JEL KÉP

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NEW TECHNOLOGY

PUBLIC OPINION

Foreword

The volume you have in your hand is the fifth one in the series of English special editions of Jel-Kép. (Previous volumes are still available free of charge at request at the Editorial Office: Budapest, P. O. B. 587. H—1373 Hungary.)

Jel-Kép is the quarterly of the Budapest-based Mass Communication Research Centre. It is the only periodical in Hungary focussing on the theoretical problems of mass communication. It addresses questions like the sociology and social psychology of mass communication as well as the theoretical issues of information policy. The present volume includes a selection of writings originally published in Hungarian in the years 1986 through 1988—with the interests of our readers abroad kept in mind.

The editors hope this volume will offer, for lack of a complete overview, at least an idea about the dimensions of work done in the theoretical workshop of mass communication in Hungary.

Editor-in-Chief

Gábor Fodor

Squandering Publicity

Publicity had an enormous role to play in the development of Marxist-Leninist revolutionary theory, in leading the socialist revolution to success and in consolidating its achievements. However, it gradually became eliminated from socialist societies, resulting in a major and fundamental distortion of the movement itself.

A volume of selected works published in Hungary under the title "Marx, Engels and Lenin on the Press" contains details of the remarks made by Marx concerning the freedom of the press in the wake of the discussions of the 6th Landtag of the Rhine. This part of the volume also includes thoughts expressing the value of a free press in general and challenging passionately and acrimoniously the speaker of the Landtag who described the press as an industrial activity. However, quite a few of his points were omitted and in their absence only the portrait of an "immature Marx" can be drawn.

Marx did not attribute self-value to publicity; the point he sets out from is interest, and not an abstract moral value. He pointed out that wherever restriction on publicity is a privilege enjoyed by few people, the interests of the masses invariably suffer.

"We will introduce publicity", the speaker went on with his address in the Landtag, "where we consider it to be convenient, and we will restrict it where, in our view, expansion is aimless or rather harmful" ... "Who does he mean by saying we?" Marx asks and adds: the estates of the province. Making the debates public serves the province and they have the right to provide, if they consider it correct, a polyphonic echo of the printing press for their own wisdom.

Fortunately this passage is not included in the volume. I use the word 'fortunately' on purpose, because it would have been very awkward had it been given rise to the suspicion that this way they wanted to criticise the fact that, for instance, a journalist must always get his report approved beforehand by the head of the permanent committee of the National Assembly whose debate he wishes to report on. Rendered to be 'accessible', an „immature Marx" may well have encouraged some journalists to engage in different sorts of "immature actions", journalists being pople who are expected to be "mature" so much so that they are not even allowed to fail.

Marx points out the system of government from which is also missing the technique of breaking with the representative character of publicity, the inviolability of the impersonated symbols of power, when he remarks that it is obviously more important that the province does not threaten the personality of the estates of the nation than the demand that the interests of the province are not threatened by the personality of the estates.

A century and half later this idea can become too incovenient only in places where, for some reason or another, the prevailing political system cannot tolerate the modern formations of pub-

licity and not only the Marxist but even the bourgeois liberal approach giving priority to the authority commanded by the existing social order as against personal authority are absent. For this reason it must be stated that it is quite convenient that the above view did not find its way into the volume in question. For if it had, it would certainly have amounted to calling attention to a sort of backwardness which ought to have been attached to either Karl Marx or the prevailing conditions. Marx takes a position against a paternalistic concept of publicity when he comes out into opposition to the official speaker's argument listed in favour of the justification of defence against the spread of "bad principles", by saying that the Landtag speaker was wrong when he asserted that true education was equal to keeping man swaddled in a cradle throughout his life, because when a baby begins to walk, it must learn how to fall on the ground and it can only acquire the skill of walking while falling occasionally. But if all of us remain babies swaddled, who will swaddle us? If all of us remain in cradles, who will rock them? If all of us are prisoners, who will be the gaoler? It is inherent in human nature that people are imperfect both individually and en masse. But we know the Latin saying: principiis non est disputandum. Well then, let us leave it at that. But what follows from it? The speaker's reasonings are imperfect, so are the governments', the Landtags' and the freedom of the press; each sphere of human existence is imperfect. Thus if one of the spheres is not allowed to exist because it is imperfect, none of them have the right to exist, nor has man any right to exist.

The above passage was again found to be unfit to be included in the selection which is intended to be a manual for journalists in places where the struggle against "bad principles" is being waged not primarily with the assistance of "good principles" but by drawing a line of distinction (considered to be current) between the two of them.

Indeed, it would have been very inconvenient to quote Marx since he analysed with merciless and accurate logic the unavoidable and serious consequences of paternalistic publicity which is accompanied, among other things, by the government depriving itself of information indispensable for the enforcement of what it considers to be in its own interest.

Marx says that the government can only hear its own voice while continuing relentlessly to be deluded with the belief that it hears the voice of the people and it also demands the people to delude themselves with the same idea. He adds that for this reason the people tend to assume false political beliefs or develop political disbelief or, after turning their backs on the state, become a private mob.

Since an excessively centralised press will inevitably bring about the conditions described by Marx always and everywhere, his criticism will necessarily apply always and everywhere to those implementing excessive centralisation. This remains to be the case even if they choose Karl Marx to act as a reference basis. He himself cannot do anything about it since he knew only too well that an organisation can exclude as much information from itself as much it tries to keep within itself. Marx detects that this state of publicity brings about such a general preconception which is bound to generate lack of confidence concerning officially permitted publications and vice versa: it will lead to confidence in anything that is not allowed. That is why he says that "since the people are forced to consider free writings as being illegal, they get used to regarding unlawful as free, freedom as unlawful and what is lawful as not free".

It is quite regrettable that the passage quoted above leaves no doubt about the

fact that an "immature" Marx proved to be more mature than the age in which the above views of his were omitted from a volume of his selected works. It may have attracted the attention of the people performing the job of selection; perhaps they felt it to apply even today, but if that were the case, then they were very wise in deciding that it was unnecessary for the volume, for wherever such an idea is intellectually current, it can by no means be current officially.

Regarding the incidental nature of the rights attached to publicity and the relevant bureaucratic interventions acting as a substitute for institutionalisation Marx poses the question: who is the one that can accord authorisation? Kant would have never granted a philosopher's certificate to Fichte, nor would St. Bernard of Clairvaux have issued the diploma of theology to Martin Luther. Each scholar will classify the persons criticising him into the category of authors failing to possess a licence. Or is the right to decide who is an "authorised scholar" to be extended to ignorant people? The job of passing a relevant judgement should obviously be left to unauthorised authors, because those possessing a certificate cannot be judges acting in their own case.

Again, the above passage can also lead to confusion once it is established that there are persons who have the right to declare from case to case who is entitled to publicity and in what matters. Today the point at issue is again the same as in the time Marx lived: who can issue a licence to whom to have access to publicity and on what basis of authority? In the absence of other legitimised sources, reference should again be made to Marx, but unfortunately this is impossible. Concerning issues of the above kind it is wise to refrain from recalling him because each word of his may give rise to true suspicion, just like those in connection with which he reveals that type of

thinking according to which everything is particular compared to governmental will (although whether something is particular or not can hardly be grasped through the personality or characteristics bearing it, as is described in another passage). Marx says that since reading is as important as writing, there should be both authorised and unauthorised readers—this was the conclusion arrived at in ancient Egypt where licensed authors and priests were simultaneously granted the privilege of being the only authorised readers. It is very wise if only licensed authors are given the right to purchase and read their own writings. What inconsistency! If privileges prevail, the government has the right to assert that it is the only licensed author in matters of its own, because if you consider yourselves to be authorised as citizens to write about the state, the most general thing of all, in addition to your particular estate, the question may well arise: are the other mortal beings who you would like to exclude not entitled to pass judgement on something very particular, on your authorisation and your writings?

At the 6th session of the Landtag of the Rhine, silence was not an issue figuring on the agenda. Instead the idea of restricting persons was raised in connection with which Karl Marx said that the freedom of the press is most certainly impossible to achieve by recruiting an army of official writers from the ranks of the Landtag's own members. If licensed authors were the official authors, the struggle between the freedom of the press and censorship would long have been changed into fighting between authorised and unauthorised writers.

May I take the liberty of making references to a comparison made by Marx, which was also omitted from the volume of the selected works in question. It is very accurate in pointing out what happens when democracy is intended to be extended little by little.

Marx says that the proposal submitted to the Landtag session was designed to restrict persons, the subjects of the press, while the other estates of the province wanted to follow suit but they were focussed on the materials of press matters, their impact and their sphere of existence. By doing so they started an impertinent bargaining on the extent of liberty to be granted to the press. He adds that the above attempts remind one of the teacher of physical education who proposed the following method as the best way of teaching young people long jump: take the pupil to a big pit and indicate the length his jump has to cover by a piece of thread in mid-air over it. It is obvious, added the teacher, that the pupil must first practise jumping and he cannot jump from one side of the pit to the other on the first day. However the far end of the piece of thread must be moved gradually forward. Regrettably, the pupil involved fell into the pit on the very first day and he has been lying in it ever since. The teacher was a German and the pupil was named Liberty.

Marx attached at least as much importance to publicity as those who did not get beyond the limits of bourgeois liberalism. It is high time to make it clear that Marx never betrayed these views of his, nor did he ever withdraw them. What he was struggling for was the enforcement and expansion of liberal freedom rights and not for their destruction. While speaking about the Commune of Paris he disclosed the bourgeois manipulation which permits the oppressed from time to time to elect people from among the representatives of the oppressors' classes. By doing so he did not launch an attack on social publicity; he attacked the efforts to expropriate publicity, or more exactly, the conditions of pover and domination which lead to the true alternatives being hidden by their false counterparts in publicity.

In his work criticising Hegel's political law, Marx makes it clear that "a political state is an existence separated from bourgeois society". Earlier, while analysing the conditions of poverty in the Moselle region he wrote that both the administration and those governed by it were dependent on a third factor, the political elements, which was unofficial, and as such did not set out from bureaucratic presumptions; it was likewise a bourgeois element without being entangled in private interests and their narrow limitations. This third or supplementary element is the free press, with the head of a citizen and a bourgeois heart. On the subject of the press, both the administration and those governed by it can equally criticise each other's fundamental principles and demands but not within the framework of subordination of any kind. They have equal citizen's rights, no longer however acting as private persons but as intellectual forces and as reasons of the mind. The free press is both the product and producer of public opinion. It is the only factor capable of easing the trouble by distributing the sentiment of trouble among all people there.

Marx was the first to give such an interpretation of publicity according to which it is essentially a modern system of transmission appearing in the guise of social needs which in turn are attributable to the fact that the political state and bourgeois society are separated from one another. This is what he describes as the "third element". In a more polemic fashion, only to reveal a current absurdity, he projects the outlines of the image of a society in which the political state and bourgeois society are no longer separated from one another. In this context, he states that it is very unreasonable to make a demand which stems only from the idea of the political state being an existence separated from bourgeois society and from the theological notion of the political state. In this state the mean-

ing of representation by the legislative power is completely absent. Legislative power is a representation in this context in a sense that each function is of a representative nature. For instance, the shoemaker is my representative if he satisfies social needs. Again, it is representative inasmuch as each specific social activity as man's activity can represent the definition of a being, in other words, the essence of a person. Thus each man is the representative of another fellow-human being. He is representative not through another person, but by way of what he is and what he happens to be doing.

The latter current absurdity of the mid-19th century was in fact a socio-economic formation which once and for all relegated capitalist conditions into the background while exceeding them by far. It was the realm of humanisation in a Marxist interpretation, which may as well be described as communism. An end to the separation of the state from society will automatically render it unnecessary to act in the role of a transmitter between the two ends and so this function of publicity is discarded. The questions that concern us after what was discussed above are as follows: what has so far been the relationship of the history of 20th century socialism with political publicity? For what reason and in what manner has it tried to deny and then rediscover absurdity prevailing even today in, among other things, the context of publicity?

The tribunal
of the broadest publicity

Lenin did not at all regard publicity as being a liberal value — which is an alien body in the working class movement. While criticising the attitude displayed by Martov, Axelrod, Plechanov and others after the 2nd Congress of the Social

Democratic Party of Russia held in 1903, Lenin emphasised that he knew no politician who had not experienced occasional failures during his career. He added that if one was to speak in serious terms about the influence exerted by a politician on the masses, about winning the "goodwill" of the masses, every effort must be made not to conceal these failures so that they can get to the tribunal of the broadest publicity for judgement. This is the only method which makes it possible for considerable masses of party personalities commanding authority (and not for a small group of them whose members have just happened to get together) to get to know their leaders and place each of them into an appropriate position. Only broad publicity can gear each inflexible, one-sided and whimsical deviation towards the correct path.

In a lecture on the Russian Revolution of 1905, Lenin mentioned the point, among other things, that lecture halls at universities had became the meeting places of hundreds of thousands of workers, craftsmen employees who could discuss political issues openly and freely there. They achieved the freedom of the press, for there was not one publisher having the courage to present an obligatory copy before the distribution of a book to the authorities, who in turn were not brave enough to do anything against that attitude. Thus it was the first time in the whole of Russian history that the revolutionary papers were published freely in St. Petersburg and other Russian cities.

The issue of the freedom of the press was included in the agenda of the November 4, 1917 meeting of the Central Executive Committee of Russia. The draft resolution submitted to it had been formulated by Lenin himself in which he said, among other things, that in the opinion of the Workers' and Peasants' Government the freedom of the press meant liberating the press from the yoke

of capital, transferring the ownership of the paper factories and printing presses into the hands of the state as well as ensuring that each group of citizens, composed of a certain number, say, 10 000 people, should be given equal rights to use the corresponding part of the available quantity of paper and the appropriate printing capacity. Under the then prevailing exceptional conditions Lenin considered the problem of the freedom of the press as one of the burning issues to tackle. That is why he formulated the above mentioned draft personally, proposing that the press rights of each group of citizens be included in the provisions of the law. Last but not least there was another noteworthy fact: revolutionary as that time was, voting on the draft took place in a democratic fashion. It was adopted by a simple majority: 34 votes were cast in favour, 24 against and there was 1 abstention.

No doubt, publicity is part and parcel of Marxist—Leninist revolutionary theory and its offshoot, the world-wide movement, which is founded upon the theoretical criticism of capitalism, would have proved to be a most miserable utopia if the publicity arising alongside the courses of modern production, transport and information flow had not created the opportunities and means needed for the development of the movement, for holding it together on the intellectual plane and for allowing an open struggle to be waged by different left-wing tendencies. It is also an organic part of the issue that in the first phase of the Russian Revolution of 1917, which lasted till the mid-1920s, the whole society came to be imbued with the atmosphere of publicity including sciences, the arts and politics. It was in that period that sociology made great progress, in the domain of the arts the widest possible variety of trends flourished, abstract painting produced works of art which were far ahead of several European schools even today

considered to be modern, and both the Theatre and architecture embarked on seeking new paths. Lenin himself did not make even the slightest attempt to impose his own views on aesthetics on the avantgarde poets, and open debates were taking place about the theory of revolution, the state and political representation.

In 1926, when Stalin charged the opposition in the party with social democratic deviation, Trotsky met the challenge in public provided by the meeting of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party by saying that the Secretary General (Stalin) was only too eager to acquire the post of grave-digger of the revolution. Though the debates were still in progress in the Soviet Union, Stalin's position grew ever stronger and to remain in opposition was no longer a position without any adverse consequences. Nevertheless, it took some time for the following to happen: on the evening of November 7th, 1927, parts of the famous film made by Eisenstein under the title October were screened during the aniversary celebration in the Bolshoi Theatre, but under instructions from Stalin the documentary sequences presenting Trotsky too had been omitted. That sort of intervention in Eisenstein's artistic work was an event of more than symbolic importance — as was pointed out by both László Béládi and Tamás Krausz.

A letter which Lenin dictated while lying sick in bed was also one of the decuments left unpublished. In it he appealed to the Soviet leaders not to allow Stalin to remain the party's Secretary General. Naturally no publicity was given to quite a number of 'alternative' political opinions either. However, failure to make Lenin's letter public was the first occurence of this kind to mark the beginnings of a new process in the course of which publicity came to be gradually eliminated for a long time to come al-

though it was a factor which had an enormous role to play in leading the revolution to eventual success, consolidating the achievements and in directing the efforts to find the right path during the initial periods of the revolution.

The debates taking place then had for some time been focussed on the problem that a considerable group of the Bolsheviks, first and foremost the opposition inside the party and in fact Stalin himself, regarded the new Soviet economic policy as a digression, an episode the social tensions of which were incompatible with the fundamental endeavours and the predominant ideas. In October 1921, the year that saw the introduction of NEP, the new Soviet economic policy, Lenin stated at the 2nd All-Russian Conference of Information Agents that ever since 1917 when the issue of takeover by the Bolsheviks had arisen and they had shed appropriate light on the task for the whole people, it was emphasised firmly in theoretical literature in general and in Bolshevik literature in particular that the transition from capitalist society called for a long and complicated process (the less developed Soviet society is, the longer the period); a transition leading through the socialist keeping of records and control was needed for just coming closer to communist society. Somehow this point was forgotten when the necessary steps in the field of construction had to be taken in the midst of the flames of civil war. The essence of the new economic policy lies in the fact that we suffered a disastrous defeat, Lenin added, going on to say that the new economic policy meant that capitalism was to be restored to a considerable extent. Stalin, on the other hand, interpreted the NEP period as embodying socialism and made systematic preparations for doing away with everything in it that was not socialist, in other words, all the elements placing emphasis on the triangle of goods-money-market.

Trotsky's approach to the problem was different. He was seeking the way-out in a permanent revolution even if the issue had obviously been removed from the current scene of world history. It was Bukharin who represented Lenin's idea most consistently in the sphere of the new economic policy. Although he was unable to find any alternative other than war communism (which was untenable), he was also aware that „When a worker who tends to think occasionally, finds himself faced with the negative aspects of our present system, e.g. when he catches sight of an orphaned child close to the luxury shops in the ninth year of our revolution, he will be invariably prompted to pose the question: 'Where are we heading for?' The issue of socialist construction in one country is a problem which can be raised by any of the workers; the difference lies in the way of formulation: 'what on earth is socialism if in this country there are masses of homeless in the vicinity of luxury shops?" However, Bukharin did not want to eliminate the above contradiction by accepting the option of Trotsky's illusion of a world-wide (permanent) revolution or Stalin's voluntarism. He favoured the method of releasing resources created by "market socialism."

When the new economic policy was declared, Lenin called for intensive centralisation to promote the immediate introduction of measures and emphasised that the Economic Commission must be made to be an organ operating exclusively as a body codifying and coordinating all the economic actions taken by the government and what is possibly termed 'committee discussion' of any kind should be banned from it completely. He discussed several questions in detail, for instance the one that the number of types of tax and the amounts derived from it must be increased in the shortest possible time, and that tax paid in kind be replaced by tax levied in money. He regard-

ed it as the Politbureau's demand that bonuses be given to as many leading personalities as possible in recognition of fast scheduling or for, say, an increase in the volume of production and commerce. While emphasising the above points, he did not hesitate to appeal to the people by saying that discussions, theoretical disputes and battles of words of any kind concerning the subject of the new economic policy should be left to the debating clubs and partly to the press. He reiterated the point in a more concrete context when he insisted that every kind of discussion relating to fiscal policies, the replacement of tax paid in kind by money etc. be delegated partly to the debating clubs and partly to the press.

