

# Political Marketing: Rethinking Political Party Behavior

Apasheev Alexey

## 要 旨

今日、現代社会はさまざまな構造的変化にさらされており、それにつれて民主主義または政党政治のありかたが根本から変化し始めている。政党の役割と行動様式が従来と異なり、現代の現実に応じ、変化しつつある。また、現在の投票行動は従来からの典型的なモデル（階級所属、パーティー・アイデンティフィケーションなど）で分析が出来なくなり、より新しいフレームワークが必要とされている。

いうまでもなく、政党政治は選挙政治を通して行われる。しかし、現在の選挙政治にも根本的な変化が現れてきた。特に有権者が大きく変わり、消費者のような立場から政党や候補者を選ぶような傾向がある。それにより、候補者または政党が商品化されている。また、選挙というプロセスが商品販売に近づいている。本論文では、こうした新たな事実に応じて生まれてきた政治的マーケティングの発想について論ずる。

**Keywords: Political marketing, political party, election, election campaign**

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### **I. Introduction**

It is undoubtedly that party politics is directly related to free elections. It is a particular mechanism through which the party politics works. As once claimed by Gerald Curtis, “the story of how men are elected to public office in systems of representative government is one of the most exciting and important of contemporary politics” (Curtis, 1983, preface).

Society, in turn, seems to be a body whose main feature is permanent changing in its structure, behaviour, ideas, and so on. Certainly, such changes in society influence essentially on party politics. Political science knows so-called crisis of democracy when parties cannot respond to all changes occurring in society. In such time the new models of party are emerged. They are normally called to be most appropriate and reflect properly all transformations in society.

All major undergraduate textbooks on politics devote a section to party behavior. They form the government and hold potential influence on policy outputs that affect people’s everyday lives. They also fulfil a normative representative role. They have an important part to play in the political system as a whole. Traditionally, parties were viewed as pursuing a particular ideology. The widely known pattern is represented by cases of Labour and Conservatives. In the case of Labour that is socialism and the Tories’ Conservatism. But, nowadays an alternative and dominant argument is raised that the main goal of major parties is long-term electoral success. As Downs (1957) notes “...parties formulate policies in order to win elections, rather than win elections in order to formulate policies” (p.28).

### **II. Traditional view on theory of party politics and rise of market-oriented behavioral model of political party**

As a rule, parties can take different approaches to how they determine their behavior. This in turn affects their ability to achieve the goals and execute the role in the political system.

#### **2.1. Traditional view**

Political science already has a number of models that attempt to outline the way parties behave: the

mass-party model developed by Duverger in 1954, the catch-all party model offered by Kirchheimer in 1966, the electoral professional party model suggested by Panebianco in 1988, and the cartel party model elaborated by Katz and Mair in 1995.

1. The most long-standing model is the Mass Party. This argued that parties emerged from and to represent a group (or class) of people in society. Parties had strong roots in that section of society: providing channels by which people could be involved in politics, not just politically but also socially. Parties also pursued a distinct and particular ideology according to the “stratification of society” (Duverger, 1954, p.419). Duverger was the first who presented in detail the analysis of party politics from sociological standpoint. His analysis widely utilized the examples of emergences of Socialist parties, and founded his concept of mass party generally on the cases of Europe Socialist parties. He highlights that the “...mass parties are generally parties of the Left” (p.359). Duverger argues that for the mass political party “...recruiting of members is a fundamental activity...” (p.63). He continues, “...without members, the party would be like a teacher without pupil” (p.63).

The essence of mass party is in the ideological cleavage in society. It is completely class-oriented party relying on party affiliation and identification within masses and focusing on certain ideology or doctrine. There was strong linkage between parties and its supporters. Voters normally identified themselves with certain party as a socialist, republican, bourgeois and so on. But society began to change structurally and ideologically. Therefore the role and functions of mass party no longer respond such changing. Ideology basis, class identification, linkage between voters and parties has weakened. On the other hand voters' electoral volatility has been increased. Consequently, parties faced new electoral conditions and needed to apply new electoral strategy.

2. Kirchheimer realized such transformation in 1966 and published his seminal article “The Transformation of the Western European party system”. In his analysis Kirchheimer used the rational choice concept<sup>1</sup> developed by Downs in 1957, but provided more detail about how parties would behave. In fact, Kirchheimer was somewhat impressed by Downs's study. He argued that Western liberal democracies had seen the rise of the Catch-all Party, which tries to attract the support of a broad majority in society. Although Kirchheimer's “The Transformation of the Western European party system” was published firstly in 1966, it contains terms and theoretical framework that seem very modern. In general, Kirchheimer was concerned with the organization of the integrating links between government and the electorate and the changes of party structures, strategies and systems in time.

The main characteristics of catch-all party are:

- drastic reduction of the party's ideological baggage (ideology no longer is the basis for attracting supporters);
- further strengthening of top leadership groups (leadership as a face of organization becomes more important in party campaigning);
- downgrading of the role of the individual party member;
- de-emphasis of the specific social class in favour of recruiting voters among the population at large (since class identification is weakened, it no longer is the basis for targeting voters);
- securing access to a variety of interest groups. (based on Kirchheimer, 1969, p.190)

The Kirchheimer's analysis starts with conclusion:

Yet after the Second World War the acceptance of the law of the political market became inevitable in the major Western European countries. This change in turn found its echo in the changing structure of political parties. (Kirchheimer, 1969, p.184).

Kirchheimer identifies two aspects of the transformation process of party systems in Western Europe. First, old-style bourgeois parties were in decline; second, mass-parties changed their competitive strategy and structure towards a catch-all approach. The main force behind this transformation can be identified in a weakened cleavage structure.

Kirchheimer's work is one of the most influential and widely cited articles in political science on the question of party and party-system development. Wolinetz (1979) stresses, for example, the fact that the concept of catch-all strategies should be adopted by all successful parties because of its competitive advantage. Parties that fail to adopt should become insignificant; hence, the party systems should become less fragmented (p.17). Wolinetz concluded that the adaptation of catch-all strategies is only successful in party systems in which the voter's attachment is weak (p.22).

In fact, the terms "political market" or "political competition" are virtually ubiquitous in article (Kirchheimer, 1966, pp.183, 184, 186, 188, 192). This is an indication of Kirchheimer's thinking in an economic framework. In addition to the market and competitive analogy, he also used generic conceptual terms of marketing in his analysis. One obvious example is the equation of parties with major brands (p.192).

