

Západočeská univerzita v Plzni

Fakulta filozofická

Bakalářská práce

**Barack Obama's farewell speech - translation, rhetoric and
contextualization**

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Prohlašuji, že jsem práci zpracovala samostatně a použila jen uvedených pramenů a literatury.
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Poděkování:

Mé poděkování patří panu Mgr. Hostýnkovi, vedoucímu mé bakalářské práce, za jeho odborné vedení, cenné rady, pomoc a vstřícnost při jejím vypracování.

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1 Introduction

The thesis aims to translate Obama's farewell speech in Chicago in January 10, 2017, focusing on the used rhetoric (linguistic means, ability to persuade, etc.) as well as evaluating these performances. Another part of this thesis will be contextualization - introduction to the problematic mentioned in the speech, familiarization with the mentioned situations and description of the steps that have been made for / against the given issue. This means that the core parts of my work are: translation of speech, rhetoric and contextualization.

I chose these parts because of my field of study "Foreign Languages for Commercial Practice - English and German", whose content are the subjects as translation, rhetoric and linguistics. Unfortunately, we do not have political sciences or subjects related to modern history or politics, but I do not believe that it will hinder me from a clear and comprehensible formulation of sentences and introducing my thoughts on this subject.

An integral part of the thesis will also be an effort to outline the profile of Barack Obama and his political and private life - character, evaluation as a personality on the world stage, career, opinions, political activities, his life and family background etc.

I have chosen this bachelor thesis because I am very fond of Mr. Barack Obama, I admire him, I have always been interested in his life, in his difficult journey to the political peak, his opinions and worldview, I like very much his behavior and his speeches, the skills to motivate crowds, but I appreciate most his character, which has not been changed as his political power was growing. Despite his tremendous power, he has always remained faithful to his principles, whether marriage and family, or opinions and goals that have always been constant as well.

At the same time, he has never been president or a politician of "fuss" and scandals. He has never needed to use various tools just to be in the spotlight, he has no need for being seen on the covers of magazines and newspaper because of various "stupid" eccentricity, outrages or controversial opinions. In my opinion, he has never denigrated or even brought disgrace on the USA. His behavior has always been in conformity with the high demands of society, even Obama's biggest enemies could never say that he would ever treated someone without respect or that his behavior has ever been rude, vulgar, inappropriate. That's one of many reasons for me to consider him as a very skilled politician who represents his country very well.

I do not think the United States has been disgraced ever during his presidency, he has always behaved according to the best possible parameters, and even its greatest enemies could never say that he behaved vulgarly or inappropriately.

The introducing is followed by the second chapter dealing with the translation as a field of study. It briefly introduces the key words of this area as the core part of the thesis is the translation of Obama's farewell speech.

The third chapter examine rhetoric as a field of study, it covers briefly the introducing this area, history, its representative and means of rhetoric. Important subhead is “Persuasion vs. Pressure” which was added after a consideration of how many politicians use pressure instead of persuasion, my intention was to stress that Obama’s tools are the peaceful ones.

The complete profile of Barack Obama was described in the fourth chapter. This part of the thesis shows many important data from his biography in order to introduce him as many people are not familiar with them, starting with his family background, moving to religious views, education, introducing the Obama’s family we all know, ending at his political life. As a complement “Nobel Prize” subhead is added because, in my opinion, this is not a well-known fact and it is worth sharing.

The essential part of the thesis is Obama’s Farewell speech, delivered in Chicago, January 2017, just a short time before handing the power to his successor; and its translation with an introduction preceding it. This speech has become a memorable one as it was full of optimism, appeals on democracy and a positive change, faith in America’s bright future and its citizens.

The chapter six attempts to contextualize his speech in terms of analyzing the legacy he aimed to leave, describing further the main points and putting it into a context. This part of course outlines other details, such as Obama’s preparation for the long-awaited speech or the venue itself, too.

The chapter seven deals with rhetoric used in Obama’s speech. It analyses his rhetorical techniques and body language, which helped him to be such a successful orator.

The chapter eight uncovers briefly his life after eight years in office as a President of the United States of America.

After the chapter eight follows a conclusion, in which will be the evaluation of the findings; followed by the resumé and the abstract.

This thesis is written in English – there is a simply reason for that – I am fond of this language more than of German. In grammatical term and the width of a vocabulary is English my stronger point than the other mentioned language.

I have used several sources for this thesis – whether printed or those quality internet ones. Those internet ones were used mainly as a source of the full Obama’s farewell speech and also for the contextualization in terms of the latest data, and his other speeches which served for evaluation of his rhetoric, his performing, relationship with the audience, ability to argument and for completing other details of the thesis. Those printed ones helped for a better orientation on an American political stage, in connections, in Obama’s life – whether political or personal; and last but not least – for completion the important details for the thesis and its practical parts.

2 Translation

2.1 About

Translation is a way of transmitting a written text from one language into another. The language of the original text is called „the source language“ and the language of the final text is „the target language“, thus the original text is „the source text“ and the final text is „the target text“.¹

A scientific discipline of translation and interpretation is known as Translation studies. It could also be described as an interdiscipline dealing with the translation of texts from one language to another. As an interdiscipline it is connected with the various fields of study such as linguistics, philology, semiotics, terminology etc.²

2.2 History

The history of translation is very extensive because the translation has been needed almost since the earliest days of human interaction. The first known translation is the Sumerian poem, Gilgamesh, translated into the Asian languages.

As religion was developing the need of translation became even more important. One of the first translated religious texts is the Old Testament.³

2.3 Methods

There are two methods of translation - literal translation and free translation. The literal translation is the verbatim translation of a text from one language to another. The literal translation follows closely the form of the source language. Every word is translated in the same order as the source text.⁴ The free translation does not follow closely the form of the source language. The meaning of the source text and the target text is the same, but it is described by different words and an order of words is different. This method purpose is to create a more natural-sounding translation (Hrdlička, 2014, p. 12-23).

2.4 Difference between translation and interpreting

When we talk about oral transfer of information from one language to another we do not use the word "translation". Instead we use the word "interpreting".

The main difference between the interpreting and the translation is that the interpreter translates orally while a translator translates written text.⁵

¹ logos.net. *Common terms used in translation*. [online].

² wikipedia.org. *Translation studies*. [online].

³ kwintessential.co.uk. *History of translation*. [online].

⁴ proventranslation.com. *Literal Translation vs. Free Translation*. [online].

⁵ languagescientific.com. *The Difference between Translation and Interpreting*. [online].

3 Rhetoric

3.1 About rhetoric

Rhetoric is the skill and the science of speaking, the ability to argue in order to engage the attention and eventually to convince the listener.⁶

3.2 History of rhetoric

The rhetoric has its origins in Ancient Greece, the public speaking meant a great part of public life. It is also known that the ancient Athenians admired the beauty of the spoken word (Rezek, 2010, p. 7). An important part played Sophists (Greek philosophers in the 5th century BC) too (Rezek, 2010, p. 10).

At the ancient times, if someone wanted to defend themselves successfully before the trial or the assembly, they had to deliver their speech on their own without any help, even if they had their speech written by an expert for court speeches. In ancient times the rhetoric was divided into three fields: judicial, political and ceremonial (Buchtová Šmajsová, 2010, p. 27).

According to the Buchtová Šmajsová (2010), some of the rhetoric principles were established yet in ancient times – among these for example:

- Inventiveness
- Organization
- Style
- Memory
- Speech

3.2.1 Representatives

In history there were many famous influential orators, for example these most important ones according to author of the book (Buchtová Šmajsová, 2010, p. 27-28):

- **Gorgias** (483 – 375 BC) - an ancient Greek sophist, pre-Socratic philosopher, teacher of rhetoric
- **Isocrates** (436–338 BC), an ancient Greek teacher of rhetoric, one of the ten Attic orators (greatest orators and logographers of the classical era (5th–4th century BC)).
- **Socrates**(470 – 399 BC), a classical Greek philosopher, one of the founders of Western philosophy; and his student Plato (428/427 or 424/423 – 348/347 BC), an Athenian philosopher, main figure in the history of Ancient Greek and Western philosophy
- **Aristotle** (384–322 BC) an ancient Greek philosopher and scientist

⁶ merriam-webster.com. *Rhetoric*. [online].

3.3 Means of rhetoric

3.3.1 Speech techniques

We learn to speak from a very early age, we imitate the language of our surroundings - parents and friends. Our speech and speaking habits evolve to about puberty. In order to be able to express well, one has to very well acquire certain techniques of speech such as:

- 1) respiration
- 2) creation and using of voice
- 3) articulation
- 4) standard pronunciation
- 5) correct pronunciation of foreign words
- 6) elimination of pronunciation defects
- 7) audio modulation of the speech

(Buchtová Šmajsová, 2010, p. 35- 79)

3.3.2 Focus of speeches

We recognize 2 stylistically different types of public speeches, which could be summarized like this:

- 1) focused on the content
- 2) focused on emotions

The first type, focused on the content, tries to persuade audience by giving clear facts and logical arguments. The aim is to share new findings and pieces of knowledge. Emotions are not important and are not aimed at. It is aimed on true information

The second type, focused on the vehicles of expression and formal side of the speech, is to share new pieces of knowledge among people by influencing emotions of the audience.

Very common is the combination of these two types. It is important to always find a proper balance of content and form. If the given speech is focused only on one type, we cannot achieve as much as if it was balanced. Audience must get the right and true information, which is essential to make a decision but if the speech is supported by emotions, it is simply much easier to persuade them (Buchtová Šmajsová, 2010).

3.3.3 Types of speeches

- 1) oral essay
- 2) lecture
- 3) discussion contribution
- 4) ceremonial speeches

- 5) political speech, ceremonial speech, judicial speech
- 6) language of the banks
- 7) public information, interview, press conference
- 8) TV performance
- 9) narration

(Buchtová Šmajsová, 2010, p. 82-124)

3.3.4 Means of making thrill in speeches

- 1) Gradation
- 2) Chain connection
- 3) Contrast
- 4) Announcement of a key message
- 5) Irony and sarcasm

(Buchtová Šmajsová, 2010, p. 136-137)

3.3.5 Means influencing speech effectiveness

- 1) Quotes
- 2) Aphorisms
- 3) Rhetorical questions
- 4) Dialogue questions
- 5) Repetition
- 6) Tautology
- 7) Exclamation
- 8) Proverb

(Buchtová Šmajsová, 2010, p. 137-141)

3.3.6 Speech figures

There are many speech figures. Let us have a look at some of the speech figures that often appears in Obama's speeches:

Polysyndeton – Usage of too many conjunctions in close succession.

Example: and, but, or, nor

Ethos – It represents typical ideal of a behavior or character being represented. It also shows the credibility, or often an ethical appeal and is used to convince the audience of the worthy of respect toward the speaker.

Example: Typical example is a speaker telling people his own story in order to make them believe and respect him.

Tricolon – Tricolon is a term, consisting of three parallel clauses, phrases, or words, which happen immediately one after another. These three parallel words, phrases, or clauses are often of the same length. The aim of tricolon is to emphasize the aimed meaning, to complete the wholeness, to make the point more interesting, rhythmic and memorable; the third part is sometimes used to bring out something unexpected.

Example: *Veni, vidi, vici*⁷; the sweat of its laborers, the genius of its scientists, the hope of its children⁸

Metaphor – This figure of speech refers to words, phrases or expressions applied figuratively that have different meaning from their origin literal definition but serve for describing the idea or for comparison.

Example: to be a black sheep of the family, to be a couch potato⁹

Juxtaposition – It is used for portraying contrasts and comparison by placing different words or phrases of character, place, intensity e.g. next to each other. It helps to highlight the quality of the essential word or phrase (Leanne, 2011, p. 135).

Example: Merry and tragical

Epistrophe – It represents a repetition of the same words in the sentence.

Example: “*Who is here so base that would be a bondman? If any, speak; for him have I offended. Who is here so rude that would not be a Roman? If any, speak; for him have I offended. Who is here so vile that will not love his country? If any, speak; for him have I offended*”¹⁰

3.4 Persuasion vs. Pressure

In the speech of every good speaker signs of persuasion occasionally appear. There exist several slightly different definitions of this relatively young concept but the core is, according to the author of the book (Gálík, 2012, p. 9 – 11), always the same:

- Persuasion is an intentional attempt to influence.
- Persuasion is a form of communication – it means it always works between the communicator and the recipient.
- Mental state of the recipient changes based on successful persuasion - in the form of subsequent changed ideas, opinions, behaviors, ..
- An important part of the definition is the part emphasizing free will - there is a great difference between persuasion and pressure.

⁷ literarydevices.net. *Juxtaposition*. [online].

⁸ President Dwight Eisenhower, “*The Chance for Peace*.” *Speech delivered to the American Society of Newspaper Editors*, April, 1953

⁹ grammarly.com. *Metaphors*. [online].

¹⁰ *Julius Caesar* by William Shakespeare

Although both concepts may mingle in theory, it is not the same. While persuasion focuses on changes of one's ideas, behaviors, but clearly and only in free will, pressure is already an instrument that does not accept "its failure" – it uses prohibitions, commands, orders, enforcement, extortion - all of these are "violent, coercive" instruments against human will that clearly state what is "to be done; what must be like this or that otherwise ..." Instead of these dots at the end one can imagine e. g. "comes a punishment, a fine "etc. – briefly: a negative consequence. (Gálík, 2012)

Persuasion, of course, appears in Obama's speeches. He, as a great speaker, knows how to use the words in order to motivate and persuade people. He can awaken emotions, mostly positive, in crowds. He can make people feel like this or that is right. That they are going in a good direction. But everything is done in a positive spirit, unlike "pressure", not in the form of threats and subsequent punishments.

Approach to the audience varies greatly, depending on the orator and which country it is - whether it is less or more democratic. In modern politics we still see attempts by individuals to so-called dictatorship – it is done by individuals and it means commanding everyone, ruling everything and having everything under control. This is not the right approach. Barack Obama does not take this approach to things, everything has always been done mostly in a "non-violent form," and has always highlighted - and still highlights - the uniqueness of the citizens and individuals who, according to him, should be and are the one who gives the direction of the country. He has always pointed out that the greatest power is the people, has never looked down up on others or denounced them, which in contrast to "dictators", using pressure instead of "healthy" persuasion, is a very common phenomenon. That is one of the reasons why Barack Obama has been considered as a great politician of his country.

4 Barack Hussein Obama

4.1 Introduction - biography

4.1.1 Family background

Barack Hussein Obama was born to parents with vastly different background– to the white American Stanley Ann Dunham (1942–1995) and Kenyan Barack Hussein Obama Sr. (1936–1982). Mother's odd first name, Stanley, was a relic of her father's disappointment at failing to sire a boy. Obama Sr.'s middle name, "Hussein", given to him after his father, who converted from Roman Catholicism to Islam and took this name, was also given to young Barack (Wilson, 2008, p. 109). Both parents of the USA President were atheistic; his father converted at the age of 6 from Islam to Anglicanism, changed his name from "Baraka" to "Barack" and later became an atheistic, considering the religion as a superstition (Remnick, 2010).

