

**SOCIAL MARKETING:
INFLUENCING BEHAVIOR**

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ABSTRACT

This project explains how the Christian construction of individuals has led to neo-liberal governments delegating social welfare to individuals' free initiatives; this 'responsibilization' of individuals is carried out by indirect governance aiming at influencing individuals' behaviors through social marketing activities mainly implemented by non profit associations. It discusses where social marketing comes from, what it is, how it is done, and what it entails. These concepts are explored empirically through a qualitative analysis of the spread of social marketing in Italy.

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INTRODUCTION

This dissertation is about social marketing. Social marketing can be described as ‘the application of commercial marketing technologies to the analysis, planning, execution, and evaluation of programs designed to influence the voluntary behaviour of target audiences in order to improve their personal welfare and that of their society’ (Andreasen in Kotler and Lee, 2008:8). Therefore social marketing is an important issue to analyse as it seeks to influence individuals’ behaviour. It is particularly important now as the neo-liberal governing of economic and social life seems to be about shaping the ways in which individuals understand and act on themselves (Miller and Rose, 2008).

This new way of managing population represents a paramount change of the understanding of the public sphere¹. Indeed the ideal democratic public discussion seems to be replaced by the making up of people by governments. Social marketing also represents a controversial ethical issue because its attempt in making up people is simultaneously a matter of social authorities seeking to promote individual fulfilment while also improving productivity and increasing social welfare.

The analysis of social marketing is then not only fundamental to understand the construction of individuals but also to comprehend how and by whom the society is constructed. Furthermore social marketing is a paramount subject of analysis as it is not a mere tool to shape people’s identities but it also entails an understanding of the concept of human being as a free individual autonomous in his choice thus proponent of his own destiny; consequently since individuals are political animals social marketing also includes concepts related to the dynamics of governments and the relationship between rulers and governed, the changed public sphere.

This relationship seems to be based on the power governments hold on individuals; a power built on a regulated freedom that encourages individuals to constantly improve

¹ From the one described by Habermas for instance (Goode, 2005)

themselves in order to become what they could or should be (Miller and Rose, 2008). This encouragement is social marketing. Although ideally the application of marketing for social change should follow precisely designed patterns (Evans and Hastings, 2008; Andreasen, 2002; Kotler and Lee, 2008) however it would appear that often social marketing is reduced to a mere practice of promotion, informational communications, as it is cheaper for governments. In fact the evidence seems to suggest that neo-liberal governments limit their activity to economic utility. As a consequence it could be asked if economic interests are the only value left; and if so, what kind of world neo-liberalism – through the social marketing tool – is constructing.

This work then will try to explore the spread of social marketing in order to understand which are the reasons and the consequences of its existence. In order to do so social marketing will be firstly analysed by contextualising its existence as a tool to indirectly govern individuals by governments; and secondly social marketing will be explored empirically through a focus on the case of Italy.

THE CONTEXT

Social marketing firstly emerged in North America in the 1960s and 1970s (Moor, 2011; Harvey, 2005). Some early theorists (Lazer and Kelley, 1973) saw social marketing as a ‘potential to assuage public fears about the selfishness of business by highlighting its potential contribution’ (Moor, 2011: 3) to social wellbeing. As a consequence this reduced public fear would have also contributed ‘to business success through the social shaping of markets’ since ‘a happy and healthy population would mean ‘better’ markets’ (Moor, 2011: 3). Therefore social marketing – among many debates and critics (e.g. Luck, 1969; Lacznick et al 1979) – became ‘a part of the academic discipline of marketing and [...] a set of practical interventions in the social’ (Moor, 2011: 3).

Consequently social marketing has been adopted by neoliberal countries (Harvey, 2005; Miller and Rose, 2008) and international development (Kotler and Lee, 2008) as a tool to make individuals’ behaviors’ change in the name of social wellbeing. In order to understand the link between neoliberal countries and the birth of social marketing and its aim in changing people’s behaviour, it is paramount to initially underline the neoliberal construction of the individual self.

In effect ‘the rise of ‘individualism’’ (Rose, 1989: 221) derives from the concept of freedom thus choice over one’s own life exalted in the neoliberal ideology. And since the choices made by individuals represent their identities (Rose, 1989) people are always looking for the better choice so to better express themselves and communicate with others; thence behaviour therapies have proliferated to help and ‘indirectly’ direct peoples’ choices. Meanwhile the idea of freedom has also raised doubts concerning welfare intrusions in free individuals’ lives and acclaimed the potentiality of a neo-liberalism society to freely achieve the best. It then looks as social marketing represents a behaviour therapy desired by individuals to better achieve their ideal persona while it is also a desired tool by neo-liberal governments to let individuals’ initiatives autonomously achieve a social wellbeing.

Therefore social marketing is a very interesting and important subject to analyse since it is contemporary and concerns many aspects of social and individual life. Indeed the rise of social marketing raises many critics precisely because it affects the political, economic, social and personal facets of people's lives. The comprehension of human peculiarities, citizens' rights, and consumers' boundaries are consequently all re-shaping. In fact neo-liberalism 'has pervasive effects on ways of thought to the point where it has become incorporated into the common sense way many of us interpret, live in, and understand the world' (Harvey, 2005: 3).

In order to understand the rise of social marketing and contextualising it into the present society, two main concepts will be firstly explained: the social idea of disciplining individuals through the use of freedom; and the political and economic idea of a neo-liberal society. These two ideas will be analysed by mainly focusing on two authors: Foucault and Rose. This choice has been motivated by the work these two authors have made in breaking down the post-war liberal society and how this has affected the relationship between governments and citizens. Subsequently social marketing will be analysed in its practice – that is which actions constitute a social marketing approach – through the work of its main advocates, Andreasen and Kotler, and its main critics, Luck and Arndt.

The Construction of Individuals

According to some authors (Beauvoir, 1972; Foucault, 1990; Butler, 1990) 'the individual' is not a natural phenomenon but a construction by forces and techniques used on human beings. Indeed the individual has been firstly established as a 'Christian soul' that 'unified body and soul, consciousness and act, culminating in the Protestant identification of person, soul, self, and consciousness' (Rose, 1989: 221-222). When Christianity turned to a Victorian morality, several human relations among them and the concept itself of human within a society have been modified.

Christianity was central in building the individual self, as each 'self' wanted to communicate and have direct relations with God. Additionally, through the practice of confession, the idea of the self being *judged* has been inculcated; as confession represents the obligation 'to render oneself truthfully into discourse, and a power relation in which the confession was to be made under the authority of another who hears it, evaluates it, [...], and prescribes the form of conduct appropriate' (Rose, 1989: 222-223).

During the seventeenth century the confession became an obligation for every good Christian. It was the ritual to produce the truth. Moreover toward the beginning of the eighteenth century the discourses emerging from the 'confessions' were subjected to a turn of interest; that is from a religious intention into a political and economic means to analyse hence better administer individuals. This is because the state needed to know what was happening to its citizens since the population emerged as an economic and political problem which had to be dealt with. In fact population was now perceived as 'wealth, [...] as manpower or labor capacity' (Foucault, 1990: 25). Population had then become an economic potential which the State could use to control their population so to exploit that potential by having workers making products.

Thus modes of conduct were established where it was explained what was classified as licit or illicit, especially regarding personal and intimate aspects of life such as sex. This form of power required a constant presence. Therefore the nineteenth century can be described as a society of control. However Foucault argues that this was not exactly a period of repression; on the contrary, simply of control over all domains since ‘never have there existed more centres of power’ (Foucault, 1990: 49).

These centres of power were concentrated on the confession. To a point that now this obligation to confess ‘is deeply ingrained in us, that we no longer perceive it as the effect of power that constrains us; on the contrary, it seems to us that truth, lodged in our most secret nature, “demands” only to surface’ (Foucault, 1990: 60). Moreover, the confession implies an authoritarian interlocutor intervening to tell us what to do in order to adjust our behaviour.

The imposed practice of confession has led the individual to reflect on himself; as a consequence the individual, by reciting himself, has learned to assemble and put together his person. He has then learned to manage himself and to monitor his own behaviour. Foucault also argues in his book *Discipline and Punish* (1975) that individuals have learned to take responsibility for ‘governing’ themselves because they have learned that they can never know who is watching them.

