



Editor's introduction



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POLAND

It was on the 4th of June 1989 when Poles as the first citizens in Central and Eastern Europe elected the members of Parliament in semi-democratic election after a long period of communism. Next, the nations that lived about 50 years under a Soviet control could vote and elect their presidents, members of parliaments and local authorities at regular intervals. Political actors according to democratic norms started to compete for political power.

Nowadays, election campaigns are a stable element of political communication in these countries. Three models of contemporary political campaigns are recognized in the world: an exceptional model typical only of the United States, a model of the old West European democracies and a model of new democracies present in Central Europe. 20 years of experiences with free elections and political campaigns provoke some questions linked with changes of these campaigns, political marketing, and a role of media in campaigns. There is a long tradition of investigation over election campaigns in Western countries, but scholars from Central and Eastern Europe have begun such research only two decades ago and therefore its level is different. Some of them are still in a descriptive phase, others try doing empirical and comparative studies. In this volume we publish articles of both matured and young scholars.

William Benoit, who has studied the American campaigns for a long time, shows how an industry and professionalism of political campaigns have developed and what consequences this development has today. The electoral techniques tested on the American land have spread immediately all over the world. Lars Nord claims that political communication in the old and strong Swedish democracy is well preserved. It is heavily influenced by Americanization but some new international trends begin to appear. Heather Savigny and Dominic Wring analyze the problem of marketization of politics that is linked with an "ideology of disconnection." They explain how political marketing works in the most advanced Western democracies such as that in Great Britain.

We contrast the old with some new democracies in the Central Europe. As Farrell writes, "the process of campaign modernization in the newer democracies has kept pace with trends in the more established democracies, and in many respects





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the newer democracies may be developing newer techniques at a faster pace than in Western Europe” (1996). Scholars from Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Romania present outcomes of their researches dedicated to different aspects of political communication, electoral campaigns, political marketing, and a role of media. John Parmelee analyzes how difficult is situation in Moldova, where a democratization process is late.

I hope that the readers find some interesting empirical data that allow to understand better political communication and process in this part of Europe.