These two met when studying at the University of Hawaii at Manoa and got married few months after, February 2, 1961. Soon after their wedding, On August 4, 1961, Barack Hussein Obama Jr. was born in Honolulu (Targonski, 2008, p. 3). Few months after Barack's birth,

Ann Dunham took him to Washington, where they settled down and she studied too, as her husband decided to leave for continuing his education at the University of Hawaii, later followed by his next successful studies at Harvard University. In winter 1964, they got divorced and his father returned, after graduation, to Kenya for work. Obama remembers more likely nothing of his father as he was almost never at home; the two met only once more when young Barack was 10 years old, in December 1971 (Targonski, 2008). Obama Sr. has died in a car crash 1982 at the age of 46 (Remnick, 2010).

When Obama was nearly 4 years old, his mother remarried to Lolo Soetoro, an Indonesian oil executive, who that time studied geography at the University of Hawaii and this was also a place where they firstly met. One year after they got married, Soetoro went to Jakarta, Indonesia, and his wife, after finishing her studies, with his step-child rejoined him the next year, 1967. Obama started attending the local school. On August 15, 1970, Soetoro and Dunham had a daughter, Maya Kassandra Soetoro. (Remnick, 2010)

In 1971, young Obama was sent back to Hawaii to live there with his grandparents and to start his fifth grade there, with his family staying in Jakarta. Next year, 1972, his mother along with his step-sister returned back to him, mainly because of mother's desire to study anthropology. They lived together until the summer of 1975, when she and her daughter went back to Jakarta, Obama decided to stay in Honolulu and finish his high school diploma there. Ann Dunham and Lolo Soetoro divorced in 1980. His mother has died of cancer in 1995 at the age of 52. Obama has 8 step-siblings, one brother has died (Remnick, 2010).

Obama's childhood could be considered as not being easy as he was in a constant motion, moving from one place to another, shifting from one school to another. He experienced poverty, which is different from many other USA Presidents, who came from high society (Rollason, 2010, p. 10-11). This has not weakened him as one could expect, it has given him the wide life outlook and it helped him in order to understand different cultures, surroundings and various approaches (Remnick, 2010,. Obama himself admits that he does not yearn to have such life in a constant motion as he had as a child: " *There's a glamour, there's a romance to that kind of life and there's a part of that still in me. But there's a curse to it as well. You need a frame for the canvas, because too much freedom's not freedom.*"¹¹

4.1.2. Religious views

Ex-president Barack Hussein Obama is a Christian. Many people considered (and many still do) him to be Muslim. Simply because of his middle name "Hussein" (Wilson, 2008). Obama has often been criticized because of this lie that has come into a people's awareness thanks to some media and politicians (Remnick, 2010, p. 61). Some of his political rivals have used this defaming as a tool to make people dislike him and not vote for him and often launched their campaign based mainly on hatred toward this religion and Barack Obama. In media appeared, and not rarely, racist comments on his person – among others these: "*Jesus wouldn't vote for*

¹¹ The Telegraph.com. *Barack Obama: The making of America's first black president.* [online].

*Barack Obama*¹² – a comment, said by the Republican Alan Keyes, used to persuade Christian Americans that Obama is not right; *“If I were running al-Qaeda in Iraq, I would put a circle around March 2008 and be praying as many times as possible for a victory not only for Obama but also for the Democrats.”*¹³ said by Australian PM John Howard.

Although this “well-known” lie about his religion has been made clear many times, the truth has not touched everybody.

Obama, formally registred as Muslim because of his stepfather, was not raised in a religious household – his mother and father were both atheists and his stepfather too (although he was formally registered as Muslim). His stepfather used Islam as a tool to connect with the community, he never prayed (Remnick, 2010, p. 61). Obama attended in his childhood a catholic school, even although he was not a Catholic. He described his religious views as follows:

*“I’m a Christian by choice,” Obama told his audience here. “My family didn’t - frankly, they weren’t folks who went to church every week. And my mother was one of the most spiritual people I knew, but she didn’t raise me in the church. But what we can do, as flawed as we are, is still see God in other people and do our best to help them find their own grace.”*¹⁴

In his speech in Illinois, and not only there, he mentioned his religion in connection to the work he did before his presidency. *„It was in these neighborhoods that I received the best education I ever had, and where I learned the meaning of my Christian faith”*¹⁵ and mentions that he prays every day and also expresses his Christian faith by means of public service.

4.1.3. Education

Grades	Years	School	Place
Kindergarten	1966-1967	Noelani Elementary School; Public	Honolulu, Hawaii
1st-3rd grade	1968-1970	St. Francis Assisi; Private Catholic	Jakarta, Indonesia
4th grade	1970-1971	State Elementary School Menteng 01; Public	Jakarta, Indonesia
5th-12th grade	1971-1978	Punahou School; Private	Honolulu, Hawaii

¹² CBSNews.com. *Here's What Jesus Wouldn't Do*. [online].

¹³ BBCNews.com. *Australia PM slams US candidate* [online].

¹⁴ HuffPost.com. *Obama ‘Christian By Choice’: President Responds to Questioner*. [online].

¹⁵ CBSNews.com. *Transcript of Barack Obama's Speech*. [online].

Freshman-Sophomore year	1979-1981	Occidental College; Private	Los Angeles
Junior-Senior year	1981-1983	Columbia University; Private	New York City
1L-3L	1988-1991	Harvard Law School; Private	Cambridge, Massachusetts

As we can see from the table, which I made for a better orientation in this topic, Obama was shifting a lot during his early age; it was due to the fact that he was moving quite often from one place to another. He attended public kindergarten in Hawaii, where he and his mother with a new partner returned. In 1967 young Barack and his mother moved to Indonesia where they lived with Barack's stepfather. He attended the private Catholic school and later the public one, both in Jakarta. During his 3rd and 4th year he learn bit of local language, Indonesian, and joined local scouting club.

Due to the moving back to Hawaii, he started his fifth grade attending the one of the best private Honolulu schools, the Punahou School (Remnick, 2010, p. 70). *He did not come from privilege, but was able to attend the exclusive Punahou School based on his achievement and with the help of financial aid.*¹⁶ He appreciated this school about two decades after his high school graduation: *"The opportunity that Hawaii offered -- to experience a variety of cultures in a climate of mutual respect -- became an integral part of my world view, and a basis for the values that I hold most dear."*¹⁷

In 1981, after first two years at the Los Angeles Occidental College (Remnick, 2010, p. 99), he transferred to the Columbia University in New York to finish his B.A. degree with a specialization in political science- international relations and English literature (Remnick, 2010, p. 113).

Five years after graduating from Columbia, he decided for studies at Harvard Law School, as he was already working as a community organizer and he found a degree in law as a tool for improving the then work. Thanks to his fantastic grades and writing skills, he was chosen to be an editor of the Harvard Law Review and later he became it's president, which was a full-time volunteer position. He graduated in 1991 with a J.D. magna cum laude and decided to head to Chicago (Targonski, 2008, p. 5).

^{16, 7} starbulletin.com. *Punahou left lasting impression on Obama*. [online].

4.1.4 The Obama family

Obama met Michelle LaVaughn Robinson in 1989 when he worked as a summer associate at the law firm Sidley Austin and Robinson was his adviser. That summer they started dating, got engaged two years after, in 1991, and got married on October 3, 1992. Six years after their wedding, in 1998, their first daughter, Maila Ann, was born and their second daughter, Natasha, was born in 2001 (Targonski, 2008, p. 13).

His wife, Michelle Obama was born January 17, 1964 and raised in African-American working-class family in Chicago. She successfully graduated from Princeton University *cum laude* with a Bachelor of Arts in 1985 and followed by earning her Juris Doctor (J.D.) degree from Harvard Law School in 1988 (Rollason, 2010, p. 39).

She is considered by majority of Americans to be a good example of the First Lady as she is intelligent, charming, committed to her husband, devoted to her work and family and among other positive aspects of her character, she is independent supporting woman with professional experience in business and management with magnificent speaking skills.

Although their family life and hard work of both – Barack Obama and his wife – they have been keeping all aspects of their life in a good balance (Targonski, 2008, p. 13).

4.1.5 Political life

4.1.5.1 Early career

After some time living and working in New York as a financial writer with an international consulting firm, Obama moved in 1985 to Chicago to work as a director of the Developing Communities Project (DCP) - a coalition of churches on the Chicago South Side, a poor African-American area facing many problems. He describes his decision of becoming a community organizer very simply: he was searching his identity and a purposeful life direction and that was a good start (Targonski, 2008, p. 4). This decision did not meet much of public understanding but Obama explains it in an interview with a clear answer showing his heartiness and interest in improving the bad situation, not only in poor areas.

"Listen, Obama," she began. "You're a bright young man, Obama. You went to college, didn't you?" I nodded. "I just cannot understand why a bright young man like you would go to college, get that degree and become a community organizer. [...] Cause the pay is low, the hours is long, and don't nobody appreciate you." [...] Unfortunately, the answers that come to mind haven't been as simple as her question. Probably the shortest one is this: It needs to be done, and not enough folks are doing it.¹⁸

¹⁸ garifunacoalition.org. *Why Organize? Problems and Promise in the Inner City*. [online].

Their work was not always easy, more likely it was a very demanding one. *“Sometimes I called a meeting, and nobody showed up. Sometimes preachers said, ‘Why should I listen to you?’ Sometimes we tried to hold politicians accountable, and they didn’t show up.”*¹⁹

His aim was to involve and engage citizens into an effort to bring about a change, to show them that together, as citizens, they can do big things, that their opinions matter (Rollason, 2010, p. 26). That they can be a voice in such problems as economic redevelopment, job training and efforts for a better environmental as he could not get rid of the feeling that people became cynical about the politics. This work was worth it as the organization met many tangible successes (Targonski, 2008, p. 5).

Obama recalled his time back then as a big help on his way to the political peak as, among other reasons, he learnt to understand the ordinary citizens’ problems and to unite and motivate them to do something. It also helped him to grow up to be a man and find his calling: *“There was something more than making money and getting a fancy degree. The measure of my life would be public service.”*²⁰

Many of those who worked with him were interviewed and majority described him as an honest, inspiring, intelligent and dedicated hard-working man with a potential (Remnick, 2010)

After 3 years of such work, Obama understood that to bring the real change requires involvement at higher level and decided to attend Harvard Law School. During his studies he became first African-American president of the Harvard Law Review – a prestigious journal - and successfully graduated with distinction in 1991 (Targonski, 2008, p. 5).

4.1.5.2 Later career

Obama decided for two-year position as Visiting Law and Government Fellow at the University of Chicago Law School to work on his first book, *After*, in years 1992-2004, he worked at the University of Chicago Law School as a lecturer and a later as a senior lecturer of constitutional law²¹.

In 1993, Obama also joined Davis, Miner, Barnhill & Galland, law firm with specialization in civil rights litigation, minority rights and neighborhood economic development. He quit in 2004 (Remnick, 2010).

From years 1994 to 2002, Obama served many organizations: on the boards of directors of the Woods Fund of Chicago, private independent foundation helping the less-advantage ones; and of the Joyce Foundation, charitable foundation; of the Chicago Annenberg Challenge, a

^{19, 20} TheNation.com. *Obama’s Community Roots*. [online].

²¹ whoishe.org. *Barack Obama*. [online].

Chicago schooling reform project, as founding president and later chairman of the board of directors (Remnick, 2010).

4.1.5.2.1 Senate

Obama was firstly elected to the Illinois Senate in 1996; he served there till the 2004. He was re-elected to the Illinois Senate in 1998 and again in 2002. Meanwhile in 2000, he unsuccessfully attempted to become a member of United States House of Representatives. Things changed in 2003, Obama officially announced his candidacy for the U.S. Senate, with assistance of his political media consultant and analyst David Axelrod; Obama won in democratic primary election with the percentage of 53% . That year he also became chairman of the Illinois Senate's Health and Human Services Committee. This was followed by the resignation from the Illinois Senate in November 2004 due to his election to the U.S. Senate. His career in the United States Senate last from January 3, 2005 to November 16, 2008; this era finished as he was elected as President of the United States (Targonski, 2008, p. 5-7).

The first year as an U.S. Senator from Illinois, he worked on changes concerning, among other problems, the troop reduction, environmental, election and lobbying reforms. The second year he legislated for having military discharges under control (Wilson, 2008, p. 164).

4.1.6 Presidential elections

4.1.6.1 Presidential election 2008

As a politician, yet quite unknown to many Americans, he showed up in many places in the USA to introduce himself - his family background, his education and working as an organizer, his aims in politics.

Obama's campaign was not based only on traditional asking for fundraising via Internet. Certainly, Obama has made use of the Internet as a new organizing tool. The internet is not a magical electronic solution to our problem. One must use it wisely. He believes that if you want some change, you must show up and involve your potential voters, therefore he organized on his website special days – such as neighborhood meetings and neighborhood walk day – to gather residents of the communities, towns, villages and discuss his candidacy and local problems. *“But Obama recognized that community politics has to be about more than his campaign. That’s one reason why volunteers for Obama went around New Hampshire seeking signatures on a petition for withdrawal from Iraq, rather than making Obama the sole focus of their recruitment efforts”* (Wilson, 2016, p. 5).

He proposed to be President of change, necessarily to be started in each person's heart *“If you want to change the world, the change has to happen with you first”* (Remnick, 2010, p. 23). The slogan of his campaign was the famous words "Change we can believe in" with the memorable chant "Yes We Can" (Leanne, 2011, p. 173).

He called up on the crowds to do something together about many crucial problems that people were aware of: *“Let’s be the generation that ends the poverty in America. Let’s be the generation that finally, after all these years, tackles our health-care crisis”* (The Bridge, p. 23). One of the changes that were necessary to be done was the spoiled society and mainly politics. *“Not that he was against capitalism – “There’s nothing wrong with making money” – but focusing on the accumulation of wealth alone led to a “certain poverty of ambition”* (Remnick, 2010, p. 22).

Not only in his first candidature speeches did he mention the heart-touching events and stories from the past – among others the most-known Rosa Parks in 1955, an Afro-American woman civil rights activist, refusing to give up her bus seat to a white passenger which led to big anti-racist protests– he continued to remind them later as well as a symbol of American patriotism, as an “exclamation mark” of how brave the Americans should be of their ancestors (Leanne, 2011, p. 65).

He never forgot to show his deep respect and gratitude for earlier generations as well as to highlight his work as a public servant and how it changed his life and helped him to understand the Americans more. Right from the start he amazed the crowds with brilliant speeches full of sense of patriotism. *“He learned to make it an emblematic story: my story is your story, an American story. Obama was not suggesting that he was unique; there are millions of Americans with complex back-grounds and identities, criss-crossing races, nationalities, origins”* (Remnick, 2010, p. 18). He made people liking his story as many of them could relate. The various stories of each and every American, the variety of American life, were one of the most important bases of his campaign speeches (Leanne, 2011, p. 56).

