

РОЗДІЛ IV

Політичні інститути та процеси

УДК 159.932

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The Political Image Making: Selected Psychological Determinants

The paper aims at discussing the major psychological determinants of image making in the field of politics. In order to present a politician – especially in parliamentary or presidential elections – as an ideal candidate, several marketing and manipulation techniques are applied, which require professional knowledge of the prospective voters' expectations and predilections. Thus the knowledge of image making mechanisms, including its psychological determinants, can contribute to the final success of the candidate for a definite position in politics. Referring to Mark Leary's classification, the following basic components of the leader's influential image are distinguished: competence, ability to evoke sympathy, morality, strength, and the ability to influence others. The role of a pertinently constructed electoral programme, that should be envisaged in the created image of a candidate, is also emphasized. The importance of nonverbal communication in of political image making is stressed. Further, the impact of media on the public opinion is discussed as well as the role of political advertising and electoral debates in the image creation processes.

Key words: image making, nonverbal communication, political image making, image of political candidate, election campaign.

Introduction. The phenomenon of image making in the socio-political domain has a long history. Its purpose has traditionally been associated with building the picture of a politician as a perfect ruler who should be accepted, trusted and admired within a given society. On the other side, the image of hostile politicians has traditionally been formed using black PR, presenting them as negative and ignoble characters, not deserving the delegation of power. Thus in the process of political power delegation, the image development has always played a substantial role, regardless of the epoch or political system. Obviously, in particular historical periods, differentiated factors tend to predominate in such endeavours. Nevertheless, in many cases such processes enable the candidates to take over the power, and later to maintain and consolidate it through acquiring and strengthening political, economic and cultural influence.

Nowadays, there are groups of especially trained specialists who take care of a given politician's image, especially in parliamentary or presidential elections, so as to take advantage of professional knowledge related, essentially, to voters' psychological predilections. Very often marketing and manipulation techniques are applied, comparable to those used in product marketing. More or less professional experts in the human psyche play a significant role in such image forming operations, being accompanied by political scientists, sociologists, but also by cosmetologists and fashion designers.

The knowledge of image making mechanisms, including its psychological determinants, can contribute to the final success of the candidate for a definite political position. Let us remember, however, that even if a well developed image cannot ensure the victory of a very good candidate, an inefficient image creating campaign can result in failing the best one.

Generally speaking, it should be noted that politics alongside other aspects of public life is rooted in psychology. It is psychology that can provide an in-depth explanation of the behavior of politicians and

voters, and also of society as a whole. Psychological factors exercise a huge impact on the style in which differentiated political acts are performed. This applies in particular to the image-making processes in the political plane, especially in the case of candidates who aspire for the highest positions in the state.

In the campaign, the image of a candidate turns attention away from the party and directs it to the leader. This phenomenon was observed in the U.S.A. by Martin Wattenberg who analysed the presidential election of the 1980s [10]. His conclusion is that the candidate has to get extensively involved in the campaign, while marketing specialists are to unite all his promises, achievements and image into a coherent whole. As an example, we can quote here the case of Stanisław Tymiński in the Polish presidential campaign of 1990. According to Jarosław Gugała, it constituted the first fully professional campaign in Poland which made advantage of television and other media. The electoral committee cooperated with one of advertising agencies to create an appealing image of the candidate Tymiński. He was presented as a holder of triple citizenship, a successful businessman bravely coping with the traps of hostile capitalist world. His additional advantage was a specific «strangeness», since he was advertised as a person running business in the U.S., Canada and South America. Building of his image as a candidate from the outside, who observed from distance the splits within the «Solidarity» movement and social disappointment associated with the reforms, helped him gain additional support. Lech Wałęsa won, but it was only in the second round with Tymiński. Thus the thesis was proved that an outsider supported by a good image building campaign can beat anyone. The Russian presidential election in 1996 provide another example of the marketing impact on the voters' psyches. Marketing specialists brought from the U.S.A. led Boris Yeltsin, ailing and losing popularity at the time, to victory. They presented him as a candidate enjoying good health, familiar with the problems of his country and possessing the potential to solve them. This may be treated as a good illustration of a very common situation in politics: the adequate image creation and manipulation of voters, based on psychological knowledge of their expectations, can successfully promote even a seemingly weak or unpopular candidate.