The core of Kirchheimer's work is the concepts of segmentation and targeting. As Henneberg and

Eghbalian note, “The transformation from mass-integration to catch-all parties, as Kirchheimer described it, is primarily a change in targeting strategy” (p.77).

Kirchheimer concluded that

“...under present conditions of spreading secular and mass consumer-goods orientation, with shifting and less obtrusive class lines, the former class mass parties and denominational mass parties are both under pressure to become catch-all peoples’ parties” (p.190).

Therefore, more subsegments should be emerged. And the catch-all party tries to adapt to this by the new targeting strategy. Kirchheimer states that the catch-all party’s “potential clientele is almost limitless” (p.186). Party should change its behaviour and probably cut off some side of its past. But, certainly if a party breaks too abruptly with its past, it loses credibility, as it has happened with Socialist party of Japan in 1994<sup>2</sup>. Nevertheless, it is necessary to break with an unsuccessful past that hinders future success and to “...re-position the political offer in the voter’s preference space” (p.193). One example of such a move is transformation of Labour to New Labour under Tony Blair.

Kirchheimer’s catch-all party seemed to be the most sensible to electoral conditions. However, as far as society has become structurally and culturally more heterogeneous, so-called “middle class” and voters’ electoral volatility has been increased, parties faced the necessity of more effective approach to campaign. There was a premise to emergence of new Electoral-professional type of party. Similarly, popular politics had been substituted by merchandized and educational politics in America in the early twentieth century<sup>3</sup>. Such new type of party has been realised and described firstly by Panebianco in 1988.

3. Panebianco’s (1988) Electoral-professional party followed the same line as Kirchheimer. This founded on the same basis as the catch-all party that parties are changing who they appeal to. The electoral-professional party gives a central role to professionals within the organization. In the mass party described by Duverger the apparatus, the party bureaucracy, plays a crucial role. In turn, Panebianco (1988) explains that:

...in the new type of party a much more important role is played by professionals (the so-called experts, technicians with special knowledge) they being more useful to the organization than the traditional party bureaucrats, as the party’s gravitational centre shifts from the members to the electorate. (p.264).

Panbianco in his book “Political parties: organization and power” suggests a new type of political party, isolates it from mass party, and draws the differences between mass-bureaucratic party and electoral-professional party (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Differences between mass-bureaucratic and electoral-professional parties.

Mass-bureaucratic party	Electoral-professional party
Central role of the bureaucracy (political-administrative tasks)	Central role of the professionals (specialized tasks)
Membership party, strong vertical organizational ties, appeal to the “electorate of belonging”	Electoral party, weak vertical ties, appeal to the “opinion electorate”
Pre-eminence of internal leaders, collegial leadership	Pre-eminence of the public representatives, personalized leadership
Financing through membership and collateral activities (party cooperatives, trade unions etc.)	Financing through interest groups and public funds
Stress on ideology, central role of the believers within the organization	Stress on issues and leadership, central role of the careerists and representatives of interest groups within the organization

Adopted from Panbianco (1988, p.264).

Panbianco stresses that the historical epoch of strong parties/strong institutions (the mass-party analyzed by Duverger) seems to be drawing to demise, and the era of new electoral-professional type of party and catch-all party seems to be coming up. As a general premises for the appearance of that new models Panbianco suggests the changes in the party environment, decline of “electorate of belonging” and party identification, and unstableness of electoral arena.

Panbianco identifies two main types of party environmental changes which seem to be behind the transformation.

The first type of change is related to social stratification systems. In this respect Panbianco (1988) notes, that:

Social structural transformation [...] influences parties, modifying their hunting grounds and political

arenas. Electorates [...] have become more socially and culturally heterogeneous, and less controllable by parties. (p.266).

The second type is technological one, that is, the turning of political communication systems under the impact of the mass media. Panebianco (1988) highlights again,

Changes in communication techniques are causing an earthquake in party organizations: old bureaucratic roles becoming obsolete in the organization of consensus; new professional roles are gaining ground. (p.266).

Thus, the changes in social structure and political communication work together to erode traditional political cultures.

4. The most recent addition to the models of party behaviour is the Cartel model, by Katz and Mair (1995). This suggested that parties increasingly collude and act together, using the resources of the state to ensure their survival and resist challenge from new parties or movements.

Katz and Mair (1995) characterized their new type of party, the cartel party, “by the interpenetration of party and state, and also by a pattern of inter-party collusion” (p.17). The cartel party can be identified through several key characteristics. Katz and Mair describe the characteristics of cartel party through the goals of politics, the patterns of electoral competition, and the party membership, and the relations between the party members and the party leadership. The emergence of the cartel party, caused the advent a period in which the goals of politics

“...become more self-referential, with politics becoming a profession in itself – a skilled profession, [...] and one in which the limited inter-party that does ensue takes place on the basis of competing claims to efficient and effective management. (p.19).

The new style of electoral competition that has been formed in mid-1970s has certain implications for changes in the resource base of the parties and in the type of party work and campaigning. The campaigns of the cartel parties are now “almost exclusively capital-intensive, professional and centralized” (p.20). It, like a Panebianco’s electoral-professional party, devotes more and more resources to the employment of professional publicists and media experts.

Katz and Mair argue that position of the cartel party members is not privileged, that is, the distinction between members and non-members may become blurred. When members perform some activities, they are more likely to do so as individuals rather than through delegates. The relationship between parties and the state also changes, suggesting a new model. In this model parties are less the agents of civil society, and “are rather more like brokers between civil society and the state” (p.13). Then Katz and Mair characterise such “broker” position feature that,

On one hand, parties aggregate and present demands from civil society to the state bureaucracy, while on the other they are the agents of that bureaucracy in defending policies to the public. (p.13).

As all preceded party models had an associated model of democracy, the cartel-party also associated with a revision of the normative model of democracy. In this revised model the essence of democracy lies in the ability of voters to choose from a fixed menu of political parties. In this respect, Katz and Mair characterize the party as a “group of leaders who compete for the opportunity to occupy government offices and to take responsibility at the next election for government performance” (p.21).

Katz and Mair consider the development of party politics as a continuing process in which each of party models are seen merely as a certain stage in such process. From this perspective the cartel party is not a final model in development, but simply one stage in an evolution process. Like previous party types, the cartel party suggests a particular conception of democracy; “moreover [...] it stimulates further reactions and sows the seeds for yet further evolution” (p.6), perhaps towards a market-oriented party that, in turn, would imply its specific democracy conception.