Obama succeeded in winning the necessary number of votes, announced in Illinois his candidacy on February 10, 2007, made great strides and went on successfully. *“As Barack Obama and seven other contenders for the Democratic presidential nomination began to organize in 2007, opinion polls consistently put Obama in second place behind presumed favorite, New York Senator Hillary Clinton”* (Targonski, 2008, p. 7-8). This time the Democratic primary election campaign of 2008 was historic because the two head candidates were an African-American man and a woman. Obama, conscious of his disadvantage towards Clinton, he had to have his strategy well-prepared. *“With Clinton enjoying greater name recognition, a well-oiled campaign machine, and support at the state level from leading Democrats, the Obama camp devised an innovative strategy to negate these advantages: targeting states that used caucuses rather than primaries to select delegates and focusing on smaller states that traditionally voted Republican in the general election”* (Targonski, 2008, p. 8).

This plan paid off firstly in Iowa on January 3, 2008, *“[...] Iowa win was a game-changer [...]”* and more success was about to come *“It paid off once more on “Super Tuesday” – the elections held simultaneously in 22 states on February 5 – when Obama dueled Clinton to a tie and swept rural states in the West and South”* (Targonski, 2008, p. 8).

It continued the same way and he won 10 more consecutive contests in that month, totally defeating Hillary Clinton's run for the presidency. Obama made her the 67th United States Secretary of State for the era 2009-2013 (Remnick, 2010). In 2016 she was a Democratic Party's nominee for the President of the US but was defeated by Donald J. Trump²².

Obama eventually got to the final of the 56th presidential election on November 4, 2008, where it was about to decide between him and his rival, Republican John McCain – Senator in Arizona, member of United States House of Representatives.

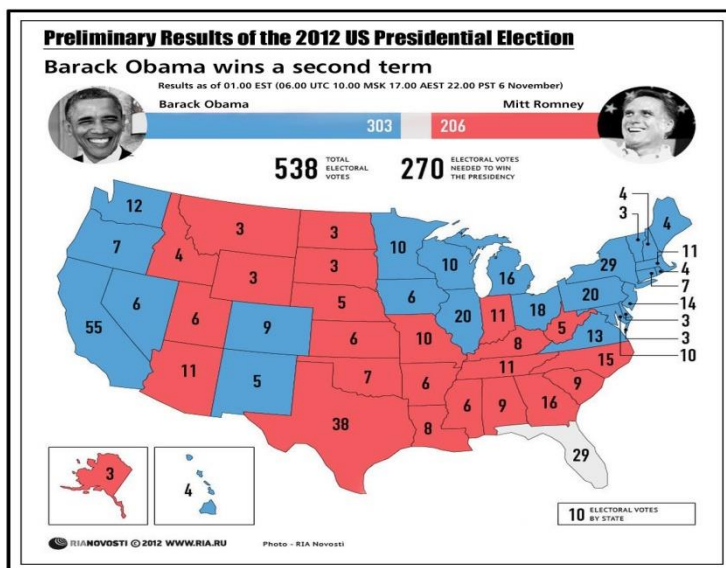
Obama won with 52.92% of the votes and became the 44th President of the USA, the first African-American President in the history of America.²³

Obama chose Joe Biden as a Vice-president of the USA (Targonski, 2008, p. 14).

4.1.6.2 Presidential election 2012

The National Democratic Party Congress, nominating its presidential candidate, took place on September 3 to 6, 2012 in North Carolina. Obama has accepted the Democratic Party nomination there, with Joseph Biden as the Vice Presidential Party candidate. Obama's republican opponent was Willard Mitt Romney (known by his shorter name Mitt Romney), former Governor of Massachusetts, accepting the nomination on the National Republican Party in Florida on August 27 to 31, 2012, with the Vice presidential nominee Paul Ryan at his side.

Presidential election 2012 took place on November 6, 2012.



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²² BBC.com. *US ELECTION 2016*. [online].

²³ CNN.com. *President*. [online].

²⁴ Voices from Russia. *Preliminary Results of the 2012 US Presidential Election*. [online].

Obama has successfully won votes of 26 states of the USA and in Washington D. C. and 332 electoral votes and therefore defeated Mitt Romney who won 24 states and 206 electoral votes, in percentage: 51.1% to 47.2%. Obama has become a second Democrat, regaining his presidential seat. Shortly after his re-election, Obama delivered a successful victory speech, expressing big thankfulness towards the voters and mentioning the crucial goals and message for the next four years.²⁵

According to the BBC News, Romney said that this is a time of great challenges for the USA and he prayed for Obama to be a successful leader; he expressed his hope for the politicians to “put the people before the politics”. Obama also offered to meet Mitt Romney to discuss how they could work together.²⁶

Among the positive reactions on the victory of Obama we could hear the negative ones too: *"Tuesday's election produced an uncertain mandate, although Obama will attempt to claim one. Obama offered a plan, but not one that deals directly with some of the problems he will have to confront immediately."*²⁷

Obama, swearing that „Best is yet to come. “, has positively stepped into a new era of history, with his team and Americans who supported him.

4.2 Nobel Prize

In October 9, 2009 Barack Obama was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize *“for his extraordinary efforts to strengthen international diplomacy and cooperation between peoples”*²⁸. The jury voted unanimously to award it to him.

This happened shortly after his election, and therefore he was the subject of strong criticism. He was accused of not deserving the price because, according to the critics, the only thing he had done for peace were speeches about improving the current situation and thoughts of calming down the bad global situation, but he had not really done anything.²⁹

But *„Even before the election, Obama had advocated dialogue and cooperation across national, ethnic, religious and political dividing lines. As President, he called for a new start to relations between the Muslim world and the West based on common interests and mutual understanding and respect. In accordance with a promise he made during his election cam-*

²⁵ Wikipedia. 2012 United States presidential election. [online].

^{26, 17} BBCNews.com. Barack Obama says: 'Best is yet to come'. [online].

²⁸ Nobelprize.org. The Nobel Peace Prize 2009. [online].

²⁹ daily.jstor.org. Did Barack Obama Deserve the Nobel Prize? [online].

*paign, he set in motion a plan for the withdrawal of U.S. occupying forces from Iraq.*³⁰
Therefore his awarding is considered by majority as deserved.

³⁰ Nobelprize.org. *The Nobel Peace Prize 2009*. [online].

5 Farewell speech

5.1 Full speech

It's good to be home. My fellow Americans, Michelle and I have been so touched by all the well-wishes we've received over the past few weeks. But tonight it's my turn to say thanks. Whether we've seen eye-to-eye or rarely agreed at all, my conversations with you, the American people – in living rooms and schools; at farms and on factory floors; at diners and on distant outposts_– are what have kept me honest, kept me inspired, and kept me going. Every day, I learned from you. You made me a better president, and you made me a better man.

I first came to Chicago when I was in my early 20s, still trying to figure out who I was; still searching for a purpose to my life. It was in neighborhoods not far from here where I began working with church groups in the shadows of closed steel mills. It was on these streets where I witnessed the power of faith, and the quiet dignity of working people in the face of struggle and loss. This is where I learned that change only happens when ordinary people get involved, get engaged, and come together to demand it.

After eight years as your president, I still believe that. And it's not just my belief. It's the beating heart of our American idea – our bold experiment in self-government.

It's the conviction that we are all created equal, endowed by our creator with certain unalienable rights, among them life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

It's the insistence that these rights, while self-evident, have never been self-executing; that we, the people, through the instrument of our democracy, can form a more perfect union.

This is the great gift our Founders gave us. The freedom to chase our individual dreams through our sweat, toil, and imagination – and the imperative to strive together as well, to achieve a greater good.

For 240 years, our nation's call to citizenship has given work and purpose to each new generation. It's what led patriots to choose republic over tyranny, pioneers to trek west, slaves to brave that makeshift railroad to freedom. It's what pulled immigrants and refugees across oceans and the Rio Grande, pushed women to reach for the ballot, powered workers to organize. It's why GIs gave their lives at Omaha Beach and Iwo Jima; Iraq and Afghanistan – and why men and women from Selma to Stonewall were prepared to give theirs as well.

So that's what we mean when we say America is exceptional. Not that our nation has been flawless from the start, but that we have shown the capacity to change, and make life better for those who follow.

Yes, our progress has been uneven. The work of democracy has always been hard, contentious and sometimes bloody. For every two steps forward, it often feels we take one step back. But the long sweep of America has been defined by forward motion, a constant widening of our founding creed to embrace all, and not just some.

If I had told you eight years ago that America would reverse a great recession, reboot our auto industry, and unleash the longest stretch of job creation in our history...if I had told you that we would open up a new chapter with the Cuban people, shut down Iran's nuclear weapons program without firing a shot, and take out the mastermind of 9/11...if I had told you that we would win marriage equality, and secure the right to health insurance for another 20 million of our fellow citizens – you might have said our sights were set a little too high.

But that's what we did. That's what you did. You were the change. You answered people's hopes, and because of you, by almost every measure, America is a better, stronger place than it was when we started.

In 10 days, the world will witness a hallmark of our democracy: the peaceful transfer of power from one freely elected president to the next. I committed to President-elect Trump that my administration would ensure the smoothest possible transition, just as President Bush did for me. Because it's up to all of us to make sure our government can help us meet the many challenges we still face.

We have what we need to do so. After all, we remain the wealthiest, most powerful, and most respected nation on Earth. Our youth and drive, our diversity and openness, our boundless capacity for risk and reinvention mean that the future should be ours.

But that potential will be realized only if our democracy works. Only if our politics reflects the decency of the our people. Only if all of us, regardless of our party affiliation or particular interest, help restore the sense of common purpose that we so badly need right now.

That's what I want to focus on tonight – the state of our democracy.

Understand, democracy does not require uniformity. Our founders quarreled and compromised, and expected us to do the same. But they knew that democracy does require a basic sense of solidarity – the idea that for all our outward differences, we are all in this together; that we rise or fall as one.

There have been moments throughout our history that threatened to rupture that solidarity. The beginning of this century has been one of those times. A shrinking world, growing inequality; demographic change and the specter of terrorism – these forces haven't just tested our security and prosperity, but our democracy as well. And how we meet these challenges to

our democracy will determine our ability to educate our kids, and create good jobs, and protect our homeland.

In other words, it will determine our future.

Our democracy won't work without a sense that everyone has economic opportunity. Today, the economy is growing again; wages, incomes, home values, and retirement accounts are rising again; poverty is falling again. The wealthy are paying a fairer share of taxes even as the stock market shatters records. The unemployment rate is near a 10-year low. The uninsured rate has never, ever been lower. Healthcare costs are rising at the slowest rate in 50 years. And if anyone can put together a plan that is demonstrably better than the improvements we've made to our healthcare system – that covers as many people at less cost – I will publicly support it.

That, after all, is why we serve – to make people's lives better, not worse.

But for all the real progress we've made, we know it's not enough. Our economy doesn't work as well or grow as fast when a few prosper at the expense of a growing middle class. But stark inequality is also corrosive to our democratic principles. While the top 1% has amassed a bigger share of wealth and income, too many families, in inner cities and rural counties, have been left behind – the laid-off factory worker; the waitress and healthcare worker who struggle to pay the bills – convinced that the game is fixed against them, that their government only serves the interests of the powerful – a recipe for more cynicism and polarization in our politics.

There are no quick fixes to this long-term trend. I agree that our trade should be fair and not just free. But the next wave of economic dislocation won't come from overseas. It will come from the relentless pace of automation that makes many good, middle-class jobs obsolete.

And so we must forge a new social compact – to guarantee all our kids the education they need; to give workers the power to unionize for better wages; to update the social safety net to reflect the way we live now and make more reforms to the tax code so corporations and individuals who reap the most from the new economy don't avoid their obligations to the country that's made their success possible. We can argue about how to best achieve these goals. But we can't be complacent about the goals themselves. For if we don't create opportunity for all people, the disaffection and division that has stalled our progress will only sharpen in years to come.

There's a second threat to our democracy – one as old as our nation itself. After my election, there was talk of a post-racial America. Such a vision, however well-intended, was never realistic. For race remains a potent and often divisive force in our society. I've lived long enough to know that race relations are better than they were 10, or 20, or 30 years ago – you

can see it not just in statistics, but in the attitudes of young Americans across the political spectrum.

But we're not where we need to be. All of us have more work to do. After all, if every economic issue is framed as a struggle between a hard-working white middle class and undeserving minorities, then workers of all shades will be left fighting for scraps while the wealthy withdraw further into their private enclaves. If we decline to invest in the children of immigrants, just because they don't look like us, we diminish the prospects of our own children – because those brown kids will represent a larger share of America's workforce. And our economy doesn't have to be a zero-sum game. Last year, incomes rose for all races, all age groups, for men and for women.

Going forward, we must uphold laws against discrimination – in hiring, in housing, in education and the criminal justice system. That's what our Constitution and highest ideals require. But laws alone won't be enough. Hearts must change. If our democracy is to work in this increasingly diverse nation, each one of us must try to heed the advice of one of the great characters in American fiction, Atticus Finch, who said, "You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view...until you climb into his skin and walk around in it."

For blacks and other minorities, it means tying our own struggles for justice to the challenges that a lot of people in this country face – the refugee, the immigrant, the rural poor, the transgender American, and also the middle-aged white man who from the outside may seem like he's got all the advantages, but who's seen his world upended by economic, cultural, and technological change.

For white Americans, it means acknowledging that the effects of slavery and Jim Crow didn't suddenly vanish in the '60s; that when minority groups voice discontent, they're not just engaging in reverse racism or practicing political correctness; that when they wage peaceful protest, they're not demanding special treatment, but the equal treatment our Founders promised.

For native-born Americans, it means reminding ourselves that the stereotypes about immigrants today were said, almost word for word, about the Irish, Italians, and Poles. America wasn't weakened by the presence of these newcomers; they embraced this nation's creed, and it was strengthened.

So regardless of the station we occupy; we have to try harder; to start with the premise that each of our fellow citizens loves this country just as much as we do; that they value hard work and family like we do; that their children are just as curious and hopeful and worthy of love as our own.

None of this is easy. For too many of us, it's become safer to retreat into our own bubbles, whether in our neighborhoods or college campuses or places of worship or our social media feeds, surrounded by people who look like us and share the same political outlook and never challenge our assumptions. The rise of naked partisanship, increasing economic and regional stratification, the splintering of our media into a channel for every taste – all this makes this great sorting seem natural, even inevitable. And increasingly, we become so secure in our bubbles that we accept only information, whether true or not, that fits our opinions, instead of basing our opinions on the evidence that's out there.

This trend represents a third threat to our democracy. Politics is a battle of ideas; in the course of a healthy debate, we'll prioritize different goals, and the different means of reaching them. But without some common baseline of facts; without a willingness to admit new information, and concede that your opponent is making a fair point, and that science and reason matter, we'll keep talking past each other, making common ground and compromise impossible.

Isn't that part of what makes politics so dispiriting? How can elected officials rage about deficits when we propose to spend money on preschool for kids, but not when we're cutting taxes for corporations? How do we excuse ethical lapses in our own party, but pounce when the other party does the same thing? It's not just dishonest, this selective sorting of the facts; it's self-defeating. Because as my mother used to tell me, reality has a way of catching up with you.

Take the challenge of climate change. In just eight years, we've halved our dependence on foreign oil, doubled our renewable energy, and led the world to an agreement that has the promise to save this planet. But without bolder action, our children won't have time to debate the existence of climate change; they'll be busy dealing with its effects: environmental disasters, economic disruptions, and waves of climate refugees seeking sanctuary.