This constant control and instant communication constitutes the basis on which ‘the disciplinary mechanism’ (Foucault, 1975: 197) relies. Individuals are observed everywhere and they are all registered and scheduled like in a time of a plague. This system represents the guarantee of order. Foucault (1975) explains this exercise of power, of control, and of disciplinary program through its apotheosis: the *Panopticon* designed by Bentham. The Panopticon is a building divided into non communicative cells, all visible to a supervisor in the central tower; where all the people are seen but can not see. The effect is ‘to induce in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power’ (Foucault, 1975: 201). It is automatic because the power in the Panopticon is visible

yet unverifiable: the inmate can not see if the supervisor is there but he is always sure that he might always be there.

This exercise of power in the Panopticon is referred to situations in which people are confined. However presently there is no need to confine people as the entire society is being transformed into a control society. Although it is not a repressed society; on the contrary, it is a society where the human being is 'carefully fabricated' (Foucault, 1975: 217) as free, as independent in his choice, and as a proponent of his own destiny. It is precisely this power that is fabricated inside the human being that incite them to constantly improve themselves and which thus makes them a subject of discipline hence of power; as discipline 'is a type of power, a modality for its exercise' (Foucault, 1975: 215).

As a result confession can then be seen as an initial form of social marketing as it made individuals subjected to an authoritarian someone judging them and indicating the right behaviour. Similarly it is social marketing as a behavioural therapy which allows voluntary individuals to improve themselves by showing the correct behaviour. Paradoxically it seems that the fabrication of individuals as proponents of their own destiny has condemned individuals to discipline.

Meanwhile the twentieth and start of the twenty-first century has seen many changes happening to contemporary politics such as 'the globalization of flows of money, communications, products, persons, ideas' this has took place at the same time as 'the localization of local economic regions, world cities, regional identities and lifestyle sectors' (Rose, 1999: 2). These challenges underpin the conventional notion of the nation-state, thus creating a new ethical politics: neo-liberalism. The latter one represents a new concept of politics that refuses the boundary of the old politics as just a matter of the nation-state. Its politics is based on the idea that individuals 'take back to themselves the powers and responsibilities that, since the nineteenth century, have been acquired by states, politicians and legislators' (Rose, 1999: 2-3).

This results in nations losing their normal vehicles for disciplining its citizens such as religion and the school for instance, hence 'a new diagram of control' (Rose, 1999: 234) is taking shape; indeed this is happening since 'the family was splitting apart and could no longer socialize its members, the hospital was breaking down as a site of confinement [...], the institutions of education [...] were in a more or less terminal crises' (Rose, 1999: 233-234). This new control takes the form of a continuous training, a constant incitement to improve individuals. Thereafter 'we're moving toward control societies that no longer operate by confining people but through continuous control and instant communication' (Deleuze: 1990: 174) to construct free individuals.

Neo-liberalism: Discipline through Freedom

This type of society just described is neo-liberalism.

Neoliberalism is [...] a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets and free trade (Harvey, 2005: 2).

Neo-liberalism is then a form of government that sees its main expression in the market. Indeed the market is perceived as revealing the truth since it is the very natural mechanism of the market in formatting the natural price that gives the market its truth-creator character. Hence a 'history of truth' is created (Foucault, 2008: 35) and through this creation of truth the governmentality has a tendency to be unlimited. Governmentality though is unlimited in domains of action but is limited in interests. In other words it is the problem of utility that is used as criteria to define the limits of the public authority. Moreover another central feature of neo-liberalism is the centrality of notion of freedom. Neo-liberalism can be described as 'a consumer of freedom' because 'it can only function insofar as a number of freedoms actually exist: freedom of the market, freedom to buy and sell, [...], possible freedom of expression and so on' (Foucault, 2008: 63).

Therefore since it consumes freedom, this government has to also produce it, manage it and organise it. Individual interests then do not have to represent a danger for collective interests and vice versa. However as a consequence individuals are constantly exposed to danger as they see themselves and the others as containers of danger. It is 'the political culture of danger' (Foucault, 2008: 66) allowing neo-liberalism governments to great control and coercion over individuals (even though neo-liberalism tends to be seen as being 'against' state interference or control).

As a consequence a 'state-phobia' feeling is perceived. There is a fear over the power the state is believed to have 'of expansion in relation to the object-target, civil society'; and there is a fear coming from the association of different forms of state so that they 'give rise to each

other on the basis of a specific dynamism of State' (Foucault, 2008: 187). These two fears over the state have led to a will of a minor role state; as a mere guardian to guarantee the 'exercise of an economic freedom' (Foucault, 2008: 83).

The welfare state has been blamed and accused of being a bureaucratic and inefficient political intrusion on private choices and freedoms, thus as a violation of individual rights; while instead, neo-liberalism by being an economy based on 'relations of exchange between discrete economic units pursuing their undertaking with boldness and energy, ever seeking the new endeavour and the path to advantage' it is believed that it 'will produce the most social goods and distribute them in the manner most advantageous to each and to all' (Rose, 1989: 230).

In this way, in Western societies, the creation of individuals, imagined as autonomous in their choices yet amenable in their behaviours (Rose, 1989), has been realised. These concepts have idealised the idea of freedom. Indeed the idea of being free suits different aspects of life: economically it helped the belief of a society hinging on markets where individuals by being free to consume, thus to buy, are constructing their personality based on their consumption choices. In fact, in the societies described by Rose and Foucault, 'every choice we make is an emblem of our identity, a mark of our individuality, each is a message to ourselves and others as to the sort of person we are' (Rose, 1989: 231). While socially, this obligation to be free has made humans intolerant to any interference to their individuality, exalting neo-liberal policies of anti-welfare.

The government of individuals has then become indirect and has thrived behaviour therapies that belong to social marketing, the tool to influence behaviors. Our 'thoughts, feelings and actions may appear as the very fabric and constitution of the intimate self, but they are socially organized and managed' (Rose, 1989:1); governments and institutions are able to regulate the conduct of citizens to better achieve objectives. Individuals' minds are governed by 'promoting self-inspection and self-consciousness' and by 'shaping desires'

(Rose, 1989: 4). This governmental promotion of self-inspection and self-consciousness indirectly drives individuals voluntarily towards behaviour therapies to improve themselves.

The aim of this governing through freedom is to ‘produce security for property and wealth, profitability and efficiency of production, public virtue, tranquillity and even happiness’ (Rose, 1989: 5). In order to do so, governments are dependent upon knowledge about individuals; like a producer and its product market. Additionally in order to implement this indirect governance, charities, foundations, employer’s organizations, trades unions and churches are used since they are more in contact with individuals (King, 2008; Rose, 1989; Miller and Rose, 2008).

As a result the following occurs: individuals think to create their lives through their choices based on the freedom ideology; so, in order to govern according to this ideology of freedom, governments operate indirectly at a distance through behaviour therapies, in the most imperceptible way by precisely extolling the self, the autonomy, the choice, the freedom. Consequently practices of self-management are used in order to eliminate ‘the discrepancy between the behaviour produced and the behaviour desired’ (Rose, 1989: 238). Therefore ‘a variety of techniques were invented to render human conduct amenable to reshaping’ (Rose, 1989: 239). These psychological behaviour therapies, proved successful, represent a tool that each authority can use to reshape behaviour: from giving up smoking to stopping domestic violence or to simply eating healthily or practicing more sport.

This is the basis of social marketing. It is ‘programs designed to influence the voluntary behaviour of target audiences in order to improve their personal welfare and that of their society’ (Andreasen in Kotler and Lee, 2008: 8). Surprisingly, individuals often accept it as they see it as an opportunity to improve their chosen life; and to try to make it constantly more similar to that advertised in media. Again, disciplining through freedom.

Hence, contemporary forms of power are based on the ideal use of freedom; it is a particular kind of freedom, a regulated one that encourages individuals to constantly assess

themselves. A regulated freedom whose aim is to ‘make up people’, from their sexual activity to their working plans (Miller and Rose, 2008). Consequently governments become ‘engineers of the human soul’ (Miller and Rose, 2008:12) that operate on individuals’ behaviours without contravening their formally private character.

