligatory epithet "the traditional Ukrainian braid". Some even argue that the braid gives her the "look of a saint from an icon" (Ukrainskaya Pravda, 2005), while Jonathan Steele in the article "Prison, revolution and reconciliation" adds that her braid "hovers on her head like a halo" (2009). A certain cultural pattern can be observed in the way Tymoshenko's signature hair-style – the over-the-head braid travels through various spheres and thus obtains varied meaning. From a traditional sphere of Ukrainian culture where a braid encircling the top of a woman's head is one of the most notable features, such hairstyle later becomes a special feature of a prominent Ukrainian poet Lesya Ukrayinka. This transition of the symbol continues at present having found a new life thanks to Tymoshenko and has surprisingly discovered itself in the sphere of politics. Moreover, it appeared in the world of top fashion in Milan and Paris becoming a part of Fashion Week 2006 collections by Givenchy. Narciso Rodrigues featured a model with such a hairstyle in his perfume advertisement, and the singer Mary J Blige appeared on the cover of her album "The Breakthrough" with the same braid. The fact that this symbol demonstrated its full potential by transcending time and spheres means that it has obtained a status of an important element of a cultural pattern. As Geertz describes it, "culture patterns – religious, philosophical, aesthetic, scientific, ideological – are 'programs'; they provide a template or blueprint for the organization of social and psychological processes, much as genetic systems provide such a template for the organization of organic processes" (1973, p. 216). Thus the braid becomes a significant recognizable element of a Ukrainian cultural pattern. Clothes form another visual, stylistic and fashion paradigm of 'plainness – sophistication' in their form (images 2a, b). The presence of numerous details, stylish accents and creative interpretation of formal clothes visually contrast the official minimalism of a strict business suit. Thus, Tymoshenko's scarf echoes with a tie, the white color of her shirt corresponds to formal rules, but the attire itself looks unconventional, especially being refreshed by such a detail as the imitation of frill-collars popular among medieval elite. As a result, even within the spatially limiting portrait frame Tymoshenko manages to showcase sophisticated details of her outfit as distinct features that make her noticeable, whereas, Clinton remains true to her classical jackets and plain earrings.

Image Construction at Elections



3a) *Korrespondent*, 28 September, 2007 (by Dmitriy Nikonorov)



3b) *Columbia Daily Spectator*, February, 2008 (by Angela Radulescu)



4a) *Korrespondent*, August, 2007



4b) *Los Angeles Times*, January, 2008 (by Barbara Davidson)

Elections are considered to be the time for mobilizing maximum effective means for conveying the necessary message to various types of audiences. Photographs in this section demonstrate the way every element functions and contributes to creating a certain visual effect using psychological, stylistic and semiotic means.

The construction of the psychological paradigm is influenced by the level of emotionality of both subjects,

as the two politicians behave in an absolutely opposite way. Clinton's enthusiastic gestures are absolutely contrasted by Tymoshenko's stillness. Hand gestures are an important element when considering the speakers' representation. They are psychological indicators of persuasion, which add emphasis to speech and convey additional emotions. With her hands stretched wide, Clinton seems to express promise, assurance and at the same time welcome. Tymoshenko's span of motions is narrower, but at the same time precise. Her fingers pinched together work towards specifying, emphasizing and persuading her audience, however, her emotions are more constrained.

As these sets of photographs allow to see both politicians completely, it is possible to analyse their clothing in more detail, than in close-up portraits. In general, distinct elements that contribute to the overall femininity paradigm and emphasize the contrast between these two women are the oppositions of low heels and high heel shoes, straight-cut jackets as opposed to accentuated waist. These are also accompanied by a multiplicity of creative details in Tymoshenko's style and minimum of them in Clinton's. Indeed, clothing is a notable detail of these photographs, especially the ones depicting Julia Tymoshenko. On the image (3a), her white military style jacket follows the revolutionist style with its lapels (lappets) on her shoulders and sleeves and standing collar. Her long dark pencil skirt adds to her strict look. Her revolutionist style reminds the outfits of USSR Secretary Generals, who used to give speeches in a very similar way in front of a seated audience who listened to the leader with a solemn air. The photograph (4a), on the contrary, demonstrates her other approach to visuality as she is wearing a simplified version of a Ukrainian traditional costume, adding a red beaded necklace and a woven belt as accessories. On both photographs her tops are white referring to the official colour of her party.