Now, we can and should argue about the best approach to the problem. But to simply deny the problem not only betrays future generations; it betrays the essential spirit of innovation and practical problem-solving that guided our Founders.

It's that spirit, born of the Enlightenment, that made us an economic powerhouse – the spirit that took flight at Kitty Hawk and Cape Canaveral; the spirit that cures disease and put a computer in every pocket.

It's that spirit – a faith in reason, and enterprise, and the primacy of right over might, that allowed us to resist the lure of fascism and tyranny during the Great Depression, and build a post-World War II order with other democracies, an order based not just on military power or national affiliations but on principles – the rule of law, human rights, freedoms of religion, speech, assembly, and an independent press.

That order is now being challenged – first by violent fanatics who claim to speak for Islam; more recently by autocrats in foreign capitals who see free markets, open democracies, and civil society itself as a threat to their power. The peril each poses to our democracy is more far-reaching than a car bomb or a missile. It represents the fear of change; the fear of people who look or speak or pray differently; a contempt for the rule of law that holds leaders accountable; an intolerance of dissent and free thought; a belief that the sword or the gun or the bomb or propaganda machine is the ultimate arbiter of what's true and what's right.

Because of the extraordinary courage of our men and women in uniform, and the intelligence officers, law enforcement, and diplomats who support them, no foreign terrorist organization has successfully planned and executed an attack on our homeland these past eight years; and although Boston and Orlando remind us of how dangerous radicalization can be, our law enforcement agencies are more effective and vigilant than ever. We've taken out tens of thousands of terrorists – including Osama bin Laden. The global coalition we're leading against ISIL has taken out their leaders, and taken away about half their territory. ISIL will be destroyed, and no one who threatens America will ever be safe. To all who serve, it has been the honor of my lifetime to be your Commander-in-Chief.

But protecting our way of life requires more than our military. Democracy can buckle when we give in to fear. So just as we, as citizens, must remain vigilant against external aggression, we must guard against a weakening of the values that make us who we are. That's why, for the past eight years, I've worked to put the fight against terrorism on a firm legal footing. That's why we've ended torture, worked to close Gitmo, and reform our laws governing surveillance to protect privacy and civil liberties. That's why I reject discrimination against Muslim Americans. That's why we cannot withdraw from global fights – to expand democracy, and human rights, women's rights, and LGBT rights – no matter how imperfect our efforts, no matter how expedient ignoring such values may seem. For the fight against extremism and intolerance and sectarianism are of a piece with the fight against authoritarianism and nationalist aggression. If the scope of freedom and respect for the rule of law shrinks around the world, the likelihood of war within and between nations increases, and our own freedoms will eventually be threatened.

So let's be vigilant, but not afraid. ISIL will try to kill innocent people. But they cannot defeat America unless we betray our Constitution and our principles in the fight. Rivals like Russia or China cannot match our influence around the world – unless we give up what we stand for, and turn ourselves into just another big country that bullies smaller neighbors.

Which brings me to my final point – our democracy is threatened whenever we take it for granted. All of us, regardless of party, should throw ourselves into the task of rebuilding our democratic institutions. When voting rates are some of the lowest among advanced democracies, we should make it easier, not harder, to vote. When trust in our institutions is low, we

should reduce the corrosive influence of money in our politics, and insist on the principles of transparency and ethics in public service. When Congress is dysfunctional, we should draw our districts to encourage politicians to cater to common sense and not rigid extremes.

And all of this depends on our participation; on each of us accepting the responsibility of citizenship, regardless of which way the pendulum of power swings.

Our Constitution is a remarkable, beautiful gift. But it's really just a piece of parchment. It has no power on its own. We, the people, give it power – with our participation, and the choices we make. Whether or not we stand up for our freedoms. Whether or not we respect and enforce the rule of law. America is no fragile thing. But the gains of our long journey to freedom are not assured.

In his own farewell address, George Washington wrote that self-government is the underpinning of our safety, prosperity, and liberty, but "from different causes and from different quarters much pains will be taken...to weaken in your minds the conviction of this truth;" that we should preserve it with "jealous anxiety;" that we should reject "the first dawning of every attempt to alienate any portion of our country from the rest or to enfeeble the sacred ties" that make us one.

We weaken those ties when we allow our political dialogue to become so corrosive that people of good character are turned off from public service; so coarse with rancor that Americans with whom we disagree are not just misguided, but somehow malevolent. We weaken those ties when we define some of us as more American than others; when we write off the whole system as inevitably corrupt, and blame the leaders we elect without examining our own role in electing them.

It falls to each of us to be those anxious, jealous guardians of our democracy; to embrace the joyous task we've been given to continually try to improve this great nation of ours. Because for all our outward differences, we all share the same proud title: Citizen.

Ultimately, that's what our democracy demands. It needs you. Not just when there's an election, not just when your own narrow interest is at stake, but over the full span of a lifetime. If you're tired of arguing with strangers on the Internet, try to talk with one in real life. If something needs fixing, lace up your shoes and do some organizing. If you're disappointed by your elected officials, grab a clipboard, get some signatures, and run for office yourself. Show up. Dive in. Persevere. Sometimes you'll win. Sometimes you'll lose. Presuming a reservoir of goodness in others can be a risk, and there will be times when the process disappoints you. But for those of us fortunate enough to have been a part of this work, to see it up close, let me tell you, it can energize and inspire. And more often than not, your faith in America – and in Americans – will be confirmed.

Mine sure has been. Over the course of these eight years, I've seen the hopeful faces of young graduates and our newest military officers. I've mourned with grieving families searching for answers, and found grace in a Charleston church. I've seen our scientists help a paralyzed man regain his sense of touch, and our wounded warriors walk again. I've seen our doctors and volunteers rebuild after earthquakes and stop pandemics in their tracks. I've seen the youngest of children remind us of our obligations to care for refugees, to work in peace, and above all to look out for each other.

That faith I placed all those years ago, not far from here, in the power of ordinary Americans to bring about change – that faith has been rewarded in ways I couldn't possibly have imagined. I hope yours has, too. Some of you here tonight or watching at home were there with us in 2004, in 2008, in 2012 – and maybe you still can't believe we pulled this whole thing off. You're not the only ones. Michelle – for the past 25 years, you've been not only my wife and mother of my children, but my best friend. You took on a role you didn't ask for and made it your own with grace and grit and style and good humor. You made the White House a place that belongs to everybody. And a new generation sets its sights higher because it has you as a role model. You've made me proud. You've made the country proud.

Malia and Sasha, under the strangest of circumstances, you have become two amazing young women, smart and beautiful, but more importantly, kind and thoughtful and full of passion. You wore the burden of years in the spotlight so easily. Of all that I've done in my life, I'm most proud to be your dad.

To Joe Biden, the scrappy kid from Scranton who became Delaware's favorite son: You were the first choice I made as a nominee, and the best. Not just because you have been a great vice president, but because in the bargain, I gained a brother. We love you and Jill like family, and your friendship has been one of the great joys of our life.

To my remarkable staff: For eight years – and for some of you, a whole lot more – I've drawn from your energy, and tried to reflect back what you displayed every day: heart, and character, and idealism. I've watched you grow up, get married, have kids, and start incredible new journeys of your own. Even when times got tough and frustrating, you never let Washington get the better of you. The only thing that makes me prouder than all the good we've done is the thought of all the remarkable things you'll achieve from here.

And to all of you out there – every organizer who moved to an unfamiliar town and kind family who welcomed them in, every volunteer who knocked on doors, every young person who cast a ballot for the first time, every American who lived and breathed the hard work of change – you are the best supporters and organizers anyone could hope for, and I will forever be grateful. Because, yes, you changed the world.

That's why I leave this stage tonight even more optimistic about this country than I was when we started. Because I know our work has not only helped so many Americans; it has inspired so many Americans – especially so many young people out there – to believe you can make a difference; to hitch your wagon to something bigger than yourselves. This generation coming up – unselfish, altruistic, creative, patriotic – I've seen you in every corner of the country. You believe in a fair, just, inclusive America; you know that constant change has been America's hallmark, something not to fear but to embrace, and you are willing to carry this hard work of democracy forward. You'll soon outnumber any of us, and I believe as a result that the future is in good hands.

My fellow Americans, it has been the honor of my life to serve you. I won't stop; in fact, I will be right there with you, as a citizen, for all my days that remain. For now, whether you're young or young at heart, I do have one final ask of you as your president – the same thing I asked when you took a chance on me eight years ago.

I am asking you to believe. Not in my ability to bring about change – but in yours.

I am asking you to hold fast to that faith written into our founding documents; that idea whispered by slaves and abolitionists; that spirit sung by immigrants and homesteaders and those who marched for justice; that creed reaffirmed by those who planted flags from foreign battlefields to the surface of the moon; a creed at the core of every American whose story is not yet written:

Yes We Can.

Yes We Did.

Yes We Can.

Thank you. God bless you. And may God continue to bless the United States of America.³¹

³¹ nytimes.com. *President Obama's Farewell Address: Full Video and Text*. [online].

5.2 Translation into Czech

Je dobré být doma. Mí drazí Američané³², Michelle a já jsme velmi dojatí všemi přátelskými přáními, které jsme obdrželi v posledních několika týdnech. Ale dnes je řada na mě, abych poděkoval. Ať už jsme si spolu rozuměli, či naopak, mé konverzace s vámi, s Američany - v obývacích a školách, na farmách a továrnách, v restauracích či v odlehlých koutech země, jsou to, co mi dodávalo inspiraci a chuť pokračovat v mé práci a být vždy upřímným. Každý den jsem se od vás učil. Udělali jste ze mě lepšího prezidenta a lepšího člověka.

Prvně jsem přišel do Chicaga, když mi bylo něco málo přes 20 let, stále se snažíc přijít na to, kým jsem byl a také na smysl svého života. Bylo to v sousedství, nedaleko odsud, kde jsem začal pracovat s církevními skupinami ve stínech zavřených oceláren. Byly to právě tyto ulice, kde jsem zažil sílu víry a tichou důstojnost pracujících lidí, vystavených tváří v tvář chudobě a ztrátě. Právě tam jsem se naučil, že změna se může uskutečnit pouze, když se běžní lidé zapojí a spojí se dohromady, aby dané věci dosáhli.

Po 8 letech působení jako váš prezident, tomu stále věřím. A není to pouze moje přesvědčení. Je to bijící srdce amerického snu – náš odvážný experiment ve vládnutí nad námi samými.

Je to přesvědčení, že jsme všichni stvořeni sobě rovni, a naším stvořitelem obdařeni jistými nezcizitelnými právy, mezi nimi právem na život, svobodou a nárokem na štěstí.

Je to trvání na tom, že tato práva, byť zcela zřejmá, se nikdy nevykonávala sama o sobě a že my, národ, skrze nástroje naší demokracie můžeme vytvořit ještě lepší unii.

Toto je ten veliký dar, kteří nám zakladatelé naší země dali - svobodu plnit si své individuální sny skrze pot, dřinu a představitost – a také potřebu společně usilovat o dosažení ještě většího dobra na tom našem světě.

Po 240 let to byla snaha o občanství, co dalo pracovní možnosti a smysl každé nové generaci. Bylo to to, co přimělo patrioty vybrat si republiku před tyranii, průkopníky vydat se na západ, otrokům pomáhalo postavit pomyslnou cestu ke svobodě. Bylo to také to, co hnalo imigranty a uprchlíky přes oceány a Rio Grande, ženám dodalo sebevědomí k tomu, získat hlasovací právo, a dodávalo sílu dělníkům. To byl důvod, proč vojáci položili své životy na pláži Omaha³³ a Iwo Jima³⁴; v Iráku a Afghánistánu – a důvod, proč byli muži a ženy ze Selmy³⁵ a Stonewallu³⁶ připravení, udělat to samé.

³² „My fellow Americans“ – Obamův typický způsob oslovení davu.

³³ Jedna z pěti oblastí v Němci okupované Francii, kde proběhlo během 2. světové války, dne 6. června 1944, vylodění, v konečném výsledku vítězných, spojeneckých vojsk; Spojené státy zde utrpěly obrovské ztráty na životech.

³⁴ Japonský ostrov; bitva o něj probíhala mezi Spojenými státy a Japonskem od 16. února 1945 do 26. března 1945, došlo k vítězství Spojených států, které i zde utrpěly velké ztráty na životech.

Tohle je to, co myslíme tím, když říkáme, že Amerika je výjimečná. Neříkáme, že náš národ byl bezchybný od začátku, ale že jsme ukázali schopnost měnit, a dělat život lepší pro ty, kteří jdou na této cestě s námi.

Ano, náš vývoj byl hrbolatý. Boj za demokracii byl vždy těžký, sporný a někdy i krvavý. Často se zdá, že za každými dvěma kroky kupředu, děláme jeden zpět. Ale dlouhá historie Ameriky vždy byla specifická pohybem dopředu, stálým upevňováním našeho primárního přesvědčení – a sice přijmout všechny, a ne jen některé.

Kdybych vám před 8 lety řekl, že Amerika zvrátí velkou recesi, restartuje náš automobilový průmysl, a rozpoutá nejdelší období vytváření pracovních míst v naší historii... kdybych vám řekl, že začneme novou kapitolu s kubánským lidem, zastavíme íránský program vývoje jaderných zbraní bez jediného výstřelu, a dopadneme strůjce útoku 9/11... kdybych vám řekl, že dosáhneme rovnosti manželství žen a mužů, a zajistíme právo na zdravotní pojištění pro dalších 20 milionů našich drahých spoluobčanů - pravděpodobně byste řekli, že jsme nastavili laťku příliš vysoko.

Ale to je přesně to, co jsme zvládli- co vy jste zvládli. Vy jste byli tou změnou. Vy jste vyslyšeli naději lidí, a kvůli vám, téměř v každém ohledu, je nyní Amerika lepší a silnější než byla, když jsme začínali.

Za 10 dní svět zažije stěžejní prvek naší demokracie – pokojné předání úřadu od jednoho svobodně vybraného prezidenta k druhému. Slíbil jsem nově zvolenému prezidentovi – panu Trumpovi – že bude zajištěno to nejhladší předání prezidentského úřadu, stejně jak to i mne zajistil pan prezident Bush. Protože je na nás všech, abychom se ujistili, že vláda nám pomůže zvládnout různé výzvy, kterým stále čelíme.

Víme, co je potřeba udělat. Koneckonců, my zůstáváme nejbohatším, nejsilnějším a nejuznávanějším národem na Zemi. Naše mládež a houževnatost, naše rozmanitost a otevřenost, naše schopnost riskovat a snaha inovovat, to vše naznačuje, že budoucnost by měla patřit nám.

Ale toto může být uskutečněno pouze, pokud naše demokracie funguje. Pouze pokud naše politika odráží slušnost našich lidí. Pouze pokud my všichni, nehledě na naši politickou příslušnost a politické zájmy, pomáháme obnovit smysl pro konkrétní společný záměr, jenž teď tak moc potřebujeme.

A to je přesně to, na co se chci dnes večer zaměřit- na naši demokracii.