In order to intervene in people’s behaviours, problems must be constructed; this way, if some conducts are formulated as dangerous, unproductive, or inefficient to obtain the ideal status of happiness, health and opulence, solutions must be created thus intervention become desired. Hence problems and solutions are linked (Miller and Rose, 2008). Consequently authorities are more likely to get involved in peoples’ lives in an indirect way, encouraging them to shape and reshape the ways in which individuals understand and act on themselves. So personal, economic and social dimensions are intertwined. This is because the making up of individuals is concurrently done to promote the personal fulfilment of the individual self and of the social self, while also improving economic productivity (Miller and Rose, 2008). This shaping and reshaping is done through the use of social marketing.

Indeed the techniques that have mostly proven winning in shaping people’s behaviours and desires in their consuming habits are those of marketing. Marketing, branding and advertising, have proven that it is possible to direct people’s choice by guiding people’s perceptions. The techniques to influence behaviours have been at first used to affect people’s acts of consumption (Packard, 1957). Similarly, the new control has taken the form of social marketing; the Centre for Business Relationships, Accountability, Sustainability and Society (BRASS)² defines social marketing as ‘an approach to behavioural change which seeks to take the philosophy, tools and techniques from commercial marketing thinking and apply it to the pursuit of social goals’ (BRASS, 2010).

² BRASS: http://www.brass.cf.ac.uk/projects/Sustainable_Consumption_and_Marketing/sustainability-consumption-and-marketing--Social-Marketing.html (17.i.2010)

Social Marketing

Foucault and Rose have explained the context that has led to the proliferation of social marketing. Indeed through the construction of free individuals, a neo-liberalist society has been established where individuals are disciplined by playing with tools of free choice and of autonomous expression. Social marketing is then born as a technique to direct individuals' free choices and autonomous expressions within a 'individuals' freedom' ideology. '*Social marketing* is a distinct marketing discipline, one that has been labelled as such since the early '70s, and refers primarily to efforts focused on influencing behaviors that will improve health, [...], protect the environment, and contribute to communities' (Kotler and Lee, 2008:7). In other words, social marketing 'is a matter of getting someone to do something' (Andreasen in Kotler and Lee, 2008: xii).

This section will analyse what are the processes to follow in order to influence behaviors as outlined by Andreason and Kotler, the two main advocates of social marketing, whose theories will be used in this work in order to frame this research. However, as already mentioned, social marketing is a complex question subjected to much criticism on whether it represents a useful and ethical tool to be used by a state as an indirect administration thereafter some critical theorists of marketing will also be explained.

Nevertheless, by following the proponents of social marketing, it has to firstly be highlighted that social marketing uses variables from marketing such as the '4Ps' (that is, Product, Price, Promotion and Place), in order to develop programs that are able to accomplish behaviour change goals. Thus by using advertising techniques and marketing principles, social marketing aims to 'sell' positive behaviours so 'to reduce the psychological, social, economic, and practical distance between the consumer and the behaviour' (Wallack et al. 1993: 21). Social marketing's goal is then to influence behaviour. It is a process used in order to develop social change programs (Andreasen, 2002). It represents a technique applied

to manage and boost social change. It is not simply the acceptance or promotion of an idea but rather its implementation and thus determining a change in behaviour.

Social marketing is different from other areas of marketing in terms of the objectives of the marketer and his or her organization. Indeed 'social marketing seeks to influence *social behaviors* not to benefit the marketer *but to benefit the target audience and the general society*' (Kotler and Andreasen, 1996: 389). However, it is important to specify that it is very difficult to influence people's behaviour, especially on issues that are considered as important ones to them; indeed social marketing is very limited in achieving actual change especially in a short amount of time.

In fact, delivering actual results can be a very long process due to a multitude of factors; it is indeed a matter of communicating large amounts of basic information in order to change basic values and overcome general scepticism by employing opinion leaders and external agencies. In order to overcome these structural problems, it is then necessary for social marketing to benefit from the knowledge of other disciplines such as 'social anthropology, education, mass communications, and behavioural psychology' (Kotler and Andreasen, 1996: 403). Social anthropology is paramount to understand audiences in their possible resistances to the proposed behaviour change, in their customs, norms and values. Additionally, education and mass communication are fundamental in understanding how to tailor the new behaviour so that it will be understood by audiences and perceived it as socially and personally desirable.

Especially in its persuasion strategy (persuading audiences that the new behaviour is in their best interest), concepts from mass communication and education are very helpful in developing themes and choosing spokespeople for promotion and advertising, by employing the best channels of communications; they can also help in forging curricular materials for classroom, and lecture presentations (Kotler and Andreasen, 1996: 405). Moreover, behavioural psychology is also used, as an alternative to persuasion strategies, in the

'behavioral modification approach' (Kotler and Andreasen, 1996: 405). This approach is based on the reward mechanism that is 'people act in certain ways because they learn to appreciate the rewards such actions produce' (Kotler and Andreasen, 1996: 405).

Nevertheless, social marketing can be successful by applying the marketing 4Ps. Hence, the product is what the consumer must accept, the positive behaviour, as for instance having protected sexual relations. The price 'refers to psychological, social, economic, or convenience costs associated with message compliance' (Wallack et al. 1993: 22); as for example it could be the possible loss of status for a teenager stopping smoking marijuana with his friends. The promotion concerns the 'packaging' of the behaviour so to reward the cost afforded in complying the behaviour; it involves communicating the benefits involved in adopting the positive behaviour, so to best present the behaviour. The place refers to the availability of the behaviour, for instance in a campaign involving the use of condom, it is paramount to ensure that condoms are widely available to the beneficiaries of the campaign.

Therefore the first step in social marketing starts from the definition of the problem which involves specific research on consumers. In other words, it is important to determine what consumers/beneficiaries are able to give up in order to benefiting from the positive behaviour. This type of research that defines problems and identifies feasible programs is called formative research. Indeed, a formative research uses several tools from helping designing the campaign to monitor the implementation of the campaign (Wallack et al. 1993). This is mainly done through the use of focus groups.

Moreover, social marketing has different levels of intervention, different types of social marketing. There is a class of intervention focusing on individual change that is practiced by 'social workers, educators, and psychologists, as well as social marketers' (Andreasen, 2002: 5); this intervention focuses on the changed behaviour of individuals to eliminate major social problems. A second class of intervention believes that the entire community must be at the centre of a social marketing campaign; so that by acting together and changing community

norms and value, 'the invocation of interpersonal influence will sweep individuals along and, further, that the creation of community institutions along the way will ensure the sustainability of programs' (Andreasen, 2002:5). A third class of intervention believes that a real change can only happen if social structures provide the desired change; so the focus must be in promoting media advocacy, policy change and lawmaking to achieve social ends. Thus,

social marketing can help get the right message to the right people in the right way at the right time. For some people who have adequate resources and support, the messages alone might be enough; for others, however, the messages alone will not be enough. For many communities, individual change is linked to social change and social change means addressing the power inequity that contributes the problem (Wallack et al. 1993: 24).

According to Andreasen, in order to identify a legitimate approach to social marketing, it must satisfy the following six benchmarks: first, 'behaviour-change is the benchmark used to design and evaluate interventions'; second, audience research must be used to forge, test and monitor interventions; third, target audiences are carefully segmented; fourth, 'the central element of any influence strategy is creating attractive and motivational exchanges with target audiences'; fifth, 4Ps of marketing are used; lastly, sixth, 'careful attention is paid to the competition faced by the desired behaviour' (Andreasen, 2002:7).