## **2.2. Market-oriented behavioural model**

A number of changes in electoral environment affect the way parties behave. Party identification, attachment and membership have fallen in terms of overall level. Electoral volatility has increased, and party support has declined. The so-called “anti-party” voters have appeared<sup>4</sup>. Since the advent of mass technology, television and radio has become the main source of information about politics. People no longer need to rely on partisan sources of information. Increasing the availability of education makes voters more critical and less attached to parties. Voter’s pattern of electing candidates has become similar to process of buying goods and services by usual consumer. Politics itself has become more flexible and consumption-oriented.



As a result of such transformations a “value vacuum” has been created in societies. Indeed, O’Shaughnessy (1990) argues that political marketing [market-oriented party] arises when, amongst other things, “geographically and socially mobile societies create a “value vacuum” and political territory is open with low pre-existing loyalties” (p.24). The behavioral model of market-oriented party has been suggested by Lees-Marshment in 2001. It based upon the classification of business organizations according to its orientation toward product-, sales-, or consumer-focusing. Certainly, parties implement its strategy according the positions they take. As far as we recognize that recent parties act like business organizations, it is obvious that parties’ positioning need to be analyzed in marketing perspective. The concept of political marketing offers the framework for analyzing parties’ various strategy in terms of marketing.

### **III. The nature and conceptual origins of political marketing**

#### **3.1. The nature of Political Marketing**

Political science knows numerous perspectives from which the electoral politics can be analysed. One of these perspectives is political marketing. Over the past 20 years, the field of political marketing has gained significance as an academic discipline. Evidence of this growth has been the publication of several books, journal articles, special issues of academic journals devoted to this subject in Europe and the United States, and national and international conferences devoted solely to political marketing.

Similarly to modern-day principle of economy that consumer is at the absolute center of the business world the parallel can be drawn in electoral politics. The voter is at the center of political competition, and parties and candidates revolve around him/her, like companies revolve around the customer. In 1960 when Robert Keith published his “The marketing revolution”, perhaps he did not even guess that in the new millennium the political marketing revolution would be occurred.

The application of marketing to politics has been somewhat neglected in both the marketing and politics literature. While the study of elections is central to their subject, political scientists tend to focus on institutional relationships or scientific explanation of political and electoral phenomena rather than campaign strategies and management. However, the last few years have seen the emergence of a coherent subset of the broad field. A group of scholars, based in Britain, Germany and then USA, accepts the term “political marketing” and is attempting to establish it as a distinctive subdiscipline, generating regular conferences and specific literature. It is developing cross-disciplinary political/marketing/communication perspectives not

simply to explain the promotional techniques of modern politics but as tools of analysis of party and voter behavior. Margaret Scammell (1999) stresses,

It [political marketing] shares with political science a desire to understand underlying processes, and therefore to create explanatory models of party and voter behaviour. It shares with political communications the key continuing interest in persuasion. (p.719).

Marketing is called to offer political campaigners a variety of benefits. Firstly, marketing offers a framework for thinking about political campaigning. Secondly, marketing offers a professional approach to analyzing and managing political campaigns. The political campaign is analogous to the product development and launch process in the world of enterprise, and can be described and managed in the same way. As Reid (1988) claims, “the problem of getting elected is essentially a marketing one” (p.34). “Almost all politicians use marketing techniques and ideas, but very few wish to admit it openly” (Mauser, 1983, p.3).

The changes occurring in electoral politics are evident. Political actors face the emergence of new type of politics, that is, “consumption politics”. Political parties no longer pursue grand ideologies, and the majority of the people no longer simply vote for the party their parents supported. They are more critical of parties and candidates, expecting them to deliver what they want. In order to survive in this new electoral market, where voters act like consumers, parties are acting like businesses.

So what is marketing?

Many companies until the 1970s were product-oriented, pushing their products into the market, regardless of market demands. Market-oriented (customer-oriented) organizations first determine its customers’ needs and wants, and then build the product. Until the 1970s marketing was viewed in the sense of “pushing” products, but since so-called “marketing revolution” it has been considered in the new sense of “customer satisfaction engineering”. According to Newman’s characteristics of marketing, such a process centers on a seller (the business), who is exchanging a product or service for money from a buyer (the consumer) (Newman, 1994, p.8). To implement that exchange, seller utilizes the marketing strategy, which normally made up of four components: the product (service), promotional campaign, price, and distribution<sup>5</sup>. Marketing, and its various strategies, originally grew out of the needs of business firms to communicate with their customers and to deliver goods to them. All the firms in a competitive marketplace must let potential customers know about the existence of their products. Philip Kotler in 1972 formulated a generic concept of

marketing by proposing, “marketing is specifically concerned with how transactions are created, stimulated, facilitated, and valued” (Kotler, 1972, p.49). In Kotler’s view, the goal of marketing is to satisfy the needs and wants of the exchange partner. This insight seems to be the main standpoint from which all further surveys must be conducted.

The America marketing association defines marketing as “the process of planning and executing the pricing, promotion, and distribution of goods, ideas, and services to create exchanges that satisfy individual and organizational goals” (Mauser, 1983, p.4). As we can see this definition is partly based on McCarthy’s 4Ps model.

In the 1970s, attempts were made to broaden the scope of marketing to include nonbusiness activities. Kotler and Levy (1969) pointed out that churches, public schools, and police departments, for example, could be considered as having “products”, “customers”, and as using the standard tools of the marketing mix<sup>6</sup>. They argued that,

The choice facing those who manage non-business organizations is not whether to market or not to market, for no organization can avoid marketing. The choice is whether to do it well or poorly, and on this necessity the case for organizational marketing is basically founded. (p.15).

In fact, the article of Philip Kotler and Sidney Levy “Broadening the concept of marketing” (1969) is considered as a starting point of the field conceptual evolution. Their critical assumption that all organizations produce a “product” of at least one of the following types: physical products, services, persons (marketing of skilled personnel), organizations (many organizations market themselves), and ideas.

Consequently, such products need to be promoted and presented to many groups that are interested in it. Certainly, the organization’s success depends upon whether its product satisfies these groups (consumers) or not. Kotler and Levy (1969) note, “nonbusiness organizations to various degrees engage in product improvement, especially when they recognize the competition they face from other organizations” (p.12). Thus, organizations act within competitive environment where, as many researchers admit, marketing is only approach to achieve their objectives and long-term success. Since political party, in such perspective, is undoubtedly considered as a non-commercial organization, marketing is properly seen to be applicable in its performances. Accordingly, such field as political marketing has been arisen.

