

## **Nicolas Sarkozy – a French celebrity macho man who fell from favour a long time ago?**

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As a result of sexual assault charges preferred against the head of the International Monetary Fund, Dominique Strauss-Kahn (DSK), quite a lot of French politicians were given an approval rating in a poll conducted by *Sondage TNS Sofres* in the early summer months of May and June 2011. The President of France himself would also appear to have enjoyed a slight rise in a popularity rating after the latest upheavals in the international political life caused by DSK's New York arrest, which is likely to have a profound impact on public opinion both in the US and in France; in the latter this disruption may turn out to be of the utmost importance in the build-up to the next presidential elections. Thus, were it not for a substantial decrease in approval ratings that Nicolas Sarkozy seems to have been suffering since he was elected President, one might be exceedingly surprised to see him regain people's trust. Would that mean that he is going to rule the roost after the next polls if the butterfly effect has occurred? Be that as it may, legal proceedings brought in the US against a might-have-been president DSK should not be regarded as the only reason why Nicolas Sarkozy's popularity has slightly picked up. What must have contributed valuably to the rise of confidence in the current president of France is also the fact that he did change the way of communicating; that is, another stage of creating his political ethos appears to be characterized by placing a little more emphasis on two ancient rhetoric categories: logos and prepon rather than on pathos and kairos. To put it briefly, the thing that might be indicative of the transformation of an overall style of his speeches is reinforcement of a set of conspicuous linguistic features; consequently, Nicolas Sarkozy, in his political discourse, is beginning to weave together such strands as sobriety, simplicity, restraint, etc. In this paper, we are going to focus on principal phases of mediatisation of the President of France. In other words, we would like to show how the image of Nicolas Sarkozy has been changing since 2007 and which linguistic characteristics have affected the way the presidential ethos has been systematically designed and redesigned. Furthermore, we are going to emphasise the orientation of research into the political discourse which deals with various mechanisms of communication: staging devices used in the contemporary political discourse, which is still very much noticeable through Sarkozy's speeches. To sum up, we examine the evolution of his rhetorical effectiveness and attempt to find an answer to the question to what extent he has changed a discursive landscape in the realm of politics, and yet not only in this one.