Similarly, the National Social Marketing Centre in UK³, on the basis of those elaborated by Andreasen, it proposes eight benchmark criteria that determine an intervention consistent within the social marketing domain. The first one is a customer orientation that means a deep understanding of the target audience by the use of consumer and market research. The second one refers to the specific behaviour goal any intervention worth of a social marketing classification should have. The third one concerns behavioural theory in four primary domains: bio-physical, psychological, social and environmental/ecological. The fourth one focuses on developing 'actionable insights' (NSMC, 2006) in order to move and motivate the customer toward the positive behaviour proposed. The fifth one includes exchange meaning

³ National Social Marketing Centre (2006) 'Social Marketing National Benchmark Criteria' available at <http://www.snh.org.uk/pdfs/sgp/A328466.pdf> accessed 19 February 2010.

the full cost faced by the consumer in order to achieve the proposed behaviour. The sixth one introduces internal and external competition, meaning strategies aiming at minimising all the 'factors competing for the time and attention' (NSMC, 2006) of the addressed audience. The seventh one indicates segmentation, meaning that interventions are 'directly tailored to specific audience segments rather than reliance on 'blanket' approaches' (NSMC, 2006). The eighth one identifies an appropriate 'mix of methods' between intervention and marketing methods, that is between strategy and operation; four primary domains of intervention are considered: informing and encouraging, servicing and supporting, designing and adjusting the environment, and controlling and regulating.

Andreasen (2002) also sets two criteria by which to decide whether to use a social marketing approach; the two criteria are effectiveness and appropriateness. By effectiveness he intends the strategic analysis of the following questions: whether the campaign could turn out to be a mere communicational one and whether it will actually report a behavioural outcome. By appropriateness he means whether the use of social marketing is the best approach to the context also in ethical terms. This leads to the principle that 'where all things are equal in society, look at the individual; where inequalities in society exist, "change" these first' (King in Andreasen, 2002: 9).

Generally, it is possible to distinguish two major types of social behaviour change programs. The first one is the 'one-time behaviour changes' (Kotler and Andreasen, 1996: 391); this type of program is more restricted in its aim as it requires a specific action to be taken at a specific time. An example is mass immunization campaigns in Africa: marketers meet village leaders few weeks before the arrival of the medical team offering incentives and announcing their procedures so that when the medical team arrived all the population is informed and show up.

The second type of program is called 'continuing behaviour change' (Kotler and Andreasen, 1996: 393). This program is harder to achieve as 'people must unlearn old habits,

learn new habits, and freeze the new pattern of behavior' (Kotler and Andreasen, 1996: 393). There are two types of continuing behaviour change programs, low involvement and high involvement. In the low involvement, a great role is played by mass communication as for instance advertisements employed to raise awareness about the dangers of using drugs. While the high involvement are programs dealing mainly in achieving a change in values; for this purpose it is usually preferred the use of law. Indeed, 'the theory is that as people comply with the new law, forces will be set into motion that will produce the desired attitude change' (Kotler and Andreasen, 1996: 393).

Complexities

Social marketing has also been the subject of various criticisms. Indeed Luck (1969) in his article '*Broadening the Concept of Marketing. Too Far*' defines marketing as 'concerned with markets' and markets as 'characterized by buying-and-selling' (1969: 54); thus he claims that since in the non-business sector there is no activity that can be included in the market, the core concern of marketing, therefore marketing can not be broadened up so to comprehend what has been described so far as the social marketing. His argument is that since 'a church does not sell its religious and redemptive services. Political parties do not sell specific services [...]. The Heart Fund does not sell donations' (Luck, 1969: 54) hence these fields can not fall into the marketing scope.

Similarly to Luck, Arndt (1978) also wonders how much the concept of marketing should be broadened. He claims that although supporters of social marketing (like Kotler) believe that 'marketing is in essence an exchange process' however the difference lies in the fact that 'not all exchanges are *marketing* exchanges' (Arndt, 1978: 101). And that because he retains that marketing can only cover economic needs of the society.

However by now marketing has extended into lots of areas that may be competitive or may require communications expertise but are not necessarily for profit. There is for instance the tendency of politicians to resort to marketing agencies as well (Crouch, 2004; Marshment, 2001); due to different economic and political reasons as well as the different role and impact of media, politicians look like performers to be sold at audiences-voters as if they were another product in the market hence the need to recur to marketing agencies (Barnhurst, 1998; Curran, 2002; Corner and Pels 2003). Therefore on this point marketing should be considered mostly as a method, a technique and not simply relate it to a mere sale of products in the market.

Nevertheless it is also true that since the word market is build into the word marketing, this could delimit its scope by confining it to the mere market. Nonetheless it could be asked whether in the twenty-first century, in an economy increasingly creative and based on intangible assets, which products/services can fall within the market space (Moor, 2007; Jonscher, 2000; Howkins, 2002; Parrish, 2005).

Another criticism that has been addressed to social marketing is the fact that, it seems like, through social marketing, people are perceived as individuals responsible for their own destiny, thus the nature and cause of problems is not really encountered (King, 2008; Miller and Rose, 2008; Williams, 2000). If people are no longer members of a community or a state but perceived as individual free self, the positive behaviour is simply proposing a change in individual's life and does not deal with the source of the problem inside the community or state. Social marketing is indeed perceived to be 'manipulative and not "community based"' (Andreasen, 2002:4). Nevertheless, intervention at individual level is useful in forging targeted programs. Indeed, the benefits of social marketing are that the target audience is guaranteed to play a major role and the costs are minimised by the use of the 4Ps.

However Goldberg (1995) claims that it is actually possible for social marketing – at least when it is being researched – to be more socially/policy oriented. In fact, according to Goldberg, 'social marketers need to attend to environmental/policy factors as much as individual behaviour factors in structuring their research' (Goldberg, 1995: 348). Indeed 'a broader definition of social marketing' is needed because by considering 'complementary or interactive' the two perspectives of 'individual level' research and 'policy/social environment level' (Goldberg, 1995: 351) research, a whole community change will happen and not only an individual change.

For example in order to persuade individual motorcyclist to wear helmets, it is suggested to firstly advocate at policy makers using the argument that the use of helmet will reduce health care costs. Therefore once the law is effective it will be a matter of persuading

individuals to adhere to the law (Goldberg, 1995: 351). It is more likely that a research merely focusing on the individual is 'inherently conservative in that it implicitly endorses the status quo with regards to factors associated with the social structure' (Goldberg, 1995: 357). Social marketing can be a really useful tool if it is used not only to raise awareness among individuals about their possible risks and potential wellbeing but also to research, analyse, and individuate the source of the problem and thus finding a solution (Wallack et al 1993).

THE RESEARCH

Objectives and methodology

This second part of the dissertation will present the research that has been carried in order to explore the spread of social marketing to find out more empirical details about the context in which it has – or it has not – been adopted. As my mother tongue and my interests are Italian, I have decided to conduct my research in Italy. Italy is a member of the European Union⁴, and it belongs to the G8 – a forum for the leaders of eight of the world's most industrialized nations⁵ -, and since 2008⁶ it is governed by a neoliberal right wing coalition⁷. It is then a suitable place to hold my research since economically it belongs to the 'first' and 'developed' world based on a globalised capitalistic market, and politically and ideologically it follows the neoliberal thought of minimum state intervention for maximum individual freedom expression through the free market.

This research then is an analysis of social marketing through a focus on the case of Italy to see if and how social marketing has been adopted in Italy; and to see how far this research can confirm the ways of thinking about social marketing that I have developed through using the work of Foucault, Miller and Rose, and King explored in the first part. What has then been argued concerning the changing role of the state towards a changed conception of citizens and about the positive outcomes of a social marketing approach for the populations' wellbeing. It is an exploratory work to find out the current conditions in Italy. This work will try to understand if Italy is a control society (as described by Foucault and Deleuze) inciting individuals to improve themselves through social marketing activities; if economic utility is the only or main criteria used by Italian government to define the limits of its government in regard of welfare activities; and also if Italy is actually using social marketing as a tool to delegate welfare responsibilities to individuals then how is it done and by whom.