The first use of the term “political marketing” was in Stanley Kelley’s pioneering study on the increasing

influence of professional persuaders in politics that named "Professional public relations and political power" (1956). Kelley used political marketing more or less interchangeably with propaganda (p.17). The purpose of political marketing activity was the same to propaganda, that is, persuasion. Indeed, propaganda can be considered to be forthcoming of political marketing. But, as O'Shaughnessy (1990) stresses, "comparison with contemporary political marketing would yield superficial resemblances but ultimately be misleading" (p.23).

The most critical difference between propaganda and political marketing is that propaganda begins with the ideology and does not moderate it, on the other hand, political marketing based on adopting "consumer" orientation and borrowing techniques from business. Indeed, the targeting strategy can be seen somewhat similar, for example, Hitler sent different messages to different groups as market-oriented politicians do it nowadays, but basically the foundations of two concepts are quite different. Propaganda is normally led by intent to influence, and its common characteristics are manipulation and persuasion, while political marketing's foundation is a strong conceptual linkage between business and politics, and its common characteristics are responsibility and satisfying. However, the discussion about the key differences between propaganda and political marketing is still opened to criticism<sup>7</sup>.

In fact, there are several weaknesses of political marketing. Virtually all the political marketing subdiscipline researchers would readily admit that there is not yet a consensus on definition.

There is a continuing problem of definition of the political product. It is described variously "as a package of policies, an offer of representation, a style of leadership and an embodiment of political values" (Scammell, 1999, p.736). There is as yet no systematic investigation into what the political product is and this remains a weakness which political marketing research is only just starting to address (Reid, 1988, p.34-47).

Therefore, this leads into a related difficulty of transfer of marketing models to politics.

Another criticism of the political mass employment of marketing methods is that they help the demise of the party. As O'Shaughnessy (1990) notes "political marketing has been partly caused by a weak party system, and also contributed to its further demise" (p.12). The central functions of the party can now be supplanted by commercial purchase. Parties are about to become, in terms of Katz and Mair (1995), mere agents or broker between citizens and state (p. 6-7). Consequently, the essence of party politics could be seen as an alternative field of commerce, which certainly would influence on the essence of democracy. However, the question is whether such transformation is so bad for democracy.

Another kind of criticism is that political marketing is often viewed as causing behaviour amongst

political elites that will only be successful in the short term and neglects the real needs of people. Critics of political marketing see it as responsible for politicians simply following public opinion and neglecting the real needs of the population. But political marketing, first of all, is about the long-term electoral success, that is undoubtedly, politicians need to respond to the voters' demands in order to obtain electoral support for a long period.

Arguments for the rise and importance of political marketing always meet with opposition. Political marketing has been criticised for being simply about advertising, slogans, sound-bites<sup>8</sup>, and spin-doctors<sup>9</sup>. Certainly, this is a part of marketing, part of techniques, but more fundamental difference comes with the concepts of marketing. As noted by Lees-Marshment (2001), "political marketing can be applied comprehensively to all aspects of political behaviour" (p.2).

Despite that criticism political marketing has now become international. It is undoubtedly used in countries other than the USA and Great Britain. Certainly that comparative study of political marketing needs to take account of the institutional and cultural differences of other nations. Such differences include the structure of government, constitutional arrangements, separation of powers, type of legislature and electoral system. Marketing is concerned with the relationship between the organization and its market: thus research needs to take into account the nature of society and its effect on politics. Finally and most importantly, such research must be founded on solid theoretical basis to prevent cursory, misleading conclusions about the essence of political marketing in particular country.

## **3.2. Conceptual origins of Political Marketing**

### **3.2.1. Similarities and differences**

The evolution of political marketing as a definite idea does not have such deep roots as historical one. Perhaps the concept of political marketing began its growing since Kotler and Levy (1969) introduced a new way of thinking that eventually enlarged the scope of marketing from commercial markets of profit organizations with product or service exchanges to those additionally comprising non-profit organizations and their specific exchange relationships.

Many academicians recognize that this development was the theoretical "birthplace" of political marketing.

The deep comparison between marketing of goods and services and marketing of political candidates

will certainly indicate that many more concepts and tools are shared by conventional marketing and political marketing. As Shama (1976) considered once:

...some well-known concepts of [conventional] marketing: sellers and buyers, consumer behaviour, market segmentation, image, brand loyalty, product concept, and product positioning, etc. They are all concepts of political marketing.

Consider also some of the familiar tools, which are used in [conventional] marketing: market research, media, advertising, multiple regression<sup>10</sup>, factor analysis<sup>11</sup>, conjoint measurement<sup>12</sup>, and multidimensional scaling, etc. They are all tools in the marketing of political candidates (p.764).

Many observers have remarked on the strong similarity between electoral politics and commercial markets. Shama in his PhD-work presents a table in which the common similarities between traditional marketing and political marketing are given (Table 2).

**Table 2.** Similarities between traditional marketing and political marketing

Traditional marketing	Political marketing
Products	Candidates
Product mix	Candidate mix
Product image	Candidate image
Product development	Candidate development
Product concept	Candidate concept
Product positioning	Candidate positioning
Product promotion	Candidate promotion
Personal selling	Canvassing
Product manager	Candidate manager
Brand loyalty	Party loyalty
Brand manager	Party manager
Consumers	Voters
Consumer market segmentation	Voter market segmentation

Consumer satisfaction	Voter satisfaction
Consumer opinion leaders	Political opinion leaders
Consumer market share	Voter market share
Consumer research	Voter research
Marketing campaign	Political campaign
Market planning	Political planning

Adopted from Shama (1976, p.765)

It is visible that both fields face the similar problem situations in managerial perspective. Mauser (1983, p.6) identifies three main points of that kind of similarity.

Firstly, there is a number of organizations (companies or political parties) in both fields that are competing with each other for the loyalty of the members of a target audience (consumers or voters). In order to cover a significant share of the market (vote), each company (political party) must develop a particular advantage over all of its competitors. Moreover, both attempt to achieve their goals under the same kinds of constraints: limited resources of time, money, and skilled personnel.