How was the firmness of centralisation efforts compatible with publicity at that time? Why did Lenin not demand that the press end the "battle of words" and the practice of "engaging in theoretical disputes" and concentrate all its energy on facilitating the acceptance of important decisions instead? Was it insistence on his part on the traditions of the working class? Some kind of democratic sentiment? Consistency of principle? Yes, it was, but it must be remembered that the idea of taking advantage of centralisation by the state was actually raised in this context to promote the realisation of an economic centralisation process and publicity is a highly suitable means to be used for achieving such an essential goal. It was the paradox of the age and the situation that those at the centre did not want to decide upon everything, rather they wanted to decide not to make a decision centrally on each issue.

Following the crucial moments of the revolution this was to be for a long time to come the only attempt at eliminating comparatively rapidly the inheritance of social development in the East, about which John Stuart Mill writes that if the part of society wishing for organised cooperation or a comprehensive view of social matters were in the hands of the government, and if the government offices were always filled with the most gifted people, the whole culture of the country concerned and its practical intelligence (with the exception of purely speculative culture and intelligence) would be concentrated in a huge bureaucracy, and the remainder of the community should turn to it in every case: the masses should turn to it for guidance and orders concerning everything they have to do, while the gifted and the ambitious should turn to it for personal advancement. The only goal of ambition should be to get into this bureacracy and once inside, one should be driven by the desire to move ahead. In such a regime not only the community of outsiders is unsuitable, because of a lack of practical experience, in passing judgements or controlling the activity of bureaucracy but also if the chance accidents of the tyrannical or natural operation of democratic institutions were to raise up one or more rulers prepared to make innovations from time to time, then not one reform running counter to the interests of bureaucracy could be implemented. This was the sad state in which the Russian empire happened to be lying according to reports by people who had had sufficient opportunity to observe it (from a closer range). The Czar was completely helpless in the face of the bureaucratic body there; although he could exile any of its members to Siberia, without that body or against its will he was unable to reign.

Viewed from the angle of the knowledge we posses today, even the need for sheer survival was not strong enough to discard completely the political change in which in the 1930's the emphasis of value was placed on the advantages that lie in centralisation. It is quite another story what otherwise avoidable damage and losses were inflicted on the cause of socialism in the Soviet Union and world-wide socialism by an excessive

drive towards centralisation and its maintenance beyond every reasonable measure. The false concept and practice of democratic centralism which at a later date served as a model for the East-European communist parties and determined the whole structure of the political systems in the region had a major role to play in the above described negative outcome.

Simply, the right of minority opinions to publicity was discontinued. The move was initiated by Stalin. First he made references to Lenin in support of his action by quoting him as saying that the communist party can only fulfil its duty in the time of a difficult period of civil war if it is organised on the basis of very strict centralisation and the discipline adopted ranks on a par with that used in the army. Stalin drew the conclusion that the same applies to discipline inside the party under the conditions prior to achieving dictatorship. But he added straightaway that even stricter discipline must be adopted following the achievement of dictatorship. To make his point clearer he underlined in a didactic manner that as soon as the struggle between opinions is over, when criticism is exhausted and there is nothing left in reserve and a resolution has been adopted, the unity of will and action on the part of all the members of the party is an indispensable condition without which it is impossible to have a unified party, or one in which iron discipline can be imposed.

It is quite obvious that Stalin raised Lenin's intention relating to exceptional conditions to the status of some kind of general law of political theory. The difficult period of the civil war was over, but the idea submitted by Stalin was retained to become a standard, irrespective of the actual conditions that determined the general situation of the communist parties. The above interpretation of the majority principle came to be deeply imbued

in the minds of many communists who did not realise or reckon with all of its possible consequences.

And the consequences turned out to be very serious. For one thing, there is not a single instance in the history of human thinking where a new idea or programme of any substance became majority opinion overnight. Thus the definition submitted by Stalin became the justification of stagnation and immobility since the vulgarised explanation of the majority principle failed to contain a broader interpretation which would have reckoned with the preconditions absolutely necessary for the process of minority thoughts to be shared by the majority, even to a very limited degree. Stalin did not hesitate to falsify the history of the Bolsheviks in support of his views and stated that never, even for a single second, did the Bolsheviks consider the party to be other than a monolithic organisation carved from one block, which has only one will and that in its work each minute difference in the way of thinking is ironed out and united into a uniform process of practical activity.

Fundamental distortion

The acceptance of the above concept without any reservation or criticism and its application to every situation created conditions in a number of communist parties which led to a drastic reduction in their innovative abilities. It became the hotbed of a major and fundamental distortion since the whole history of socialism and the working class movement is all about the way in which a minority thought spread first to Europe and then to the whole world. Stalin's interpretation was designed to break with the best traditions of the movement, a move leading to no lesser an identification crisis than when a nation eliminates its best and most inspiring traditions from its own memory.

Another consequence of no little importance was that it ran counter to the institutionally professed values of universal culture which figure in educational curricula. People like Giordano Bruno, Marx, Lenin, Einstein and others have always been regarded by communists as the heroes of philosophy because they could formulate something new, so helping makind to make progress. Furthermore, it was constantly pointed out that personalities of the above kind were born into a structure which, as a rule, displayed strong resistance to changes. The ideas propagated in the Stalinist fashion necessarily came to be diametrically opposed to practice, a process resulting in specific discord and to a large extent contributing to the selection of the least suitable people. This is because, when voting, preferences were given to those failing to or, worse, those not wanting to take notice of the inherent contradiction.

On top of all this, politics appeared to be such an autonomous sphere in the structure thus brought about, resistant to new ideas, which was in no way subjectable to correction demanded by individual opinions once a party resolution had been made. It is beyond any doubt that the above practice was largely responsible for the communist parties in power always failing to recognise in time the errors committed.

What Antonio Gramsci described as follows in a different situation became general practice. He said great strength undoubtedly lies in the unity and uniformity of a leading group. However, he argued, strength tends to be sectarian, to be of the type found in freemasonry and consequently not of the kind a large ruling party is in need of. Political vocabulary has become a jargon; the prevailing atmosphere remindsard one of a secret meeting. If everyone keeps repeating the same slogans and applies the same rigid intellectual schemes all the time, a stage is likely to be reached at which everyone will think in an identical fashion, meaning that eventually no one will think at all.

The narrowing of the limits of publicity and the occasional apparent absence of minimum logic was very closely connected with the degeneration of the movement into a bureaucratic syndrome.

Referring to Schaffle, the Austrian sociologist and politician, Karl Mannheim makes a distinction between two sides of social life: one he describes as "current state life", the other "politics". In this division, administration is the field in which "current state life" can be grasped paradigmatically since the high level of rationalisation, the predominant presence of a professional element as well as the reproductive manners of behaviour upon specifications and precedents differ greatly from the area of the movement which has not as yet been subjected to rationalisation and regulation.

In the contrast outlined by Mannheim, the organisation of files as specified by the relevant regulations, the bringing of a verdict at court in an automatic manner rigidly in line with the provisions of the law, the repeated movements of a worker in technology, or the behaviour of a technician who combines the general laws governing Nature are simply not regarded as actions of value. They are contrasted with unregulated situations in which things are still on the move; consequently personal considerations can have a major role to play in making decisions. This is the area which is called 'politics' in Mannheim's view, the domain on which action proper is taking place to create the needs and possibilities of a subsequent formalised stage.

Although Mannheim's way of thinking was very largely characterised by Weber's ideal types, it was not lacking in sensitivity to dialectics. Evidence to this effect is his remark that it must be recognised that just as in every distinction there are in reality no clearly definable

borders. Thus in 'current state life' due to the slow pace in the shifting of actual applications something new can be brought about. And vice versa: it may well be that a social movement is thoroughly imbued with stereotype elements well on their way towards bureaucracy.

The refined description given above, and especially its second half, was by no means of a speculative character. Following an analysis of Prussian conditions, Mannheim arrived at the conclusion that the attempt to render the problem of politics a problem belonging to the sphere of administration is a typical fundamental tendency of bureaucratic thinking. It contains a specific legalistic and administrational type of thinking and manner of action which are both confined to constructing closed and static structures only and are continually faced with the paradoxical task of incorporating the new laws stemming from non-systematic forces in its own system, thus pretending if it were the continuation of the building of a fundamental system.

As a consequence of Stalinist distortions, socialism assumed a specific form during a certain period in which (as was pointed out by György Szoboszlai) it created theorems of its own, and it was only later, following the prolonged and rather uneven periods of development concerned with the elimination of distortions, that it became possible (but only indirectly) for socialism to try to constantly define itself vis-á-vis society. Modern politics corresponding to Mannheim's interpretation has been reduced to exercising power in general, to a system governed by the viewpoints and methods of administration in particular, in which "current state life" can raise itself above the law. Therefore, professional elements can prevail only on a low level and in a rather unpredictable way.

Because revolutionary conditions discontinued and the democratic forms of government were not adequately developed, the personal legitimacy of the revolution was replaced by an institutional defence extended to the politician. He came to be named 'functionary', a term showing very well that the definition of 'selection', (or to speak in more appropriate terms, "raising from the masses") and that of his position no longer covered the notion of politician.

Politician or functionary?

Our attempt to distinguish between a politician and a functionary can be made easier by taking into consideration several characteristic criteria. The system of dependence of a functionary is virtually completely hierarchical, while that of a politician is rather related to society because his existence as a politician, his success or fall, as the case might be, is largely dependent on a more general sphere of judgement. It is absolutely necessary for a functionary to possess both the ability and the skill to adjust himself to regulated situations; this can be guaranteed partly by his attitude and inclinations and partly by his knowledge of accepted forms and processes. A politician, however, whose career assumes activities to be performed on a plane much less easy to rationalise, where "developments are in progress", will find it impossible to adopt reproductive behavioural patterns. All a functionary is expected to know about the movements involving society as a whole is what is specified for him to know by official analyses and in the appropriate area he is responsible only for bearing in mind all the minute details and changes and the extent to which changes can be made. In contrast, the nature of a politician's knowledge must be much more of a horizontal type; it must extend over a wide range and be extended in terms of perspective. That is why he must possess the ability to synthesise. Finally, it should

also be mentioned as part of the comparison that a functionary's range of authority is, as a rule, more exactly specified, the opportunities available for him to take measures are more direct and yet his personality is far less exposed to publicity than that of a politician.

The elimination of the notion of politician from both the written and oral language reflected a realm of forms of publicity in which most of the pieces of information assumed a symbolical character. Of course, this symbolical publicity had a very real background. The replacement of the notion of politician by that of functionary clearly involved the understanding that the whole system of dependence of the exercise of power is of a hierarchic type; its predominant behavioural patterns are reproducible and it is not the duty of people 'raised' into this system to draw up programmes on their own, nor to be exposed in their person to public will of any kind.

It also had symbolical importance that in that publicity God came to be secularised by writing His name with a small "g" whereas the party was idolised to the extent of printing the first letter of the word with a capital "P". In fact attributes like omnipotence, infallibility as well as the party's irrational portrayal were intended for the party leaders and not the rank and file of the party.

It is a horrifying example of symbolical publicity that for 64 years no one in the Soviet Union was allowed to see the newsreel of Lenin's funeral for the simple reason that there were such revolutionaries as Bukharin, Kamenev and Zinoviev standing alongside Stalin. Today's viewer may well be reminded of one of the lines of the Internationale: the attempt to "change forth with the old conditions" was successful, but unfortunately not in the manner expected by those sacrificing their lives in the revolution, during the subsequent civil war and in the struggle waged against Fascism. In that realm of forms of publicity nothing and no-one was allowed to recall what might have caused a problem no greater than a refraction of light in the image of monolithic unity. Successive generations grew up without being permitted to know more about the above-mentioned men than what was contained by the history of the party as presented by Stalin. Such elementary facts that they were the closest of Lenin's comrades-at-arms were not mentioned, made to be forgotten and rendered victims of the falsification of history. Although symbolical in character, the above approach did have its internal logistics, since if the effort to "change forth with the old conditions" were to be unsuccessful, it may well occur to someone to try to find out what they actually did do, say, write and think. However, any attempt to this effect, even the feeblest one, had to be prevented in order to keep each line of the history of the party by Stalin sacred and so that no element of Stalinist conduct could come under fire.

It became quite customary and an integral part of public life for Stalin himself, and, following in his footsteps, the canonised party leaders of the other socialist countries to address rallies while standing below or in front of their own life-size portraits, and it was quite acceptable for them to join the applauding audience which was cheering them with rounds of applause lasting minutes. The move on the speakers' part was designed to indicate that the applause was intended not for them personally but for the body they symbolised. It is by no means uninteresting to note from a psychological point of view that one-time revolutionaries, those who were volunteers in the 1930-s Spanish civil war, who were prepared to face the tribulations of being underground for political reasons, many of whom were very sensitive to universal culture even under the most adverse conditions, remembering the above described events

and practices recall how at the time they were imbued thoroughly with sincere enthusiasm.

Political psychology has so far been unable to supply any acceptable explanation for this effect, because the Stalinist model of exercising power did not even allow this discipline to exist and it cannot rely even today on any substantial research results concerning the areas under review. The science of history has embarked only quite recently on trying to disclose what actually happened to the people at that time. New details are brought to light in succession and there is good reason for expecting that the relevant proceedings will in fact last for quite a time even if the effort to dig deeper and disclose the underlying causes and motives is not hampered by restoration attempts similar to the ones adopted during the Brezhnev period. The process will certainly be a prolonged one because it is virtually impossible to bring masses of facts that were "silenced" and lay buried in the depth of the pit of history to the surface overnight. We do not have as yet any knowledge whatsoever which can be called more or less scientific as to what was going on inside the people at the time. Testimonies to this effect have so far been made available in memoirs, the unpublished literary forms of personal recollections. For the time being, we have only hypotheses concerning the manner in which total subordination was accepted by people who had been brought up on the ideas of socialistic equality; how they reacted to authoritarian behaviour as verified empirically by the examinations made by Adorno on the basis of Erich Fromm's schemes. They included undiscerning attitudes towards those commanding authority and those of aggression towards people violating conventions as well as hostility towards "imaginative" behaviour. The cult of strength in general and an imbalanced emphasis laid on domination and submission were additional but equally important behavioural characteristics.

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Tamás Terestyéni

Social Organisation and Communication

The present paper undertakes—though in a sketchy form—to investigate how information and its communication function in two social models which embody markedly different principles of organisation.

Recently, systems-oriented social scientific research has paid increasingly more attention to the investigation of the organisational priciples hidden behind the creation, operation and way of regulation of different social formations. By organisational principles—following Elemér Hankiss—we mean theoretical answers to the most common dilemmas of social organisation produced by social evolution, which are manifested in the structure, control and way of regulation of systems of social formations as functionally operating systems. These organisational principles constitute the internal "logic" of social systems, organisations and ways of regulation which determines the changes a given social structure may be subject to without losing its identification.

Naturally, organisational principles are not pre-produced or a priori existing ideas which precede the formation of the organisation as some kind of plan. "The basic principles of organisation of a new socio-economic formation are created by socio-economic forces whose conflict gradually gives life to a new socio-economic structure. But once they have been created, the principles of organisation play an important role in coordinating those forces and in regulating the new socio-economic system in general."* In the first part of the paper we shall outline at the level of systems theory a problem which appears to be significant from the point of view of social organisations. We shall present two opposing organisational principles which are offered as possible solutions of the problem, and then we shall briefly discuss the important structural and operational characteristics of organisations behind which those two organisational principles are active. In the second part of the paper we shall examine the role of information and communication in organisations operated on the basis of the two types of principles.

The problem of adjustment

Let us assume that we have a population consisting of a large number of individuals, in which the individuals are not isolated from each other in space and time but each individual is in contact

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* Elemér Hankiss: *A „fekete doboz". Paradigmák kölcsönhatása és konfliktusai a mai társadalmakban* (The „black box". The interaction and conflict of paradigms in the societies of today). XXX. 1987/4. 22.

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with at least one other individual. The individuals are intelligent, i. e. they are capable of receiving, interpreting and evaluating the information provided by the environment, drawing conclusions, planning, making decisions and performing meaningful action afterwards. Moreover they can communicate with each other, i. e. they are capable of passing on purposeful information on their environment and themselves to one another.

Each individual has definite needs; if they are unable to satisfy their needs, they perish. The needs can only be satisfied if the individuals somehow reckon whith the environmental potentials, if they somehow take into account how things are going on in the world surrounding them. The behaviour of the individuals, which tries to ensure the satisfaction of needs by reckoning with environmental conditions, is referred to as adjustment. The ability of adjustment enables individuals to react adequately to the challenges of the environment and to maintain their existence under constantly changing environmental conditions as well. In addition to satisfying the needs of maintainig existence, adjustment also contributes to the individuals trying to ensure the survival of their (biological and socio-cultural) genes: they give life to new individuals and bestow on them their abilities to adjust.

The individuals are not only intelligent but they are also rational, at least in the somewhat limited sense that they consider the satisfaction of their needs to be their elementary interest. Moreover, they try to satisfy their needs in a way that derives the greatest possible profit from the lowest possible investment, i. e. they are aiming at an optimal adjustment in relation to their potential and environmental conditions.

The individuals have at their disposal limited resources with which they can satisfy their needs. Consequently, the individuals are permanently competing with each other in exploiting the available resources.

On the other hand, the individuals can be successful and efficient in satisfying their needs if they make harmonised, joint efforts, and if they enter into cooperation with each other such that the success of the efforts of the individual trying to satisfy his needs significantly depends on whether the other individuals are able to satisfy their own needs. Thus in their efforts to adjust, the individuals are simultaneously bound by compulsion to compete and cooperate.

The question arises in what way the total adjusment of the individuals capable of individual adjustment in the above sense can be coordinated so that it will ensure optimal adjusment for the whole population in the long run. How is it possible to organise the behaviour of individuals motivated by the compulsion of competition on the one hand and of cooperation on the other so that this organisation should promote the most complete survival of the population under constantly changing environmental conditions? It is not difficult to admit that each social organisation which aims at survival and adjustment under changing environmental conditions carries some kind of an answer to that question.

In our view, social evolution has produced two organisational principles, diametrically opposed to each other, to solve this problem. (By this, of course, we do not intend to state that no other organisational principles, of at least equal importance, have come into existence in the history of human societes.)

Two organisational principles

One of these principles takes as its starting point that individuals are intelligent and rational beings who are, in turn, in possession of the ability to adjust; and

the more capable the individuals are to adjust, the stronger the population and the more able to adjust, as a whole. Thus people are allowed to do what they consider good. Individuals will obey two kinds of compulsion: on the one hand, they will compete with each other for resources (i. e. for securing the highest possible proportion of riches). On the other hand, they will cooperate with each other (i. e. gain riches by satisfying the needs of others related to those riches). Although it is true that the compulsion of competition will induce individuals to walk over others,the compulsion of cooperation will hinder those efforts, prompting them to reckon with the needs of others. As a consequence of the compulsion to cooperate in competition, the individual cannot act at the expense of others beyond a certain limit without doing harm to himself. In addition, because the opportunities and potential for gaining self-serving riches significantly depend on how much the individual can produce to satisfy the needs of others, the compulsion to cooperate will of its own accord strike a balance with the compulsion to compete. Moreover, the compulsion to compete will strengthen the compulsion to satisfy the needs of others, since the more the individual does to satisfy the needs of others, the more he can expect for himself (i. e. the strong compulsion to compete at the same time means a strong compulsion to cooperate as well). So if individuals are allowed to act as they wish in order to adjust, sooner or later a community with a great ability to compete will be formed, integrated into a uniform whole by the links of cooperation based upon mutual interests. It is obvious that if we wish to coordinate the activities of individuals in the population on the basis of this strategy, we have to introduce a regulation which restricts the scope of individual mobility to a limited extent only, and which under identical conditions

provides potential for competition and cooperative links between individuals. Let us call this solution the natural model.