⁴ EU: http://europa.eu/abc/panorama/whatdoes/index_en.htm#continent (13.viii.2010)

⁵ G8: <http://g8.gc.ca/about/> (13.viii.2010)

⁶ Italian Government: http://www.governo.it/Presidente/Biografia/biografiaberlusconi_it.html (13.viii.2010)

⁷ PDL: <http://www.ilpopolodellaliberta.it/notizie/18615/manovra-economica-meno-stato-piu-sviluppo> (13.viii.2010)

In order to answer these questions I used the method of interviewing representatives of private agencies, non profit associations and public departments dealing with attempts to influence peoples' behaviors. I chose these representatives for several reasons. Firstly because as social marketing is seen as a government tool to discipline its citizens, I found it useful to talk to public servants dealing with the decisional aspect of social marketing. Secondly because as social marketing is used by non profit associations to actually bring behavioural change into their beneficiaries, I thought it necessary to address to those rooted in the territory dealing with individuals and their communities. Thirdly because as often the part related to social communications is delegated to private communication agencies, I believed a good interlocutor on the semiotics and ethics of images concerning social issues would have been a responsible of communications.

I did not use focus groups, surveys or questionnaires because I was looking for insights on the actual reality of facts from people dealing within. I have chosen to interview experts because I needed qualitative data – not quantitative – and interviews are categorised as qualitative research. The value of this method lies in the possibility it has given me to turn the social marketing 'world into a series of representations' precisely through my interviews (Denzin and Lincoln in Snape and Spencer, 2003:2). The interview method has allowed me to receive and deepen the experience and expertise of those working in the field of my research.

'Interviews are a tool of research, an intentional way of learning about people's feelings, thoughts, and experiences' (Rubin and Rubin, 1995: 2). Through interviews I had the possibility to get an insider's view of the social marketing situation. My interviewees were 'meaning makers' (Warren, 2002: 83) giving me their interpretations about social marketing in Italy. As this research was mainly focusing on the 'why's and 'how to do's aspects of social marketing, it has directed these questions to those taking decisions on why they adopted social marketing and how they make it effective. Of course verbal data collected through interviews can be 'of dubious validity and reliability' sometimes due to a

misinterpretation of questions or to a lack of memories over facts for example; however interviews still represent ‘the keystone of contemporary social science’ (Foddy, 1993: 11).

If I would have had more space and time I would have tried as well to conduct some surveys and focus groups among the beneficiaries of social marketing campaigns to collect their points of view as being on the other side of the social marketing line – as users and not decision makers. I would have probably tried to analyse what are the incentives and mechanisms that have led their behaviors to change. However this would have entailed a deep theoretical and psychological analysis of what stimulus activate the human brain and a sociological analysis of communities’ implicit dynamics that unfortunately can not be properly covered in addition to what is already covered in an MA dissertation.

As mentioned previously, the specific object of analysis in this research has been to verify or falsify the first part of the dissertation. That is to firstly verify or falsify if Italian neo-liberal government actually uses social marketing as a tool to implement the ‘responsibilization’ of individuals policy described by Miller and Rose (2008) and King (2008); secondly to analyse how associations and organisations are delegated (Rose, 1989; King, 2008; Miller and Rose, 2008) by the government to deal with social marketing and what problems they encountered; lastly to explore social marketing practices (as described by Kotler and Lee, Andreasen, Wallack et al. and Goldberg) in Italy especially concerning promotion.

In doing so I have chosen to collect several case studies, as recollected from the interviews, as I wanted to have an overview of the Italian national situation and not only one in-depth specific case study. And since ‘the discourse of the interview is jointly constructed by interviewer and respondent’ (Misher, 1986: 52) I was initially framing the interview by explaining the main argument of my dissertation: the Christian construction of individuals that has led to neoliberal governments delegating social welfare to individuals’ free initiatives through social marketing activities mainly carried out by non-profit associations. Furthermore

I was also explaining that social marketing is the application of the 4Ps in order to influence people behaviours on welfare and non-profit issues. This was an opening of the interviews in order to create a relaxed social atmosphere with my interviewee by clarifying ‘the purposes of the inquiry’ and defining my role as interviewer ‘as well as that of the interviewees’ (Merton et al. 1990: 171).

After that all the interviews followed approximately the same path: I would ask what they were doing, how, which people and/or institutions were involved, and mostly their opinions as experts; in order to answer these questions and to show me their work, the interviewees were reporting their experiences, my case studies.

The research has been divided in three main categories following the three reasons justifying the interviews and the three main themes to verify or falsify. Thus a first category related to the decisional aspect of social marketing as a tool of neo-liberal governments; that is, what are the reasons for using (or not using) social marketing; a second category concerned with the actual social marketing activities and campaigns to interact with citizens/beneficiaries; that is, the different types of approach used in social marketing; and a third category concerned with social communication that is the communicational intended outcomes promoting the new behavior. These three categories will be explained and analysed through the words of my interviewees together with the concepts and theories explained in the first part.

Reasons for use of social marketing

The work of Foucault, Rose, Wallack et al, Kotler etc. discussed in the first part, could be stressed and synthesized up to a point of declaring that the two phenomena of the Christian individualization of humans and the capitalistic exaltation of free choice have led to a situation where neo-liberal governments use social marketing as a way to supplant welfare policies and thus delegate to individuals the task of providing and safeguarding the public health.

Hence it can be argued that the reasons for using social marketing can be identified in two main factors: ideologically and economically. The ideological is linked to the free ideology: individuals are constructed as free humans intolerant to political intrusion but promoters of a guardian state defending their economic freedom autonomous initiatives (Foucault, 2008). The economic factor concerns the neo-liberal ideology of a market as truth-creator: the market is believed to be autonomously able to produce the right offer of social goods and to distribute it advantageously among the right demand of social goods (Rose, 1989). Thus since the true value of things lies in the exchange process –market basic principle – the government limits its actions to economic utility.

Therefore it appears that social marketing is used because by trying to influence behaviors of volunteer individuals it is not formally interfering with individual freedoms. Moreover by not facing the economic responsibility of dealing with society's wellbeing such as public health, safety, environment etc (Kotler and Lee, 2008) and by delegating it to individuals through their autonomous initiatives and correct behaviors, governments are also following the economic utility principle.

In this regard I have interviewed Dr. Rosanna Di Natale responsible of the Federsanita' ANCI of the municipality of Rome; a department dealing with social policies and health

promotion. Dr. Di Natale explained to me that the Italian history in regards of public health is peculiar. Indeed as she explained

since 1978 Italy has adopted a National Health System that has given Italy a vision and a pulse of a state whose social organization was like a big mother taking care of its citizens from cradle to grave at least for what concerned health issues. The health service has been a great achievement that has allowed Italy to become the country where people get older later and die less; therefore the health service was useful as it has objectively allowed being a country among the strongest ones because if you have a population that is well also industries will be well and so on.

However Dr. Di Natale remarks that presently the reality is different as population has now increased and need more expensive and technologically advanced cures compare to when the National Health Service was created. Thus there is a problem of sustainability. In other words the problem is how is it possible to make this system still practicable while facing this change of increased demand for care. The solution that has been adopted in Italy as Dr. Di Natale reports has been to give

the LEA that is some Essential Levels of Assistance; the logic behind has been to admit that since it was no longer possible to guarantee health protection from A to Z, it was however possible to identify those essential levels of performances, the most important ones, which can not be waived and after that having other health services that can either be paid entirely or partially depending on the personal financial situation. This change has of course represented a paramount shock for the Italian citizen who perceived health services as an ideal protective mother giving everything. The problem though with that modality is precisely the fact that the technologically advanced instruments we now have are not only very expensive to preserve but also since they can luckily prevent pathologies earlier than the mortal stage they are consequently augmenting the costs of cares. Thus it becomes difficult to sustain.

It is then a natural evolution for the state to invest its resources in order to instead try to influence on citizens' lifestyles so to avoid expensive chronic diseases of tomorrow. Therefore it is not precisely a controller state – as described by Foucault, Deleuze, and Rose – so to have an active and healthy working population as labor force and capacity, but more of an economic impossibility to guarantee a total take-over of the citizens for the reasons explained by Dr. Di Natale. These evidences seem to suggest that in Italy beyond the use of social marketing lie economic reasons but mostly political ones since social marketing reflects a political decision about how to spend tax revenue.