However, beyond this basic similarity some crucial differences are hidden. While most political systems accept only a small number of political parties, commercial markets typically support a large number of business firms. The United States has only two major parties; the United Kingdom and Canada have three national parties; France only four. Furthermore, the elections are held at definite intervals, while markets generally run more or less continuously. The final major difference lies in the precise nature of the immediate goal. In politics, the goal is getting elected; while in business it is to take a profit. Candidates are typically elected by winning a majority of the vote, that is, at least one more vote than 50 percent of the total votes cast; the absolute number of votes considered as unnecessary. On the other hand, commercial organizations try to increase a profit as far as possible.

The second major parallel between marketing and electoral campaigning is that both voters and consumers adopt the same role. As Mauser (1983, p.6) notes, "Both are called on to select among the alternatives presented to them on the basis of the available information in the light of their personal goals". Many researchers draw the parallel between the process of purchasing goods or services and the process of voting. If we adopt the perspective of making a decision by both voters and consumers, we will find that the most common patterns of purchasing and voting decisions could be mutually adapted. For example,

sociological model of the voting behaviour<sup>13</sup> could be applied to consumers' behaviour, that is, "...Jews tend to buy matzo; older people purchase more bran products; western Americans have a greater preference for black coffee than do easterners; while beer is more a "working class" drink" (Mauser, 1983, p.9). Similarly, the parallel can be drawn between voters and consumers' behaviours in social-psychological<sup>14</sup> and positive<sup>15</sup> perspectives.

The final major parallel between electioneering and traditional marketing lies in the field of communication channels that are available to political campaigners and marketers. The tools, like electronic, print or display media, or personal contact that accessible to both candidates and marketers for reaching their potential supporters are virtually identical<sup>16</sup>.

In order to reach the potential supporters both candidates and marketers generally combine the most suitable set of media, which is called the communication mix.

Certainly, besides these resemblances there are many other similar points between conventional marketing and political marketing which can be considered from various viewpoints, yet the perspective that is making such similarities most visible is managerial one. Thus, it can be fairly urged how the political campaigns may be conducted. To the extent that the situation facing political candidates resembles that facing marketing managers, marketing analyses and strategies will be appropriate in politics.

### **3.2.2. Common stages in the development of the political marketing concept**

The most of theorists on subject have used an evolutionary model originally devised by Keith (Keith, 1960, pp.36-38), to explain the evolution of marketing as a commercial philosophy. Within this framework the initial stage, the so-called "production" orientation takes a classical view of business and assumes the customer will, with minimum encouragement, purchase what the firm makes.

With the advent of the next phase, the more complex "sales-led" approach, organizations begin to invest in market research in order to target selected consumer groups, better with more refined and often stylistic communications. The third and most sophisticated orientation, the "marketing concept", "...is based around the organizing principle that successful business strategy starts and ends with the buying public" (Wring, 1996, p.93). Shama draws the parallel between this framework and his model of the political marketing concept evolution. He bases his model on the development theory of American business, and identifies three stages in evolution of political marketing concept, that are: (1) candidate orientation, (2) sales-management orientation, (3) marketing orientation.



The strategy in product-oriented stage was the strategy of product promotion (Shama, 1976, p.766). In many respects this stage of candidate marketing is similar to the production era of marketing. In both cases the main focus of the marketing process is the product itself. The candidate was viewed as a product needing mass exposure, resulting in increased public awareness, which was assumed to be positively connected to voter preference. Therefore, number of exposures and length of exposures were taken as the key for victory in the campaign. "The inputs to the promotion campaign to achieve increased awareness were designed on the basis of guess and intuition" (Shama, 1976, p.767). Little effort was made to design the candidate and his campaign based on a careful study of the voters and their political needs and wants. Political marketing at this stage is seen merely as promotion and distribution of candidates through increased exposure by mass media.

Gradually, it was recognized that candidate marketing encompassed more than promotion and distribution activities. By the 1960's political campaigning was viewed and practiced as the selling of candidates. It was evident that in order to maximize votes all campaign activities must be well planned and coordinated. Shama (1976, p.768) again draws the parallel between this approach to candidate marketing and the sales management era of business during 1930-1950. He identifies four general activities which characterize the sales management approach to political marketing, that are: (1) study of the voters, (2) marketing segmentation, (3) promotion, (4) a comprehensive campaign plan.

While the candidate orientation stage simply called for buying more mass media exposure for the candidate and his/her views, the sales management stage called for first learning more about the buying process of voters and what they would favour in different candidates. "Political consultants began to emphasize the desirability of systematically polling and measuring voter attitudes and desires, and shaping their candidate to appear to satisfy the voters' wishes" (Shama, 1976, p.768).

By that time, the realization occurred that careful voter segmentation studies should be prepared so that the candidate could determine to which groups he/she would make his/her maximum adaptation and appeal. In the beginning it was based only on a small number of variables, such as income and party affiliation.

Since the recognition that voters were not homogeneous, there came the realization that different voters could be more effectively reached by different promotion appeals and media. The sales management orientation argued for a more sophisticated approach to candidate promotion, and called for a careful examination of the effectiveness of appeals and media.

Shama (1976, p.769) emphasizes that "The highlight of the sales management orientation to candidate marketing is the comprehensive campaign plan". In general, such comprehensive campaign plan includes a

well coordinated schedule of activities such as television commercials, radio announcements, fund-raising, canvassing, speech making, and so on, that is expected to increase the number of votes for the candidate.

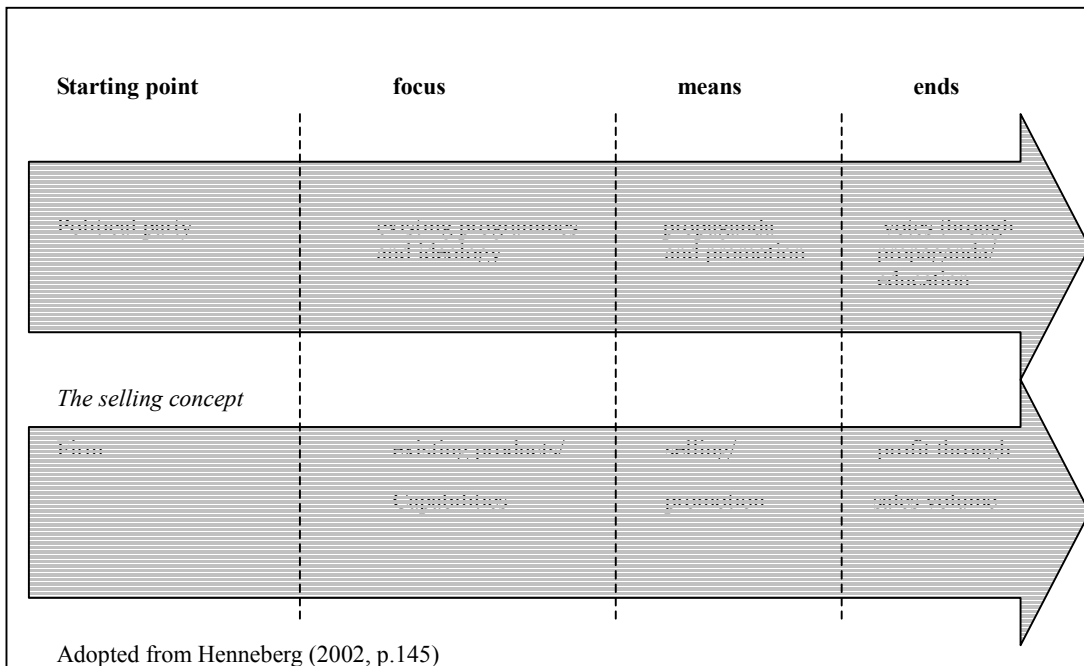
There are visible similarities between this stage of political marketing and the sales management orientation of goods and services. Shama (1976, p.770) outlines the following ones:

1. Both are concerned with the volume of sales (or votes) to be achieve;
2. Both rely heavily on promotion to maximise sales or vote volume;
3. Both call for a well coordinated marketing plan based on studying potential consumers;
4. Both represent a more sophisticated marketing approach.

Figure 1 shows the characteristics of the political selling concept in comparison with conventional selling concept.

**Figure 1.** Political and conventional selling concepts

*The political selling concept*



Many researchers acknowledge that the turning point of the new marketing orientation era is the Watergate accident, and the post Watergate era characterized by greater utilizing the marketing concept philosophy. This concept allows for a more flexible approach towards the electorate. It is founded on voter-orientation and takes into account the electorate's needs and wants, and it tries to achieve a high level of

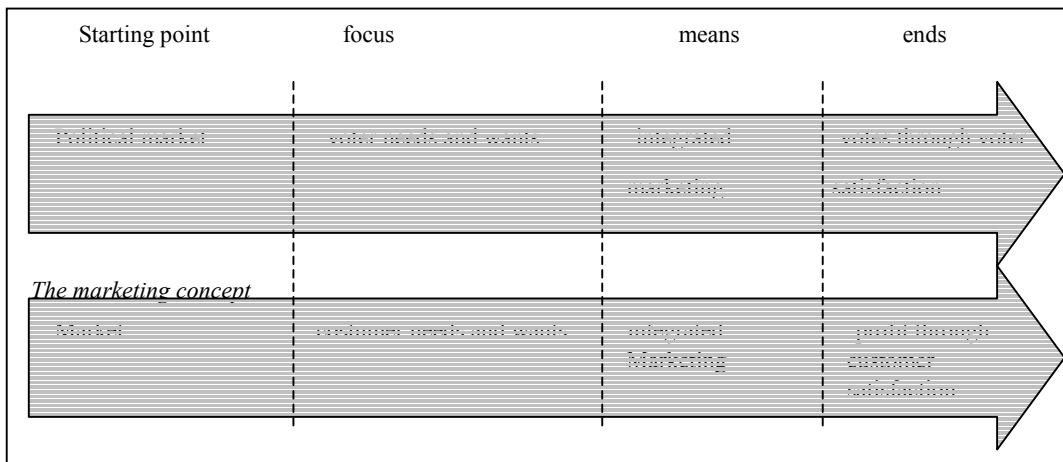
satisfaction. Thus the campaigning of political candidates is becoming more: (1) voter-oriented – candidates are selected for their potential to fully satisfy the voters’ needs and expectations; (2) integrated – the various marketing activities are organized for maximum impact; (3) long term oriented – build up long-run voter preference for the party and the candidate (Shama, 1976, p.770).

In marketing orientation stage a thorough study of the voter market is the basis. Such a study is concerned with researching generic behavioural processes are related to voter behaviour, for instance, political attitude formation, image formation, needs for political involvement, and so on, as well as conducting periodic polls to find out voters’ opinions on issues and candidate performance. In this respect the sharp difference between the sales and marketing orientations is that the sales management orientation studies the voters mainly before the election, while the marketing orientation stage studies the voters constantly so that to fully understand the dynamics of their behaviour.

The second characteristic of this stage, integrated marketing, involves the set of such activities as simultaneous study, analysis, and segmentation of voters; candidate positioning, and candidate development; promotion and use of media so that to reach an integrated marketing plan that satisfies the voters (Henneberg, 2002, p.147). In turn, Shama asserts that in marketing orientation stage such activities must take a policymaking approach “...rather than the simple or complex decision making approach employed by the candidate oriented and sales management oriented stages...” (Shama, 1976, p.772).

**Figure 2.** Political and conventional marketing concepts

*The political marketing concept*

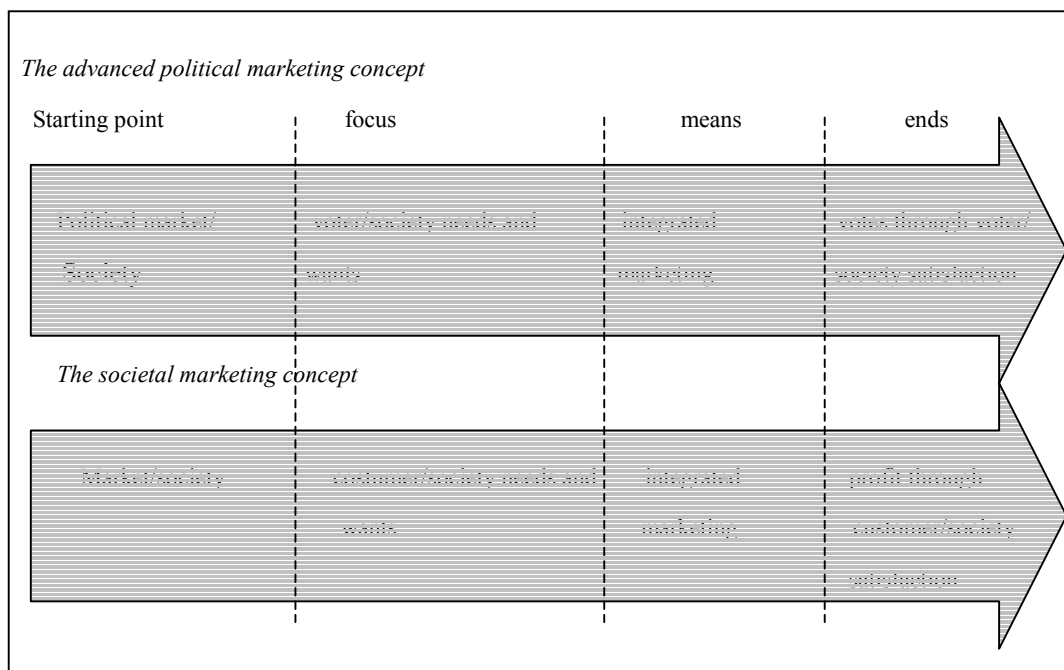


Adopted from Henneberg (2002, p.146)

In the stage of marketing orientation the campaign efforts are not only aimed at winning the current election, but rather at winning the election and serving the voters in a satisfying manner. Consequently, the long run voter preference for the party and the candidate is built up.