On the other hand, the second principle takes as its starting point that the optimal adjustment of the individual does not of itself ensure the survival of the whole population. Individuals concentrate on their own individual needs and interests, and even though they do reckon with the interests of other individuals as a consequence of the compulsion to cooperate, the needs and interests of the whole of the population (a majority far removed from the individual), are not incorporated in the individual's needs and interests. And anyway, the limited character of resources and the compulsion to compete encourage individuals not to heed the needs of those who are not in direct cooperation with them. Thus the solution of allowing individuals to behave as they think fit will lead to a polarisation of the whole population, to a lack of fulfilment of elementary needs of great masses of individuals, to anarchy.

The second solution argues that optimal adjustment of the whole population is only possible if the individual's needs and means of satisfying them are subordinated to the needs common to all or at least most of the individuals. If all members of the population make serious efforts to satisfy the common needs which are their own needs too, then cooperation will be created between each of the individuals and the whole population, integrating the individuals into a community. In this integration, the more the individual has contributed to satisfying the needs of the public, the more he will be able to satisfy his own needs. Consequently, when individuals enter into competition for their own sake and in their own interest, they will at the same time compete for the sake and interest of the general public.

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If we wish to coordinate the activities of individuals in the population on the basis of this approach (which may be referred to as the interference model), we must introduce regulations which somehow subordinate the behaviour of the individual to satisfying the defined needs of the general public, and which allow the individual only limited scope for mobility, oriented towards competition carried on with the aim of satisfying the needs of the general public.

The principles of each model are manifested through the institutional system, structure and way of operation of social sub-structures, contributing significantly to maintaining the essential features of the structure. Naturally, in reality no social formation exists which fully embodies either of the two models outlined here. However, in order to see clearly how these principles exert their influence and gain ground, it is worth discussing the institutional, structural, regulatory and operational specifics which constitute the manifestation of the ideal type of each model.

The amoeba

The natural model ensures the greatest possible freedom and scope for mobility for the individual, since that is the only way competition can be manifested, and large numbers of cooperative relationships can be created among individuals. The regulators do no more than merely define the general conditions of competition and cooperation compulsory for everyone; beyond that, everything is left to the individual: laws only stipulate what is not permitted but give a free hand to the individual as to what he can do in the non-prohibited range.

Since the conditions of subordination, hierarchies, monopolies, and power relations definitely restrict the potential for competition and cooperation based upon

mutuality, this type of organisation tries to exclude the creation of monopolistic situations and hierarchial dependences. The power of any individual to instruct or order individuals, or dispose of or decide about another's needs, riches or behaviour is also excluded. All this facilitates the creation of non-hierarchical, horizontal connections among individuals, facing each other as equals, in such a way that every individual is in a situation where he has to reckon with the needs and competitiveness of other individuals connected to him. He has to adjust his own behaviour and the satisfaction of his own needs (as well as his own adjustment) to those of the others. In this way, a specific self-regulation comes into being, in which the behaviour of individuals is adjusted, as it were, to the behaviour of other individuals.

Since this way of organisation hinders individuals from controlling others, no power centres come into existence. Power is divided among all individuals. Control of all individuals over all other individuals is manifested. The institutional system implementing and maintaining regulation is under the controll of all individuals too. Laws and decisions concerning the whole of the community are made by harmonising the interests of all individuals, and those laws and decisions are equally compulsory for everyone. Institutional roles carry the function of harmonising interests and administration. Carrying out those roles does not grant any individual monopolistic rights or exclusive power over others or over privileges. The links between individuals are based upon mutuality, they are of contractual character, and non-adherence to the contract disqualifies the individual.

A community organised in this way is in constant flux. On the one hand, there is the compulsion of competition and cooperation. On the other, it is guarding

against the formation of small monopolies, advantages limiting competitions, and rigid hierarchical conditions. These keep the community in continuous motion. Hoping to increase the potential for satisfying their needs, individuals search for new resources, new processes, new needs and new demands; they cooperate in new ways, and those carrying out institutional roles are changed from time to time in order to avoid rigidity. There is constant dynamism and restructuring. For this very reason, an organisation following the natural model can be compared to an amorphous amoeba, bulging out now here and then there, changing its shape constantly, if looked at from the ouside.

Such an amoeba-type organisation can adjust well to changes in environmental conditions. This organisation is made extremely flexible by the lack of rigid structures and hierarchies, by the wide circle of self-regulating, horizontal, cooperation relations as well as constant internal movement and dynamism. The compulsion of competition and cooperation, only slightly constrained, motivates individuals to make best use of resources and to maximise individual performance. Regulation influences and directs the strengthening of the ability of individuals to adjust: individual competitiveness, creativity, ability to learn and innovate, readiness to cooperate and empathy are highly developed. Its individuals' high level of ability to adjust, their performance orientation and the flexibility of the whole structure enables the whole of the organisation to reply quickly and adequately to the challenges of the environment. Adjustment may befacilitated by the fact that strong solidarity can be established among the individuals, based upon mutuality, resulting from a wide circle of cooperative links and the individuals' sense of empathy. This may significantly contribute to uniform action in critical situations.

The diatom-type structure

An interference model organisation is structured and operated in a fundamentally different manner. For this model may only be fully manifested if a mechanism is created which, rather than allowing the free play of the compulsion of competition and cooperation to strike a balance among needs, resources and performances, somehow defines public needs as the common aim of individuals, divides among them the resources available, and the work of satisfying needs, and finally, distributes riches which satisfy the needs of individuals on the basis of their performance. Thus, in this form of organisation the coordination of individual activity aimed at satisfying needs is done not through self-regulation but by central management and control.

An organisation of this kind offers very different roles to those controlling and those controlled. Even where controlled individuals fully accept the "harmonious spirit" of the system, the definition of public needs, the way of distributing work and riches, the attempts to optimise individual adjustment (i. e. to obtain the highest possible profit with the lowest possible investment) drive them to find markets where they can sell their performance and supplies in the most favourable manner possible. If, however, induced by their own interests, individuals enter into direct cooperation with each other, then it will necessarily weaken central control. Such cooperation will distract individuals from carrying out the tasks appointed by management if the individuals tie up their capacity or a part of it in the market of direct cooperation, hoping for a higher profit. For that very reason, central management and control make efforts to suppress the individual interests of the controlled, restrict their autonomy, scope of mobility and direct horizontal connections, as well as to make them as depen-

dent upon central management and control as possible. Regulations and laws define for the controlled not so much what is prohibited but rather what must be done, as prescribed by central management. Naturally, individuals restricted in their autonomy, their ability to follow their own interests, or forge horizontal links, are not able to control management, or those exercising the roles of management and control. Thus the latter assume a one-sided power relation with the former.

Since community control over management is excluded by the nature of organisation, separate control functions are incorporated into managament in order to make sure that no individual can manifest his personal interests at the expense of public interests. Naturally, the activities of the individuals in controlling roles must also be controlled, thus this type of organisation brings about an increasingly more extensive hierarchy, with individuals who have lost their autonomy pushed to the bottom, and the representative of supreme power elevated to the top.

Those at the top of the hierarchy control, in the form of orders, decrees and instructions, those at the bottom, from whom the feedback of having fulfilled the tasks and requests at best is directed upwards. There are no self-regulating, contractual links since they are impossible between individuals of equal rank and they make no sense in the hierarchy: those at the bottom may be forced to carry out orders without a contract too, and there is nothing to force those at the top to carry out the requests of those at the bottom.

It is obvious that once a system like this starts to operate, any kind of change will disturb, perhaps even stop, its operation. For if some kind of change occurs, for example resources get scarce, then needs change, and so does the performance of the individual, etc., the opera-

tion of the system must be stopped and control must be reprogrammed. Since stoppages and restarts invariably produce losses, especially since the transfer of control may contradict the interests of the individuals in controlling positions, the organisation resists all internal changes and attempts to react to changes in environmental conditions also in such a way that it should remain unchanged internally. This unchanging character, rigidity and inflexibility are further strengthened by the hierarchical structure, which cannot be broken through by individual intentions to adjust. This type of organisation therefore has no continuous internal mobility, restructuralisation, transformation, and that is why—contrary to the amoeba-type formation—it may best be compared to diatoms with a rigid, inflexible, unchanging structure.

The diatom-type organisation may be useful and efficient in cases when the resources and efforts of individuals must be concentrated to achieve definite objectives (e.g. fending off an external attack) or when the external and internal conditions of organisation do not change, or only very slowly, in a manner easy to calculate beforehand. However, if a community wishes to maintain itself with this type of organisation in the long term, sooner or later its ability to adjust will inevitably deteriorate as conditions change. Whatever happens, with the passing of time change will occur. On account of its rigidity, hierarchical structure, the lack of independence of its individuals, their restricted potential to take initiatives, and a number of other factors not mentioned here, this type of organisation can only respond adequately to challenges slowly, with difficulty, or not at all.

Historical situations

It must be emphasised again that no social formations actually exist in which the

natural or interference models are fully manifested and which, consequently, clearly represent an amoeba or diatom type of organisation. Still, the presence of the characteristic features of this or that type may be well observed in the social formations of the Modern Age. Thus, for example, the capitalist societies of a bourgeois democratic political system display the traits of the amoeba-type organisation, insofar as they provide a wide scope for competition and the links of horizontal cooperation, certain forms of community control (openness, the function of the political parties to represent interests and that of parliament to harmonise interests, the rotation of individuals carrying out institutional roles by election, the principle of representation, etc.) and the autonomy of the individuals. At the same time it is also obvious that they are far from the pure, self-regulating, amoeba-type community since it is only when the means of production are in private ownership that monopolies, privileges, individual expropriation, the accumulation of advantages and disadvantages, hierarchies and dependencies result.

On the other hand, there is no doubt that certain traits of the diatom-type organisation may be recognised in existing socialist societies with monolithic political systems and planned directed economies. While this institutional system is strongly oriented to the diatom-type, at the same time a number of elements of the amoeba-type organisation are present in these societies also, though in budding form or only at the lower levels of the organisation.

The different subsystems of the same social formation are not necessarily oriented to the same type of organisation. Thus, for example, in the military juntas of South-America diatom-type political systems came to be constructed, while the internal world of their capitalist economy had the characteristics of the amoeba-type organisation. During the years of the war, in England the pluralistic, parliamentary political system, built upon the principle of representation, carrying the traits of the amoeba-type was maintained, while the economy was significantly subordinated to the war needs. This inevitably meant the temporary appearance of the features of the diatom-type: the centralised distribution of resources, tasks and riches related to public needs in an economy which was otherwise organised according to the amoeba-type (at least as to the means of production and the owners of capital).

The formation of organisations fully manifesting the natural or interference model, a pure amoeba or diatom type, is quite impossible because organisations attracted to either type are forced to apply, temporarily or in the long run, elements of regulation alien to their systems, with the aim of easing their internal tensions, eliminating their internal contradictions and adjustment disturbances. Thus the capitalist economies are also forced to interfere in the operation of self-regulated markets with different means in order to fend off crises resulting from restrictions in demand. On the other hand, the planned directed economies are trying to be more open to self-regulating market forces in order to foster their modernisation.

Some circumstances and historical situations favour the development of a social formation proceeding towards one type of organisation, while others favour the other. When a community believes that its survival is in danger, when it is afraid of an external attack, when it considers itself to be under threat, it is prone to give priority to the organisational elements of the diatom type. A situation like this is primarily a war conflict, but the appearance of the modes and means of regulation of the diatom type may be well observed in a period of increasing social tensions, as well as power crises too. His-

tory offers a number of examples that in such situations, primarily during and after revolutionary movements resulting in changing power relations, strong central control is established which tries to subordinate individuals to the central will. On the other hand, periods free from crises and conflicts tend to favour the appearance and development of the amoeba type organisation.

When in the course of history an organisation comes into being which definitely favours one or other type of organisation, and thus manifests one or other principle of organisation in its internal logic and operation, then it tries to eliminate or at least keep under control alien elements, and any phenomena, developments or factors proceeding in the direction of the opposite type of organisation. For example, where the political subsystem is concerned, pluralistic, parliamentary formations displaying amoeba features frequently limit or prohibit the operation of political parties which openly strive towards autocracy. By contrast, however, monolithic one-party systems carrying traits of the diatom type try to curb pluralistic initiatives intending to break away from central control. Or, to give an economic example, capitalist ecomonies have tried to hamper with anti-cartel laws the establishment of monopolies threatening competition; on the other side, however, the classic planned economic management of directives has tried to limit or eliminate self-movements of the market by administrative means.

It is obvious that if a structure which definitely favours one of the organisational types is not able, or perhaps has no desire, to keep the organisational elements alien to its nature under control, it will lose its original character more and more. In the course of time forces which favour the diatom type may come to the surface in the amoeba type organisation, and vice versa; in the diatom organisa-

tion a fermentation may start which turns it in the direction of the amoeba type. However, changing paradigms, the transformation of a social formation is generally a lengthy process since the changes must defeat the internal logic of the organisation, and this does not happen overnight.

Information for adjustment

Now let us switch over to our more specific topic and examine the role of information and communication played in the natural and interference models respectively.

By way of an introduction, it must be pointed out that information and information handling are in no way secondary or auxiliary elements of social organisation. It is true that at first sight information and communication seem to be of secondary importance from the point of view of satisfying elementary needs: information cannot be eaten, information cannot be used for building flats, information cannot be burnt as fuel for heating. We must see, however, that if people were unable to receive information from their environment, if they could not formulate internal images of the environment, and form impressions about the state of affairs around them, they would inevitably perish since they would not be able to distinguish what is useful, safe and good from what is bad, harmful and dangerous for them in their everyday needs. They would not be able to accumulate their experiences and transform them into a strategy of adjustment. They could not draw conclusions from one situation with regard to another one and they would be unable to look into the future and make plans. In a similar manner, if people could not pass information on to one another, they would not be able to coordinate their activities, they would not be able to

cooperate, be integrated into a community and bestow their abilities to adjust as well as their knowledge on the next generation. Thus information and communication are in no way auxiliary phenomena accompanying adjustment and satisfying needs, but themselves essential needs, without which common adjustment is not possible.

Information is incorporated into the process of adjustment by forming its input. If this input is missing, if the individuals do not have access to information of an appropriate quality and quantity, then they have nothing to adjust to. If something is not known to us, or what we know about it is not the truth, then we cannot reason with it and we are unable to calculate in a way demanded by the real situation.

Communication is conveying and exchanging the information coded by the different means of communication (languages, sign systems), and „packaged" with their help. The essence of communication activity is that the source of information, the transmitter represents some kind of situation, phenomenon, event or matter with the means of communication at his disposal, and conveys this representation to a recipient who—supposing that he is in possession of the means of communication—recognises, deduces from the representation the represented situation, phenomena, event, and so on. Thus communication is having something recognised by way of conveying its representation. Still, communication is not exhausted in the act of recognition. When we communicate, what we do is not merely have something recognised by our communication partner but at the same time perform other activities too: either we oblige ourselves to stand up for the truth, credit of our words, the sincerity and seriousness of our expressed intentions (statements, manifestations, pieces of information, promises, warnings, oaths, testimonies,

etc.) or we oblige others with more or less force to do something (orders, commands, prohibitions, authorisations, requests, etc.). These obliging actions performed in communication enable the realisation of changes just like physical acts, although these changes occur not in the physical world but in what people believe (about the world, each other's beliefs, intentions and objectives) or in what they intend to do. On account of this specific character of action, communication is not merely the reflection of natural and social reality but it is at the same time the continuity of social reality as well. Consequently — and this cannot be emphasised strongly enough—what we communicate, the way we communicate and the way the represented content and action value of our communication acts are regulated institutionally, are inseparably and essentially connected with the whole of social organisation.

Publicity is an inevitable requirement

In the amoeba-type organisation, or natural model, under the influence of a minimally constrained compulsion for competition and cooperation, every individual is in a situation where he must reckon with the needs and competitiveness of all other individuals and adjust his own behaviour, his adjustment and the satisfaction of his needs to those of the others. Obviously, it is only possible if individuals have the highest possible amount of information about how the other individuals behave. Thus publicity is an inevitable requirement of the creation of a self-regulating organisation. Therefore the amoeba-type community presupposes an institutional regulation which ensures the greatest possible publicity, preventing individuals or groups of individuals from getting into a situation

where, while they possess information about what their environment is doing, the environment has no information about what they are doing. Here the function of the regulating power, coordinating the behaviour of individuals, is fulfilled not by some central will but through information and mutual knowledge of individuals about each other.

Publicity is the basis of community control manifested in the amoeba-type community too. In order that individuals playing institutional roles cannot use their position for acting in their own interest at the expense of others, make decisions by excluding the public, obtain situational advantages, monopolies or privileges, the publicity of their activities-is an indispensible requirement. For if there is publicity, society can take steps against individuals aiming at obtaining exclusive power, monopolistic situations and privileges. For example, it might disrupt cooperation with them or—in the case of an appropriate institutional regulation—it may disqualify them. Thus community control is maintained by publicity of information, and mutual knowledge of individuals about each other's activities, interests and intentions.

Naturally, the claim of individuals for autonomy insists on their having access to as much and as reliable information as possible, since without that their view of their environment is limited, their potentials to make decisions are restricted and their ability to achieve their goals is reduced. Cooperative relationships among individuals cannot exist without publicity and a mutual exchange of information either, for if an individual tried to enter into cooperation with someone by keeping his own activities secret, then his partner would be uncertain about his fulfilling the obligations undertaken, his adhering to the stipulations of the contract, in short, his real intentions, and this would necessarily undermine mutual

confidence indispensable for cooperation. When information is lacking, competition and the ability of individuals to compete will also be restricted: if individuals were not familiar with the market structure, the conditions of supply and demand, if they were not informed about the appearance of new competitors and resources, then they would not be able to formulate rational strategies of behaviour—they would simply be stumbling in the dark.

Naturally, in order to maintain self-regulation, it is also necessary to keep information-communication organisations under community control, or else an opportunity would open up for them to influence, manipulate individuals in their own interest by retaining or distorting information. If the attempts to restrain the expropriation of information are successful, the information and communication organisations will be like a huge mirror for each individual, in which everyone can see all the others, the whole of the community and the environment, and they can adjust their behaviour according to what has appeared in that mirror.

In an amoeba-type organisation, the institutions of information-communication, just like the individuals, are in constant competition with each other, and that obviously forces them to collect and convey as much and as reliable information as possible. Consequently, no lack of information is created here; the problem for individuals here is not to have access to information but rather to process and interpret a very large amount of information.

Naturally, the amoeba-type organisation based on the publicity of information exerts an influence on the content of information too. It is obvious that institutional regulation aiming at real publicity has no secrets, taboos or topics to hide. In a similar manner, in this system there is no shameful or bad news which

should be veiled or sugarcoated with euphemisms; pieces of information related to unfavourable matters and negative phenomena do not disrupt the self-regulating organisation. On the contrary, they call attention to problems and motivate individuals to eliminate them. The amoeba-type community does not require its successes and results to be constantly referred to and its failures and difficulties to be hushed up. It has no need for constant self-justification, displaying a positive self-image, since its strength stems simply from the individuals' autonomy, internal solidity, abilities, self-assurance and self-consciousness. Not to mention the fact that individuals cannot afford to neglect unfavourable events, hardships and failures since it would immediately cause harm to them in adjustment, if in no other way than being unable to learn from their negative experiences.