Considering the above, John Street emphasizes the need to view politics as a form of performance, and in his article "The Celebrity Politician: Political Style and Popular Culture" he discusses the need for politicians to adapt different styles to different settings. Julia Tymoshenko extensively uses this strategy and appears dressed in a revolutionary-stylized jacket and skirt in front of her supporters, while at other times she chooses the inspirational traditional variants of Ukrainian national costume. In such a way she varies her mode of performance across media appearances, and, therefore, for various types of audiences she utilizes a recognizable 'idiolect' – a particular reserve of voice, expressions, gestures and styles associated with her selected image. Street claims that just as with actors, skilled politicians vary their performance according to the demand placed upon them by different media genres, and so assessment of their performances will also vary according to the context in which they appear. Unlike Tymoshenko, Hillary Clinton is most frequently described in the following way, "She stands with her hardy brown ankle boots planted firmly center stage – the indomitable image of a seasoned, capable 60-year-old woman, handsomely groomed as always in her imperturbable (blue, this time) pantsuit" (Brown, 2008, p. 34), thus constantly referring to

her unchangeable pantsuit trend and visual monotonousness.

The second most clearly manifested element of the selected photographs, apart from the speaker, is the audience. Considered together, they reveal peculiarities in representation of communication between these two elements. The audience of supporters represents the direction to which the politicians' efforts of persuasion are addressed. In this respect, the location of the audience itself is highly significant. All the photographs except the first one follow the centrality syntagm, as the candidates occupy the dominating position assembling other elements of each photograph around them. It is clearly visible in the example of Clinton, where the focal points on both photographs with Clinton find her traditionally in the center of the frame and the surrounding audience creates a harmonious effect of a circle.

On both photographs Hillary Clinton is surrounded with her supporters from all sides including the back, which shows accessibility and openness of the candidate. At the same time, Yulia Tymoshenko faces her audience directly on both photographs, which indicates a high level of formality. Clinton's enthusiasts are a multicolour mixture of various ages, who demonstrate their approval by standing and waving posters. While in Tymoshenko's case the formality is even more enhanced with her supporters dressed in black and white, each wearing a trademark white scarf with a red heart, which is a symbol of the Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc. The audience sits in front of Tymoshenko while she delivers her speech. On the photograph (4a) the audience is represented as a depersonalized concept since only raised hands can be seen. This homogenizes all the scope of differences that constitute her support audiences, therefore, erasing age, gender, ethnicity, background, etc.

Considering the photographs further from a compositional point of view, it is important to notice the distribution of focal points. In the case of photograph (3a) Tymoshenko creates two focal points – with her own figure as a speaker and, at the same time, by looking at her audience. With the direction of her looking she creates the logical direction which viewers also follow when viewing this photograph. In such a way they will first pay attention to Tymoshenko and then will follow the direction of her address and concentrate attention on the seated audience in front of her. The focal points of the photograph (4a) create a complex composition made of two images within one frame. The figure standing on the stage and the face projected on a large screen create a visual paradigm, where the projected image becomes modified and, therefore, has its own set of visual characteristics such as different framing, angle, focus, etc. This magnified image is not a copy but rather an extension of the already formed image on the stage, therefore creating double-mediation with another level of selectivity and semantics. This example shows that mediation can be easily converted into multiplied patterns, where such a process, if carried out continuously, can lead to losing the origin of the image along the stages of reproduction and duplication.