In fact, besides above three stages suggested by Shama and acknowledged later by many researchers on the subject, Henneberg in his “Understanding political marketing” marks out the fourth stage in political marketing concept development. He calls it “advanced political marketing management philosophy” (Henneberg, 2002, p.147). He based it on the conceptual criticism of the fundamentals of political marketing, its probable populist and demagogic natures. In turn, he suggests adopting the so-called societal marketing concept<sup>17</sup> to the political sphere. “Although customer-orientation is still the core element, society’s well-being is also considered”, asserts Henneberg (2002, p.147). Not only the wants of the voters but also societal needs are guidelines for the competitive behavior of parties following this philosophy.

**Figure 3.** Henneberg’s concept of advanced political marketing philosophy.

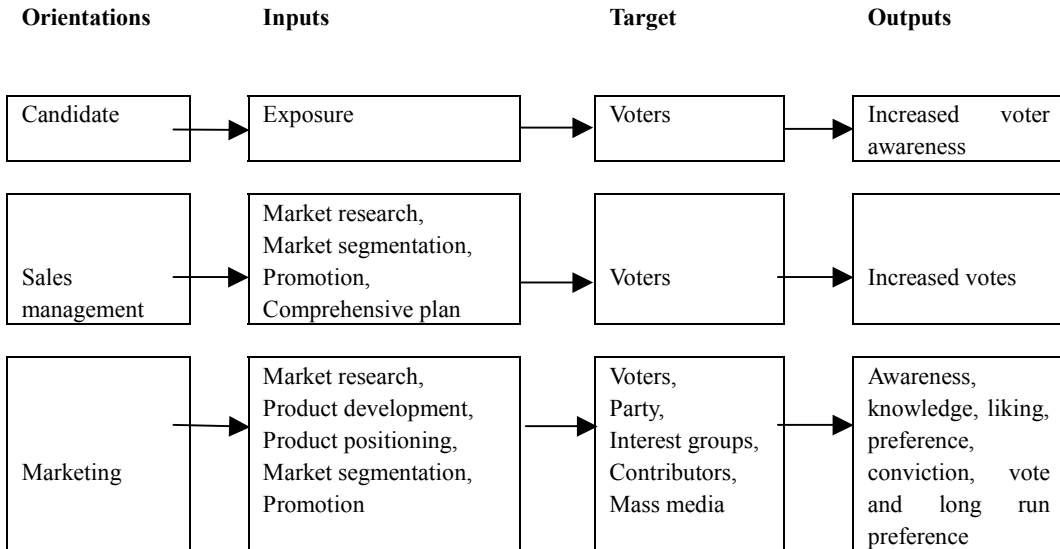


Adopted from Henneberg (2002, p.147)

Figure 2 displays graphically the main characteristics of political marketing concept in comparison with the traditional marketing concept. Figure 3 introduces us to Henneberg’s alternative concept of advanced

political marketing. Figure 4 summarizes the three above candidate, sales management, and marketing orientations. To compare and summarize these three orientations further Figure 5 represents the activities and its degree of depth for each orientation.

**Figure 4.** Campaigning orientations



Adopted from Shama (1976, p.774)

**Figure 5.** Activities and depth of candidate campaigning orientations

Activity	Candidate orientation	Sales management orientation	Marketing orientation
Voters' study	Very limited	Some	Much
Voters' analysis	None	Some	Much
Voters' segmentation	Limited	Socioeconomic	Socioeconomic and personality
Promotion and advertising	Heavy	Heavy	Planned
Product positioning	None	Some	Sophisticated
Product development	None	Some	Sophisticated
Grass roots politics (barn storming, coffee klatches, canvassing, buttons, etc.)	Heavy	Heavy	Planned
Use of mass media	Heavy	Heavy	Planned
Approach	Simple decision-making	Complex decision-making	Policymaking

Adopted from Shama (1976, p.775)

As we could see the conceptual and technical parallels between the conventional marketing and political marketing are visible. Therefore, it is fair to say that political marketing can be included within the

boundaries of existing general marketing theory, and to consider the development of its idea through the evolution of the concept of traditional marketing.

The equivalent of product orientation in business is the candidate orientation stage in the active campaigning, which utilizes a simple promotion approach "...whose main interests are the number and length of exposures which are assumed to be positively connected to voter awareness and voting behaviour" (Shama, 1976, p.773). Sales management orientation stage focuses on increasing the number of votes for the candidate as the main function of market research, market segmentation, promotion and comprehensive campaigning planning. In turn, the evolving marketing orientation appears to be more sophisticated and complex. It is more voter-oriented, integrated and long run oriented.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

As we have explored over the conceptual roots of political marketing are not so deep as historical ones. However, while many observers note that the concept of political marketing has not completely shaped yet, and it is relatively young, it's undoubtedly that the straight line of its evolution could be drawn. As mentioned above the general marketing theory helps to do it. Since the means, techniques and tasks which utilized by both traditional and political marketing are virtually similar, it's supposed to be logical that the conceptual development threads of both are parallel. Moreover, some researchers tend to claim that the political marketing is the result of widening the scope of general marketing theory towards the marketing of non-profit organization (Kotler and Levy, 1969). But, in this regard, the main point is whether the political organizations are thoroughly "non-profit". In case of commercial organizations the "profit" could be normally seen as the main goal of its activity, and as the most organizations, political parties' activity must have certain goals. Consequently, the reaching such goals could be normally seen as the "profit" of the organization. As far as the goal of most political parties is the winning the election by getting the voters' support, it's supposed to be fair to say that the "profit" of political party is the getting necessary number of votes. Moreover, although the similarities between two fields are visible and expressive, the differences between political and mainstream marketing are still sharp and strict<sup>18</sup>.