Indeed the outcomes of this decision process are evident: the government dismiss its role of defender of citizens' welfare. However Dr. Di Natale also admits that a strong country is

determined by a strong population as mentioned by Foucault (1990). Therefore individuals are delegated by government to keep their health hence their labor capacity. It is indeed an indirect governance as elucidated by Rose (1989) for which governments indirectly govern by delegating to charities, foundations, churches etc. In this respect I also interviewed Dr. Anna Elisa Carbone researcher at ISFOL the National Institute for the Development of Worker Training. Dr. Carbone explained to me that the indirect governance has been formalised in Italy in 2000⁸ by the law n.383. Indeed through this law the Associations of Social Promotion were given credit as all those associations, movements, and groups constituted so to perform not for profit activities for the social utility.

Furthermore also Dr. Filippo Buccella (President) and Dr. Stefania Collet (Press Officer) of the Association Parent Project Onlus dealing with people with Duchenne muscular dystrophy have confirmed the neo-liberal political intention to delegate to non profit associations the welfare aspect of the state. In this regard they suggested the 2008 White Book⁹ of the Ministry of Welfare where it clearly states how the new formula proposed by the European Union to its members States is 'people first' meaning the individual person before everything. This centrality given to the individual highlights the new social pact which social cohesion is based. This is clearly stated in the press release of the White Book promulgation¹⁰ this book represents a framework for the transit from a Welfare State to a Welfare Society. A Welfare Society where it is affirmed how work constitutes the basis of social autonomy of individuals and families. Therefore welfare is no longer a responsibility of the State but of the society (individuals and associations).

Following these findings it looks as though the reasons for using social marketing include delegating the responsibilities of social welfare to free individuals by influencing their behaviors and these lie indeed in economic and ideological reasons. Governments have

⁸ Associazioni di Promozione Sociale: <http://www.camera.it/parlam/leggi/003831.htm> (17.viii.2010)

⁹ Ministry of Welfare White Book:

http://www.governo.it/GovernoInforma/Dossier/libro_bianco/librobianco_leggero.pdf (17.viii.2010)

¹⁰ Press Release White Book: http://www.governo.it/GovernoInforma/Dossier/libro_bianco/ (17.viii.2010)

changed their conception of citizens and as a consequence also changed their role towards them. It seems as citizens have become individual workers and government must simply ensure that non profit associations will take care of individuals' wellbeing by correctly influencing individuals' behaviors.

Types of approach in social marketing

Having established that in Italy social marketing is adopted in order to transform the welfare state into a welfare society – as described by the European Union and the Italian Ministry of Welfare – where individuals are assuming the responsibility of the society wellbeing, and having established that social marketing is done as a practice of indirect governance by the Italian government delegating to non-profit associations of social promotion, this research will now try to analyse the different types of approach in social marketing adopted in Italy. Therefore I attempted to understand the processes that are activated so to decide which aspects of citizens' lifestyle must be the subject of social marketing activities.

In this regard Dr. Di Natale has explained that the coordination with associations dealing with social utility is paramount as they are in better contact with people and their problems. For example Dr. Di Natale reported a campaign carried to prevent HIV in 2007¹¹. The municipality of Rome while preparing the campaign and thus conducting an initial investigation for the target audience discovered that also elderly people (category of people older than 46 years and usually considered as less sexually active) were an important component of the target audience for the HIV campaign; and this discovery was made possible through the open dialogue with hospitals. It was actually discovered that elderly people represented a particular thorny problem as they were reluctant to take the HIV test at the first symptoms but did rather later when it had already become an AIDS pathology, less easy to contain; furthermore the municipality of Rome by exchanging with associations also found out how the discovery of the grandfather having sex and being affected of AIDS (a

¹¹ Street test HIV Roma: <http://www.sieropositivo.it/?channel=30&ID=3030> (17.viii.2010)

disease usually associated to homosexuals and drug-addicts) was entailing family tragedies often ending with the marginalization of the grandfather¹².

Therefore it is possible through the dialogue and indications of associations and organizations rooted in the territory and consequently in contact with their people to understand which are the problems and the audiences to be subjected to social marketing activities. Thence the social marketing plan – in its purposes and focuses with select target audiences, objectives and goals as prescribed by Kotler and Lee (2008) – is the result of a joint work between public departments and associations.

However for as much as target audiences can be accurately tailored and the message of the social marketing campaign can be strong, nevertheless it is not enough; many problems can still occur preventing for example that the message is disseminated to enough distribution channels. On this matter I spoke to Dr. Maria Grazia Panasci who is the communication officer of the hospital Policlinico Umberto I of Rome. Dr. Panasci told me of an initiative carried by the hospital Policlinico Umberto I of Rome to treat anorexic and bulimic. In order to do so they started collaborating with a chef (Fabio Baldassare¹³) who was to promote a healthy and nutritious way of cooking. The project was called ‘le mani in pasta’ (fingers in the pie) and was promoted so as to combat anorexia inside the kitchen. Unfortunately as Dr. Panasci recalls the initiative did not reach the whole target audience foreseen but only those people hospitalised at that same hospital; and this is due by a lack of accessibility to information channels.

Another example is from Prof. Mauro Ceccanti who is responsible for the Reference Centre for Alcoholism of the Università La Sapienza of Rome. Prof. Ceccanti explained me the difficulties to convey a message against the use of alcohol while the entire population is bombarded of advertisements from alcohol companies; Heineken for instance, a beer brand, is

¹² Similarly also Dr. Giuseppina Granito –communications officer of the San Filippo Neri Hospital in Rome – has confirmed the importance of targeting audiences in collaboration with specialised departments for their campaign against smoking.

¹³ Press release: <http://www.comunicaroma.info/tag/fabio-baldassarre/> (20.viii.2010)

the official sponsor of UEFA Football Champions League¹⁴, one of the most preferred and watched football tournament in Italy, thus it constantly reaches millions of viewers/consumers representing then a hard challenge for anti-alcohol organizations to compete and promulgate an anti-beer message. The context in which social marketing takes place can not be underestimated. But instead it would appear that ‘there has been little or no attempt to consider how marketing expertise might explore the ways in which the operation of markets *itself* impacts upon health or wellbeing. Rather social marketing has restricted its role to the attempt to influence consumer choice *within* an already-established market’ (Moor, 2011: 15).

Indeed Prof. Ceccanti showed me some preliminary results of a research carried throughout 2009 by its Centre within the University La Sapienza of Rome about the relation between alcohol and advertisements. This research has revealed that children aged between five and ten years old are subjected to an average of 10 advertisements per day on alcohol products while actually children of that age should not see any advertisements on alcohol at all as prescribed by the law¹⁵. This figure highlights how in order for social marketing to be really effective it must be understood as described by Goldberg and Wallack et al. as more socially/policy oriented. In other words, since there have been studies about ‘the deleterious effects of commercial branding [...] in areas such as tobacco, alcohol and food marketing’ (Gordon et al. 2008: 75) in order to overcome these deleterious effects, social marketing needs to be understood not only as a tool to raise awareness but mostly as a method to analyse the social environment and consequently as a practice of media and policy advocacy (Goldberg, 1995; Wallack et al. 1993).

On the contrary by exchanging with Dr. Filippo Buccella president of Duchenne Parent Project Onlus and Dr. Giuseppe Di Fattori responsible for the National Coordination on Social Marketing of the Italian Association for Institutional and Public Communications; and Dr. Cristiana Scoppa communications officer of the association AIDOS, I realised that the

¹⁴ Heineken & UEFA: <http://www.heinekeninternational.com/uefa.aspx> (16.viii.2010)

¹⁵ Law of protection of Minors in television programming: <http://www.camera.it/parlam/leggi/060371.htm> (25.viii.2010)

dialogue between government and associations is not so open and linear. Indeed from the interviews it emerged that associations would like to cover a more important role of advocacy towards parliamentary committees however it is not so evident.

An example of non-dialogue comes from a campaign against prostate cancer¹⁶ promoted by the Italian Ministry of Equal Opportunity in collaboration with the Ministry of Health. The slogan of the campaign was 'Fortune does not beat prostate cancer. Prevention does. If you have 50 years old go to your doctor. It takes little to avoid risks'; unfortunately it looks as the two ministries did not consult the associations of general practitioners who publicly declared how the campaign was unnecessary and misleading¹⁷; this because not only the cancer is not linked to age but also because damages of the cancer prevention screening may be greater than the benefits.