Another characteristic feature of a self-regulating communication structure is semantic unequivocalness and consistency. For individuals can only rely on information and information can only become the regulating element of individuals' activities and cooperation if the words mean the same to everyone and in every situation, if spades are called spades, if facts and intentions are not hidden but made explicit and if their use is not an empty phrase but a sincere commitment responsibly undertaken. Closely connected to the need to be unequivocal and consistent is the fact that truths and facts cannot be relativised and they cannot change from occasion to occasion in communication aiming at self-regulation. For if the truths and facts were not identical in every situation for every individual, if they were constantly reinterpreted, if they could be turned inside out at will, then they would not be able to become the common points of the individuals' adjustment and cooperation on which all the

individuals in a self-regulating organisation could equally rely.

Since the amoeba-type organisation tries to ensure a maximum for individuals, here—within the limits set by law— any individual can produce, convey and interpret information as he thinks fit and purposeful from the point of view of his adjustment. There are no prescriptions as to who must say what and when; there are no compulsions as to how information must be interpreted, how facts must be evaluated or what must be looked upon as good or bad, essential or unessential, useful or useless, beautiful or ugly, etc. There are no premade patterns or schemes to which messages, interpretations or evaluations should be adjusted. Since the individuals are not subordinated to centrally defined principles, frameworks of interpretation, ideologies or dogmas, in the amoeba-type communication the content of communication is characterised by openness, diversity, multifariousness and changeability.

Deriving from the fundamental nature of organisation, communication messages are dominated by values connected to the individual: the individuals' autonomy, independence, freedom, self-sufficiency, individual competitiveness and competitive spirit, individual performance and solidarity among individuals. Emphasis is given not to sameness and similarities between individuals but to differences, individual features and originality. Education and training are personality-oriented: they concentrate on the individual's specific features of character and abilities and try to develop them so as to make the individual suitable for fulfilling as many different roles as possible instead of forcing him into the patterns of a defined behavioural role.

Since the amoeba-type organisation tries to eliminate hierarchies and power dependencies, its communication context hardly favours communication actions

directed towards the obligation of one individual by another on the basis of power relations: individuals are not in a position to force their will upon others by orders, instructions, prohibitions or authorisation. In the self-regulating community, individuals are motivated to continually and mutually take into account each others' intentions and interests. That requires the individuals on the one hand to make explicit their own interests, views, opinions and stances; on the other hand, to harmonise their conflicting interests, views and stances and to come to a mutually acceptable agreement. Thus in the amoeba-type organisation an important role is given to debate-like communication actions clarifying stances and harmonising interests. In a similar manner, an important function is fulfilled by communication of a contractual character since it lays down the obligatory conditions of cooperation among the individuals.

Naturally a clear and easily calculable range of mobility can only be established when individuals find that their information regarding each other is reliable and accurate. Consequently, it is the basic interest of every individual to obtain reliable information as well as to furnish the others with reliable information about himself, since if that mutuality did not exist, no individual could count on reliable information. As a result, a significant individual feeling of responsibility related to information is created in the amoeba-type organisation. If someone makes statements not in accordance with reality, makes insincere promises, fails to keep his word, etc. (i.e. if he does not behave as he undertook to do in his communication actions), he will sooner or later exclude himself from cooperation and consequently from competition too, since if an individual's chances to cooperate get scarce, in time his chances to compete will necessarily be reduced as well.

Since in the amoeba-type community mutual knowledge about one another fulfils the role of the basic regulating strength of organisation, information is a basic condition of adjustment for the whole of the community and all of its individuals. This forces individuals to try to develop and optimise their use of communications potentials (channels, media) and to avoid redundancies or meaningless communication of a formal and ritualistic character.

The amoeba-type organisation, based on the individuals' autonomy and ability to adjust, expects individuals to possess diverse and well elaborated communication abilities and skills, as well as motivates them to acquire such abilities and skills. The compulsion to compete requires individuals to obtain as much information as possible and to process it as efficiently as possible, for this is how they can enhance their chances to develop an efficient strategy of adjustment. However, information, no matter how large in quantity and reliable it is, cannot in itself help the individuals; the individuals can only make proper use of it if they possess the necessary framework of interpretation and knowledge, in whose context new information becomes relevant and makes it possible to draw conclusions as to the optimal strategy. This encourages individuals to constantly develop their knowledge, abilities and means of handling information and to widen their horizons.

The self-regulating character (i.e. the compulsion of reckoning and cooperating with others in interactions among individuals), presupposes a developed skill of debating, a high level of tolerance, empathy and flexibility — especially in case of conflicts in manifesting and harmonising interests. Since it is the basic nature of the amoeba-type community that it is in constant internal motion, subject to a permanent internal restructuring, the relative situation of in-

dividuals is constantly changing too. Consequently, in order to be able to adjust to a constantly changing situation, individuals must be able to fulfil new roles, solve new tasks, problems and conflicts, and, last but not least, constantly redefine their relationships with their environment.

The specifics of the amoeba-type organisation leave their mark on the cognitive style of individuals too, insofar as they will very probably foster the formation of the following characteristic features of thinking: discarding the principle of authority, maintaining the right to entertain doubts in every situation and refusing dogmas; a positivist approach in solving tasks, taking only facts of experience as a starting point and avoiding metaphysical constructions; developing an individual world view and moral value system, favouring pragmatic solutions against voluntarism in handling problems and conflicts.

Publicity prohibited

In the diatom-type formation, hypothetically fully embodying the interference model, in which the activities of individuals with limited autonomy and but few horizontal cooperation contacts with óne another are coordinated and controlled by central regulation, information and its commucation are not the means of self-regulation but of the central regulation of individuals.

Central regulation and control presuppose a basically vertical flow of information: instructions from management, feedback and situational reports from the individuals regulated. It is not difficult to admit that in this organisation there is not much room for publicity providing mutual knowledge, required by the self-regulating, amoeba-type organisation. On the one hand, in order to be able to fulfil the instructions of management, individuals do not actually need to know anything about other elements of the system, other individuals, the mechanism of operation or the whole of the environment. They only have to be familiar with the instructions directly above them in the given hierarchy. On the other hand, in the diatom-type organisation all factors enhancing the autonomy of the individual necessarily reduce the cohesion of the organisation, since they will sooner or later divert the individual from the intentions of central regulation. If individuals had information and mutual knowledge about each other's needs and resources, and if, on the basis of this knowledge of theirs, they could enter into direct, horizontal connections with each other, then they would do so in the hope of enhancing their chances to satisfy their needs, especially if the definition of central regulation related to public needs as well as to the distribution mechanism insufficiently satisfied them. For this very reason, in order to ensure its undisturbed operation, the diatom-type organisation tries to implement a regulation which restricts as much as possible the individuals in establishing information channels and links independent of central regulation.

Naturally, individuals make efforts to satisfy their needs as optimally as possible. They may try to secure more from central diːtribution or they may try to avoid central regulation. Let us take a look at the first possibility. Since — as we have already seen — individuals cannot beyond a certain limit rely on central distribution rewarding them for increasing their performance, they resort to the strategy of forcing management to distribute the riches as advantageously for them as possible: they display more than their actual needs, they try to enhance their relative value in the eye of the central regulation by performance retention and an uneconomical use of resources, they hide their capacities, reserves, etc.

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Naturally, this blackmailing strategy can only be succesful if central control is unable to see the real situation, therefore the individuals try to cover and camouflage themselves and mislead the regulation by restricting or falsifying the upward flow of information. The other possibility demands that individuals hide fom central regulation as much as possible since, as we have seen before, it will do its best to hinder any efforts which distract individuals from its own intentions and objectives.

All this means that while in the diatom-type organisation regulation requires from individuals the highest amount of information possible in order to maintain its undisturbed operation and control, individuals will be motivated to hide as much as they can and allow regulation to have as little access to the information related to them as possible.

Consequently, central control will suffer from a constant lack of information, it will either not at all or only approximately be able to form a picture true to reality of the situation and operation of the organisation, which will naturally decrease the efficiency of control. In order to eliminate lack of information, control will inevitably be forced to increase its information apparatus, enlarge bureaucracy, moreover establish secret channels of obtaining information hidden from the individuals, through which they may be unknowingly and unavoidably supervised. That central control and regulation will be motivated to hide from the eye of the individuals under control, just as individuals try to hide from control shows the contradictory character of the diatom-type organisation. For if the individuals had the chance to obtain information, other than instructions, about the levels of the hierarchy above them, if they saw and knew how control and regulation are operated, on the basis of what considerations decisions are made,

what the mechanism of defining public needs and distribution is like etc. then all those things would become possible for them to get to know in the long run, and thus they could take them into consideration while optimising their adjustment and satisfying their own needs, which would obviosly weaken the diatom character and central control.

It is self-evident that in the diatom organisation, similarly to the other subsystems, the organisations of information and communication are under strict central control too; moreover since publicity and the free flow of information attract the individuals more strongly than anything to the self-regulating, amoeba-type organisation, in handling information and restricting openness even more strict and centralised control will be introduced than in other fields.

The diatom-type community is full of secrets and taboos since those at different levels of the hierarchy try to hide from each other, and central control tries to hinder the horizontal flow of information among those at the same level. As a consequence of lack of openness and the basic intention to hide, no feeling of responsibility is created in individuals in respect of information and the reliability of information. Moreover, as a consequence of those at the different levels of the hierarchy constantly trying to hide from one another and not giving information of appropriate quantity and quality to each other, communication will be dominated not by mutual confidence but by mutual suspicion; falsifying truth, hiding facts and manipulating information will become everyday features of life.

Since in the diatom-type organisation central control defines public needs yet does not operate the distribution mechanism with reference to conflicting and harmonising interests in public, there is constant danger that control will satisfy individual needs to an ever decreasing

extent. If the needs of many individuals are left unsatisfied and if the public interests defined centrally are far from the interests of many individuals, then operation may easly be disrupted and organisation may be dislocated. Aware of that danger, central control is constantly trying to prove that its definition of needs, its distribution mechanism and its coordianation mechanism are useful and operating properly, and that they serve the interests of each individual. The compulsion of proving its legitimacy is primarily manifested in the following: central control selectively emphasies succeses and good results before the individuals, and remains silent about hardships, problems and failures since they may shake confidence in it. It also formulates an emeny image evoking a feeling of danger which increases the inclination to accept the diatom-type organisation and central control. Moreover, since central control cannot beyond a certain limit motivate the individuals to higher and better performance by increasing the quality and quantity of centrally distributed riches, it tries to motivate with the help of information: it makes efforts to convince individuals about the necessity to increase the performance. Due to the compulsion to prove and convince, instructions from central control to individuals will be accompanied by information of propagandistic and agitating nature, whose function will obviously be not to ensure openness and inform about the central control' s principles of decision-making, mechanism and concrete steps, but to induce individuals to accept the organisation and fully execute the instructions of central control.

This hiding behaviour on the one hand and the dissemination of agit-prop on the other, will inevitably drift both individuals and regulation towards manipulative communication, in which language loses its semantic accuracy and consistency: words will not call spades

spades, they will make intentions not explicit but veiled, they will change their meaning from situation to situation, they will relativise facts and reinterpret and re-evaluate them from situation to situation. All this forms a functional element in the system, since the more difficult it is for the individual to get to know and reckon with his environment, the more he will be dependent upon central regulation and the more he will be forced to serve the diatom-type organisation.

Since one of the most important elements of individual autonomy is to interpret and evaluate information without restrictions, the diatom-type · organisation trying to strongly limit individual autonomy attempts to subordinate the individual processing of information to centrally defined principles, frameworks of interpretation, ideologies and dogmas, which instruct individuals how to evaluete things, what to consider good or bad, essential and unessential, useful and useless, etc. and what conclusions to draw from the information available to them. Thus in the diatom-type community the content of information will be characterised by one-sidedness, narrowness, closedness and artificiality of thought and ideas, as well as rigidity and an unchanging character.

As a result of the basic nature of the diatom organisation, communication messages aie dominated not by values related to the individual but by those related to the whole of the community: public interest, public needs, work done for the public, sacrifices made for the public, the identification of individuals with central regulation and control wishing to act in the interest of the public, the acceptance of central control and loyality. Little attention is paid to the individual' s own attraction, performance, abilities or the differences between the individuals; it is not individuality or originality but the similarities between the individuals which are emphasised and e-

quality becomes the central ideal. Education and training are oriented not to the personality but to roles: they consider it their task not to develop characteristic features and abilities of individuals but to force individuals into defined roles and patterns of behaviour.

The hierarchical structure of the diatom-type organisation greatly favours communication actions where one individual is exerting his will on another on the basis of their relative power positions: the information necessary for operation is conveyed from central control to the regulated individuals in the form of orders, commands, decrees, prohibitions or authorisations. Lack of openness excludes the possibility of explicit expression of interests, views, opinions, stances, their clashes, debates and harmonisation of interests. The motivating factors for concealment prompt individuals to hide or keep secret their real intentions, objectives and views. Thus in the diatom-type community communication action dealing with opinions, harmonising interests, or of a clarifying or debating character do not receive a central role.

Neither individual, nor community feeling of responsibility is established in relation to the reliability of information. This is excluded from the very beginning by the compulsion to hide, but there are other factors too which make responsibility for truth, authenticity and reliability fade away. For lack of community control, central regulation cannot be held responsible for not providing information in sufficient quality and quantity. Individuals are forced into centrally defined patterns, schemes and dogmas, for which they have no personal responsibility whatsoever. Information drawing an image of the individuals' real intentions, objectives and behaviour is not conveyed from the individuals themselves to central regulation but through secret channels which they cannot influence. As a consequence, a significant part of public communication is transformed into repetition poor in real information value, rituals performed for their own purposes.

What the diatom-type organisation, restricting the autonomy of the individuals and subordinating them to central control, requires from its individuals from the communication point of view is that they should accept and internalise the principles, values, ideologies and dogmas defined by central regulation and control. Thus the success of individual public communication depends primarily upon hoe they are able to combine the patterns, schemes and empty phrases withouth the danger of saying something. Thus there is no need for diverse and well-established communication abilities and skills, frameworks of interpretation and evalution supported by a rich material of knowledge and a wide scope of vision. Moreover, this model tries to hinder the development of such traits in large masses of individuals with different prohibitions and mechanism of contraselection, for this would encourage and strengthen individual autonomy. The diatom-type organisation supports in individuals the development of a cognitive style, or way of thinking which contains the following elements: authoritarian principle, rigid insistance on theses, dogmas and refusal to think independently. General principles, theses, and dogmas are taken as starting points in problem-solving techniques; positive experience is adjusted to dogmas, facts are turned inside out and metaphysical constructions are given priority. Individually generated world views and moral value systems are discarded, emphasising the importance of the community. For handling problems and conflicts voluntarist solutions are chosen.

The Hungarian mule

Finally, let us us briefly touch upon how today's Hungarian society is placed in this amoeba-diatom dichotomy. There is no doubt that at the end of the forties in Hungary an institutional system came into existence which—consciously or less consciously—wished to organise Hungarian society in the diatom way, on the basis of the interference model. We do not consider it our task to investigate its internal and external causes or demonstrate the diatom characteristics of the early fifties well-known anyway and then trace the road along which the social organisation of the extremist diatom type led to 1956. In the wake of political consolidation, the extremities receded, the compulsions of central regulation were eased and the people's scope for mobility widened. However, by the mid-sixties it had become obvious that the basically unchanged diatom organisation was not able to increase the performance of the economy in accordance with its needs, or to enhance the ability of society to adjust its economy. In 1968 that recognition resulted in reform steps which introduced amoeba-type modes of regulation and organisation in the economic subsystem but they failed to deal with the whole of the institutional system and the basically diatom character of the institutional structure. Thus the reform initiatives — in spite of their innovative influence — were quickly slowed down in the early seventies. It came to light that if the institutional system maintaining the diatom-type organisation remained unchanged, the efforts to open for the amoebatype organisation had little chance to develop, they would be distorted and killed: crossing a diatom donkey with an amoeba horse would not result in a racing horse but simply a mule unfit for breeding.

By the end of the eighties, the internal tensions of Hungarian society, the deterioration of its performance compared to constantly rising demands made it an unpostponeable task to transform the economy in the direction of the amoeba type. However, such a transformation of the economy is hardly possible if the organisation of social life mostly remains within the framework of the diatom type, embodying the interference principle. An inevitable requirement of reform and renewal is that the whole of society with all of its subsystems should be renewed, including the organisation and institutional system of social communication as well.

Attila Ágh

Arguments Concerning the Reform of Mass Communications

In the draft reform outlined in the following the author sets out from the demands, the inherent contradictions and tensions of society to describe the governing principles for restructuring political publicity, which may form the basis for a thorough renewal of Hungarian mass media.

Confidence crisis

One of the most serious contradictions of Hungarian society today is the ever widening and deepening confidence crisis. It is manifested above all as follows:

1. In a gradual loss of confidence as from the mid-1980s in the political leadership not only in respect of the prevailing situation but also, over and above this, in raising doubts as to whether or not the political line as a whole adopted over the past fifteen years or so has been adequate as well as in the form of a confidence crisis involving the members of the leadership in person.

2. A confidence crisis in respect of mass communication is invariably a structural element of the extensivist political system of early socialism, but over the past decade it has undergone a substantial change (in reverse ratio as compared to the lack of confidence in the political leadership). In contrast to the previous attitude of the general public to mass communication, which was characterised by suspicion and rejection, the present approach has become extremely complicated and contradictory in which

elements of expectation, confidence or even openness can be identified.

3. Simultaneously there is an increasing lack of confidence on the part of the political leadership in the mass media; it has often been indicated or even formulated on several occasions that it is not society that bears the symptoms of crisis but the media which have assumed a "negative" attitude; in other words, it is frequently voiced that the media at least contribute to the troubles even if they do not actually lie behind them as their cause.

So far as the reform of the mass media is concerned, we have to study the situation in the atmosphere of the confidence crisis described above; and our task is to ease it or eliminate it altogether. The framework is provided by a triangle composed of the political leadership, the mass media and public opinion (the people or civilian society). Any reform involving the mass media can only be studied and implemented on the basis of an initial general reform of the political institutions. However, the present study is concerned only with the special implications on the mass media of this general political reform. It can be con-

cluded by way of introduction that with regard to mass communication the above mentioned specific political reform has the following characteristics:

1. A reform of the mass media is one of the most sensitive parts of a political reform because in it social contradictions appear in a concentrated form as though they were the essence of it all.

2. Unlike in other areas of society (for instance, in the economy) a gradual approach can hardly be adopted here because, as a result of its concentrated political content, the process of restructuring is more automatic than elsewhere.

3. A reform of the mass media is one implication or manifestation of the reform of all the other spheres of society and is consequently extremely suitable for launching a general political reform, acting as a catalyst and a means of mobilising public opinion; in short, it is the optimum form of launching a general political reform and of bringing about a change in the paradigm of political life (as shown by Soviet practice).

In the present emergency situation striking signals of contradictory developments are observable: substantial progress made in one field may well run parallel with considerable backwardness in another. This contradictory state of affairs largely amplifies the malfunctioning nature of society as a whole. One of the areas suffering from backwardness is that of the mass media. In this connection mention must be made not only of the conservation of the extensivist form of the system of political institutions but also of the fact that the image of socialism and the previous state socialist ideology have very largely fallen short of both the internal and external demands of the age.