These two sets of photographs from election campaigns provide an abundance of paradigms. On a large

scale of compositional structure the most distinctive one is that of the location of the audience, creating the opposition 'circular – frontal.' In Clinton's case the position of the audience presents one more specific point which is in framing. Due to the circular nature of location, her audience acts at the same time as the background and the foreground. Clinton almost seems to blend with her supporters, which reinforces the idea of unity and openness, while Tymoshenko's figure, distant and elevated, creates an air of inaccessibility. This specificity of framing creates its own paradigm of 'unity – separation'. This paradigm is closely connected with the length of the shot, thus, in Tymoshenko's case the long shot (photo 4a) serves to establish psychological distance between her and the electorate. Despite the use of a short shot in both images (3 a, b), proximity fails to be conveyed in Tymoshenko's instance due to the positioning of the speaker and the location of the audience.

Focusing on Personality: Imitation of Psychological Proximity



5a) *Korrespondent*, 11 August, 2007 (Aleksander Prokopenko)



5b) *Vogue*, December, 1998 (Annie Leibovitz)

A fewer number of photographs represent a politician in an informal setting, which then aims to convey quite opposite messages than the previous category of campaign-set photographs. Photographs used in this section establish among the audience certain feelings of affability towards the candidate. This research does not take into consideration traditional photographs of politicians in their family circle; rather, it examines another side of mediated closeness referred to here as a certain degree of intimacy set within the environment of intellectual work. The images above do reflect a certain level of intimacy, as viewers seem to be given a chance to observe the usually invisible process of work and contemplation. These two photographs show both politicians in a peaceful surrounding contemplating over papers with a cup of tea and thus make an attempt to combine the 'off-stage intimacy' with a working atmosphere. Whether these environments are constructed is another important aspect to bear in mind when considering these photographs critically.

The working environment is a natural sphere of activity for a politician, for this reason its depiction can highlight additional details to their representation. Simultaneously, the approach applied to these photographs by their authors aims to minimize the physical and psychological distance between the audience and the politician by capturing a seemingly solitary moment free from crowds, microphones, posters with logotypes. These two images of women seem to fight any hypothetical sensations of inauthenticity, a seeming imposture, but at the same time this is exactly the feeling that can arise. By

making such efforts at minimising the divide, such type of photographs may as well maintain it. Image as a place for subjectivities seems to be working in two opposite directions at the same time.

These two photographs are united by the general setting, which, although conveying different mood, consist of similar elements. These are a desk, a cup of some hot drink and papers that convey a situation of working environment. Both women fix their eyes not on the lens of the camera but elsewhere, and this fact together with the posture imply a degree of openness and proximity that these politicians intend to express. The audience is as if allowed a step closer into private space of political backstage demonstrated here as working with documents and contemplating.

Both photographs communicate differing moods, as Tymoshenko's pose is relaxed, her gaze is pensive and directed into the distance, her usually concentrated and strict countenance is softened here. These features create a lyrical air, the one experienced during a short break from work. Thus, the audience seems to be allowed to witness Tymoshenko's 'soft side' and reveal the 'lyricism of Woman' as Barthes concisely put it in *Mythologies* (1991, p. 57). Eye direction is also notable in Clinton's case, where her eyes are busily fixed on the document she is reading, while a pen in her hand also indicates her functionality and absorption in work. Together these contrasting photographs form the opposition 'busy - pensive'.

The setting itself can be interpreted in various ways, and one of the readings could be as follows. Tymoshenko's background is a room full of antique dark wooden furniture. Having no windows, this room delivers a feeling of the subject being locked, caged in the masculine world of politics. From an extreme point of view, she is a prisoner, a captive of the masculinized system. At the same time, the setting arranged by Annie Leibovitz for Hillary Clinton is a spacious patio, where the sky occupies most of the photograph and columns aiming high are given much scope, while in all this breathable frame Clinton occupies only the right-hand lower corner. This photograph, emphasized by refreshing, supposedly morning lighting, is particularly successful at conveying a sense of lightness, spiritual freedom and, at the same time, tranquility, security and a feeling of confidence in this woman as a professional. This gorgeous patio is a space for inspiring work, for enlightening, for a free mind that soars and reaches any intellectual height. Clinton is thus contrasted to Tymoshenko in the type of the chosen setting, which, in the case of the former, is located inside and the latter outside. These facts fall into the paradigmatic opposition of spatial relations such as 'outside - inside' and 'open - closed', which, as discussed above, both have a psychological influence on these images.