³⁵ Slavné pochody ze Selmy do Montgomery roku 1965 ve státě Alabama, organizované nenásilnými aktivisty za občanská práva; cílem bylo upoutat pozornost na snahu Afroameričanů získat volební právo, podpořit navrhovaný anti-diskriminační volební zákon a upozornit na segregaci.

³⁶ tzv. Stonewallské nepokoje; první několik dní trvající násilné nepokoje s více než 2000 protestantů za práva leseb, gayů, bisexuálů a transgender osob (LGBT).

Chápejme, že demokracie nevyžaduje jednotnost. Naši zakladatelé se také mnohokrát přeli a museli přistoupit na kompromis, a nyní se to samé očekává od nás. Ale oni věděli, že demokracie požaduje jistý smysl pro solidaritu – myšlenku, že i přes naše vnější rozdíly, jsme v tom všichni společně – v časech dobrých i zlých.

V celé naší historii byly okamžiky, kdy hrozilo, že solidarita bude poničena. Začátek tohoto století byl jedním z těch okamžiků. Zmenšující se svět, rostoucí rozdíly; demografické změny a hrozba terorismu - tyto síly testovaly nejen naši bezpečnost a prosperitu, ale stejně tak i naši demokracii. A to, jak si poradíme s těmito problémy demokracie, určí poté i naši schopnost vychovávat naše děti a vytvářet kvalitní pracovní místa a chránit naši vlast.

Jinými slovy, určí to naši budoucnost.

Naše demokracie nebude fungovat bez pocitu ekonomických možností pro všechny. Dnes ekonomika znovu roste; mzdy, příjmy, hodnota domácností a důchodů znovu rostou, chudoba znovu klesá. Bohatí platí spravedlivější podíl na daních, navzdory tomu, že trh s akciemi láme rekordy. Míra nezaměstnanosti je téměř nejnižší za deset let. Počet nepojištěných nikdy nebyl nižší. Výdaje za zdravotní péči rostou nejpomaleji za 50 let. A pokud někdo dokáže sestavit plán, který je prokazatelně lepší než vylepšení, která jsme dokázali my ohledně našeho zdravotního systému – který pokrývá co nejvíce lidí za co nejmenších nákladů – veřejně to podpořím.

To je nakonec přeci tím důvodem, proč děláme svou práci – abychom lidské životy zlepšili a nikoli zhoršili.

I přesto, že jsme si vědomi, jaké pokroky jsme dokázali, víme, že to nestačí. Naše ekonomika nepracuje tak dobře či neroste tak rychle, když někteří prosperují na úkor rostoucí střední třídy. Ale silná nerovnost je také ničivá vůči našim demokratickým principům. Zatímco horní 1% získalo větší podíl na bohatství a příjmech, mnoho rodin ve vnitřních městech a venkovských oblastech bylo ponecháno stranou – propuštěný tovární dělník; servírka a zdravotnický pracovník – ti, jež mají problém zaplatit účty – přesvědčení, že „hra“ je nastavena proti nim, že jejich vláda slouží jenom zájmům vlivných – to je recept pro ještě více cynismu a polarizace v naší politice.

Neexistují žádná rychlá řešení této dlouhodobé situace. Souhlasím, že naše obchodní vztahy by měly být nejenom bez bariér, ale také spravedlivé. Ale další vlna ekonomického oslabení nepříjde ze zámoří. Vznikne z vytrvalého tempa automatizace, která zapříčiní to, že spousty dobrých prací střední třídy se stanou zastaralými.

Proto musíme vypracovat novou společenskou smlouvu – abychom zaručili všem našim dětem vzdělání, které potřebují; abychom dali dělníkům sílu spojit se v boji za lepší mzdy, abychom aktualizovali sociální síť, aby zrcadlila to, jak nyní žijeme a abychom vydali více reforem daňového systému, aby korporace a jednotlivci, kteří čerpají nejvíce z nové

ekonomiky, neunikali povinností vůči zemi, která jim umožnila jejich úspěch. Můžeme se dohadovat o tom, jak nejlépe dosáhnout těchto cílů. Ale nemůžeme být lhostejní k cílům jako takovým. Pokud nebudeme vytvářet příležitosti pro všechny, rozhořčení a rozdělenost, které brzdily náš pokrok, se jenom zhorší v následujících rocích.

Je tu další hrozba pro naši demokracii – tak stará, jako náš národ sám. Po mém zvolení zde probíhaly rozhovory o post-rasistické Americe. Takováto vize, jakkoli dobře zamýšlená, nikdy nebyla realistická. Rasa zůstává v naší společnosti velkou a často rozdělující silou. Žiji dost dlouho na to, abych věděl, že mezirasové vztahy jsou nyní lepší, než byly před 10, 20 či 30 lety – můžete to vidět nejenom ve statistikách, ale i v přístupu mladých Američanů napříč politickým spektrem.

Ale nejsme tam, kde potřebujeme být. Všichni máme dost práce před sebou. Nakonec, pokud by na každý ekonomický problém bylo nahlíženo jako na problém mezi tvrdě pracující bílou střední vrstvou a menšiny bez zásluh, poté pracovníci všech „odstínů“ budou muset bojovat pro kousíček jídla, zatímco bohatí budou nadále ustupovat do svých osobních rezidencí. Pokud odmítneme investovat do dětí imigrantů, jen proto, že nevypadají jako my, snižujeme tím vyhlídky našich vlastních dětí – protože tyto „tmavé“ děti budou představovat obrovský podíl americké pracovní síly. A naše ekonomika nemusí být hra s nulovým součtem. Loni vzrostly příjmy všem etnickým skupinám, všem věkovým skupinám, mužům a ženám.

Abychom mohli jít vpřed, musíme dodržovat zákony proti diskriminaci – při přijímání pracovníků, v bydlení, ve vzdělávání a v systému trestního soudnictví. To je to, co požaduje naše Ústava a nejvyšší ideály. Ale samotné zákony nebudou stačit. Změna se musí stát v našich srdcích. Pokud má naše demokracie v této stále rozmanitější zemi fungovat, každý z nás si musí vzít k srdci radu jedné z největších postav americké beletrie, Atticuse Finche, který řekl, „Nikdy nedokážete doopravdy porozumět druhému člověku, dokud si neuvědomíte věci z jeho úhlu pohledu... dokud nenavléknete jeho kůži a neprojdete se v ní.“

Pro černošské a další menšiny, to znamená propojit se s našimi zkouškami spravedlnosti, kterým čelí i mnozí lidé naší země - uprchlík, imigrant, chudý venkovan, trans genderový Američan, ale také bílý muž ve středním věku, který může vypadat, že se mu dostává všech výhod, ale kdo viděl jeho svět, otočený změnou ekonomickou, kulturní a technologickou.

Pro bílé Američany toto znamená uvědomění si, že dopady otroctví a Jim Crow náhle nevy-mizely v 60. letech; že když je hlas menšin nespokojený, není to pouze z důvodu, že by se menšiny snažily o obrácený rasismus nebo se dožadovaly politické korektnosti; že když vedou poklidné protesty, neznamená to, že se dožadují nějakého speciálního zacházení, nýbrž rovnoprávného zacházení, které nám naši Zakladatelé slíbili.

Pro rodilé Američany, toto znamená připomínání si stereotypů o imigrantech, které byly řečeny, téměř slovo po slově, o Irech, Italech a Polácích. Amerika nebyla oslabena přítomností těchto nově přichozích, oni přijaly krédo této země a tím jí posílili.

Takže nezávisle na tom, v jaké fázi se nacházíme, musíme se snažit více, musíme začínat s předpokladem, že každý náš drahý občan miluje tuto zemi přesně tak moc jako my; že oceňují tvrdou práci a rodinu tak jako my, že jejich děti jsou stejně tak zvědavé, nadějně a hodné lásky tak jako ty naše. Nic z toho není jednoduché. Pro příliš mnoho z nás se stalo bezpečnější, uzavřít se do svých bublin, ať už v sousedství, na vysokoškolských kampusech, místech bohoslužby nebo v našich příspěvcích na sociálních sítích, být obklopený lidmi, kteří vypadají jako my a sdílejí stejný názor na politiku a nikdy nezpochybňují naše domněnky. Vzestup silné stranické politiky, rostoucí ekonomické a regionální rozvrstvení, rozštěpenost našich médií do televizních kanálů podle vkusu všech - to vše má za důsledek, že toto obrovské třídění působí přirozeně, či snad i nevyhnutelně. A stále více se cítíme tak jisti v našich bublinách, že přijímáme pouze informace, ať už pravdivé, či nikoli, které korespondují s našimi názory, namísto zakládání našich názorů na existujících důkazech.

Tento trend představuje třetí hrozbu naší demokracie. Politika je soubojem myšlenek; během zdravé debaty si prosazujeme určité cíle a nástroje k jejich dosažení. Ale bez nějakého faktického minima; bez ochoty přijmout novou informaci a bez ochoty přiznat, že váš oponent má pravdu a že vědeckost a racionalita mají svůj význam, budeme jen mluvit jeden přes druhého a bude nemožné vytvořit nějaký společný základ a kompromis.

Není toto právě tou odrazující částí politiky? Jak se mohou zvolení představitelé rozčilovat ohledně deficitů, když se zamýšlí vynaložení finančních prostředků na školky pro malé děti, ale už se nic nenamítají, když se snižují daně korporacím? Jak je možné, že omlouváme etické „přešlapy“ v naší politické straně, ale vadí nám, když druhá strana dělá to samé? Toto selektivní třídění faktů není pouze nečestné, je to i sebedestruktivní. Stejně jak mi říkávala moje matka, realita má svůj způsob, jak tě dostihne.

Podívejme se na výzvu klimatických změn. Jen v osmi letech jsme snížili na polovinu naši závislost na zahraničních olejích, zdvojnásobili naši obnovitelnou energii a vedli svět k dohodě, jež slibuje záchranu naší planety. Ale bez odvážnějšího činu naše děti nebudou mít čas debatovat o existenci klimatických změn, budou zaneprázdněni vypořádáváním se s jejich dopady, jako např.: přírodní katastrofy, ekonomické přerušování a vlny klimatických uprchlíků hledajících útočiště.

Nyní se můžeme a měli bychom se přít ohledně nejlepšího přístupu k tomuto problému. Ale pouhé popírání tohoto problému nejenomže zrazuje budoucí generace, ale i hlavního ducha inovace a praktické řešení problémů, které zavedli již naši zakladatelé³⁷.

Je to právě toto přesvědčení, zrozené za Osvícenství, které z nás udělalo ekonomickou velmoc – myšlenka, ta, jež dostala křídla na Kitty Hawk a Mys Canaveral; myšlenka, jež léčí nemoci a díky níž máme technologii stále při sobě.

Je to tato myšlenka – víra v důvod, podnikání a nadřazenost „pravdy nad silou“, která nám pomohla zdolat fašismus a tyranii během Velké hospodářské krize; a vybudovat poválečný

³⁷ tzv. zakladatelé = „Founding Fathers“ – T. Jefferson, B. Franklin, G. Washington,...

pořádek s ostatními demokratickými zeměmi, pořádek, založený nejen na militární síle nebo mezinárodních vztazích, ale také na principech – zákonnosti, lidských právech, svobodě náboženství a projevu, právu na shromažďování a svobodný tisk.

Nyní tento pořádek čelí zkoušce – nejdříve násilnými fanatiky, kteří se hlásí k Islámu, nedávno samovládci v cizích hlavních městech, kteří vidí volný obchod, otevřenou demokracii a samu občanskou společnost jakožto hrozbu pro své síly. Ohrožení naší demokracie je mnohem více škodlivé nežli výbušnina či raketová střela. Reprezentuje strach ze změny, strach z lidí, kteří vypadají jinak, mluví jinak, či se jinak modlí; pohrdání vládou zákona, za níž nesou zodpovědnost naši představitelé, netolerování nesouhlasu a svobody myšlení; víru, že snad meč, zbraň, bomba či propaganda je nejvyšším arbitrem při rozhodování, co je pravda a co je správné.

Díky neobvyklé kuráži našich mužů a žen v uniformách, inteligenci úředníků, prosazování zákona diplomaty, žádná zahraniční teroristická organizace nebyla schopna úspěšně naplánovat a provést útok na naši domovinu za těchto uplynulých osm let; a i přesto, že nám Boston a Orlando připomínají, jak nebezpečná radikalizace může být, naše bezpečnostní složky jsou efektivnější a ostrážitější než kdy předtím. Zničili jsme desítky tisíc teroristů, včetně Osama bin Ládina. Globální koalice proti ISIL³⁸, kterou vedeme, zničila jejich lídry a okolo poloviny jejich území. ISIL bude zničen a každý, kdo ohrožuje Ameriku, nebude nikdy v bezpečí. Bylo mi velkou ctí, býti vrchním velitelem všem těm, kteří slouží naší vlasti.

Ale ochrana našeho způsobu života si žádá více než jen naši armádu. Naši demokracii může velmi poničit, když se podvolíme strachu. Stejně tak, jako my, občané, musíme zůstat ostrážiti vůči hrozbě vnější agrese, tak se musíme chránit proti zeslabování hodnot, které tvoří to, čím jsme. To je důvodem, proč jsem v uplynulých osmi letech pracoval na právním ukotvení. To je důvodem, proč jsme ukončili mučení, pracovali na zavření Gitmo³⁹ a pozměnili naše práva upravující vládní dohled. To je důvodem, proč odmítám diskriminaci vůči Muslimským Američanům. To je důvodem, proč se nemůžeme stáhnout z celosvětových bojů – za rozšíření demokracie a lidských práv, za práva žen a práva LGBT⁴⁰ – bez ohledu na to, jak nedokonale se naše snahy mohou jevit či jak se může zdát, že ignorujeme tyto hodnoty jen proto, že je to pro nás politicky výhodnější. Boj proti extremismu, netoleranci a sektářství je synonymem pro boj proti autoritářství a nacionalistické agresi. Pokud se celosvětově snižuje prostor pro svobodu a respekt, roste šance války uvnitř států a naše svoboda bude eventuálně ohrožena.

Buďme ostrážiti, ale nemějme strach. ISIL se pokusí zabít nevinné osoby. Ale pokud nezradíme naši Ústavu a naše principy v boji, nemohou přemoci Ameriku. Rivalové jako Rusko nebo Čína nedokáží dosáhnout takové míry vlivu na světě jako my – pokud se nevzdáme toho, za čím si stojíme a nezměníme se v jen další velkou zemi šikanující menší sousedy.

³⁸ ISIL = Islámský stát v Iráku a Levantě

³⁹ Gitmo = námořní vojenská základna v zátocě Guantánamo, Kuba

⁴⁰ LGBT = zkratka označující lesby, gaye, bisexuály a transgender osoby

To mě přivádí k mému závěrečnému bodu – naše demokracie je ohrožena, kdykoli ji bereme jako samozřejmost. Každý z nás, nezávisle na politické straně, by se měl zabývat otázkou předělání našich demokratických institucí. Jestliže jsou naše volební účasti jedny z nejnižších mezi demokratickými státy, měli bychom hlasování zjednodušit, nikoli ztížit. Jestliže důvěra v naše instituce je nízká, měli bychom snížit ničující vliv peněz v politice a apelovat na principy transparentnosti a etiky ve státní správě. Jestliže je Kongres nefunkční, naše okrsky by měly dodat odvalu politikům, aby jednali podle zdravého rozumu a nezastávali zkosnatělé názory.