In a state of uneven development one tends to be increasingly tempted to suggest the use of the "royal short-cut", that is, adopting the method of giving extensivist political emergency treatment to the crisis in an effort to end the "chaotic conditions". Unfortunately endeavours of the above drastic nature are identifiable on the part of the political leadership towards the mass media in spite of the fact that interventions of this kind, resembling the use of "manual control" and the effort to bring back the system of extensivist political direction at all costs under the present conditions will inevitably lead to mounting and accumulated tension in both the short and medium term. On the other hand, a reform of mass communications may well become a catalyst of the development of the whole society.

Comments on the nature of socialist publicity

In general, the notions of publicity, public opinion, public life-private life have been treated in rather an antihistorical manner, for they are invariably regarded as "given", prevailing and obvious for all, which means that although their content can be modified during the successive ages, the structural relationship between them, the way they are related to one another, and their functions essentially remain the same, irrespective of the epoch. The truth is that it is their structural relationship that necessarily undergoes fundamental changes, a process going hand in hand with a change in their function in society as a whole. Today this sort of "restructuring" is due.

Publicity is one of the fundamental principles governing the political system. It is a factor that can both reveal and strengthen its viability by way of the power relations being manifested by it. In other words, power functions by way of publicity only, since by rendering power visible and readable it can orientate people to behave in a particular way. In classical European development the Middle Ages were characterised by a sort of representative publicity. It was far

from being a representation principle; quite the contrary, for power was "represented" by rendering the persons wielding power and the symbolical objects expressing power visible, a process which was invariably accompanied by ritual verbal recalling (i.e. official publication). The solemn atmosphere and richness of forms of the Baroque court constituted the last stage of representative publicity. They had considerable influence to exert on the representative cult and culture of power at a later stage. Closed "public life" and open "private life" correspond to representative publicity; an ordinary person, a "commoner" cannot enter "public" life". Only an individual bearing a "public office" is allowed to do so, but only to the extent of his office. The mainstream of European development reversed the above set-up: in the 19th century democratic bourgeois publicity enforced from below was brought about to replace "court" publicity which had been built up and subsequently declared from above. However, West-European development did retain several elements of the treasure house of forms of representative publicity, a characteristic which became even more predominant in Eastern Europe, representing power by taking advantage of the forms of the "late Baroque period.".

As a result of the development of civilan society in Western Europe, which gained increasing autonomy, publicity emerged as a forum for presenting the different interests of society and for representing and coordinating them. Accordingly, the institutions of representative court-publicity came to be replaced by the system of institutions developed by bourgeouis liberal publicity. In the early stages the press and book publishing were developed under the supervision of public administration as a means of rendering power public but later they increasingly became tools for the manifestation of the appropriate sphere of civilian society. Parallel with the emergency of private ownership, independent private opinion also made its appearance as an independent means of representing private interests on public forums. Hand in hand with the aggregation of interests in civilian society, private opinions became increasingly summarised and generalised. Finally, public opinion came into the picture as a factor reflecting the diversity of civilian society and as a form of the public generalisation of private views. It was the presentation of civilian society as a whole as opposed to the state-political sphere. In the classical period of the bourgeois age, publicity acted as the principal means of controlling power, as a separated sphere. In the initial stages the publicity of social criticism assumed a literary and artistic form (it was in that embryonic condition in which it came to be conserved in Eastern Europe), then it became secular, to develop and change as required by the specific nature of the individual social spheres. The principal object and final goal of the critical "reasoning" of bourgeois public opinion is public well-being.

Bourgeois liberal publicity brought about a highly diversified and increasingly structured system of institutions: the press, book-publishing, forums of debate and, last but not least, the means and forms of parliamentary publicity which grew richer and more differentiated. Simultaneously, this sort of publicity came to be divided into at least two parts, a two-tier publicity composed of "cultured" bourgeois liberal publicity and public opinion on the one hand, and their "uneducated" plebeian radical counterparts on the other. Each of them had their own divergent systems of institutions and values as well as social movements to rely on. While being fully aware of the existence of the above deep-lying antagonism, it must be made clear that official

buorgeois publicity always performs the function of the self-regulation of civilian society, that is, it provides for an order in people's lives, helps the structure of their interests to come into play, offers an opportunity for conflicting interests to be reconciled and for settling conflicts. Thus, elimination of publicity by itself necessarily leads to a rigid but chaotic movement of civilian society, a rapid increase in its conflict potential and, in the final resort, to its fast disintegration and eventual atomisation for which, again, the different phases of East-European development supply obvious examples. Finally, bourgeois publicity also has a legitimation function to perform, since only in debates carried on within the arena of public opinion which, in turn, mobilises the publicity forums and institutions, can such a consensus be "forged" which can then be described by theoreticians as the product of "common sense" and only this can be the standard by which social laws and legislation in general can be measured. It must be underlined that this European development is bound specifically in historical terms and possesses a bourgeois form, but it also has a sort of all-human democratic content. What is meant by this is that the establishment of beourgeois publicity leads to the elaboration of those social and technical means which must be acquired by all modern societies in order to be able to operate normally. However, from the closing years of the 19th century, bourgeois publicity underwent substantial changes brought about by the increasing role played by the state and by its intervention in the sphere of society. Simultaneously, the mass media were gradually making their appearance bringing with them an ever increasingly developed arsenal of their own means. I do not intend to recall that particular historical stage extending as far as the problematics of mass culture and the "consciousness industry" that followed

the Second World War. Rather, I would prefer to return directly to the contrast shown by development in Eastern Europe as compared to Western Europe on the basis of what has been discussed above. In spite of marked differences between the social formations, it follows from the concentration of power that the above described concept of representative publicity may well serve as the starting point for making an analysis of the publicity of the extensivist political system of early socialism.

The principal characteristics of this extensivist political system are as follows:

1. Early socialism saw the "nationalisation" of political publicity. It took the form of making the assumption that the principle of general interest is 'given' and it is monopolised by the political leadership. As a consequence, there is no opportunity for bringing the general mechanism of the representation of social interests into play as the means of developing and transmitting general interests from below. Publicity then becomes one of the specific historical forms or types of representative publicity. Thus socialist representative publicity is by no means a principle governing representation, nor the manifestation of the people or civilian society vis-à-vis the state; in fact it is the manifestation of power possessed by the state towards civilian society and public opinion arising from it. Therefore socialist representative publicity involves a double structure or rather a structural dualism of the official and non-official, declared and actual civilian world and the gap between them could, occasionally, be bridged in a certain sense only by a true charismatic leader. The charismatic property, the ability to appeal to the people directly, however, has so far been regarded as an automatic attribute of each of the socialist leaders, following from the above dual structure. It is ascribable to the belief that the nationalisation of political pub-

licity places the arsenal of the means of socialist popularity at his disposal.

2. Socialist representative publicity establishes a symbolism of its own; public life will thus become something that is sacred, ceremonially and theatrically arranged. This applies in particular to the range of forms of the manifestation of power which are accompanied by suitable verbal publication. These forms of the representation of power are typical of the late Baroque style in the socialist countries: pompously ornamented, while in appearance seeking the forms of classic expression (i.e. in architecture) to appropriately illustrate the policy of greatness and the greatness of politics (the Asian socialist countries tend to directly copy Buddhist forms, that is the representation of power takes the form of the traditional cultural code.) The range of symbolical language corresponds to the symbolical objects, thus the verbal manifestation of nationalised political publicity is likewise bombastic, tending to be archaic and of a Victorian-like complexity being built on a few recurrent thoughts and the idioms expressing them. One speech or oral publication can, therefore, hardly be distinguished from another; its function is not the announcement of something new but the expression of constancy. That is why it does not emphasise the personality of its bearer, but differs according to his political situation. The form the announcement of changes takes is a slightly more refined formulation making use of the previous phraseology and the ideological and cultural code. It can only be understood hierarchically, that is, the importance and place of the individual expressions and the significance of the new message can only be made out on the basis of the position they occupy in the political hierarchy. This ritualised political publicity very clearly expresses the separation of the "ordinary man" in the street from "public life". At the same time, it reproduces it to an increasing extent, because there is only symbolical and no real communication between the two parties. Theatrical forms, as a rule, have an extremely high alienating impact on the "public" and normally such news items are carried by the public life columns which have nothing to do whatsoever with the ordinary man, or vice versa. For instance, formalities of arrivals and departures at railway stations or at airports, statesmen kissing each other, etc. Sometimes they tend to irritate public opinion directly, an attitude which is enhanced by the fact that the forms adopted in the representative domain have often been imported from the Soviet Union and as such have seemed alien to Hungarian customs and failed to meet people's expectations.

13. Nationalised socialist publicity takes the form of "information" supplied from above, hence in Hungary the term "mass information" is adopted instead of mass communication. Mass information assumes that the monopoly of information is a normal state of affairs and basically the only question it poses are how much information, when and in what ways should be conveyed to the people (to the public) or to specified groups through a number of channels. Thus the movement and channels of information and communication do not express the articulation of civilian society, nor do they render interest structures visible or legible; they are not even useful tools for treating conflicting interests.They are actually a means of the monopolistic direction of society. Thus each of the elements of information, irrespective of whether it is related to a person or object, is fitted in a power hierarchic order which must be adjusted to the all-society political logics of the omnipotent state and not to the internal logics of the given social sphere. It goes without saying that nationalised political "publicity" does not mean a kind of publicity equal to open-

ness but rather the opposite: something that is closed, from which it follows that the movement of information takes place in a limited space and that secrecy becomes a fetish. Meanwhile, the natural closedness of certain spheres of civilian society, that is to say concern with their own-business, equals openness going in a necessarily upward direction. This structure is much the same on the various levels of society, from the centre of power down to the smallest communities, bearing the visible marks of openness upwards and closedness downwards. The same applies to the publicity of party life. As a rule, an average party member obtains little if any information about the internal life of the party and the leading organs. The other way round, however, the information flow is quite substantial even if not adequate due to structural deformations.

4. The closedness of socialist public life and publicity as described above boils down to the failure of the man in the street to learn to speak in a "political manner"; in other words, he cannot express and articulate verbally his own interests, from his own point of view, and those of the group to which he belongs. Nor is he capable of applying it to the movement of society as a whole an declaring it in public with full responsibility. Thus the term 'debate' as is used in this country is a total misnomer when applied to the area of publicity in public life. Originally, it means the clash of opinions but this has become totally lost and so it practically becomes one of the ritual manifestations of representative publicity. Again, the term becomes meaningless even on the plane of ordinary people, because the forums and organisations where people could speak in a political fashion or express their views in a serious form supported by arguments allowing them to oppose the opinions of others are missing. People cannot learn how to debate and argue and so they cannot con-

duct a debate. Following the lengthy numbness of public opinion, the initial stages of awakening are characterised by a number of poor debates initiated by the mass media mostly from above. They then adjust their wordings to the official language of "public life" which sounds so pathetic that even the participants of the 'pseudo-debate' cannot recognise their own previously voiced views. Nevertheless, this "double helix" communication chain of the political leadership and civilian society, transmitted specifically by the mass media is still adequate and rich in information compared to what are termed "social debates". In actual fact they do no more than make a formal contribution (in most cases by the nationalised organs of social representation, incorporated in the state machinery) to decisions elaborated well in advance. Thus they serve merely to render them legitimate.

5. If the man in the street fails to speak in the system of representative publicity, the political leadership will necessarily not "hear", that is, it will not be able to learn anything about essential developments taking place in civilian society at large or take notice of what is formulated by public opinion. A downward flowing system of mass media will be unable to provide for two-way communication and exchange of information. Thus, it is a scheme functioning inadequately and inefficiently because it will prevent not only the ordinary man from having access to information about events occurring in the upper regions of politics but it will also deprive the political leadership of the opportunity to obtain adequate information necessary for managing the affairs of society. This is an issue that is not related to the intention of obtainig information. It follows from the structural characteristics of the system built up in a reverse fashion (i. e. from top to bottom) and the isomorphic nature of the buildup of the political system that

this system can hear nothing but its own (loud) voice occasionally accompanied by minor or louder noises made by its inadequate internal operation. This is because information coming from below is necessarily adjusted to real or presumed expectations as a consequence of the dependence of the lower units of the system. This structural fact of the perception or wrong perception of the political system or leadership embedded in the system of representative publicity is a serious conceptual obstacle to treating conflicts. Therefore the tensions that arise must reach a very high level in each area if they are to be rendered more or less adequately perceptible. However, even in that case the danger still prevails that the political leadership will consider these contradictions either in an ideological fashion which is founded upon a previous image of socialism or in a long historical perspective and will interpret them accordingly. It is undoubtedly the fundamental contradiction of nationalised political publicity that it is incapable of conveying "politics" to the people of the street in a language they can understand. To make matters worse, it also prevents the operation of feedback, i. e., the flow of information to the topmost levels about "small politics".

6. As a matter of fact civilian society and political publicity are identical notions. In actual fact they have the same meaning the difference lying in the sides from where the approach is made. Civilian society comes about, becomes organised and expresses itself through different organisations, institutions, bodies and levels so that it is manifested on the plane of political publicity. In fact it is civilian society that creates political publicity interpreted in a modern sense. It is therefore an indispensable condition for its successful operation, since the increasingly pluralistic interests must be made public, expressed and made to clash with one another after they have

been formulated in the language of politics. This is the essence of the normal operation of civilian society. It can be brought to a halt only for a brief spell (in the event of a war etc.) and under very special conditions but without paralysing the activities of society as a whole. This political publicity is structured in a sense that it is a closed and exclusive information system within its own area, yet it is open both horizontally and vertically and wishes to manifest itself. We know only too well that in Eastern Europe an organically developed civilian society was not brought about, as we are also fully aware that the heterogeneous structures existing in Central Europe were brought down by force and at a rapid pace. But we are less aware of the fact that one of the principal means used in the process was the introduction of official or nationalised publicity, since the organisation of civilian society is incapable of operating without having a publicity of its own. It is the inherent contradiction of representative publicity that although there can be official publicity to a certain extent, the existence of "official public opinion" is ruled out completely because public opinion is organised from below as the generalisation of private opinions. That is why official publicity has not been able to establish an official public opinion; besides, it has not allowed real public opinion to be organised and manifest itself except secretly, which means that the forms assumed were distorted and inadequate.

Thus representative publicity is automatically accompanied by dual publicity and dual public opinion (or further segmentation of both). In fact true public opinion becomes the opposite of itself, or quite frequently its own caricature (I have my own opinion but I disagree with it); the manifestation of views is reduced to the status of jokes. The man in the street is made to play a political role and speak as befitting in public life. By doing

so he is rendered not only infantile and inappropriately oriented but, if he happens to confuse the role he is playing or makes a slip of the tongue, he is likely to be drafted into the ranks of the "opposition". In an attempt to avoid this, the overwhelming majority tend to choose the attitude of political idleness and "silence".

7. In the representative publicity of the extensivist political system of early socialist society, the role played by mass communication or the related media is a duel one in "supplying information": partly it transmits and publishes the views of the political sphere and partly it deputises for politics or substitutes public opinion. The former role is the primary and predominant one, for the first and foremost duty of the media is to transmit the closed publicity of "public life" and the representation of power to the "commoners", to render power relations visible or legible, as the case might be, for the ordinary man. This is the extent to which the media can be information carriers, for the essence of the message they transmit is not information to be imparted but to render the political system an everyday factor for public opinion. To this end, the media borrow and adopt the official and ritual manner in which the political system happens to be speaking simultaneously making it intelligible by putting it into everyday language. It generally takes the form of a news analyst posing in the role of "self-made politician" to act as mediator or transmitter between the political sphere and civilian society: whatever he happens to be saying or doing is of a political function and has political relevance, without he himself being a "politician". Since true public opinion is of an organisational structure (although rather underdeveloped and chaotic) different from that of the political scene, the media not only transmit but also impose the ideological conceptual models and selective pieces of information on their "audiences" (viewers, listeners, readership). The media as such, in their barenness, as the only windows on the world at large, are both attractive and repulsive to the man in the street. Since they are incapable of feeling his demands, it is their common characteristic to exaggerate things. Once a topic is fed into them, all they can do is to overemphasise it and repeat it too many times, bringing about the feeling of saturation on the part of the „audience".

8. The fact that mass communication is playing the role of transmitting politics, that it is organised from above and that it is controlled directly rules out the option of playing a critical function. However, its function of acting as a substitute for politics involves the latter role, since it must work, willy-nilly, with empirical material drawn from reality and is therefore bound to clash with schemes specified on high. Thus what it potentially does consists in disclosing contradictions and voicing a measure of criticism. It follows that the media emerge as the plane or domain on which the true contradictions, tensions and interest structures make their appearance, however deformed they might be. In other words, a pseudo-political sphere is thus brought to life in which problems are brought to the surface and the actual people involved also appear. This is a process generated from two ends: partly "from above" because in the press the "pluralism" of the apparatus and the different branches are brought into play (however softened the tone might be) as the manifestation of official publicity and partly "from down under", because the problematics of civilian society also find their way into the media. This in turn pushes the media into a "state of uncertainty" from both the top and bottom ends instead of allowing them to operate as a well-organised machinery, since adhering to the rules specified above invari-

ably leads to the fading of the role of transmitting the political sphere, while coming out in support of the problems indicated "down under" is a similarly destabilising factor. Willy-nilly the media assume several functions of the political sphere and large masses of people will thus practice their own public life and take advantage of their right to "grumble" in a verbal fashion in the press. The role of "wonder worker" as played by the publicity of the mass media is quite characteristic: it partly acts as a safety valve designed to ease a certain measure of tension (think of the practice of the political cabaret as a substitute for politics) and partly as the eventual forum that is the only factor capable of finding a solution to the individual practical problems: after publicity is given by the mass media to the minor or major problems in the socio-economic system, they can be settled as a rule (that is why a large proportion of public opinion regards the television and the papers the only possible means leading to the repair, say, of the flat roofs on houses). This in turn constitutes increasing pressure exerted by public opinion on the institutions of mass communication in an attempt to get them to broaden their own range which has little if any to do with their basic mission.

9. Since mass communication is made to play the role of transmitting the items of politics and deputising for politics, it is characterised by overregulation both from inside and outside and by the absence of independent movement. The mass media reflect the structural forcefield of the extensivist political system not only in terms of their external relations system but also with respect to their internal conditions. They lack structure and are overcentralised simultaneously. They are structureless because differentiation relating to the corresponding spheres of society life is absent and they are excessively centralised in terms of their internal power relations since they

reproduce the centralisation of the external power structure in the operation of their own information and communication system, bringing about a clash between the professional and political elements. The mass media produce their "goods" for sale on a political market, and while doing so, are constantly tempted by the opportunity of meeting the demands of the purchasing power of the information market of civilian society. However, as long as the fundamental rules governing representative publicity prevail, they cannot fulfil any of their roles. Therefore, they will not function adequately in either of the two fields nor will they be productive. It must be mentioned in this context that the mass media are suffering not only from being unable to solve the dilemma of selling their products or keeping people informed. They also suffer from schizophrenia of the latter function caused by the problem of limitation in the various spheres of their activities. This has not as yet been sufficiently clarified in principle. Besides, the general order governing them is disturbed or upset ever so often by actual interventions or shorter or longer spells of switching over to "manual control". In the final resort, all this is precipitated in the sphere of public opinion, reappearing as the open contradictions of the media, frequently taking the form of verbal nonsense. The journalist experiences utter frustration, stemming from the structural contradictions of the information system. Part and parcel of this problem is the question: what can be described as "socialist" (or "loyal", "progovernment") press? In this context the conflict between the demands of providing information and those of the criticism of reality is quite clear, similar to the domain of theory in which the adjective "Marxist" can only be applied to the person prepared to accept our day-to-day practice without reservation, even if not long after what was previously

regarded as "criticism" becomes the official opinion in the majority of cases.