The Image of an Ideal Political Leader in the Election Campaign. One of the leading objectives of the presidential election is to present the candidate as an ideal leader. Mark Leary [6] distinguishes five features of such a model leader: competence, ability to evoke sympathy, morality, strength and the ability to intimidate others. Competence is mainly related to education and should be in accordance with the seriousness of the office for which the candidate aspires. The ability to evoke sympathy is also of great importance, as prospective voters would prefer smiling and easy going politicians. And the leader is expected to be morally impeccable. People expect honesty from politicians more than from persons representing other professions. Many leaders lose support after scandals. For example, the U.S. President Richard Nixon lost citizens' support after disclosure of the Watergate affair. In the cases of losing the voters' trust, no apology can restore their full support. Another criterion is strength and balance. The leader should be calm, assertive and self-possessed. The charismatic leader is expected to undertake and complete the actions required in face of risks, such as wars or terrorist attacks. These features evoke a sense of security on the side of citizens. And the ability to intimidate others means enforcing obedience. All these features, combined together, make up the profile of a perfect leader, and thus can bring about his success.

The ability to exercise influence upon others is equivalent to possessing power over them. Hence, the more impact instruments are within the range of a given politician and the more people are subject to this influence, the greater power he possesses. Such impact generally consists in evoking the desired effect by one's actions, and also in shaping definite attitudes of other people. The essence of leadership role lies first and foremost in a decision making position within the structure of power. Neither the collaborators of a leader are totally deprived of power: they assign him for their leader, formulate certain expectations related to him, exert pressure, criticize, praise, or withdraw their support. However, they are ranked lower in the hierarchy of power than their leaders, as the measures of exercising influence available to them are weaker than those which are at the disposal of the leader himself.

The mutual relationship between the leader and his supporters is of a universal character, and can be found in any political system. The role of a political leader is expressed in a variety of prerogatives. Every leader possesses specific responsibilities, such as representing interests of a particular group, developing the group/party programme, resolving conflicts between particular subgroups, reorganising the legal and administrative system or clarifying political processes. At the same time, actions undertaken by political leaders have a far greater scope of influence than the decisions of other leaders, as they affect functioning of

the state, relations with other states, but above all the everyday lives of citizens. Consequently, the range of political leaders' power is much vaster as compared to non-political leaders. Political leaders also have larger and more diversified modes of control at their disposal; both the control performance and impact measures are defined by administrative and legal procedures that are in force in the state concerned. It should be remembered that «a politician does not function in vacuum, but within a specific political system» [7, p. 18–25].

The identity of a politician is primarily defined by the electoral program adopted by him, understood as a declared system of values. The assumed identity model should correspond to the expectations of voters, the votes of whom the politician aspires for. All components of this model should form a coherent unity, which in the time perspective of the election campaign should be fully reflected in the form of the candidate's image. Similarly to the company identity model, the identity of a politician should look ahead into the future. This means that it cannot just express the present potential of a politician but should reflect the goals pursued by him.

The manner in which the leader sets out the group objectives and the nature of the preferred means of influence fall within the scope of the process referred to by social psychologists as a leadership or management style [9, p. 14–35]. Basically, three types of control can be distinguished [9, p. 14–35]. The first one may be called an autocratic management style. The autocratic leader alone defines the goals, assigns tasks to the group members, enforces the performance of these tasks, and prefers imposing penalties rather than granting awards. The second style, defined as a democratic one is characterized by partner relationship of the leader with the group members; the purpose and nature of the tasks are decided jointly, while the assessment is adequate to the level of the tasks completion. The third style, a liberal one, constitutes a negation of any type of leadership; a dominant role in the evaluation of group activity is played by the group itself.