A vše toto záleží na participaci každého z nás, na přijímání své zodpovědnosti jakožto občana, nezávisle na tom, jakým směrem se „kyvadlo moci“ bude ubírat.

Naše Ústava je pozoruhodný, krásný dar. V podstatě je to ale jen kus pergamonu, který sám o sobě nemá žádnou moc. My, lidé, tomu kusu dáváme sílu – naší participací a rozhodnutími, která děláme. Ať už si stojíme za našimi svobodami nebo ne. Ať už respektujeme a prosazujeme vládu zákona či nikoli. Amerika není křehká, ale zisky naší dlouhé cesty za svobodou nejsou vždy samozřejmostí.

Sám George Washington ve svém projevu na rozloučenou napsal, že vládnutí nad námi samými je základem naší bezpečnosti, prosperity a svobody, ale „z různých příčin a různých sfér budeme vystaveni mnoha těžkým zkouškám, aby bylo v naší mysli oslabeno přesvědčení o této pravdě;“ a že bychom pravdu měli zachovávat s „velkou úzkostlivostí“, že bychom měli odmítat počátek jakékoli pokusu o odcizení jedné části země od zbytku či snahy o oslabení těch posvátných vazeb, které nás pojí v jeden národ.

Tyto vazby oslabujeme, když dovolujeme našim politickým dialogům, aby se staly tak ničujícími, čímž státní správa odrazuje osoby s dobrým charakterem; tak hrubými a plnými nenávisti, že názory těch Američanů, s kterými nesouhlasíme, jsou pro nás zcela scestné a jaksi zlomyslné. Oslabujeme tyto vazby, když prohlašujeme, že část z nás je Američany „více“ než ti druzí; když považujeme celý systém za nevyhnutelně zkorumpovaný a viníme námi zvolené lídry bez zamýšlení nad naším vlastním podílem, když jsme je sami zvolili.

Je na každém z nás, aby byl tím zaníceným úzkostlivým ochráncem naší demokracie; aby přijal ten radostný úkol, jež jsme dostali, abychom se neustále snažili vylepšovat tento náš krásný národ. Protože i přes všechny naše vnější rozdíly, všichni sdílíme ten stejný, hrdý titul: Američan.

Koneckonců, to je to, co si vyžaduje naše demokracie. Demokracie vás potřebuje a není to pouze v době voleb, či když jsou v sázce vaše zájmy, je to v průběhu celého života. Pokud už máte dost hádek na internetu s cizími lidmi, zkuste s nimi mluvit osobně. Pokud si něco žádá zlepšení, zavažte si boty a udělejte pro to něco. Pokud jste zklamaní zvolenými představiteli, „vyhrňte si rukávy“, sežeňte podpisy a kandidujte sami. Ukažte se. Ponořte se do toho. Vytrvejte. Někdy vyhraje, někdy ne. Domnívat se, že ostatní jsou plni dobra, může být riskantní a přijde doba, kdy vás tento proces zklame. Ale těm z nás, kteří měli to štěstí být

součástí této práce a vidět vše zblízka, mi dovoluji připomenout, že to může dodat sílu a inspirovat. A navíc bude utvrzena vaše víra v Ameriku a Američany.

Má víra se potvrdila. V tomto období osmi let jsem viděl mladé absolventy a mladé vojenské důstojníky, jejichž tváře byly plné naděje. Truchlil jsem spolu se zlomenými rodinami hledající odpovědi a našel milost v charlestoneckém kostele. Viděl jsem naše vědce, jak pomáhali paralyzovanému muži znovu získat svůj hmat, a našim zraněným vojákům pomohli opět chodit. Viděl jsem naše lékaře a dobrovolníky, jak pomáhali vše „vrátit zpět na nohy“ po zemětřeseních, a jak dokázali zastavit pandemii. Viděl jsem naše děti, připomínajíc nám naši povinnost starat se o uprchlíky, pracovat v míru a hlavně pečovat jeden o druhého.

Rozhodl jsem se, nedaleko odsud, vkládat po všechny ty roky svoji víru do běžných Američanů a jejich síly přinést změnu – tato víra se vyplatila v rozměrech, které jsem si ani nedovedl představit. Doufám, že to cítíte stejně. Někteří z vás, kteří jste tu dnes večer s námi nebo vše sledujete z domovů, jste tu byli s námi v roce 2004, 2008, 2012 – a je možné, že stále ještě nedokážete uvěřit, že jsme to všechno dokázali. A nejste jediní. Michelle – po uplynulých 25 let jsi nebyla pouze mojí ženou a matkou mých dětí, ale i mým nejlepším přítelem. Dostalo se ti role, jež si nežádala a ty ses toho ujala s elegancí a kuráží, stylem a dobrým humorem. Udělala jsi z Bílého Domu místo, které patří všem. A protože nová generace tě má jako vzor, může mířit výš. Jsem na Tebe pyšný. Celá země je na Tebe pyšná.

Malia a Sasha, i za těchto zvláštních okolností, jste se obě staly skvělými ženami, chytrými a krásnými, ale co je důležitější – jste milé, přemýšlivé a plné vášně. Nesly jste to břemeno na vás upřené pozornosti tak lehce. Ze všech věcí, které jsem ve svém životě udělal, jsem nejvíce pyšný na to, že jsem váš otec.

Joe Bidenu, tomu odvážnému klukovi ze Scrantonu, jež se stal Delawarským oblíbencem: Když jsem byl kandidátem, byl jsi mojí první volbou⁴¹, a zároveň i tou nejlepší. A to nebylo pouze tím, že jsi byl skvělým viceprezidentem, ale protože jsem díky tomu v Tobě našel bratra. Milujeme Tebe a Jill jako byste byli naše rodina a společné přátelství je pro nás jednou z největších radostí našeho života.

Mému vynikajícímu týmu: Po osm let – pro některé z vás ještě mnohem déle – jsem čerpal z vaší energie a zkoušel přenášet dál to, co jste mi ukazovali každý den: srdečnost, charakter a idealismus. Sledoval jsem vás vyrůstat, uzavírat sňatky, zakládat rodiny a vydávat se na vaše nové cesty. I v těch těžkých časech, jenž byly pro nás frustrující, nikdy jste nedopustili, aby vás Washington vnitřně zlomil. Jediná věc, na kterou jsem pyšnější, než na všechno to dobré, co jsme udělali, je pomyšlení na to, jaké všechny věci si z toho odnesete do budoucnosti.

Každému organizátorovi, který se přestěhoval do nového města a každé vstřícné rodině, jež takovéto lidi přijala; každému dobrovolníkovi, který chodil dům od domu, každému mladému člověku, který prvně hlasoval ve volbách, každému Američanovi, který pocítil na vlastní kůži, kolik úsilí je potřeba, abyste něco změnili – to vy jste tou největší podporou a nejlepšími or-

⁴¹ na post viceprezidenta USA

ganizátory, v jaké jen člověk může doufat, a já vám za to budu už napořád zavázán. Protože, ano, to vy jste změnili svět.

Proto odcházím dnes večer z tohoto podia ještě optimističtější ohledně této země, než jsem byl v době, kdy jsme začínali. Protože vím, že naše práce nejenom pomohla tak velkému počtu obyvatel, ale také je inspirovala – hlavně tolik mladých lidí – aby začali věřit, že každý je schopen něco změnit a že lze zvládnout více než si člověk myslí. Nastupující generaci – nesobeckou, obětavou, kreativní a patriotickou – jsem viděl na každém rohu. Vy věříte ve spravedlivou a inkluzivní Ameriku, která „měří všem stejně“; vy jste si vědomi, že nepřetržitá změna vždy byla znakem Ameriky; něčím, čeho není třeba se bát, nýbrž osvojit si, a vy jste ochotni vyvinout velké úsilí za demokracii. Brzy budete v početní přesile a věřím, že demokracie tak bude ve správných rukách.

Mí drazí Američané, byla to pro mě životní pocta, sloužit právě Vám. Ve skutečnosti nekončím, budu tady s Vámi, jakožto občan, po všechny dny, které mi zbývají. Ať už jste mladí věkem či srdcem, nyní Vás, jakožto Váš prezident, žádám o poslední věc – o to samé jako před osmi lety, kdy jste mi dali šanci.

Žádám Vás, abyste věřili. Nikoli v moji schopnost dokázat věci změnit – ale v tu Vaši.

Žádám Vás, abyste se drželi přesvědčení zapsaného v zakládajících dokumentech naší země; té myšlenky, tiše vyřknuté otroky a abolicionisty⁴²; toho zápalu, jaký měli tehdy imigranti i usedlíci na cestě za spravedlností; toho kréda, které bylo znovu potvrzené těmi, co zasadili vlajky z různých zahraničních bitev na povrchu Měsíce; té víry v jádru každého Američana, jehož příběh ještě není napsán.

Ano, my můžeme.⁴³

Ano, my jsme to dokázali.

Ano, my můžeme.

Děkuji Vám. Bůh Vám žehnej. Bůh žehnej Spojeným státům americkým.

⁴² abolicionisté = členové hnutí, usilující o zrušení otrokářství

⁴³ „Yes, we can!“ – slogan užívaný v Obamově prezidentské kampani

6 Contextualization of the farewell speech

6.1 Introduction

A typical place for Presidents to deliver their farewell speech is their Oval Office at the White House, as a symbol of their presidency and work they did from that room. Bill Clinton, Ronald Reagan and Jimmy Carter have also used their presidential office without any immediate live audience.

This was not Obama's case as he opted to deliver his speech symbolically at the McCormick Place convention center, in his hometown Chicago, Illinois. It is a place where he gave his speech after his 2012 reelection victory speech and it is also close to Grant Park where he gave his speech after winning the 2008 election. Chicago is also a place where he started his career as a community organizer.⁴⁴

This long-awaited event took place on January 10, 2017 at 9:00 p.m. EST, just days before the inauguration of Donald J. Trump, and was mediated through many television and radio stations and was livestreamed online by the White House. It was also open to the public and free tickets were distributed at McCormick Place from early morning on January 7, three days before the event, on the basis of "first-come, first-served". There were thousands of people waiting in lines; exact number of the tickets given away was not disclosed by White House officials.⁴⁵

The venue, providing 4249 seats, was overcrowded that night. The ceremonial impression was intensified by a massive presidential seal and big American flag over President Obama's head, completed by many flags lining the stage.

The speech was written by Obama himself, with the help of Cody Keenan, the White House Director of Speechwriting; Jon Favreau, former White House speechwriter and David Axelrod, former senior advisor. With such contribution to the drafting process, Obama was able to have his speech done within a few days, finishing in the afternoon of that important day. In an open letter to his supporters, Obama said he was inspired by the farewell speech of George Washington, the first U.S. President, which has been so important for the nation that it is read every year on G. Washington's birthday.⁴⁶

His speech intention was, according to USA Today, to make a „*forward-looking*“ and positive speech focusing on the calling on Americans to unite as citizens, with mentions of political accomplishments during his presidency alongside.⁴⁷

The final speech lasted 50 minutes included issues such as democracy and its threats, remembering the history of the USA, the Constitution and the creed of Americans given to them by

⁴⁴ usatoday.com. *Obama's farewell address will be 'forward-looking,' optimistic.* [online].

⁴⁵ roomper.com. *How many people attended Obama's farewell speech? It was packed.* [online].

⁴⁶ wikipedia.org. *Barack Obama's farewell address.* [online].

⁴⁷ usatoday.com. *Obama's farewell address will be 'forward-looking,' optimistic.* [online].

the Founding Fathers. Obama also highlighted capacity of each citizen to bring about change and their faith as a main tool to overcome hard times. He warned about the current issues regarding to the race, environment, immigrants, differences between the poor and the rich, racial tensions and partisanship, and called for an action. Obama did not forget to count their accomplishments with expressing big thanks at the end of the speech. Although he cautioned Americans, his tone, feeling he left there and his legacy was positive, as he promised when writing it.

6.2 Analysis

In the following pages I will try to analyze the whole speech in meaning of contextualization, focus on the mentioned topics and his legacy in general.

He began his speech with his favorite “*My fellow Americans*”, followed by expression of how thankful he is for the letters he and his wife Michelle received in the past few weeks as he is leaving the White House. Right from the start, Obama was showing the gratitude towards the Americans and how the presidency influenced his life: „*You made me a better president and you made me a better man.*”

From the first opening paragraph former community organizer moves straight to his beginnings in Chicago, explaining he came there in his early 20s in order to find himself, his purpose of life, ending to realize his life direction is to help others and bring about a positive change. This was due to the “*power of faith*” he witnessed and understood. Chicago that time was also the place where he better understood that people have incredibly big power to do great things if they only get together.

The following lines of the speech are full of positive patriotism, mentions the rights of each and every American – life, liberty, freedom, pursuit of happiness– not forgetting the democracy, as a “*great gift our Founders gave us*”, which he highlights many times. By “*Founders*” are meant seven key figures, “*Founding Fathers*”: Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, George Washington, Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, John Jay and John Adams; mentioning them is something he could not resist; he loves to stress the key personalities from history.

The Founding fathers are not the only thought of history. Obama names many crucial moments from the past – pioneers, patriots fighting for republic and refusing the tyranny, slavery, immigrants and refugees, strong women and workers, participants of protests bravely demanding their rights and soldiers fighting for America. He connects “*nation’s call to citizenship*” to their courage. Through that and also through the statement “*So that’s what we mean when we say America is exceptional.*” is expressed the uniqueness of the United States. Obama did not deny the mistakes, slow progress or painful times leading to the achievement of democracy, more likely he admitted them but said that America, in general, has always been moving forward and developing positively.

In the eight minute, Obama counts their political accomplishments, such as defeating a great recession, restarting of auto industry, job creating, improving relationship with Cuba, non-violently shutting down nuclear weapon in Iran, killing the initiator of World Trade Center attacks on September 11, 2001, achieving marriage equality, providing healthcare coverage of 20 million citizens.

That amount of U.S. citizens gained the health insurance thanks to the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA), better known as Obama Care, which has been one of Obama's major goals for the time of his presidency. The purpose of this law that passed the Congress in 2010 was to provide affordable insurance for more Americans, improve the quality of health care and health insurance and reduce healthcare costs and spendings.⁴⁸

Although this law previously met disapproval due to many reasons, opinion polls showed different data after the inauguration *“In a variety of recent polls, with questions asked in different ways, more Americans are now saying they favor Obamacare than oppose it.”*⁴⁹

Since Trump's election, he has continuously been fighting against the health law of his predecessor and insists on many changes to be done *„As I predicted all along, Obamacare has been struck down as an UNCONSTITUTIONAL disaster! Now Congress must pass a STRONG law that provides GREAT healthcare and protects pre-existing conditions.”*⁵⁰ This statement has been published on his Twitter in December, 2018, causing controversy.

Many of these accomplishments above may have seemed impossible but America in charge of Barack Obama made it true. Obama does not take the credit for it; he claims that as a credit for the U.S. citizens.