10. Political publicity is characterised by two principal functions in the classical history of European development: it exercises *control* from the aspect of the democratic representation of interests and it *legitimates* by carrying on an activity resolving conflicts and bringing about consensus. In representative publicity, however, emphasis is undoubtedly shifted over to the latter function, or even it can essentially be exclusive in the earliest stages. In the second half of the 20th century, however, after the "who defeats who" issue (power) has ceased to figure high on the agenda, representative publicity becomes increasingly a factor failing to function true to its mission: instead of legitimising, it is largely engaged in delegitimisation. Dissatisfaction with the political system arises first and foremost as mass dissatisfaction with the media, "the information service". It is formulated and voiced frequently and its "secondary publicity" is in fact wide-ranging and truly open publicity. The customary reaction displayed by the political leadership to this development is for nationalised publicity to take the form of "improving" the information system directed from above, a scheme considered to be obvious. In actual fact this is a process of refining or updating the strictly bound information and management system on what is known as the "plan instructions" basis. This form has been exceeded by the march of events along with the potential involved in the economic management system founded upon plan instructions given centrally. However, the acceptance of the necessity of direction from above has left behind a detrimental dogma even in those criticising it: it is still believed that mass communication as such can be reformed, "improved" and made more efficient; however it can only be modernised as part of democratisation.

Midstream

Representative publicity is an organic element, part and parcel of the extensivist political system of socialism. It is both essentially a starting point and counterpoint for a plan for reform, which means that the tasks to be accomplished are formulated also from the negative angle. In the period of transition the following conditions must be taken into account:

1. The structure of representative publicity outlined earlier presents only its "ideal type" which a) portrays the reality of the 1950s with reasonable approximation, b) is a tough reality in several socialist countries and is the environment in which Hungarian mass communication functions and provides one of the factors conditioning Hungary's foreign affairs c) and even if it fails to describe adequately all the phenomena common to Hungarian mass communication, it mirrors its essence accurately; in other words, there has not as yet been a fundamental and final break with the structure of representative publicity.

2. Moving away from the original and classical model of representative publicity is a considerable development in the Hungarian context. But since its essence is increasingly characterised by excessive tension and contradiction, and since it has been retained in some anachronistic forms, this contradiction has its own negative or, if you like, chaotic consequences. Internal uneven development is an additional aggravating factor making the problem more complicated.

. 3. Enhanced expectations of the Hungarian people have come to be largely intensified in the second half of the 1980s by "glasnost", the appearance of the new Soviet political thinking on the scene. Since Hungarian mass communication is presently overregulated, it can neither keep pace with nor "isolate" the novel Sovient development. Thus there is an even bigger contrast between reality and

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expectations, as can be seen if it is borne in mind that "opposition" youth in the German Democratic Republic staged a demonstration in the name of Gorbachev.

4. The debate in the Hungarian Parliament in the autumn of 1987 is not the only breaking point in domestic political publicity. Backed up by the forums of local publicity that have come storming into the picture over the past ten years or so, a similar breaking point is expected to occur during the next general election at which the demand for publicity, for the presentation of the alternative individual programmes will inevitably be the crucial political issue.

5. So far as its information and communication system is concerned, the world at large is tending to become increasingly more open. The information supplied is more detailed, more thorough-going and broader, the exchange of information is intensive. If under such conditions the present state is maintained, it may well force the Hungarian "information" system to go on the defensive. It could also render the confidence crisis more acute and could provide a scope for the organisation of communities, for a host of alternative and diverse publicity forms and forums are likely to emerge at the opposite end.

Issues relating to the transition from the monopolistic practice of power to the hegemonistic method appear more distinctly in the domain of mass communication in the different social spheres. Therefore, replacement of representative publicity by the democratic representative brand can no longer be delayed on the basis of hegemonistic power practices and a switch-over to an intensivist political system. In connection with the mass media, transition to practicing power hegemonistically means the following:

1. Deploying power and management are no longer of the extensivist type, which means intervention everywhere and any time. They must be confined to making strategic decisions and management of basic principles.

2. It assumes that the scope of authority is specified in principle and subsequently institutionalised, a measure theoretically excluding detailed, constant, continuous or occasional intervention.

3. It demands that the objectively existing articulation of civilian society and the pluralism of its interest be duly recognised and the political system include the principle that the representation of interests presumes publicity, and that the treatment of conflicts is promoted by conflicting interests if they come to the surface due to the functional nature of the process.

Thus it is assumed that the following actual measures are taken for the launching of the reform process:

1. There is need for a position of principle or resolution to be taken or made, respectively, by the Central Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Worker's Party. It must declare the demand for restructuring or reforming political publicity, thereby stating that the Press Act of 1986 is insufficient and obsolete and that it is essential to move beyond the narrow limits it provides.

2. Institutional differentiation must be made which falls in line with the intensivist political system and the treatment of differences, that is, a line of distinction must be drawn between the management of the party press and that of the other media; the scope of authority commanded by the Information Office of the Government must be changed, a parliamentary committee designed to support and supervise mass media must be set up, etc.

3. A new association law should be issued following thorough discussion of the draft both in Parliament and by society at large, which will regulate the whole structure of political publicity not from the aspect of the narrow confines of mass

communication but from that of civilian society. It is envisaged to govern not the press itself but political publicity provided for the units and organisations of civilian society, or its institutionalisation, financing and propagation from the smallest to the biggest one. "Ownership" will thus be an issue not raised from above as a demand or a special favour (i.e. ownership of a paper or magazine), but posed by the actual people in society, people to whom "communication rights" must be delegated not only enabling them to represent interests in a democratic fashion but also specifying their duties and responsibilities as men "speaking in political terms". Hence the establishment of democratic publicity and the bringing about of a system of democratic institutions are not two separate tasks despite first impressiom and also suggested by the term: "reforming mass communication". They are interdependent parts of the one process. Although the decisive element is the democratisation of the system of institutions, if "ownership" too is not subjected to a fundamental change, the former factor is reduced to a meaningless formality and will not be operational.

Recognition of delay and declaration of urgency must be the very first moves during the discussion of a reform of mass communication. This is the field in which backwardness is most apparent within the frame of pragmatic, uneven and contradictory domestic development. This in turn acts as a brake on the dynamism of other areas. The restructuring of political publicity, its separation from the state and decentralisation are called for partly by the wide need for information and orientation brought about during the socio-economic reform process (which can no longer be satisfied by the channels at disposal or by retaining the main direction of flow) and partly by an open system of interest representations. In the latter, if success is to be achieved, then rational, foreseable and calculable behaviour is the indespensable demand to be met by all (corporate and non-economic) elements in society, through which the activities of both the state and one another can be followed. Viewed from the aspect of civilian society it is necessary but not sufficient to emphasise the demand that political publicity be subjected to a reform, primarily in the lower regions, and accordingly a considerable part of the information structure should be transferred to the corresponding organs of civilian society or, alternatively, the elements already existing in that sphere should be developed further. Special emphasis must be laid on the issues of access to information after a system of extreme fetishised secrecy, and on the establishment of the system of information production. The different organisations must set up their own PR organs, with communication being one of their principal means. Moreover, regular press conferences should be held by their leaders or "press chiefs". This is also an international requirement, since it is regrettable how poorly Hungarian companies inform their potential trading partners about their production capacities, goods offered for sale and so on.

Liberation followed by stimulation of the information-communication potential of civilian society will bring about competition in the mass communication field, self-financing of available means and a cultured publicity of the different interest groups. Parallel with the effort designed to exclude or regulate a justified extent of intervention, a development coming in the wake of the regulation of corporate rights, there must be a similar endeavour involving the activity of the mass media and the newspaper owners. Instead of being afraid of the "bare honesty" of party interests and the pluralistic multi-channel information system arising from them, it is essential to support its manifest nature to prevent

it from distortions and inadequate functioning. The one-sidedness of regional and functional interests in "peripheral" mass media can be balanced favourably with the system of means at the disposal of "central" media (the radio, television and the central press) which are required to bring about a clash of opinions. Instead of "official" publicity there is a need for central state publicity which is one element of political publicity playing the role of hegemony. It must act as a mediator between partial interest and not as a representative of the given truth or public interest. To this end both the symbolical and verbal forms of central state publicity must be changed— these are factors exerting too alienating an effect on public opinion and on the population even today; they are alien to life and often exhibit a false pathos. Only after this can both the local and central press be expected to change their uninteresting and drab style and offer fresh, current, attractive and colourful information instead of dull commonplaces, mere scraps of information and self-repetitions.

The crucial point in the whole reform process involving the mass media is the establishment and organisational build-up of the external and internal publicity of the party. Attempts have already been made to achieve the former goal, on certain occasions in particular (European Cultural Forum etc.). Leading personalities showed up at press conferences as the party's spokesmen wanting to explain the given situation. Based upon the positive experience gained then this method should be made regular and institutionalised, for it could largely contribute to the improvement of the party's external and internal relations with the masses. Even greater problems than this concern the party's internal publicity, party democracy and internal debates. It seems that these processes have been stagnating or heading downwards in recent years because elsewhere the emergency situation has induced the reflexes of "manual control" to come into play. At the moment the contrast between the external debates which are in fact of a social nature and publicity plus debates carried on within the party is growing. It is a factor largely preventing party members from representing on additional forums the party's opinion and guidelines which have been discussed, coordinated and made public.

Thus in the restructuring of political publicity, providing for "party publicity" is the primary task to accomplish. Next in line is the settlement in a similar fashion and direction of the different levels of democracy of popular representation, another important issue the essence of which is not confined merely to parliamentary publicity to be given to newly elected MPs, for it also includes elaboration of the publicity structure and information-communication system of the process of nominating candidates and the election itself. The third requirement is the organisation of the above mentioned functional publicity, in other words, bringing an articulated value and interest pluralism of civilian society to life and its direction by the previously considered factors. Thus civilian publicity for its part will also perform the control function and will find itself faced with the democtratic organs of popular representation on an increasingly higher level. I very substantially disagree with the argument that the division of power and the system of counter-forces are products of bourgeois development which are alien to the socialist political system. I profess that they are the only possible methods of the operation of a system of democratic institutions working on very different planes of the social sphere. They do not in the least influence or limit the leading role played by the party even if they are interpreted in an advanced fashion, I mean, in the spirit of the specification of strategic development

targets, their achievement and of principled political management. The division of power and the system of counter-forces correspond to the actual pluralism of interests and to the need for coordinating them. The relevant principal condition is "free press", that is, mass media organising themselves from below and applying self-regulation in agreement with the principle that "one is free to do anything that is not prohibited by law". Political publicity of this kind will necessarily grant actual, dynamically stable legitimacy to the prevailing political system, i. e. it is capable of moving beyond the limits of the existing legitimacy vacuum in which old mechanisms no longer operate, and the new ones have still not come into existence.

In the draft reform outlined above I set out from the demands posed by the socio-political sphere, its inherent contradictions and tensions with intentional one-sidedness. I also adopted the same method when deducting the governing principles. The internal problems of mass communication which are quite substantial by themselves were not used as a starting point. As they say, the mass media do not constitute the "message" itself. Therefore they cannot be reformed by themselves, or if they can, only with great difficulties. In actual fact only those sending the message can be and should be subjected to reform. Restructuring political publicity is a pressing necessity of social dialogue. This is the basis from which the ways and means of a reform of mass communications can originate. They are now very much in demand because following the success story of the 1970s, the public image of the Hungarians is very much on the decline in the world at large. In the effort to renew "our reputation of old" in the world, we can rely only on ourselves and on a thorough renewal or our mass media.

Tamás Szecskő

Communication Planning:
a Learning Process*

In the information household of any modern society there is a rather large amount of information which is handled by the subsystem of the mass media. As regards its share in the national information production, I would not risk any quantitative guesses. But, based on the assessment of the Central Statistical Office (1), the share of the mass media's information output in the overall information production of the educational and cultural sector was 84 per cent in 1960 and 93 per cent in 1984.

I do not want to over-interpret these data. I know that the fast-growing information output of the cultural-educational sector—with the mass media inside—could easily be dwarfed by the growth-rate of information production in other sectors of social activity. At the same time, I am also aware of the volatile character of the mass media's traditional definition. In my earlier example, for instance, its statistical concept covers only the broadcasting, the papers and the periodicals. But what about the new media: the video, the teletext, the home computer, etc.? Technological development dismantles the traditional boundaries between broadcasting, point-to-point communication and computer communication. Even with the most accurate statistical methods, it would be rather difficult to estimate the exact weight of the mass media's information production nowadays. But, undoubtedly, it is an important element in the information household of any advanced society.

This is why I think the experiences gained in assisting long-range planning in the system of mass communication could be of some use for any kind of long-term thinking (prognosticating, planning, policy making) in the realm of social informatics, in its broadest sense.

So, in the following I will try to describe and evaluate some steps of a learning process. A learning process, in which Hungarian mass communication researchers tried to meet the demands of planners and policy makers, in cooperating with them in the elaboration of different kinds of long-range plan. First inside the broadcasting system; and later —right nowadays—dealing with the mass communication system as a whole.

At the end of the seventies, the Hungarian Radio commissioned the Mass Communication Research Centre to prepare social and economic prognoses for the eighties and an assessment of the prospects of technological development in the field of mass media. Moreover, the Radio made it clear that some policy recommendations—based on the prognoses—are also needed, to facilitate their strategical planning for this decade.

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Based on the experiences of this cooperation, two years ago the Mass Communication Research Center was asked again to contribute—in a similar way—to the preparation of a long-range plan for the nineties. And here we are now.

I cannot go into the details of this work, but restrict myself to shortly mention some of the basic lessons learnt in the course of this cooperation between researchers and policy-makers of the broadcasting organisation who, from time to time, are forced to act as planners. In other words, I am looking for some meaningful points of this "interface". My sight, of course, is biased: I perceive more easily the sociologically and politologically relevant issues than those which have a technological or administrative importance.

The first lesson was that of History. It almost broke up the newly made alliance between researchers and planners. In the second half of the seventies all the prognoses and forecasts of Hungarian economists for the forthcoming decade were bright, rosy and optimistic, extrapolating almost linearly the trends of the domestic economic boom for the eighties. This, alas, did not prove to become a "self-fulfilling prophecy". Burdened, moreover, with the deterioration of the international relations, these misjudgements in prognostics made some fundamental parts of the longe-range plan almost worthless. Consequently, — as an evaluative study on the programming policies states— the changes in the programme structures almost wholly neglected the strategic elements and were based on tactical concepts, full of compromises. These structural modifications of programming were just trials to adjust the programme policies to the uneven development of the economic, political, ideological and social spheres". (2)

The second lesson was a technological one. The penetration of the new communication technologies into the Hun-

garian society since the mid-seventies has been mostly an unplanned, unregulated and partly hidden process. It popped up its head here and there, almost by hazard. There has been only one strict set of regulations: that of the COCOM-list, which hindered the influx of some—so called "high-tech"—equipments to Hungary. Consequently, prognoses in this field proved later to be more modest than the forthcoming reality or even pessimistic. The Radio's plan, for example, just for this reason, could not take into consideration the recently rather fast development of the cable systems.

There was also an organisational lesson. Although the researchers' policy recommendations advised some changes in the organisational structure of Hungarian Radio, the plan itself, finalised by the Radio, did not react then. So later, in the process of ongoing programme-structure reforms a partly ossified organisational structure became an impeding factor. As a result, modelling the programme structure, instead of an act of planning, turned out to be a process of bargaining between the top management and the lower elements of the outdated organisational structure.

One could also feel a certain kind of resistance to innovations in the behaviour of broadcasters, both on the managerial and on the programme-making level. The prognoses—and the policy recommendations based on them—emphasised for example the changing functions of modern radio boradcasting. They stressed the entertainment and service functions coming to the forefront, leaving the traditional educational function behind. The Radio, however, built its plan on a basically unchanged set of functions and it is only in the draft of the long-range plan for the nineties that these fundamental changes of the functions are clearly reflected.

As most of the learning processes, these first encounters of communication

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researchers and broadcasting planners were a series of trials and errors. But if the process is really a "learning" one, one cannot take it as a failure. As I see it, basically it was a positive experience both for the researchers and the policy makers. Where do I think the most important assets of these first encounters are to be found?

First of all, where they began breaking down the anti-planning bias of broadcasters. One of these used to take form in the idea that mass communication, being an instrument of the instantaneous present, is—almost "per definitionem"—unable for being planned ... not speaking of long-range planning! This could be called a professional bias. The other is a technocratic one, where the hardware of the medium (or the system) is the independent variable and the programme policies, the communication policies are deterministically dependent on it. So—according to this line of argumentation — it is useless to have any kind of policy planning, mostly not for a longer period: the content of radio 10-15 years from now will be defined by the then existing technical infrastructure.

If one scrutinises them more carefully, it becomes clear that both of these bias tend to escape the future, consequently they are highly disarming. To my evaluation, both of these misconceptions began fading out during the last decade, at least on the managerial level of broadcasting.

Another result of the closer cooperation between researchers and planners was that broadcasters let themselves tempted by some policy recommendations offered by the researchers, which —due mostly to different kinds of vested interests—they did not appreciate first, but some years later—after a "sleeping" period—they became activated in their minds and actions. One can find good examples for this "sleeper effect" in comparing the policy recommendations of the researchers at the end of the seventies

and the draft long-range plan of the Radio elaborated eight years later. Perhaps the most important indication of this development of thinking is how radio broadcasters accepted, step by step, the idea of decentralising broadcasting.

Last but not least, there have been, almost since the beginning, some fundamental concepts offered by social sciences that broadcasting planners eagerly accepted and effectively used in their medium- and long-term planning. The elaborate, multi-dimensional perception of the social structure, for example, based on the findings of sociological research, had a strong impact on the Radio's plan for the eighties, refining the vision of the planners and policy makers regarding the composition of their audience, its stratification and even its fragmentation. (A further refinement of this approach could be found in the draft plan for the nineties.)

This approximation of standpoints should, certainly, be interpreted in a broader social-historical context as well. Some years ago, having experienced the first signs of this drift, I showed in one of my writings of that time that "this cooperation can be attributed to the radical change in the national planning system since the 1968 economic reform, resulting in a closer connection between scientific research and planning, the strengthening of the elements of social prognostics, the growing importance of social indicators, the appearance of the concept of the quality of life, and the start of long-term social planning."(3)

And with the concept of "long-term social planning" here we are at the utmost present. Presently, with the collaboration of a broad range of institutions, the National Planning Office is just in the midst of the preparation of the next social plan to cover years till the first decade of the next Millenium. Among others, the Mass Communication Research Center has also been com-

missioned to participate in the work. Its task is to elaborate some conceptual guidelines for the communication development of the Hungarian society. Considering that this is a work in progress, I cannot report here on the final results, but only indicate some methodological dilemmas and the efforts to solve them.*

The first of these I already mentioned earlier, and this is the dissolution of the traditional concept of mass communication. Allowing that some elements of the concept are undergoing important changes, we assume nevertheless some stable characteristics of mass communication processes, as contrasted to other communication processes of the society. These are:

"— information is mass-produced by specialised organisations;

— information is mediated by technical means which are usually commodities;

— information is mostly tailored for supposed categories of a generalised audience;

— the consumers' role is limited to the choice of the information and to the consent or refusal of the consumption, the processes lacking a concrete and continuous feed-back;

— all these processes deploy among the concrete political, economic, legal moral and cultural conditions of a given society." (4)

I think, delineating the concept of mass communication with these criteria gives us enough flexibility to treat also the new communication technologies. But, beside this multi-folded definition we also needed a set of axiomatic principles which could serve as a consensual basis for all those working in the project, sometimes with very different profession-

al backgrounds (from sociologists to engineers and legal experts).