The democratic state in contrast to the totalitarian one possesses an open character where citizens can freely proclaim various views, realise their personal value systems and follow their own life styles. The communication can be performed freely, both within one's own neighborhood as well as outside the country, and people's needs are expressed explicitly. People have freedom to create associations, parties; they can also form legal pressure groups in relation to official governments and leaders. By attending elections, they decide who it is to perform a leadership role and for how long. The political leader who wants to maintain power within the framework of a democratic state has therefore to seek a balance between frequently conflicting interests of different groups. The totalitarian state is directly associated with «hard» manipulation, i.e. the one accompanied by repressions. It seems, however, that political manipulation in a state based on democratic principles is far more complicated and less obvious. This manipulation will be basically more «psychological» than the one based on terror, but nonetheless dangerous, as it can be hidden behind such seemingly harmless slogans as «the image making» [4, p. 167].

The Role of Nonverbal Communication in Political Image Making. Another important aspect of creating the image of a candidate constitutes a non-verbal communication. Michael Argyle distinguishes four basic features of this type of communication [1]. «Firstly, it is related to interpersonal communication attitudes and emotions. Secondly, the non-verbal signals perform self-presentation functions. Thirdly, it plays a ritual role, and its fourth function lies in supporting the verbal communication» [3, p. 190–191].

One of the most important aspects of non-verbal communication is the facial expression, which may suggest to the observers that a given person possesses definite features of character. According to Paul Ekman, «certain emotional expressions of the face, for example, manifesting happiness, fear, anger, disgust, sadness and bewilderment are universal for all people, regardless of sex, race, and culture» [3, p. 194]. The face can inform the observer about emotions that are experienced by a person at a given moment.

The clothes of a politician are important as well. They should always be adjusted to the situation. Smart clothes are suitable where the seriousness of the office is required, while less formal ones – during visits to the area. As an example, a visit of Prime Minister Donald Tusk to the damaged flood-banks of Sandomierz in 2010 can be quoted. He was dressed in dark denim trousers, a dark t-shirt and casual brown jacket. Yet, for the purposes of the last election campaign to the European Parliament, the PiS party President, Jarosław Kaczyński, was wearing a sweater. According to the psychologists' analyses, a sweater was supposed to make the image of the politician warmer, and that was exactly what President Kaczyński had been missing.

On the other hand, the negative consequences of «dressing up» in an outfit different from the usual one were experienced by Jacek Kuroń at the time of the 1995 presidential campaign. Before, he had usually appeared wearing denim trousers and a shirt, and for the campaign purposes he was dressed in a formal suit. In the eyes of voters, his disguise became unmasked. His previous style had been considered to be a visual complement to his unrestrained personality constituting one of his strengths.

A handshake is usually recognized as a significant mark in impact forming. The most advantageous is a strong, closed, long, and vigorous handshake accompanied by eye contact.

It may seem that the height of the candidate and his general physical appearance should not affect his victory. Yet, the U.S. history shows that in the years 1900-1968, the presidential elections were won by tall candidates. William Berkowitz's experiment is worth of referring to in this context. He studied the case of the election for a mayor of New York City. There were two candidates in the election: John Lindsay (taller) and Mario Procaccino (shorter). In addition, a rule of contrast could work in this context [2]. Before the election, researchers asked the locals about their electoral preferences, and their own height. As a result, the majority of tall voters wanted to vote for the taller candidate, while voting for the shorter one depended on other factors. Eventually, Lindsay won. It seems that in the eyes of the electorate, taller men reflect strength. In order to eliminate this effect, shorter politicians should avoid debates with significantly taller competitors. They should also ensure the adequately arranged presentation in the media.

The Role of Media in Creating the Image of the Candidate and Their Impact on the Public Opinion.