That is one of big remarks appearing in his speeches. He barely takes the credit of accomplishments, more likely, he congratulates the people, stating *“That's what we did. That's what you did. You were the change. [...] and because of you [...] America is a better, stronger place than it was when we started.”* This way is expressed considering all Americans as a team, as one. There are no differences; there are no more and less important ones. All are created equal. This is a thought he has always been highlighting.

As a leaving President, he made his successor sure about the power transfer without any problems *“[...] just as President Bush did for me.”*

After a brief introducing the issue of democracy at the beginning he returned to it and made it one of the major topics, firstly listing the superlatives *“[...] we remain the wealthiest, most powerful, and most respected nation on Earth”*.

⁴⁸ obamacare.net. *Obamacare Summary*. [online].

⁴⁹ nytimes.com. *Obamacare More Popular Than Ever, Now That It May Be Repealed*. [online].

⁵⁰ Twitter.com. *Donald J. Trump's status*. [online].

The U.S. recovery from the crisis was, according to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, an international group tracking global growth, the “*strongest in the developed world*” because “*well-timed expansion of fiscal policy.*”⁵¹

Obama added that America’s potential is great but realized only under condition that their democracy works. An approach of Americans in times of democracy challenges and difficulties will, according to his words, determine the nation’s future. This was aimed to the president-elect President Donald J. Trump, who seems to divide society and whose values are in a strong contrast to the Obama’s, it is up to the Americans how they will deal with it.

Their democracy will not be functioning without a sense of solidarity, unless same economic opportunities are guaranteed for everyone, unless people accept that they may have outward differences but are still equal.

But not all lives of Americans are equal, which is a threat to their democracy, “*it is also corrosive to our democratic principles*”, Obama described the current problems, among them the fact that the differences between the poor and the rich are too huge which causes that a particular income group in society are “*convinced that the game is fixed against them, that their government only serves the interests of the powerful*” which is a serious problem leading to cynicism and polarization in the politics.

Talking about differences between the poor and the rich, this issue has a clear connection to incomes. Incomes have grown overall in the past few decades, but according to the Congressional Budget Office, top 1% has the best progress with their income having grown by 192% since 1979, in comparison to 41% for the middle income group and 46% for the lowest income group referring to 20% of citizens.⁵²

Obama mentioned the need for a change in several areas, highlighting that they, as a nation, must strive for better economy, fairer conditions, improve trade situation, make more reforms based on which corporation and individuals will not be able to avoid their obligation. He stressed that they must create opportunities and chances for everyone, otherwise no positive progress in things above will be possible.

As the second threat to democracy of the USA were mentioned still remaining racial problems. Although Obama admitted particular positive progress “*I’ve lived long enough to know that race relations are better than they were 10, 20, or 30 years ago [...].*” but he also said that the current situation is far from perfect “*But we’re not where we need to be. All of us have more work to do.*” pointing out at the race relations issue stagnating in last couple of years. Similar situation is affirmed on the webpage of Pew Research Center, which shows

⁵¹ npr.org. *U.S. Economic Recovery Looks Good Compared With Sluggish Europe, Asia.* [online].

⁵² cbo.gov. *Social Security Revenues And Outlays.* [online].

that, according to the Americans, race relations do not go in the right direction (19%), stagnate (41%) and in 38% are getting worse⁵³.

There is still a divisive force in the society, Americans often refuse people of different skin color and are afraid of immigrants but they do not realize, according to what Obama said, that these children are also their future. After all, this is what we have learnt – that these people will not weaken America, same as they – namely Irish, Italians, Poles - did not do so in the past *“America wasn’t weakened by the presence of these newcomers; they embraced this nation’s creed, and it was strengthened.”* According to Obama’s words, America has to start with the open mind and with assumption that each citizen loves their nation, that they have no cruel intentions, that they are willing to work as hard as any other citizens and raise their family any American family wants. America must believe that every person shares the same value.

These are some information for the clarification of the Obama’s statement *“because those brown kids will represent a larger share of America’s workforce.”* “This is what is considered to be true as the percentage of white Americans between 1790 and 1980 was between 80 and 90%, which explains further the New America: *“From 2000 to 2010, a decade during which the white population as a whole grew by just 1.2 percent, the number of white children in the United States declined by 4.3 million. Meanwhile the child populations of Hispanics, Asians, and people of two or more races were increasing. In comparative terms, whites constituted just 53 percent of America’s young people (down from nearly 70 percent in 1990) while Hispanics constituted 23 percent (up from just 12 percent).”*⁵⁴

It is necessary to fight against any type of democracy threats by any means, while the starting line must be really in each person’s mind and heart. *“But laws alone won’t be enough. Hearts must change.”* and we must understand that whenever any society of group protests against something, it is not because they want to take any advantage but because they demand their rights and equal treatment as the other groups. Obama also mentioned that for many Americans, it is safer and much easier to stay in *“bubbles”* with people sharing the same opinions – it leaves them accepting only their thoughts without having to argument, it also needs that change, it needs to be replaced by a will to admit other people’s outlook, or the nation will be unable to make a common ground and any decision.

That is, according to Obama, the third threat of the USA democracy, which is tightly connected to politics, where it is often impossible to find any compromise because some still choose to deny the debated problem. As in the example of climate change that has been challenging America for over many years. Without any compromise or *“bolder action”*, it will be too late for America’s descendants to discuss the issue as they will have to deal with many of the negative impacts – such as *“environmental disasters, economic disruption, and waves of climate refugees seeking sanctuary.”* This comment was made in connection to the global warming,

⁵³ pewsocialtrends.org. *Views of race relations.* [online].

⁵⁴ newrepublic.com. *Five Charts That Show Why a Post-White America Is Already Here.* [online].

refused by Donald Trump, a strong supporter of the oil and gas industry. Donald Trump refers to the problems of climate as a hoax made by the Chinese and he stands for the opinion that the global warming is definitely not caused by man.⁵⁵ As a “*bolder action*” is meant for example the Paris Climate Agreement, signed by Obama in 2016. This step is considered to be an essential treaty in solving such problems⁵⁶.

Obama further expresses the spirit that took America to where they are now – either economically or in terms of law and justice. He said that this spirit “*born of the Enlightenment*” helped the United States to overcome the hardships – fascism, World War II, tyranny and many others – and win better life conditions for Americans.

But there comes a hard time for that spirit. It is challenged by “*violent fanatics who claim to speak for Islam; more recently by autocrats in foreign capitals who see free market, open democracies, and civil society itself as a threat to their power.*” He evaluated that a danger to the democracy is worse than weapons and condemned usage of guns “[...] *the sword or the gun or the bomb or propaganda machine is the ultimate arbiter of what’s true and what’s right.*” and stressed that anyone who ever threatens America will be destroyed just as Osama bin Laden and many of ISIS leaders were. After mentioning the law enforcement agencies taking out the dangerous people of the country, he expressed his great thanks to all that serve, while him being proud to be their Commander-in-Chief.

Dedicating the major part of his speech, Obama continued with pieces of advice in order to keep America’s democracy strong “[...] *we, as citizens, must remain vigilant against external aggression, we must guard against a weakening of the values that make us who we are [...] that’s why I reject discrimination against Muslim Americans. That’s why we cannot withdraw from global fights – to expand democracy, and human rights, women’s rights, and LGBT rights*” among with the successes they made “[...] *we’ve ended torture, worked to close Gitmo, and reform our laws governing surveillance to protect privacy and civil liberties.*”

He closed the talk about democracy with a call to be careful but not afraid even though there is a threat that “*ISIL will try to kill innocent people*” and political rivals – namely Russia and China- will try to harm USA, they cannot win unless Americans give up on their Constitution and its principles. His final say on it was reminding of how fragile their democracy is “[...] *our democracy is threatened whenever we take it for granted.*” with calling for action of citizens themselves if something in politics does not work, for taking the responsibility of citizenship, because “*It falls to each of us to be those anxious, jealous guardians of our democracy. [...] Ultimately, that’s what our democracy demands. It needs you. Not just when there’s an election, not just when your own narrow interest is at stake, but over the full span of a lifetime.*” His appeal for action took the major part of the speech.

Mentioning the U.S. Constitution, Obama highlighted that it is really just “*a piece of parchment*” without any power by itself unless the people participate in pursuit for freedom and

⁵⁵ BBC.com. *Trump on climate change report: 'I don't believe it'*. [online].

⁵⁶ obamawhitehouse.archives.gov. *President Obama: The United States Formally Enters the Paris Agreement*. [online].

respect. As he loves to quote famous personalities in the history, this time he repeated words of G. Washington's farewell speech dealing with the self-government and its importance.

Obama expressed the threats to the democracy but he was not only negative and careful in this issue, he also highlighted the importance of faith that he has lately seen in behaving of ordinary Americans as well as in the times when any disaster happened. He said happily that he has seen people making unbelievable things happen, when it came to the need of help, mentioning doctors, volunteers, scientists or even young children as an example. Americans' faith in the good has made paid off "*[...] that faith has been rewarded in ways I couldn't possibly have imagined.*"

After all named issues, Obama moved slowly to "goodbye part" by expressing his deepest thanks towards the people who accompanied him personally through the whole presidency, with his beloved wife, Michelle Obama. "*Michelle – for the past 25 years, you've been not only my wife and mother of my children, but my best friend. [...] You've made me proud. You've made the country proud,*" because she took the role as a First Lady and became accustomed to it with elegance, humor and her own style; she even made Americans feel that the White House is there for everybody. He continued with words dedicated to his two daughters, Malia and Sasha, who grew into "*amazing young women, smart and beautiful, but more importantly, kind and thoughtful and full of passion.*" Obama made an emotional statement finished by expressing that from all things done in his life, he is the most proud to be their dad.

In his last minutes on the stage, he acknowledged his friend, a Vice President of the USA, Joe Biden; he said how thankful he is for his presence and that choosing specifically him for this post was the best choice he could have ever done. According to Obama's words, Biden is more than just a colleague, he is "*a brother*" and Obama's family is so happy to be friends with the Biden family.

As usually, Obama did not forget to appraise his team, a group of dedicated hearty people believing in idealism, who was, at least those 8 years, giving him energy even throughout the hard times "*[...] you never let Washington get the better of you.*" From his honest look and sound of voice you can read that he really means it and respect those people. Obama also did not forget about the other people out there, supporters, organizers or new voters.

Final part of his speech was fulfilled with asking the citizens to keep their faith, to believe – in bright future and in change they can bring by themselves, in ability of the nation to overcome diversity; and hold on to America's founding principles, adding a positive notice "*That's why I leave this stage tonight even more optimistic about this country than I was when we started.*" He showed his belief that they did a very good job which helped many Americans. This is in a contrast to a newly-elected President Donald Trump, who is known for attempts to undo some of what Obama did and what more, he has never been that optimistic about the United States.

Obama described his generation of Americans as “*unselfish, altruistic, creative, patriotic*” but more importantly, they are more motivated. Motivated to “*carry this hard work of democracy forward,*” therefore he is not afraid of the America; he sees its future in bright colors. He also reminded them that he would be there with them “*as a citizen*”.

He finished his speech after 50 minutes with repeating his election campaign slogan “Yes We Can.” followed by “Yes, We Did. Yes, We Can,” positively symbolizing their accomplishments and expressing the change that they can bring if they really want.

Just before leaving the stage, he proudly mentioned these well-known phrases “*Thank you. God bless you. And may God continue to bless the United States of America.*”

6.2.1 Obama and unemployment in the USA

From Obama’s farewell speech I chose to highlight the employment issue in the USA.

“As a nation, we can ensure that every American who wants to work and is ready to work is able to find a job and avoid poverty.”⁵⁷

Barack Obama took over the presidency in the times of economic crisis, it meant, in practice, that many huge companies went bankrupt and from that resulting huge dismissals.

For most of the then president Bush's second term, unemployment rate in the US was relatively low - between 4.4% and 5.4%. The change occurred in the summer of 2008, a few months before the presidential election, when unemployment rate was 6.8% and in October this figure rose to 10% for a short while. This has caused many changes and particularly led the Americans to pay their attention to economic issues. (FIRTOVÁ et al., 2017, p. 90)

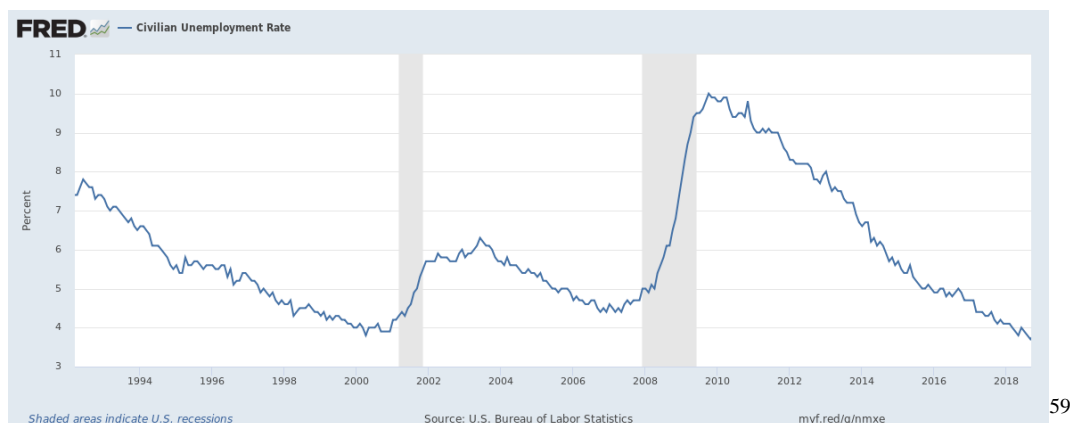
Obama’s results in this topic have been many times compared to the republican Mr. Bush’s , who has been quite successful at keeping the unemployment rate low in his presidency term. But this is hardly possible, as the “starting lines” for both of them were completely different. Obama’s “starting line” was hard, as the USA were caught in the extremely hard times. The world expected him to make big helping steps. The Bush’s administration started (and Obama continued in it) a program called TARP (Troubled Asset Relief Program), which allowed the Federal Treasury Department to buy the assets of those companies that suddenly found themselves in a difficult economic situation.⁵⁸ By these means, many important companies were saved, among others Citigroup, Bank of America, Chrysler, General Motors; and helped to keep countless number of job positions (FIRTOVÁ et al., 2017).

⁵⁷ inequality.stanford.edu. *Tackling Poverty and Inequality in America*. [online].

⁵⁸ investopedia.com. *Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP)*. [online].

Obama released a program, outlined during his 2008 campaign, called “American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, ARRA, Stimulus”, further called only “Stimulus”, which was aimed to save up to 3.5 million job positions with a government’s estimated help worth \$787 billion (to cut taxes, create jobs, extend unemployment benefits, health care and education). This most expensive law saved in real up to 2 million jobs (but is criticized by some that these jobs were only part-time) and helped the American economy but not in such a width expected by Mr. Obama himself, mainly thanks to the Republican party, who were continuously denying his steps. American people’s disappointment, which Obama was conscious of, displayed in November 2010 when the satisfaction with Obama’s economic politic was only 58% (FIRTOVÁ et al., 2017).

In the following years we saw a very slow-sinking unemployment rate. In the time of the presidential election 2012 was this rate under the level of 8% (which is still much higher than, for example, European countries are used to). In December 2016 the unemployment rate was 4.7% as in the era of G. W. Bush.