In the core of this set of principles one finds the statement that the development of mass communication does not have its own intrinsic laws. The basic and overall conditions of this development are the concrete political and economic structures and their dynamics institutionalised mostly in conjunction with each other, in any given society. In principle, however, multiple models of mass communication development could be associated with any variant of socio-economic development, albeit this multiplicity could not be arbitrary. The actual model of development is the result of an interplay between the concrete social processes. Moreover, mass communication development cannot be prognosticated, neither interpreted in isolation of external factors, partly of a global character. These factors—at least in the case of the Hungarian mass communication system—not only influence the prospects of media development, but on certain points even condition them. And the last element in this set of axiomatic principles is the assumption that the infrastructural basis for long-range media-development could be found in new communication technologies. (5)

For concluding, let me mention one or two dilemmas we have met during our work up until now.

One stems from the fact that the last long-range social plan in Hungary, encompassing some 15 years in the seventies and eighties did not contain yet any chapter reflecting the social, political and cultural target-systems of mass media development, this field of social activity having been solely described by mere technical terms (the volume of investments to be allocated here, the pa-

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* The Editor's note: Since the presentation of this paper the work has already been finished. Its executive summary can be read on p. 53 of this volume.

rameters of the communication infrastructure, etc.). So this plan under elaboration now is a kind of novelty. It means, that necessarily it will have a reactive impact not only on the perception and evaluation of present mass communication processes, but perhaps even on some of the operational decisions of today. Consequently, the plan should be a "rolling" one, even in this aspect . . . rolling forth and back.

The second dilemma—stemming partly from the first one—is the fact that the development of communication hardware, mostly on the consumers' side, has been—as I mentioned it at the beginning —a basically unplanned process, rich in probabilistic elements. Nevertheless, this social stock of hardware represents a valuable part of national wealth. One should not get rid of that: so a more systematic development of the future should combine scrapping with conservation, innovation with continuity.

The third dilemma—linked again to the first two—is that the development of new communication technologies should be in harmony with promoting and modernising the more traditional media of information and cultural diffusion.

Communication policies are undergoing a paradigmatic change nowadays in Hungary. This means that the "rules of the game" are in a kind of basic transformation, notwithstanding the components of the game and their interrelations are supposed to be planned for 20 years ahead. This is, perhaps, more than a dilemma: it is the basic paradox of the project.

And the last open-ended question: how to influence the emergence of this new paradigm of communication policies to be wholly compatible with national information policies on one hand, and with cultural policies on the other?

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Answering these questions, resolving these dilemmas—and many others, e-merging in the process of planning—could result not only in a soundly based long-range plan, but also in the aquisition of a new "know-how" by researchers: an effective dialogue with social planners.

Notes

[1] VARGA, ALAJOSNÉ: *A kulturális információs tevékenység fejlődése az elmúlt 25 évben Magyarországon a számok tükrében* (The development of cultural information activity, reflected in data, during the last 25 years, in Hungary), in: Szabó, J (ed): *Tanulmányok az információgazdaságról* (Studies on the information economy), Budapest, 1986. p. 164

[2] NAGY, MÁRTA: *A műsorpolitika változásai a 80-as és 90-es évek stratégiai terveiben* (Changes of programmepolicy in the strategic plans of the 80s and 90s), Budapest, 1987, p. 1. (manuscript)

[3] SZECSKŐ, TAMÁS: Communication Research and Policy in Hungary: Partners in Planning, Journal of Communication, Summer 1983, p. 102

[4] Working document by HELESZTA, SÁNDOR, JAKAB, ZOLTÁN AND TOMKA, MIKLÓS, Budapest, 1987, p. 3 (manuscript)

[5] cf. ibid p. 9.

Long-Term Development of the Mass Communication System

Concept and Alternatives*

From the sociological point of view, the mass communication system is an integral part of the social mechanism and is in itself a system of social factors. It is a group of resources, a technological system with its own independent organisation as well. From the sociological standpoint we can take into account the social claims and requirements of communication systems in relation to the long-term plan for Hungarian mass communications. We can look beyond both the constraints and the impetus for change arising from scientific and technical developments, and balance all these factors out evenly. The social science approach makes it both possible and necessary to take into consideration the role of socio-economic changes as well.

I. Communications development: starting point, driving force and framework

1. *Fundamentals: the present development level and structure of Hungarian mass communications.* Among various communication media, the telephone, television and the press are regarded as seriously behind the times. At present, all things considered, radio can be placed in the medium range of European development. However, the Hungarian News Agency is the equal of national news agencies in Western Europe. Among the newer means of communication, the most widely spread are personal computers. In addition, the level of distribution of video and cable television is fairly remarkable. Other means like teletext and telefax are still in the embrionic stage. Thus the most apparent feature is the uneven development of the various media, which, following the logic of the "weakest link in the chain principle", adjust the whole Hungarian communication system to the level of the least developed means.

A similar disproportion may be observed in relation to a number of functional considerations, e.g. between the fact that the there radio channels are broadcast in the ultra-short wave range and the distribution of appropriate re-

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ceivers; or between the proportion of colour TV sets in Hungary, and the fact that almost 100 % of programmes are broadcast in colour.

The main characteristic features of the organisational structure are the following: large scale territorial concentration of information production in Budapest; the concentration of information production in monopolistic (Hungarian Radio, Hungarian Television, film making, sound recording) and oligopolistic (there are only four big companies publishing newspapers and jorunals) organisations; the monopolistic concentration of distribution (Hungarian Radio, Hungarian Television, Hungarian Post, MOKÉP); the organisational separation of edition, production and distribution, i.e. the lack of vertical integrations; the large-scale centralisation of ownership licences and functions in state and party institutions, the tendency to separate managerial functions from the level of administration and to transfer them to the level of ownership; finally, the formation of a sector comprising certain new media (e.g. video) which is in practice unregulated.

This structure is in harmony with a number of other subsystems in the state organisation but it reacts with difficulty —perhaps disfunctionally—to both new social requirements and the challenges arising from the international media. Its ability to move is reduced by two further factors. The media's political and social role has always been greatly underestimated and they have been regarded as unproductive. As a result, the resources allocated to their development have frequently been qualified as a sacrifice rather than a fruitful investment. Moreover, no communication policy with a comprehensive approach has been formulated which would have been able to properly reduce disproportions, increase the adaptational ability of the communication system, and rationalise as well as accelerate development.

2. *The new communication challenge* is a diverse, complex phenomenon. Its basis is that the application of new communication technologies brings about comprehensive changes in communication relationships, permeating beyond culture and politics into spheres like industry, commerce, financial management, tourism, health, scientific research, etc. The development, production and distribution of new communication technologies is largely determined by the market strategies of transnational companies. At the same time, our own flexibility is narrowed down as we aim for compatible adjustment; all of which gives the challenge of new communication technologies a great deal of political weight.

The economic outlook on this challenge indicates that this compatible adjustment will be an expensive process, requiring a lot of spending on imports. However, it looks like being even more "expensive" if this adjustment is not undertaken, as we become more and more economically out-of-date.

The cultural significance of the challenge is that some of the new communication technologies (satellite broadcasting, video) increase the international character of information services and decrease the amount of control that can be exercised by individual countries. The commercialised international culture conveyed by the new communication technologies significantly limits the ability of society to define its own culture.

This challenge is expressed in the organisational and managerial spheres too. The new technologies multiply the number of channels and services that can be utilised by consumers. Mass communication in the sense of "uniform mass consumption, easy to control and regulate" (e. g. one-channel television) ceases to exist. The many kinds of com-

munication services interact with each other in a widening variety of ways. The integration of transmission networks results in the creation of a common infrastructure of different telecommunication and mass communication services.

Through new communication technologies, the communication industry (intertwined with computer science) is one of the most dynamically developing factors in the economies of developed capitalist countries, and this role in all probability will continue in the decades to come as well. Therefore the new communication challenge is a lasting trend.

Finally, the appearance of the new communication technologies is leading to a widening of the traditional definition and interpretation of mass communication. We include here, for example, a) telecommunication and direct broadcast satellite systems (either television or radio), high-definition television, cable television networks of high transmission capacity and their special services, secondary information systems offered by radio and television (teletext, radio data systems, etc); b) video, video disc, compact disc, etc.; c) remote information systems relying on an up-to-date telephone network (videotex, public computerised data bases, etc.), different means of picture and text transmission (e.g. telefax); d) extremely high capacity transmission systems (fibre optic, cable networks, digital network); e) electronic means of editing, setting and printing texts; etc.

In other words, the new communication challenge means the appearance of a communications sytem more complex than previously seen, following to a greater extent its own laws, which will require new forms of acceptance, utilisation and regulation, i. e. social, political and economic handling, both in its mode of operation and in the culture conveyed. Since it is tightly connected with economic and technical development, moder-

nisation, the development of international relations, etc. it cannot simply be neglected or settled with prohibitons. Practically the only question is under what set of conditions it may be utilised.

3. *The basic conditions of communication development.* The answer to be given to the new communication challenge will be determined by international economic and political relations, domestic social-demographic development and the success of Hungarian political-economic development. In the first group of these decisive factors we examine a powerful and influential system of interconnections. In the second group we look at a process that can be relatively easily projected into the future, and in the third group there are several possible alternatives.

The context of world political and economic development, starting with the determining influence of cooperation and mutual interdependence between the two world systems, presupposes for the next two decades the following: a) the continued competition of the two leading mulitary powers: b) continuing political and economic polarisation of the world: c) the increasing role of education and training, on the one hand, and communication and electronics, on the other, in enhancing the innovation ability of the country; d) the relatively weak ability of the CMEA countries to adapt, and the continuation of their backlog; e) a generally increasing flow of capital, people and information within the CMEA. (Which, however, may be limited e.g. by violent efforts to assimilate nationalities in smaller countries).

Among the social tendencies in Hungary—on the basis of the level of proceses, the subject of the changes and the degree of determination—it is necessary to differentiate between the demographic and structural mobility of society, the changes in way of life and the

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transformation of the social system and organisation.

A diversity of changes between demographical and structural mobility may be predicted with a fairly high degree of certainty over the next two decades as well. a) The total number of the population will decrease (or be stagnant). b) There will be a significant increase in the proportion of elderly people (and at the same time the number of young adults will grow too). c) The number of people with advanced training and education will rise but the proportion of people with diplomas will lag behind almost all the countries of Europe. The reduction in the prestige and sellability of higher education will hinder the increase in the number of intellectuals. d) The rate of social mobility—compared to the period following World War II and the '50s (early '60s) will slow down and the mobility of a strongly upward trend earlier will be replaced by a more moderate mobility trend and then by a trend towards downward mobility. e) Integrating the earlier elements as well: the increase in social differentiation will probably be the most important part of any change in the social structure. The gap will increase between a group with an outstandingly high living standard on the one hand, and the marginal lower strata separated almost hopelessly from the higher financial levels and opportunities of society. A further manifestation of differentiation will be the strengthening of the national, linguistic, ethnic and religious communities as well as group-forming factors and the growth in the identity and social autonomy of such groups., f) All those changes will significantly increase the tensions within society, especially the tensions between the generations.

In this changing of way of life, economic difficulties will continue to grow, which the large masses will try to counterbalance by increasing individual performance—primarily by work performed in the second economy. That will go hand in hand with a further reduction in leisure time, the restriction of human relationships and consequences detrimental to health (stress, stress ailments, a decrease in average life expectancy, etc.)

Among the changes in social structure, the dominating role will be played by centrifugal and differentiation tendencies. a) Further regionalisation is a process impossible to stop. (The development of local autonomy may be gravely hindered by lack of necessary infrastructure, particularly in relation to communication.) b) Also inevitably, economic modernisation will encourage segmentation of the social structure, i.e. the autonomy of individual fields (economics, culture, the network of human relationships, morals, free time, etc.) as opposed to central control and regulation. c) Even more clearly, the world of personal relationships and the world of organisations, in fact two different systems of operation, will become even further apart, and the task of mediating between them—a typical function of communication—will grow more difficult. d) Finally, all this differentiation and centrifugal movement, or simply the rapid change in everyday culture, will repeatedly create the impression of disorder and anomia, whose most palpable and conspicuous elements and signs include lack of community, uncertainty and erosion of values.

Among the possibilities for economic and political development in the next two decades, one theoretical projection is an optimistic scenario which ensures an annual economic growth above 3 per cent, as a result of rapid modernisation of the Hungarian economy, a significant increase in its exports to the capitalist countries and multilateralism gaining ground in the CMEA. The opposite extreme outlines a scenario of recentralisation in the event of the failure of reform attempts, leading to economic stagnation, competing social groups of signifi-

cant sizes and an attempt to "create order" by recentralisation. There is a slim chance of the occurance of either extreme scenario.

The economic situation of deterioration in the significant export markets of the Hungarian economy in the long run, the perpetuation of the bilateral structure within the CMEA, the inconsistent manifestations of Hungarian political will directed towards reforms and the unchanged slow pace of modernisation of the Hungarian economy lead to a scenario in which the present level is maintained. Parts of it involve a lasting and significant reduction in home consumption and the standard of living, shortage of goods, disturbances in public services, inflation, a significant increase in social tension, the unchanged character of the social institutional system and the slow pace of the development of socialist democracy. This scenario has a significant probability—just like the next one.

Moderate growth achieved in significant export markets in capitalist countries, the lastingly bilateral structure of the CMEA, the transformation of the production and product structure of the Hungarian economy more rapidly than before, the manifestation of political will aiming at comprehensive reforms—those are the factors enabling the conception of a scenario of change. In the course of more rapid economic modernisation, new forms of property will come into existence, the intensive system of the ownership of socialist property will develop, the autonomy of participants in the business sector will grow. On account of this increasing openness, but still within the framework of a modern-day interpretation of the leading role of the party, the actual functions and scope of authority of the separated state structure—mainly parliament and the government—will widen and there will be an increase in the relative autonomy of special interest bodies. The reduction in living standard

and the unevenly distributed burdens of a more rapid modernisation will generally lead to social tensions which, however, will be successfully handled by the political institutional system, so they do not throw the viability of this verson into doubt.

II. Communication needs and development trends

1. In order to maintain and optimise its output, society and its subsystems (such as politics, the economy, culture, the organisation of everyday life, etc.) must be properly informed about its external potentials and the situation of all its elements as well as any changes in those elements, i.e. they have *communication needs*. These comunication needs can be examined by social subsystems. However we must keep in mind that these requirements frequently figure in the function of previously mentioned scenarios of general socio-economic development.

The handling of social changes makes it necessary to transform and adjust political practice in several fields. The image of political leadership able to solve all essential problems, and of the state "looking after all its citizens" is about to cease to exist. At the same time, the effectiveness of traditional governing techniques and influence-broking is decreasing. Aware of the increasing differentiation of society, the increase in tension, the erosion of values and apathy and cynism on occasion, it is a standing problem to legitimise power, reach an integration through recognising differentiation and to handle tensions and establish concensus—even temporarily, or with reference to just one or two social groups. Those conditions give rise to the following needs: to provide more differentiated ways of disseminating information, to offer background and guidance prior to political decisions and to develop open-

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ness and make bilateral communication general.

In the economic sphere, the increase in complexity (of the number, autonomy and system of connections of economic units), the attempts to enhance productivity, the transformation of the labour structure and the changes in demand create different kinds of communication needs for both the economic structure and the society it serves. Increased demand for information increases the significance of the press, videotex and the public data bases. In rationalising work, the role of personal computers and the new potentials of text comunication (telefax, etc.) becomes more significant. Promotional activity is increasing in the handling of market relations.

The communication needs of education, public education and the scientific sphere follow, among other things, from new educational techniques (audiovisual technology, distant education, etc.), the obligation to prepare for the application of new audiovisual technology, as well as from the appearance and utilisation of new scientific data sources (data banks).

In organising everyday life, communication needs stem partly from the increasing demand for information pertaining to practical use (services), and partly from the entertainment capacity of a part of the new media. Even in the case of increasing economic difficulties, an increase in the time spent watching television (and the programmes broadcast via satellites), as well as in the demand for video and personal computer games can be anticipated.

All this appears at a moderate level in the scenario of keeping socio-economic development at the same level, and more definitely in the scenario of changes. In the latter case, social differentiation, especially the stronger manifestation of the role of locality (regional and local broadcasting, cable systems, local papers, etc.) goes hand in hand with a significant increase in the demand for local mass communication. The erosion of values and the deterioration of community create communication needs irrespective of the development scenario. In the scenario of changes, however, a role of key importance is played by accessibility to new communication techniques in the promotion of values and community development.

The existence and formation of new communication requirements is a decisive factor for development policy too.

2. From the angle of needs, a basic factor in the development of mass communication is a *diversity of means, channels and information.* In addition, four types of different development needs must be distinguished on the basis of the character of territorial accessibility and the circle of users. In the area of resources of uniform territorial accessibility and general demand, the two national television programmes will be faced by the competition of foreign programmes broadcast via satellites in the medium-term at the latest. Should significant progress take place in the development of general openness (i.e. in the scenario of changes), then a significant increase in demand could be expected for the quantitative development of the press. In so far as resources are uniformly accessible for meeting specific requirements, a significant increase in demand may be expected, according to the scenario of changes; a relatively rapid development of video can be anticipated; organisational demand for the services of the Hungarian News Agency will increase; there will be demand for establishing a fourth national radio music and entertainment programme (plus advertising); depending on the development of openness, demand will increase for papers and journals written for special interest groups; computers will keep on spreading and their communication potentials

will increase (e.g. used as distant copying machines or for distant correspondence); even without becoming more wide-spread, means like special publicly accessible data bases, videotex, telefax, the new means of recording and playing back sound (CD, DAT) will increase the diversity of communication. In the area of territorially differentiated accessibility and general demand, in the scenario of changes there will be a significant increase in the demand for, and competition between the regional and local services (radio, television, cable transmission, press). Uneven development, typified by differences in both demand and accessibility not just for radio and television programmes of a regional character, but also for local community and denominational press, semi-private video clubs, cable transmission etc. will be inevitable in the scenario maintaining the present level too, but it will receive a really great impetus in the scenario of changes.

III. Structures, ownership relations, forms of regulation

Several deficiencies in the present structure of mass communication act as incentives to development. On account of territorial and functional concentration and centralisation, it is not always possible at present to properly satisfy information and communication needs afflicted by a diversity of conflicts too. This deficiency will keep increasing with the further differentiation of requirements in the future. There is a great deal of unused capacity and potential in the present system. As demonstrated by the experience gathered so far, the present system does not promote the spreading of new media in Hungary. This structure is not an economising one, neither does it seem suitable for efficiently mobilising non-centralised resources. Finally, this struc-

ture offers no protection against a further strengthening of monopolies. In contrast to all that, it appears useful to reduce monopolistic concentration and centralisation in the development process aiming at changing the organisational structure. Another useful trend of structural development is interorganisational cooperation, and thereby the integrated introduction of new media and services.