For instance, Lock and Harris in their article "Political marketing – vive la difference!" suggest the numerous key differences which provide the basis for the assumption "...political marketing as a discipline has to develop its own frameworks [...], and that it has to develop its own predictive and prescriptive

models...” (Lock and Harris, 1996, p.16). Thus, the question is, whether the political marketing is a result of broadening the conventional product and service marketing theory or it is a result of widening the scope of political science.

From mentioned over we can fairly conclude that research on political marketing has now established itself as a spirited subdiscipline of mainstream marketing, producing considerable numbers of high quality learned articles and books each year. In the last 25 years it has become visible that “...political actors not only act out but also think in marketing terms; they believe that they do marketing management, and they try to integrate their use of marketing instruments in a coherent marketing strategy” (Henneberg, 2004, p.5). It has been considered by Lees-Marshment (2001) as a “revolution” (p.229), and by Newman (1999) as a “new age in politics” (p.125). It has moved from solely a communication tool to an integrated way of managing politics, be it policy development, campaigning, or even governing.

Structural, ideological and cultural transformations in society cause the structural and behavioral changes in party politics. Over time the theory of political party has generated new models of party organization and behavior. Nowadays drastic transformations in contemporary society force the radical changes in party behavior model. New “consumption” politics gives birth to new market-oriented model of party behavior. The most important point is that political marketing approach makes politics more responsive to its market that is the one of the most significant virtues of modern-day democracy. Political parties identify the needs and wants of those they seek to serve and attempt to meet these demands. Political marketing is not about manipulation, persuasion or populism; rather than changing voter demands or simply respond to the short-term needs, it is concerned with responding to them in a long-term perspective; it is about creating voter satisfaction. Parties still do fulfil the same functions as they did when the mass-parties were prevalent, such as representation, socialization and aggregation of interest, but they do so in a different way. It is a new way of behaving under changed electoral conditions.

## Endnote

- 1 For more details see Downs, 1957.
- 2 In 1994, in order to hold the power and stay on authority Socialist Party of Japan disowned its natural socialist foundation and turned its political course for “180 degree”. Moreover it joined the coalition with opposition parties. As a result, it lost the credibility and failed on the next election to the House of Councillors of Parliament. For more details, see: 福岡政治 (2000) and 石川真澄 (2004)
- 3 For more details see Perloff, 1999.
- 4 For more details about recent electoral changes see Lees-Marshment, 2001, Webb, 1992, 1995, 2000, 2002, Norris, 1997.
- 5 The set of these components mostly called “principle of 4Ps” (product, promotion, price, and place) has been developed

- by E.J.McCarthy in 1960. For more details, see: McCarthy, E.J. (1960). *Basic marketing: a managerial approach*. Homewood: R.D.Irwin.
- 6 Marketing mix is an approach to marketing; a model of crafting and implementing marketing strategies, which has been elaborated by N.Borden in 1964. It stresses the mix of various strategic factors in such a way the organizational and consumer objectives are achieved. For more details see: Borden, N., (1964). The concept of the marketing mix. *Journal of advertising*, vol. 4, June, pp. 2-7. Commonly, in constructing marketing mix the variables of 4Ps are used.
  - 7 For more details see O'Shaughnessy, N., (1999). *Political Propaganda*. In Newman (Ed.), *Handbook of political marketing* (pp.725-739).
  - 8 Sound-bite is a very short piece taken from a longer speech or an interview in which someone with authority says something which is considered by those who edit the speech to be a most important point.
  - 9 Spin-doctor is someone whose job is to give information to the public in a way that gives the best possible advantage to a politician or organization.
  - 10 Multiple regressions is probably the most popular method in applied marketing research to summarize the relationship between a pre-designated set of independent variables and a single dependent variable. For more details see: Dipak, J. (1994), *Regression analysis for marketing decisions*", in R.P.Bagozzi (Ed.) *Principles of marketing research*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publishers, pp.162-194.
  - 11 The objective of factor analysis is to explain the most of the variability among a number of observable random variables in terms of a smaller number of unobservable random variables called factors.
  - 12 The objective of conjoint analysis is to determine what combination of a limited number of attributes is most preferred by respondents. It is used frequently in testing customer acceptance of new product designs and assessing the appeal of advertisements. For more details see: Green, P. and Srinivasan, V. (1978) *Conjoint analysis in consumer research: Issues and outlook*, *Journal of Consumer Research*, vol 5, September 1978, pp 103-123.
  - 13 Sociological approach for understanding the voting decision was developed by Paul Felix Lazarsfeld in 1940s. According to this approach the voters' social characteristics are the major explanatory variables for understanding the voting decision. Depending upon their religious affiliation, social class, and rural or urban residence, voters are considered to be predisposed to voting for the particular party or candidate. For more details see: Lazarsfeld, P.F., Bernard, R.B., Hazel, G. (1944). *The people's choice*. New York: Duell, Sloan and Pierce.
  - 14 Social-psychological approach of understanding the voting decision was developed by the researchers of Institute for Social Research at the University in Michigan in 1950-1960s. This approach is characterized by its concern with measuring attitudes towards political stimuli. Generally, there are three distinct types of attitudes to explain the individual voting decision: party identification, support for campaign issues, and candidate appeal. For more details see: Campbell, A., Converse, Ph.E., Miller, W.E., Stokes D.E. (1960). *The American Voter*. New York: Wiley.
  - 15 The positive approach attempts to use rational choice theory, originally developed in economics, to explain how candidates, political parties, or voters make political decisions. Rational-choice models view political actors as purposive so that their behavior is seen as an attempt to maximize their individually held goals. For more details see: Riker, W.H., Ordeshook, P.C. (1973). *An Introduction to positive political theory*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall.
  - 16 For more details about similarities of communication tools see Mauser, 1983.
  - 17 Societal marketing concept was developed by Kotler and Zaltman in 1971. For more details see: Kotler, P., Zaltman, C., (1971). *Social marketing: An approach to planned social change*". *Journal of marketing*. Vol. 35, pp.8-12.
  - 18 For more details about differences between political and business marketing see: Kotler, P., (1975). *Overview of political candidate marketing*. *Advances in consumer research*, vol.2, pp.761-769.

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主指導教員（谷喬夫教授） 副指導教員（松本彰教授・真水康樹教授）