Additionally, Clinton's position in the right side of the photographic frame indicates the relation to the visual syntagmatic concept of the New. Leibovitz seems to imply, on the one hand, that Clinton is a new phenomenon in the world of politics, a new version of a woman leader. However, this notion is put under question later in this section.

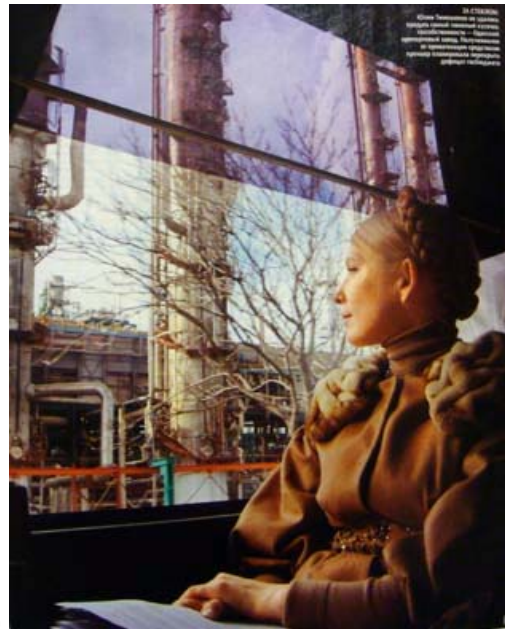
At the same time, from a gender perspective, Leibowitz acts as a male photographer or rather as a masculinizing one, as she does not reveal the femininity of the female subject, but rather places Clinton within the familiar and pre-defined conventions of traditionally male politicians' representation. Probably, this is an intention to emphasize the still existing secondariness of women's presence in politics, where they experience the need to hide behind the mask of masculinity for a more successful performance.

In connection with this, it is hard not to notice how the common to both women paradigm of femininity emphasizes itself once again in clothes in these two photographs. Clothing here continues to highlight the contrast in the performed gender, as Clinton is dressed into a clearly men's white shirt, and Tymoshenko dons a soft jacket with multiple hem trimming and a large brooch. Notably, a hypothetical transposition of these two women with male politicians in these two photographs would result in an absolutely seamless interchange in Clinton's case, where a mere face substitution would suffice. However, all the signifiers in Tymoshenko's photograph would clash dramatically. Thus, in the portrayal of Clinton, Annie Leibowitz is manifesting a unisex image of a politician, another face in the array of homogenized public servants. More precisely, gender is reduced here to the seemingly inescapable option of masculinity, and, eventually, Clinton's image cannot claim to be a new interpretation of a woman politician phenomenon.

Focusing on Personality: Environmental Portraits



6) *Korrespondent*, 23 February, 2008



7) *Korrespondent*, 24 May, 2008

(by Aleksander Prokopenko)

(UNIAN Information Agency)



8)

Korrespondent, 29 December, 2007 (AFP)

In general, women have been symbolically portrayed as an embodiment of “the virtues and qualities attached to what have been seen as their appropriate social positions: beauty, sexual desirability, modesty, virginity, innocence, maternity, love, care/nurture, servitude and sometimes respectable old age” (Edholm, 1992, p. 160). Moreover, Edholm emphasizes that “qualities of justice, truth and beauty in western culture are almost always represented by symbolic female figures” (1992, p. 160).

Generally, “symbolizing belongs to metaphor rather than to perception, and is thus a linguistic, and specifically rhetorical, not an immediate psychological function of the mind,” claims Gage (1999, p. 109). Rhetorical potential of the three selected photographs below is particularly high as they contain objects with strong metaphorical messages and can have a variety of interpretations. Besides, symbolic objects serve as cues that trigger associative connections between the object and certain cultural and social phenomena.