During the electoral campaign, the election spots in the media play a considerably influential role. Political marketing specialists presume that the mass media do not decide what people think on a given subject, but rather make them think on it. And if the media focus the audience attention on the candidate also beside election spots, there is a greater chance for the electoral success. Usually, the representatives of governing parties are more frequently invited to television programmes than the members of other smaller parties. In addition, the media impose the interpretation of facts and perspective of perceiving the candidates. They present politicians from a given tendentious side. According to Cialdini, «a normative impact of the media consists in providing the audience with a 'social proof of rightness'. We consider certain things to be right because other people – valued authorities or the majority of the group – behave or think so. The more ambiguous the situation, the less sure we are how to proceed, and all opinions expressed in the media are recognised as a normative tip – as 'a proof of rightness'» [9, p. 319]. The media select the contents for presentation so as to affect the audience emotionally. When viewing the negative content, the brain is more agitated than with the positive one. The material is presented in such an order so that the recipient should remember the negative message. A similar role is played by the repetition of a given piece of information or a problem. If a politician wants to win the support, he should repeat his message in various forms – that is the method to shape public opinion. The airtime allotted to electoral spots also has an evident impact on the election. Aleksander Kwaśniewski's success in the presidential election in the year 2000 can be attributed to the merits of the public media, which devoted a considerable amount of time to broadcasting his spots.

Political Advertising. It can be stated that the image creation of a given political candidate has been transformed into an advertising spectacle, in which a politician becomes a «product» that is to be sold by a definite political party/group with the prospects of gaining the highest possible profit. Hence, political advertisements are designed to present a given candidate in the best light. They show him against the background of positive developments in the country and errors committed by his competitors. They make use of the politician's family and its history, graphical effects, and background music. One of the most impressive election spots with background music was a spot presenting Waldemar Pawlak in the 1995 presidential election, where he used the support of the popular Bayer Full band. The errors of competitors were emphasised in recent PiS campaigns, while Bronisław Komorowski referred to his family history. Candidates apply various persuasive strategies, based on symbols, referring to the seriousness of the office, competences, charisma, need for change, optimism, traditional values, support of authorities, emphasis on achievement, the voice of «ordinary» people, analysis of problems, and many other mechanisms. In general, candidates use persuasion in order to affect the human psyche and thus to get the prospective voters' support. Election advertising does not always bring success, but often turns profitable.

The Role of Electoral Debates in Creating the Image of the Candidate. Electoral debates have a significant impact on the final choice of the undecided voters. During such debates, the candidates' views are exchanged concerning different areas of social life as well as reform programmes. However, the most important role in the debate is played by the presentation of the candidate, his appearance, behavior and responses to difficult questions. In recent history, there were several famous TV debates of candidates: Kennedy – Nixon (1960), Wałęsa – Miodowicz (1988), Wałęsa – Tymiński (1990), Wałęsa – Kwaśniewski (1995), Kaczyński – Tusk (2007). Especially the first and last ones were symptomatic. The debate Kennedy-Nixon was the first debate broadcast on television. Kennedy won, due to the errors committed by Nixon's staff. The primary mistake of Vice President Nixon was his consent to participate in the debate. At that time, he had been leading in the polls, and did not need any confrontations with the rival. In such a confrontation Nixon could hypothetically have won, but eventually he lost.

Political debates play a crucial function as regards shaping the candidate's image in elections. They allow for explicit confrontation of the candidates and clearly show whose self-presentation is more impressive and influential. Due to the fact that «the human psyche very willingly remembers», any mistakes made during a debate can result in a radical change of electoral preferences.

Conclusions. Regardless of the differentiated ways of forming the image in politics, certain factors seem to prevail in the process of evaluating the political leader. J. Strelau distinguishes three categories of such factors/information: «...information on his political activity, personal features of the politician (his appearance, character, education, family roots etc.). For many people the character of a politician is of a great importance, but it is difficult to obtain reliable information on this topic. That is why the indirect information is frequently used. The physical appearance constitutes one of this kind of information. The third category is information about his membership in a party or political groups» [8, p. 383–384].

The evaluation of a leader is also affected by his ability to make contacts, precise following the norms and values accepted by a given group, credibility, reliability and group membership. Besides, other factors are important: his general knowledge, the level of intelligence, and ambitious purposes. A person who – owing to his competence and reliability – is well oriented in the socio-political situation and seems to direct his actions towards the common good can be especially appreciated as a perfect candidate [5, p. 73–83].