Thus it can not be a mere act of social communication but it should rather be a more complex work of integrated action between public associations, private companies and public institutions. This way associations could take care of the interaction with audiences while public governments and institutions would define and control the environmental framework; as a consequence the influence of private companies' economic interests on target audiences will also be marginalised. It could be for example to reduce advertisements on alcohol for adults and not allow any advertisements on alcohol during children's television timing.

Prof. Maurizio Pompili who is responsible for the Suicide Prevention Centre at Sant'Andrea Hospital in Rome, explained me how even media advocacy can be paramount in helping suicidal people and instruct people about the causes, the symptoms, the suggested behaviors to have etc. Furthermore Prof. Pompili also reported me a successful campaign to pharmaceutical companies in order to change paracetamol confection – a drug often used by suicidal people. The confection was changed from liquid bottle to blister pills as it allows

¹⁶ Campaign against prostate cancer:

http://www.pariopportunita.gov.it/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1613:al-via-lo-spot-controllo-il-tumore-della-prostata&catid=45:comunicati-stampa&Itemid=226 (25.viii.2010)

¹⁷ Protests against the campaign: http://www.partecipasalute.it/cms_2/node/1501 (25.viii.2010)

potential suicidal people to have second thoughts while swallowing 40 pills one-by-one out of the blister instead of swallowing one small bottle. Therefore the evidence seems to suggest that sometimes even a change in the product design can be more successful than social advertising.

However in the case of alcohol for instance this ideal procedure is confronted with economic powers; as Prof. Ceccanti elucidate

alcohol producers invest large amounts of money and create a micro economy as in Italy alone they have three million employees making Italy the first country in the world as exporter of wine; 25% of the global production of wine is Italian. As a consequence their economic power is an oppositional force for the diffusion of a concept of alcohol-free health; a concept that would require such elevated economic interventions that are basically impossible. Therefore as it is impossible to make a total all inclusive action, it is then necessary to choose some niche on the territory where it is possible to act with some intensity. Indeed to have a message received by the population it has to be intense and continuative as repeated in time; the same technique used by alcohol producers.

On the contrary Luck (1969) and Arndt (1978) believed that social marketing is incompatible with the principle of marketing mainly concerned with markets and marketing exchanges. However Prof. Ceccanti explained that – in the case of alcohol – in order to compensate the psychological and semiologic work carried out by alcohol companies to increment the use of alcohol among people, the same techniques should be used by anti alcohol organizations so to negate the effects of pro-alcohol advertising. But they have much less money as it emerges from these interviews.

In conclusion it appears that the types of approach in social marketing in Italy follow a principle of collaboration between governments deciding and associations suggesting; this kind of approach looks very similar to those proposed by Wallack et al. (1993) and Goldberg (1995) of advocacy actions within social marketing in order to influence not only individuals' behaviors but mostly the policy and social environment. However it seems as this approach is not always respected by the government leaving feelings of frustration and powerlessness among associations; but mostly it seems to confirm that in a neo-liberal government economic utility and interests (of alcohol companies for instance) comes before a full and effective solutions to individuals and their communities' problems.

Promotion and social communication

As explained previously, it looks as though in Italy social marketing is intended to be a cooperative activity between the government and associations; associations in contact with people and their problems are supposed to interchange with the government in order to suggest policy changes to governments and to be supported in their social marketing activities. However it seems as this ideal relation is not always respected. Indeed many interviewees have lamented the lack of coordination and legislation from the government to a point that indirect governance is sometimes translated into autonomous initiatives of associations. Therefore it seems as associations are left alone with individuals' problems but are not given the opportunity to deal with the source of the problem inside the state itself.

This situation often entails in Italy an erroneous application of social marketing that looks more like social communication. Social marketing uses social communication that is mostly employed in advertising and represents the embodiment of messages and values through the use of specific symbols, words, images, colours etc. It is used for instance to promote quality, value, taste, personal fulfilment, lifestyle, uniqueness through the representation of symbolic items or symbolic situations (Leiss, Kline, and Jhally, 1986).

It seems as though the integrated approach of social marketing – where all actors from policy makers to those responsible of beneficiaries' touch points are participating – is actually lost for governmental social communications campaigns and associations' niches actions. Therefore since in Italy it looks as communications represents the predominant aspect of social marketing activities I will try now to understand how it is done.

Communications represent a paramount aspect of social marketing as it can persuade target audiences about the good value and benevolence and advantages coming from adopting the new recommended behaviour (Kotler and Andreasen, 1996). Communication embodies one of the '4Ps' of social marketing: Promotion. Once the audience is known, once the

objective/product/behaviour is clear; once it is understood ‘what your potential customers really want out of performing the behaviour and the barriers that could stop them in their tracks’ (Kotler and Lee, 2008: 265); it is finally possible to decide on messages, messengers and distribution channels.

In this regard I have interviewed Dr. Grazia Cecconi, former art director of the advertising agency Saatchi & Saatchi Italia. Dr. Cecconi explained how social advertising campaigns are done in Italy.

Social advertising in Italy has started during the 1970s and was mainly focusing with issues of AIDS, drugs, smoking, and environment. In general social campaigns had to be very tough and harsh, not affected therefore not visually searched and considered. The idea behind was a sort of hypocrisy for which since the social message is fair and clean as it is, there is consequently no need to enrich it. The logic was: I am not convincing you to buy hence enticing you through an engaging image but rather I am communicating you a problem. The idea was that nobody was to be convinced since it was a right and fair message.

However for as much as ideas and messages are fair there is nevertheless a need to make them live properly and this was mainly understood in Italy towards the end of the 1990s. In this respect Kotler and Lee argue that promotions must be indeed persuasive communications so to inspire target audiences to perform the desired action and this consequently entails a communication strategy also based on creative layout (2008: 268). The creative idea is mostly expressed through sounds, words, and images; and precisely images are sometimes at the centre of an ethical debate as what is considered a right use of images of your beneficiaries. Dr. Cecconi argues that “this need for a rosy picture, a sweetened image, is simply hypocrisy as it is not possible to talk about war with smiling children. It is a matter of honesty”. Dr. Cecconi did a campaign for Medici senza Frontiere (Doctors without borders in Italy) showing an image of a child with both legs cut off and bandaged and received plenty of indignant critics. But “that is what war does; it can not be seen as disrespect for those you seek to help”.

Communicating non profit seems to be a completely different world from communicating profit. As Dr. Cecconi puts it

In the profit world I have to create a personality to distinguish my products from the others whereas in the social there is no need to invent but simply a mission to communicate; if I have to ask you money because there is a famine in Rwanda, I do not need to create a world but simply to communicate you what is happening with numbers, I must tell you that children are still dying of measles, what else could be said? While working with Medici senza Frontiere there was emergency in Rwanda and I used a real picture of a child with one tear and on the tear I wrote 'the only water left in Rwanda'; in that case you do not give any data, you do not say how many deaths, but you rather communicate a situation of despair.

Although there is evidence of the creation of personalities also in the non-profit sector as much as in the profit one. Indeed branding techniques are also used in the non-profit world (Hankinson, 2000); since there is a growing number of non-profit organizations (Moor, 2007; King, 2008) they are resorting to branding techniques so to differentiate and better communicate their identities. Branding has the potential (Gibbons, 2003) to direct people's choice especially for what concerns directing the choice of people in giving; creating a personality to distinguish a charity is helpful in raising funds.

Thereafter also in the non profit sector a world can be created for example when there is a social campaign that must convince people. For instance against drugs and Minors Dr. Cecconi argues that

In that case I must create a world: why drugs hurt? Those who use it know that it hurts therefore I must try to tell you that if you take drugs you belong to a certain type of world and I will describe it as sad and ugly but if you do not take drugs you belong to another kind of world that I will make happy. I can also try to make you identify in something because for instance in the case of a campaign against high speed in roads it is not enough to communicate that you die if you run but I also have to make you identifying in what you could become by not running as more handsome, more rich, more fine and kind saving your life and those of the others.