The portrait photographs below are united by the paradigm of solitariness. These women as if exist in their own isolated world. Indeed, portraits also tend to focus on “the individual’s uniqueness” and at times to “emphasize the isolation of the individual: the aloneness. [...] to problematize the individual’s relation to the

world" (Edholm, 1992, p. 160).

In the case of Tymoshenko, she is traditionally for her pictured as an epitome of 'True Womanhood' (Chadwick, 1992, p. 166) of the Victorian times with their traditional lofty and detached depictions of women in splendid dresses. These two portraits of hers also reveal the specifics of the male visual approach and capture of a feminine image, where a woman is placed on a venerated pedestal which is in fact a coin with two faces: a woman is honoured and at the same time immobilized from performing. Peculiarly, to emphasize this, Tymoshenko (photo 7) is as if encapsulated in a glass container which limits her abilities and allows only to observe, rather than interact directly with this masculine industrial environment.

The bridge on photograph (6) symbolizes the direction of movement towards progress as well as joining two opposing sides, which can find its reference to the Western and Eastern parts of Ukraine that need a unifying action. The bridge symbolizes a passway for a society in transition, while the river hints at dynamism and change. Tymoshenko's posture looks as if she was caught on camera while crossing this bridge, which adds to the overall semantic dynamism created mainly by these two other elements of the photograph.

The scarlet colour of her clothes reminds the revolutionary trend, although the style of the attire does not have such elements and rather reminds that of a tender golden-haired princess. As John Gage confirms in his book *Colour and Meaning*, "blonde hair with grey and crimson was expressive of feminine gentleness and amiability, or rather, true femininity" (1999, p. 189), referring to paintings of 1800s. Then the tendency among painters was that "the colour of dress were, and should be, represented in pictures as expressive of character. These notions would be most appropriate for depicting women, since men's clothing, they thought, was largely determined by profession" (Gage, 1999, p. 188). Shades of red in particular have always been especially charged with meaning, which can be explained by the fact that it "has been seen as the colour *par excellence* of life-giving blood" (Gage, 1999, p. 110).

Semantically the most enhanced element of the photograph (7) is the window. Being separated from the outside with glass involves a number of associations. It can be interpreted as the divide between the reality and personal world, creating an air of alienation or forced separation. Alternatively, this arrangement can be seen as an empowered position of a dominating figure. Either way, Tymoshenko's figure seems as if encapsulated inside the safety of this train carriage which takes her past the rough reality beyond.

The third photograph (photo 8) is divided into two parts, where half of the frame is occupied by Clinton's reflection on the glass top of a table. This visual coincidence creates a particularly strong effect as the figure of the politician is doubled and extended, thus, making the powerful atmosphere intensified by the enlarged size of the depicted figure. In such a way this occurrence can be considered the *punctum* of this

photograph. In addition, the low angle from which this photograph (as well as (8)) is taken, visually enlarges the depicted figures and in such a way emphasizes their status.

The mirror image of Clinton works as a symbolic metaphor of psychological dualism of the depicted subject. As if viewers are enabled to suddenly see the extension of Clinton, her second self, as if it is a sudden revelation of her true nature. Her reflection on the glass table naturally darkens further away from the figure and unintentionally creates an eerie effect of a darker looking, gloomier head that is concealing 'dark' dormant thoughts. Clinton is not aware of the fact that she is reflected on the glass surface and is not captured looking at her reflected self, therefore, Clinton's image does not comply here with the function of seeking to reestablish one's identity that is traditionally attributed to mirrors.

This is one of the rare occasions when Clinton wears a dress and, peculiarly captured on this photograph, seems to refuse to acknowledge this feminine element, which can be considered as an expression of self-alienation. According to interpreters of Lacan, "this reflected, therefore alienated image becomes the ideal of eventual unity, the basis for all subsequent identification" (Richardson, 1983, p. 57). He states, that the image becomes ego, therefore, is Clinton refusing to acknowledge her own ego, is it her "false self" (Smith, 1983, p. 216)?