To summarize Obama’s approach and results in this area, he was not the best but also not the worst, neither a “transformational leader“, nor he managed all he promised as many laws and regulations were vigorously denied by his opponents.

⁵⁹ fred.stlouisfed.org. *Civilian Unemployment Rate*. [online].

7 Rhetoric used in the Obama's speech

7.1 Introduction

It is necessary for every person, especially, in leadership positions to master rhetoric. It is not enough to have only a vision and a goal; an orator must be confident, persuasive and know how to convey his message effectively to as many people as possible. A successful orator as well knows how to break down barriers between him and his audience, how to earn people's heart, trust and to make his audience motivated and believe – in themselves or/and in a common good. It is also essential to highlight the most important parts of the message, only this way can an orator make people pay attention during the whole speech and make the legacy dominant in their minds (Leanne, 2011).

Some people have great rhetorical abilities naturally from birth, but most people have to learn at least some of techniques and "tricks" to become a really successful orator. It's not easy; it takes a lot of attention and focusing on self-behavior, facial expression, gestures, attitude, etc. But it's not impossible; we see lots of successful examples around us (Leanne, 2011).

Obama has shown that he is an excellent orator. But what made him really that outstanding? What skills enabled him to be such successful?

It's the mixture of techniques he has learnt, with, among others, showing empathy with audience and behaving the each and every person as a part of the team. These techniques will be explained further.

7.2 Obama's rhetoric and body language

Obama is well-known for his brilliant performances, in the following part will be analysed some of the techniques that he uses.

Let us take a look at the essential tool of a speaker - effective use of body language and voice.

Effective use of body language and voice is very important if one wants to deliver a successful speech. Obama entered the stage self-confidently, with a wide smile, waving at his numerous audiences and pointing out to many of his fellow people, shouting into the thunderous cheer: All of that along with his confident walk, straight squared shoulders and smile could tell that he feels good and confident on the stage.

He opened a positive dialogue with the crowd by *"Hello Chicago! It's good to be home! Thank you!"* We could see light sign of how touched he was as he saw and heard all of the people, who came that night to express their thanks and say goodbye. But he did not let it control him, he continued with a self-deprecating humor when the audience did not stop cheering *"You can tell that I'm a lame duck, because nobody is following instructions"* which, in that situation, kind of lighten the atmosphere.

Audience prefers such orators who feel naturally and comfortable and therefore is convinced of the truth of his words.

Specific feature of Obama's speeches are gestures too.

Generally, it is not recommended to use too much of gestures when delivering an important speech; Obama seems to ignore this advice but that is what makes his speeches so interesting. Obama maintained many effective gestures and he does not use them in vain, using of gestures such as outstretched hand to the audience - as a tool to get rid of the distance between them; raised hands, balled fist, pinched or rolled up fingers showing determination; pointing to the audience e.g., it all works well and one gets the feeling that the orator is not standing in a distance but right next to them. Gestures also create the sense of the speaker's conviction, interest and desire about the things discussed.

Voice and work with it is also very important. Obama's deep timbre of his voice and his natural asset help him a lot. He can control his voice very well, he can change the position of his voice – when to rise it in order to make his statement positive and full of determination; and when the situation demands deeper or serious voice. Also the speed of his speech is important which he seems to handle perfectly as he slows down a bit when he needs to emphasize the importance and depth of his words; and when to speed it up. He masters his voice which pays off.

A speaker must also find a way to connect with the people listening to him.

Obama masters the connection with his audience. He uses several techniques for that.

Firstly, he introduces his own story: *“So I first came to Chicago when I was in my early twenties, and I was still trying to figure out who I was; still searching for a purpose to my life.”*

He shows that his life is same as every person's in the room, that his life has not always been bright and easy, that his beginnings were tired. But that's what led him to where he stands now. It was the experience, that help him to understand people better: *“It was on these streets where I witnessed the power of faith, and the quiet dignity of working people in the face of struggle and loss.”* This example is also one of motivating tools as it shows his story.

Secondly, Obama named specific examples of problems that Americans face, by this mean, he also connects with the audience, showing them that he is familiarized with that. It evokes the feeling that Americans are not alone in that, that these people and problems are not left behind. *“While the top 1 percent has amassed a bigger share of wealth and income, too many of our families in inner cities and in rural counties have been left behind. The laid off factory worker, the waitress or health care worker who's just barely getting by and struggling to pay the bills. Convinced that the game is fixed against them. That their government only serves the interest of the powerful.”*

With every sign of sympathy with the audience, he gets closer to their hearts.

To connect with the audience, Obama tends to mention common wishes, dreams and their history too. He does that very often in connection to an appeal on the patriotism.

“For 240 years, our nation’s call to citizenship has given work and purpose to each new generation. It’s what led patriots to choose republic over tyranny, pioneers to trek west, slaves to brave that makeshift railroad to freedom.”

In the last sentence, we can also see a figure called Tricolon - listing three things in one sentence— „to choose, to trek, to brave“.

Key importance is in charisma too. Charisma is something that is hardly learnt, more likely it must be innate. It is something that leaves an impression – the first and the last. But to have the innate charisma is not enough; one must know how to work with that in order to be a successful orator, leader e.g. Person’s charisma is noticed even before starting a conversation, so if one wants to be charismatic, then a great stress must be put on many things: clothing, behaving, gestures, facial expression, eye contact, greeting, confident walk and body language. All of that is really essential. Obama seems to manage them all.

Essential is also the vocabulary of the speaker. As people are getting more powerful, regardless to the type of job, they are forced to deliver a quality speech. Right at this moment their speaking skills are challenged. Many of the nowadays politicians have not such skills, they lack many of important techniques or have limited vocabulary. This is not the Obama’s case. His vocabulary was proven many times to be advanced and broad, which is evident when listening to his words. Word order is always kept, the sentence structure is always logical and his speeches are usually cohesive and coherent.

Obama uses parallel between history and the present as a successful way to shift between events. He likes to mention events from history, it strengthens the sense of patriotism and makes his audience proud of their citizenship. *“It’s what pulled immigrants and refugees across oceans and the Rio Grande. It’s what pushed women to reach for the ballot. It’s what powered workers to organize. It’s why GIs gave their lives at Omaha Beach and Iwo Jima; Iraq and Afghanistan — and why men and women from Selma to Stonewall were prepared to give theirs as well.[...] It’s that spirit, born of the Enlightenment, that made us an economic powerhouse – the spirit that took flight at Kitty Hawk and Cape Canaveral; the spirit that that cures disease and put a computer in every pocket.*

His language also uses many rhetoric techniques, one of them is called juxtaposition:

A faith in reason and enterprise, and the primacy of right over might, that allowed us to resist the lure of fascism and tyranny during the Great Depression, that allowed us to build a post-World War II order with other democracies. An order based not just on military power or national affiliations, but built on principles, the rule of law, human rights, freedom of religion and speech and assembly and an independent press. That order is now being challenged. He stressed the importance of the principle, based on which the USA was founded; and although that its citizens are different, they are same indeed, they are one.

It’s the conviction that we are all created equal, endowed by our creator with certain unalienable rights, among them life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

Obama likes to build ethos by naming achievements in the past years. *“If I had told you eight years ago that America would reverse a great recession, reboot our auto industry, and unleash the longest stretch of job creation in our history...if I had told you that we would open up a new chapter with the Cuban people, shut down Iran's nuclear weapons program without firing a shot, and take out the mastermind of 9/11...if I had told you that we would win marriage equality, and secure the right to health insurance for another 20 million of our fellow citizens [...].”*

Interesting is repetition of the words beginning with the same letter, such as adjectives beginning with “b” in this case: *“beating heart of our American idea – our bold experiment in self-government”* or here with letter “e” *“It's the conviction that we are all created equal, endowed by our creator with certain unalienable rights”* and with letter “c” at the same time.

His favourite technique is also using tricolon and polysyndeton. A raw tricolon is obvious in this case: *„It's what led patriots to choose republic over tyranny, pioneers to trek west, slaves to brave that makeshift railroad to freedom.[...] After all, we remain the wealthiest, most powerful, and most respected nation on earth.”* A raw polysyndeton is for example in this part: *„in hiring and in housing and in education and in the criminal justice system”*.

In this part he succeeded both at the same time. *“Now this is where I learned that change only happens when ordinary people get involved, and they get engaged, and they come together to demand it.”*

The techniques, which was not used that much, is metaphor. We could see at least one when describing Obama's belief: *„It's the beating heart of our American idea”*, the word heart is here used figuratively, in order to embody a thought.

The last analysed technique is epistrophe, also not used that much, but in this part the usage of it is obvious: *„to strive together as well, to achieve a common good, a greater good.”* By using the epistrophe, he stressed the desired word „good”.

7.3 Summary

Obama uses successfully many rhetoric techniques and is enriched with his innate strong charisma and he knows how to work with that. His demeanor is naturally self-confident, his smile is natural and honest, and his deep timbre voice is used effectively in order to highlight key parts of his speech. He shows very rich vocabulary and his speeches are cohesive and coherent. Although it is not recommended to use too many gestures, Obama does not respect it but all is made brilliantly and effectively. Mentioning many historical events and the founders of the USA works well too, it highlights the patriotism and the founding base. During his speeches, we can see his certainty, his belief and conviction that what he says or does is a right thing. He also uses one-to-one approach towards the audience which together with given

feeling that all Americans are one team is a very good way how to make people's hearts. From all points of view, Obama is considered to be a very skilled successful orator.

8 Obama after his presidency

After the presidency transfer to the new President Donald J. Trump in January 2017, Obama finally took some time to relax and travel.

His first way led in February to the British Virgin Islands where he was invited by Richard Branson, British billionaire. According to the pictures published on the internet, he really enjoyed the stay, which was followed by another stay on the French Polynesian island of Taiti with his wife. This was a place where he started to write his memoir. In late spring he spent days with his family on holidays in Tuscany and few months after he took his daughter to the country he spent his childhood in, Indonesia.

Although he left White House, Obama still remains active in politics. He met with German Chancellor Angela Merkel before the NATO summit, where his successor participated. Obama got back to work, delivered speeches at the University of Chicago about ability of each person to bring about change, prepared planning for the Chicago Presidential Center, a center where the future generation is enabled to train their leadership and started to deliver paid speeches. Obama has also been on the campaign trail for Democratic candidates.⁶⁰

„He tapped Eric Holder, his attorney general for most of his two terms, to lead a new group—the National Democratic Redistricting Committee — to prepare Democrats for 2020, when states will redraw the boundaries of their legislative and congressional districts for the first time in a decade.“⁶¹

It is well known that Obama does not agree much with his successor and he is not afraid to show it politely – he criticized Trump's proposal to undo the Obama care and in September, 2017 he expressed on Twitter his opinion about Trump's annulling the an immigration program guaranteeing children under the age of 16 a renewable two-year stay, under the condition that they were brought to the USA before 2007 and they have no criminal histories. Trump said he would fight against this „unconstitutional action“, which Obama strictly refuses:

“To target these young people is wrong — because they have done nothing wrong. It is self-defeating — because they want to start new businesses, staff our labs, serve in our military, and otherwise contribute to the country we love,” Obama said. “And it is cruel.”⁶²

^{60,55} NBCNews.com. *Life after the White House: How Obama spent his first year out of office.* [online].

⁵⁶ NBCNews.com. *Obama on DACA: Trump's Decision to End Program 'Cruel' and 'Wrong'.* [online].

⁵⁷ NBCNews.com. *Life after the White House: How Obama spent his first year out of office.* [online].

Among Barack Obama working on several projects and giving speeches all over the world, he former first couple, Michelle and Barack Obama, agreed with Netflix to produce a set of films, documentaries and series, which is now being much awaited.⁶³

9 Conclusion

The title of this bachelor is “Barack Obama's farewell speech - translation, rhetoric and contextualization” and its aim was to translate full text of Obama’s farewell speech in 2017, evaluate the used rhetoric and put it into the contextualization. An essential part was also to introduce Barack Obama as a personality. For better understanding is provided a basic description of the study field “rhetoric” and “translation”.

In the first chapters, a reader could learn basic theoretical information about the translation and rhetoric and its means usable in a practice when aiming to deliver a quality speech.

In the chapter dealing with the profile of Barack Obama a reader could learn more about this very important person on the world stage. One could notice that his way on the political peak was more difficult than it has been usual in the case of other American Presidents. He had to try hard to get people’s attention at the beginning and much energy was needed in order to make people vote for him and to get through the political situation, still preferring the white Americans to be in the head position. Obama’s inspiring story motivates people all over the world. His story is a typical example of “an American dream”.

An integral is the chapter with Obama’s farewell speech and it’s translation into Czech. Both texts are available in order to offer to a reader a comparison. The intended translation technique is literal. The full text of the speech proves Obama’s wide vocabulary, his well-made structuring of thoughts, many rhetoric techniques and a friendly approach, which, together with his body language, make his speech very successful and memorable.

In his memorable farewell speech, Obama listed many political accomplishments, some of them are described further, but he has not taken the credit for them, he highlighted the importance of each and every American. Obama also stresses the importance of the history of the USA and its founding principles. But the key importance is always put on the optimism, protection of the democracy, the ability to change, call for an action, a belief and faith. Summarizing up all of that proves his quality orator skills able to inspire his audience.

Obama did not quit from working hard after his presidency, we still can see him in the American politics. As he swore in his farewell speech, he would be here for the people as “a citizen” till his remaining days.

10 Resumé

Der Titel dieser Bachelorarbeit lautet “Barack Obama's farewell speech - translation, rhetoric and contextualization” und konzentriert sich auf die Abschiedsrede des amerikanischen Präsidenten Barack Obama nach seinem achtjährigen Präsidentschaft im Hinblick auf verwendete Rhetoriktechniken und Kontextualisierung – dass bedeutet der Inhalt der Abschiedsrede und eine Erklärung der genannten Themen. Der wichtige Teil ist die Übersetzung der ganzen Abschiedsadresse in die tschechische Sprache. Die Arbeit bietet auch einen Ausblick auf die Disziplinen „Rhetorik“ und „Übersetzung“, die wichtig für jeden Redner sind und notwendig für alle, die die Rede für so ein großes Publikum vortragen. Ein wesentlichen Teil widmet sich der Einführung von Obamas Leben, um einem Leser sein Leben vorzustellen, das voll von harter und verdienstvoller Arbeit ist. Diese These zeigt auch ein wenig von Obamas Leben, nachdem er Weißes Haus verlassen hatte.

11 Abstract

The title of this bachelor thesis is “Barack Obama's farewell speech - translation, rhetoric and contextualization” and it focuses on the farewell speech of the American President Barack Obama after eight year of his presidency in terms of used rhetoric techniques and contextualization – the content of the speech and a description of the mentioned issues. The thesis offers an outlook on the disciplines “translation” and “rhetoric”, which is important for every speaker and necessary for anybody delivering speeches for a big audience. The essential part is the translation of the full farewell address into Czech and introduction of Obama’s life in order to present to a reader his life that has been full of hard and meritorious work. This thesis also shows little bit of Obama’s life after he left the White House.

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