All the above aspects should find their place in the advertised socio-political image of the candidate if he is to achieve political success.

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Гжегожевська Марія Катаржина, Малецька Анна. Формування іміджу в політиці: психологічні чинники. У статті йдеться про психологічні чинники формування іміджу в політиці. Для презентації політика

як ідеального кандидата (на парламентських і президентських виборах) використовуються методи політичного маркетингу та маніпуляції, які вимагають професійних знань на предмет психології прийняття рішення виборцями. Розуміння механізмів створення іміджу, насамперед його психологічних детермінант, може зробити істотний внесок у кінцевий успіх кандидата. У роботі, спираючись на класифікацію Марка Лірі, визначено перелік найважливіших іміджевих характеристик, які забезпечують лідерство політика в очах виборців: компетентність, уміння викликати симпатію, моральність, сила, а також здатність залякати інших. Підкреслено роль правильно сформульованої передвиборчої програми, яка має віддзеркалювати імідж кандидата, що створюється. Також звернуто увагу на невербальну комунікацію, вплив ЗМІ на громадську думку, політичну рекламу та передвиборчі дискусії як важливі засоби формування іміджу політика.

Ключові слова: політичний імідж, формування політичного іміджу, імідж кандидата, виборча кампанія, невербальна комунікація.

Гжегожевская Мария Катаржина, Малецкая Анна. Формирование имиджа в политике: психологические аспекты. В статье говорится об психологических причинах формирования имиджа в политике. С целью презентации политика как идеального кандидата – на парламентских и президентских выборах используются методы политического маркетинга и манипуляции, требующие профессиональных знаний психологии принятия решения избирателями. Понимание механизмов создания имиджа, прежде всего его психологических детерминант, может внести существенный вклад в конечный успех кандидата. В работе, опираясь на классификацию Марка Лири, определен перечень важнейших имиджевых характеристик, обеспечивающих лидерство политика в глазах избирателей: компетентность, умение вызвать симпатию, нравственность, силу, а также способность запугать других. Подчеркнута роль правильно сформулированной предвыборной программы, которая должна отражать создаваемый имидж кандидата. Также обращено внимание на невербальную коммуникацию, влияние СМИ на общественное мнение, рекламу и предвыборные дискуссии как важные средства формирования имиджа политика.

Ключевые слова: политический имидж, формирование политического имиджа, имидж кандидата, избирательная кампания, невербальная коммуникация.

Стаття надійшла до редколегії 28.02.2016 р.

УДК 327.001.891.3

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Особливості становлення геополітики як науки

Висвітлено основні поняття геополітики та розкрито їх суть. Виділено й охарактеризовано два великі історичні етапи формування геополітики як науки, на кожному з яких виокремлено підетапи. Досліджено внесок окремих учених на кожному етапі становлення геополітики як наукової дисципліни. Вивчено основні геополітичні моделі світу, зокрема за Х. Маккіндером та К. Хаусхофером, а також геополітичні концепції Ж. Атталі, Х. Гудеріана, О. Панаріна, Р. Челлена тощо. Розглянуто значення й особливості основних геополітичних течій і геополітичних шкіл. Під час дослідження використано історичний, системний методи дослідження, а також метод періодизації. Напрямок подальших досліджень передбачає вивчення та аналіз сучасних геополітичних інтересів держав – учасниць міжнародних відносин. Результати дослідження можуть бути використані під час підготовки до лекційних і семінарських занять із таких предметів, як «Основи геополітики і геостратегії», «Геополітичні та гео економічні інтереси у світовій політиці».

Ключові слова: геополітика, геополітична школа, геополітична модель, Ф. Ратцель, Р. Челлен, атлантизм, мондіалізм, неосвразійство.

Постановка наукової проблеми та її значення. Сучасну теорію міжнародних відносин важко уявити без поняття «геополітика». Геополітика є порівняно молодого та популярною наукою, котра займається дослідженням впливу просторово-географічних факторів на політику держав. За час свого розвитку вона була як потрібною для держави, так і забороненою. Проте в сучасних умовах ця