This photograph differs from traditional mirrored images in the fact that depicted women are usually aware of their reflection and use it for self-acknowledgement, there is traditionally a feeling of one's narcissistic adoration. Notably, Clinton explicitly averts her head from the mirrored image, which may imply her refusal from traditionally female treatment of reflected personal images. Besides, this can be considered as her preference for being recognized only for her public visible image, or that she refuses to be aware of possibilities of reading her as a double personality, refuses or is unable to recognize her own image. What is observed on this photograph is the Lacanian concept of the complex "I" divided between the inner world, the specular "I", and the outer world, the social "I" (Lacan, 1989, p. 506). Clinton does not seem to feel and demonstrate bodily unity, that is her body belongs to an opposite category, non-female. She is torn by an internal dualism, between the actual and the ideal, and does not arrive at a decision, but dwells in a neutral compromise.

In the language of Lacan, Clinton's self-fashioning overtly demonstrates that in the sphere of applying her professional skills as a politician she acknowledges the presence of the Other, who is in this case represented by men politicians. Clinton feels the need to connect to male objects outside herself in order to perform successfully. Her style is a consenting agreement, while Tymoshenko's is a non-conformist response. Tymoshenko acts to oppose male politics, she introduces the female gender into it, instead of conforming and thus preserves her body integrity.

As mentioned above for the photograph (6), the associative and symbolizing significance of colour should

not be underestimated either, as it has a strong potential to convey implicit messages. For example, on the general level of perception there is a tendency of "identifying the sensuous, unstable, undeterminate characteristics of colour as such with the female, as opposed to the determinate, stable, male element of line or form; or grouping individual colours into categories such as 'warm' and 'cool'; or characterizing colours as, for example, 'cheerful' or 'sad' (Gage, 1999, p. 262). Peculiarly, Tymoshenko and Clinton never select similar colors in clothing. They seem to have completely differing preferences, despite occupying high positions on the arena of power and having to comply to the canons of official colours in dress. Clinton is hardly ever seen neither in white, nor red. When she chooses to look bright she selects orange, yellow or bright blue. Peculiarly, a dispute that was originated in 1809 by Philipp Otto Runge, a German Romantic painter and theorist, concerned these two colours and gender. He devised a color-circle, on which the warm shades of yellow and orange represented the masculine energy, and the cool blue and violet were attributed to the feminine. However, a century later when this scheme was taken by neo-Romantic Expressionists, these rules were reversed and yellow was associated with "soft, cheerful and sensual" (Gage, 1999, p. 36). This historical fact confirms both the subjectivity and flexibility of human perception, as well as the relativity of gendering the color.

Colour and style of clothes are some of the most obvious elements that constitute the visual depiction of a person in portraits. Photographs (6) and (7) are particularly indicative of Tymoshenko's level of attention to details of her outfits. The number of elements decorating her clothes is amazing, as well as the selection of exquisite fabric and colours. Tymoshenko's style is "conspicuously not masculine", her "difference to men is strongly signalled" (Edholm, 1992, p. 156) by numerous hyper-feminine details of her clothing. Even her strict military-looking jacket mentioned in one of the previous sections will always be coupled with a skirt and never trousers, which is an absolute opposite for Clinton's pantsuit preferences. In fact, many analysts reduce Hillary Clinton's image-making failures and successes to her own personality or personal style. Offering such an explanation for her image deficiencies, Campbell expresses an opinion, that "Clinton's style of public advocacy typically omits virtually all of the discursive markers by which women publicly enact their femininity" (1998, p. 6).

By maintaining a specific visual image relevant to national and cultural expectations of their countries these two politicians are able to obtain popularity and support. Tymoshenko's approach is based on traditional Ukrainian image with particularly feminine features in clothing and hairstyle, while Clinton's highly conformist strict business style shifts her into a unisex/sexless realm of perception. Repeated display of the main elements of style in visual media creates a high level of recognition on the local and international arena.

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