Moreover I also interviewed Mr. Gianluca Ansanelli who directed a short film for a campaign on high speed in streets financed by the Ministry of Youth called 'Autovelox'¹⁸. The short film is the story of two young men driving fast on a street who bump into a street camera controlled by the police. The two young men instead of stopping decide to go to the hospital pretending to be sick and hoping to use their fake sickness as an excuse for their exaggerated speed. However at the hospital instead of a normal check up the driver of the car is put through many examinations until the final diagnosis of a severe illness. Understandably

¹⁸ Autovelox: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zvg8m-TUwBw> (16.viii.2010)

the two young men have a panic reaction while the doctor who just pronounced the terrible sickness dismisses his white coat of a doctor revealing underneath his police uniform. A real doctor then ask him if he might have exaggerated with the two young men who now think are about to die of a non-existent illness; the fake-doctor/policemen replies that when you drive so fast you die and you also put at danger the lives of others.

Mr. Ansanelli has explained the logic behind the choice of such story and dialogues saying that the key to have a social message perceived by the population is often a story that makes reason out while also amusing with a surprising ending; as the surprising ending install the message longer into the target audience. Therefore it is paramount to adopt an informal language close to the ones of the target audience and to their way of perceiving the issue object of the campaign. It is the creative little fun as suggested by Kotler and Lee (2008).

Similarly Prof. Ceccanti argues that

when dealing with promotion of knowledge it is preferable to present it positively rather than negatively. For instance in the U.S.A. bloody scenes are often advertised in order to induce fear and consequently discouraging the use of alcohol. However in Italy this system will not work as there is a different mentality; those strong images will never be accepted, as in Italy a feeling of hope is much better received than a feeling of outrage; because in Italy they will not identify with the bloody scenes of a car accident caused by the use of alcohol. Italians would rather condemn the reckless driver distancing themselves from such a situation thinking that it could never happen to them.

On the same wavelength is also Prof. Pompili who explained the importance of communication in forwarding hope; in their website¹⁹ of suicide prevention there is a cartoon video²⁰ where

the protagonist finds himself collapsing from an initial normal situation described as colourful into a black tunnel where the protagonist can not see any exits nor satisfactions but only despair; this incredible pain slowly convince him of suicide as the only possible solution to his extreme suffering. At that moment though a symbolic hand appears to save him and take him back to his environment among its initial colours.

Prof. Pompili believes that a message of prevention and help can make the difference. Messages should be proactive as in they should be conveyed in order for recipients to identify themselves; this way they would not feel alone and they will seek for help.

¹⁹ suicide prevention website: <http://www.preventireilsuicidio.it/index.htm> (20.viii.2010)

²⁰ video on suicide prevention: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?gl=IT&hl=it&v=qi068f1ojN8> (20.viii.2010)

In conclusion promotion is an important aspect of social marketing as it represents the persuasive tool to inspire target audiences to action. Unfortunately it looks as if in Italy it is not so much a matter of promotion as the fourth P of social marketing but more of a social communication tout court due to a lack of interchange between governments and associations. As a result, promotion mainly takes the form of advertising rather than a creative strategy standing as an outcome of a social marketing planning process involving target audiences, objectives, goals, product platform, price incentives, and place strategy.

The limitations of social communications are precisely those instances elaborated by King (2008), Williams (2000), and Miller and Rose (2008). Indeed by merely raising awareness about problems and possible solutions to individuals, as such and not as members of a community, social marketing becomes a simple act of communication; delegating to individuals the responsibility of understanding and solving the problems. Consequently, it seems to be the case that, through this kind of use, social marketing is manipulative and not really encountering the nature and cause of problems. Either way – promotion or social communications – from these interviews it has emerged that in Italy, in order to inspire target audiences to act on their behaviors, it is paramount to convey an optimistic message; in particular a message able to personify people's hope of better life and future.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This dissertation has analysed social marketing as a tool to influence behavior. In order to conduct such analysis it has firstly analysed the context of social marketing and secondly it has carried out an empirical research using Italy as a case study. From the work of Foucault, Miller and Rose it has emerged that social marketing is the natural consequence of a ‘construction’ done on individuals since the seventeenth century. Indeed through the Christian confession, humans have learned to assemble their own persona and to perceive themselves as free individuals autonomous in their choices thus proponents of their own destiny. These processes have installed inside individuals a mechanism of discipline and self-governance.

Meanwhile the rise of neo-liberalism can be seen as the political and economic answer to this changed conception of humans. Indeed neo-liberalism is based on the concept of free market. Thus neo-liberal governments believe that their role must be confined to the protection of economic rights in order to avoid interferences to individuals’ freedom while also allowing individuals’ autonomous initiatives to achieve the right amount of social goods that will be distributed advantageously through the market. Hence neo-liberal governments have delegated social welfare to individuals.

This delegation, however, is imperceptible as individuals are constructed as free and independent in achieving their chosen life. In particular, individuals believe that in order to better express themselves and communicate with others they need to recur to behaviour therapies. These behavior therapies represent the efforts of governments in influencing people’s behaviors and as thus governing at a distance through the exaltation of individuals’ self-governance and self-improvement internalised during centuries through the Christian confession. This indirect governance is made possible by the use of social marketing since this represents the application of commercial marketing techniques to influence the voluntary behaviour of individuals to improve their general wellbeing.

In fact the analysis of the Italy as a case study has shown that the relationship between the governors and the governed has changed. Indeed the qualitative research on the spread of social marketing in Italy has empirically verified that Italy's neo-liberal government delegates social welfare to individuals' free working initiatives through social marketing activities mainly carried out by non-profit organisations. It has emerged that in Italy, since 2000, the social wellbeing has been delegated to Associations by the government. This delegation has occurred because the Italian welfare state constructed during the 1970s was dismantled to instead construct a society where each single individual through his work takes care of the community's welfare. This new configuration is in principle aimed to be the outcome of an intermediated relationship between government and its citizens through associations.

The evidence seems to suggest that Italy is theoretically willing to use social marketing as the third class of intervention described by Andreasen (2002); that is all interviewees were agreeing that real change can only happen if social structures provide the desired change. As a consequence the focus should be in promoting media advocacy, policy change, and law making in order to achieve social ends. However this type of social marketing approach seems to not always be respected. Consequently, it seems that on one side there are predominantly activities of social communications – merely dealing with informational aspects of behaviors; while on the other hand those seeking to achieve social ends thus dealing with the source of the problem are faced with a lack of national coordination and policy support and as a result are left operating in niches parts.

Unfortunately Andreason clearly highlights how this type of fragmented approach links to mere individual communications that will not provide the desired behaviour change. Furthermore – as demonstrated by Goldberg (1995) and Wallack et al (1993) – individual change is linked to social change; and social change means addressing the power inequity that contributes the problem.

However, as mentioned in the methodology chapter, parts of these comments are based on qualitative data, my interviews; consequently these remarks might be accused of inaccuracy or subjectivity. Nevertheless, in order to avoid such accusations, the interviewees were chosen on the basis of their different backgrounds and professionalisms; and yet they mainly agreed on the changed relationship between government and individuals, the increasingly responsible role of associations, the best practices to communicate, the importance of social communication but its inadequacy in dealing with structural problems compared to social marketing.

Indeed this research has shown that this turn from a welfare state to a welfare society (the responsibility of society wellbeing transferred from the State to the society made by individuals and associations as imposed by the European Union and the Italian Ministry of Welfare) arise from economic and ideological reasons as illustrated by Foucault, Harvey, Miller and Rose. A government limits its action to economic utility hence it does not interfere with free human work initiative; and this is done in order to apply the indirect governance of citizens through social marketing. Therefore it seems reasonable to wonder whether economic interests are the only value left in the neoliberal public sphere. The Italian evidence seems to suggest that this is already leading to the influence of individuals on the basis of these values and that social marketing is constructing a society where government dismiss its role of defender of its citizens. As a consequence one could also wonder whether the social marketing approach has positive outcomes for the populations' wellbeing; because it would appear that paradoxically social marketing is actually a tool allowing neoliberal governments to be that society of constant control and discipline by inciting individuals to constantly improve themselves as described by Rose (1989), Foucault (1990) and Deleuze (1990).

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