In the present system of mass communication, five types may be differentiated from the point of view of the form of ownership:

— *Central ownership* (the mass media of the state and the party; the Hungarian News Agency, Hungarian Television, central, county, town, state and party papers and journals, the infrastructure of Hungarian Post);

— *Media operated by institutions and companies* (leisure time and sports papers owned by large social organisations, or belonging to institutions 'representing special interests, sound recording by the Hungarian Record Producing Company, etc.);

— *Community-owned media* (journals of associations, town cable televion): ·

— *Media in private ownership;*

— *Media in personal ownership.*

The number of centrally owned media resources can be expected to grow only slightly in the long run. In the scenario of changes, the number of media resources operated by institutions and companies may increase under the influence of the political reform process, however, it may decrease, at least temporarily, as a result of consumer demand and the more competitive situation in mass communication. The range and quantity of media in personal and private ownership may be taken for granted irrespective of the trend of socio-economic development, however, the pace of development is considerably more rapid in the scenario of changes than in that of maintaining the same level.

Two basic historical models are known in the comprehensive regulation of mass communication: political and market regulation. The varied scale of political regulation covers central, state definition as well as communication entrusted to local institutional and autonomous communities. In the centralised political model, which was put into practice, for example, in the socialist countries (but not only there), political objectives play the decisive role; this system is insensitive to demand, and in theory it also excludes any consideration of the principle of profit. It shoves the burden of development onto central redistribution performed by the state. In the market regulation system, which is the dominating one in a number of western countries, though it has not been implemented in its pure form anywhere, the different political (and other) functions of mass communication are manifested, to a greater or lesser degree, according to the laws of supply and demand. Today in Hungary a mixed practice of centralised political and market regulations is manifested, unifying the disadvantages of both. A few requirements for a regulation system which seems inevitable for the development of the mass communication system are the following: a) It is necessary to clearly define the media resources, in respect to which the mechanisms of political regulation (partly decentralised community regulation) will fundamentally apply. b) It is intended that all media and systems of media will be chiefly regulated by market mechanisms. On the whole, it falls within the general purpose to shift the regulation mechanisms in the direction of community regulation (while the role of the market grows by itself, and irresistibly), on account of adjustment to the demands of society becoming increasingly more differentiated, the protection of different minorities (cultural, linguistic, national, ethnic, ideological and others), the limited character of the sources of development, the intention to avoid a reduction in consumer demand, as well as the implications of assumed development trends in the political institutional system.

IV. Development trends in media organisations and systems

1. *The function of news agencies.* Taking a look at all the prospects, there will probably be a significant increase in the number of organisations and institutions consuming information, as well as in the demands for quantity, speed and specialised character of information. The development of democracy in public life goes hand in hand with a multiplication of events, scenes and actors, which, on the one hand, requires a network collecting and conveying news more frequently, on the other, increases the demand for a horizontal flow of information. Anyway, it is necessary to significantly develop the Hungarian News Agency's domestic system up to a level matching that of the international network. On the other hand, it is not a feasible idea, nor is it a desirable one, to extend the monopoly of the Hungarian News Agency to other fields (e.g. data banks).

2. In the field of *radio broadcasting,* the frequency ranges at our disposal (Medium Wave, OIRT Ultra Short Wave, CCIR Ultra Short Wave) allow enough room for development. Using CCIR Ultra Short Wave does not mean giving up the OIRT Ultra Short Wave range, but its re-allocation. A demand of great emphasis, therefore, remains to provide receivers with two norms. In the development of the transmission network, the organisational and functional objectives of broadcasting programmes must be kept in mind. In addition to expanding the centrally-owned media, the transformation of the organisational

structure should be channelled in the direction of developing autonomous community-owned media, as well as local radio stations.

a) *Centrally-owned media.* In broadcasting national and regional programmes, the monopoly of Hungarian Radio will in all probability remain untouched in the decade to come. Being financed mainly from the state budget still seems to be the most useful solution. However, it seems inevitable that the proportion of commercial financing will increase.

With regard to developing the range of programmes offered, in addition to quantitative expansion, it is useful to differentiate the profiles of each channel. Radio Kossuth should be transformed from a basically text-oriented programme to one whose main profile is of an informational and cultural character. Radio Petőfi should be moulded into a commercial channel, with an easy format of text-music. The profile of Radio Bartók, mainly broadcasting classical music, should be preserved, consciously accepting that it is directed to a minority in the community. A fourth programme should be established, which would broadcast regional programmes in the Ultra Short Wave range, and beyond their programme time it would have a nationally uniform profile of commercials and light music. This could also include the Budapest regional programme broadcast daily as well as the Balaton programme broadcast in Hungarian during the summer period. Ethnic programmes would be more suitably placed in local stations, to which they should be transferred from the national network. The maintenance of Radio Danubius is justified only as long as it is profitable.

In addition to its advertising activities, some consideration should be given to establishing an independent record company as well as a system of offering services of secondary character, paid after performance, aimed at contributing to the commercial financing of Hungarian Radio.

b) *Autonomous community-owned media.* Taking into account the development in demand for local radio stations, it would be useful to promote their establishment with a media policy based exclusively upon local resources. (Perhaps with ethnic programmes, produced centrally, being treated as exceptions outside local financing). Within the framework of the press law, local social and political organisations could be entrusted with managing local radio stations, independent of Hungarian Radio, entering into a licensing (use of frequency) and contractual (servicing of transmission appliances) arrangement with Hungarian Post.

c) *Domestic industrial back-up* is a weak link in the broadcast development chain, in regard to its performance and intentions in the field of both production and transmission equipment, and in the production of receivers (suitable for receiving both Ultra Short Wave ranges).

3. *Television production and transmission.* The development of Hungarian Television must be aimed at satisfying the information and communication requirements of Hungarian society (and Hungarians living outside the borders of the country) under the conditions created by the challenge of the appearance of satellite broadcasts.

a) Within *"traditional" television broadcasting,* the primary task is to eliminate the backlog in the field of programme-producing technology, i.e. to update the basis of production. An important task is to extend the programme time; to suspend the programme intermission on Monday and to make the transmission time of Channel I and Channel II close to identical. To increase programme time really is a rational aim if the programmes manage to reach the potential audience. In the case of both

channels top priority should be given to completing at least the so-called backbone part of the network of broadcasting stations.

Communication (and programming) policy concerns allow us to draw the conclusion that the financing system of Hungarian Television must be changed significantly. The system of collecting the subscription fees into the budget and then allocating subsidies from the budget could be replaced by having Parliament first vote the funds for a given period, and then allocate the total sum to Hungarian Television. It would be useful to set the subscription fee by taking in account the price indices of production and investment costs. It will be necessary to create an interest in increasing income from commercial activities. Regulations regarding advertising should be introduced (advertising time-limits by time-slot, prohibition of advertisements for children and young people, the possibility of interprogramme advertisements depending upon genre, etc).

A marked differentiation should be made between the two channels and their advertising activities should be regulated according to their programming profiles.

Programme policy development could be built upon the developments mentioned above. Within it, it would be useful to formulate programmes well separated from each other, having distinguishable profiles; to increase the quantity of dramatic programmes and high-level cultural as well as light entertainment programmes produced in Hungary; to increase the quantity of relatively cheap but popular programmes (e. g. broadcasting sports programmes); to include the programmes of regional studios in one of the national programmes regularly, every day; to improve the quality of information and domestic current affairs programmes.

b) As a result of the competitive situation in technological development and

communication, *broadcasting Hungarian television programmes via satellites* will be put on the agenda in the next decade. The prime mover is that Hungarian broadcasting must present an alternative to foreign satellite programmes and widen the choice of programmes accessible to the mass audience—in the medium range and beyond—by establishing a third television programme which can only be created within a satellite system. The values of satellite broadcasting might include providing Hungarian ethnic populations in neighbouring countries with programmes. However, it is a disadvantage for the Hungarian satellite programme that it may only be financed from the state budget, which is inevitably limited by other developments and modernisations financed from central resources. There is no reason to start the satellite programme all too rashly. The time of efficient, economical and gradual starting may be estimated to be the second half of the 1990s.

c) *Large community antenna systems, cable television.* General social and communication development—both the rapid increase in the demand for diverse, local communication and the expected significant increase in the number of satellite programmes—will already increase in the mid-term the demand for cable systems of higher capacity than those of today. This requires a generational change in the technical level of the systems, financed from the resources of the population, which is worth assisting with communication policy as well as other means. Local community programmes transmitted through cable systems should be fitted into interconnecting local communication systems.

4. *The structure and operation of the press.* Trends in the development of *newspaper production* are increasingly affected by computerisation. Under this influence, changes are occurring in the

division of labour between printing houses and editorial offices. Where an appropriate telecommunication infrastructure exists, an opportunity opens up for decentralised printing of national papers, which may bring about significant changes in the distribution system. Desktop publishing of papers with a low circulation becomes fully possible.

a) In the field of the *operation of the press,* it is necessary to find the proper balance among market, community and central political regulation that will probably require the abolition of central control of circulation, and quotas on paper. Enterprises will need to freely set the selling prices of newspapers, depending on the market situation. Tariffs on distribution activities must be based upon real expenses. The volume of and charges for advertising activities must become dependent on demand. Publishing companies must have the right to make free choices. In the case of centrally-owned publications, political regulation may be reflected in a lower selling price and, in accordance with this, in one-channel subsidies. In the case of institutionally-owned publications, it would be useful to consistently stick to the principle of the owner of the paper having to obtain the sources of subsidising such a paper or switching over to market financing. It should be a precondition of the existence of autonomous and community papers that the given group is able to maintain its press from its own resources. It is a basic principle of regulation that the press has to fit into the whole of the economy (and economic development); it must create the resources necessary for development by itself; and it must meet the demands originating from social differentiation. All this is hindered by the oligopolistic organisation of publishing activities—the absolute majority of the four large publishing enterprises—i.e. it is probably a

precondition of development to transform the organisational structure.

b) In the past few years, the transformation of the *structure of the press* has been characterised by a decreasing demand for national dailies and an increasing demand for local dailies, as well as the attempts aimed at establishing a local press. If the efforts and conditions remain unchanged, it may be supposed that there will be a further decrease in the circulation of the central papers, the local papers will gain strength mainly at the expense of the county papers and the number of institutional and company papers will be reduced. Should information policy allow a wider political spectrum of publications, then new types of papers owned by associations, groups and foundations will appear. The demand for national papers (their number, circulation) may increase in the scenario of changing socio-economic development. The profit interest of the publishers may induce them to start a national afternoon-daily-style paper as well. The process of decentralisation of territorial distribution, ownership relations and the owners of papers, impossible to stop on the whole, makes it quite probable that the actual scope of press management by the state (and in its wake the scope of legal regulations) will tend to narrow down in the long run.

5. *Video.* In Hungary video is on the threshold of becoming a mass phenomenon. Its spread will be accelerated by both the decrease in its real price and the accessibility to satellite programmes. The rigidity of the present structure, its insensitivity to the market and lack of capital have resulted in cultural and information policy being hardly able to even influence the sphere of video, least of all in the area of management policy. This situation can only be changed by the market and the only res-

triction to the black market would be a really attractive, wide and cheap supply.

6. *Sound recording*. The rapid increase in popularity of compact discs internationally, and their appearance in the domestic market are remarkable, though a market penetration of several hundred thousand CD players can only be expected by the second half of the 1990s.

Today the Hungarian Record Producing Company has an almost complete monopoly in the field of issuing records and a complete monopoly in pressing. It is to be expected that it will have a monopoly in issuing compact discs too (through a joint-venture manufacturing enterprise). There are, however, other organisations (MAFILM, publishing houses) which also issue records. It would be justified to foster the continuation of this tendency for reasons of communication policy, within the framework of market-regulated activities.

7. *Text transfer: tools and services*. Not their appearance, but their actual development and the utilisation of their economic and cultural potential are hindered by the out-of-date nature of the telephone network. The transmission of texts and figures by telephone between two appliances of distant copying (telefax) or two personal computers may substitute certain postal services but may also offer some extra services, The number of appliances in private ownership may be estimated to reach two hundred to two hundred and fifty thousand after the turn of the century.

Hungarian Post intends to start a videotex service in 1988, initially for approximately eight hundred company subscribers. The present estimations of the Post envisage about twelve thousand videotex terminals by the year 2000.

The number of computerised (online) data bases accessible in a public network may be estimated to be 20—25 around 1995. The establishment of another 80 —90 data bases is outlined for a narrower professional circle. One of the greatest hindrances to further development is the insufficient number of lines for data transfer.

The computerisation of banking operations, including remote banking for the population (operations of banking accounts and taking up cash by a telecommunication connection) may appear in the next two decades but it will receive a real role in the scenario of changing socio-economic development only.

V. Points of orientation for expected trends in the demand for mass communication

With regard to personal demand for private consumption, the relative volume compared to total purchasing power can be expected to level out in the longer term. Within mass communication consumption, the proportion of investments will increase. There will be a similar increase in the mass communication expenses in the family budget of the various social strata. A specific way of meeting personal demand, concerning first of all the most developed media, is purchasing from hard currency accounts as well as tourist imports. Both offer increasing potential. It seems that the conditions will continue to exist in the long run to satisfy the upper segment of personal mass communication demand irrespective of the supply in the home market and the price conditions (unless it is hindered by customs policy).

The development of personal demand for private consumption will in all probability be characterised by a large scale of differentiation. In the scenario maintaining the level of socio-economic development, a lasting setback in total demand may be predicted (in spite of an increase in demand from the income elite). The demand level for the media requiring cur-

rent investment (e.g. press) will decrease significantly and its structure will change at the expense of those media conveying political information and high culture. The spread of new media is on the whole very slow. Under the conditions of the scenario of changes, the reduction in demand is of a lower scale and shorter. Following 1995, the change in the economic structure will force a more rapid development of the telecommunication infrastructure. In the wake of political reforms, public life will boost demand for mass communication, whose satisfaction will be enabled by a slow widening in purchasing power. In this case, the personal demand for mass communication will be differentiated in a wider spectre but in a less polarised manner, i.e. with gradual transitions. The rapid development of telecommunication infrastructure makes it possible to have access to several kinds of systems of distant information and the establishment of wide-range cable television may start. There may be an increased demand for the press, mainly regional and local. The spread of new media will accelerate. There may be a significant rise in both the technical level of consumer hardware and the proportion of those supplied with such hardware. (By 2005, television capable of receiving twenty or more programmes, video sets, and televisions with teletext may be present in more than half of the households.)

Magdolna Barcy and János Rudas

Training Journalists — More Efficiently

A Course for Developing Communication Skills

In the following the authors present a concrete form of application of the new method of "training in groups": communication development training organised for radio journalists. They report on the results of investigations into the efficiency of this training method and summarise the specifics of traditional education and group training.

The training and in-service training of experts active in the different fields of mass communication require increasingly more money, energy and other investments. In the meantime it becomes increasingly more obvious that the traditional methods of education are not very efficient or are hardly suitable for providing the participants with new and useful knowledge and enabling them to develop skills applicable in practice. The participants in training and in-service training courses are tired of all the lectures they are forced to attend. They consider most of them formal and superfluous, and they feel that their time is being wasted. The situation is somewhat better when the topic at hand is to get acquainted with a concrete procedure and a given method which seems to be of good use, but dissatisfaction increases when the topic of the course is more complex, more general, of a more comprehensive character (e.g. the role of human factors, management skills, ideological in-service training, etc.). It is not a chance occurance that colleagues must be "bludgeoned" into such courses and other occasions of in-service training.

In countries richer than ours, people realised a long time ago (decades ago) that education cannot be organised just formally, aiming at completing another point of the agenda or enabling the participants to obtain another "piece of paper," for that would inevitably result in low standards and very low efficiency. For that reason, they also came to the conlcusion that it is necessary to break with tradional (prelegating) methods of teaching, and to elaborate training procedures and methods which properly motivate the students, induce them to become active and thus furnish them with knowledge in greater quantity but at the same time easier to put into practice and of a more lasting character.

The new training method elaborated some four decades ago and refined since then has three essential features. One is *personality,* i.e. both the teachers and the students participate in the process personally, with their whole personality. The other is a medium of human size, i.e. *small groups* where everyone "faces the others" and where the interactions among the participants can be controlled. The third one is *personal experience,* own

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experience, i.e. instead of the passive internalisation of knowledge coming from outside, an active change in behaviour occurs, built upon the mobilisation of emotions, and based upon personal acceptance.

These methods may be applied differently, depending upon the objective and field of training. They are used, for example, in manager training, handling organisational conflicts, training communicators, doctors, psychologists, social workers, teachers, i.e. in fields and professions where people deal with other people, and where people want to influence others. The comprehensive name for the above methods is *training in groups*.

In the present article we intend to familiarise the reader with a concrete form of application of this training method: our training of communication development organised for radio journalists. We shall report on the results of investigations into the efficiency of this training, and then we shall summarise the specifics of traditional education and group training.

The framework

In spring and autumn last year, two one-week training courses for communication development were organised by Hungarian Radio. The starting point was that the ten participants (the average number is usually 8—16) and the two trainers retired to one of Hungarian Radio's holiday centres in either Siófok or Gárdony for a week. That was necessary because an essential element of the method is that the participants must be present for the whole process (they cannot come late, they cannot leave early, they cannot be absent from classes). They have to be separated from the environment they are accustomed to: workplace, friends, family. There are no guest lecturers either, the two trainers live and work with the participants almost day and night. The useful time allocated to learning increases to approximately 10—12 hours per day since no-one has anything else to do.

One of the auxiliary effects of being closed from the world is that the learning process becomes more intensive. Being locked up together provides the participants with the experience of existence beyond space and time — and that is what makes the daily programme, which seems very long at first sight and is in fact very tight, bearable, moreover expressly enjoyable.

The objective of the course was to bring about learning — communication development — in the wide sense of the word, by integrating the emotional, mental and behavioural spheres of the personality. The two-phase solution enabled greater efficiency in achieving the objective: the first week started the necessary processes, the second week built on and consolidated the favourable changes that had already begun.

Our methods were derived from the application of personality psychology and social psychology. The weekly learning time of about 50 hours was filled with a diversity of methods. Mainly we worked with the whole of the group. We initiated exercises with didactic aims which were achieved in the group, and then the group discussed the messages that could be derived from them. The participants simulated a veriety of situations in role-plays using several actors. We conducted informal talks about topics recommended by the group and we discussed certain topics—following the exercises—in the form of seminars. At times we gave short introductory or summarising lectures as well.

A few of the exercises and role-plays were recorded on video and the recording was used as an illustration during discussion. The use of the video held an

objective mirror to the participants, on the one hand, and was able to magnify elements of speech and behaviour which would otherwise have been lost, on the other.

The methodology included filling out a diversity of questionnaires and self-knowledge tests about the participants themselves and the members of the group. They were not evaluated by an external person (i. e. the group leader), but the members gave themselves, and received from the others, feedback about their behaviour and personal characteristics. When demanded by the nature of the task in question (time or intimacy requirement), the total group was divided into pairs or groups of three. All this was supplemented by written handouts we had brought with us, connected to individual topics (short articles, excerpts, summaries) and by a film on non-verbal means of communication. Finally, the aim of confirming knowledge was served by a number of written products which appeared on boards, wrapping paper and sheets from notebooks, summarising the individual phases of group work.

Let us say a few words about the role played by the trainers (group leaders). Conducting the course with the results expected required careful and multifaceted preparation (including the preparation of the objects and materials used), an increased level of concentration during the course, a permanent alertness and a maximum level of cooperation. This kind of work required a degree of flexibility, with the help of which the thematics and programme planned beforehand could be adapted to the momentary state and the present level of the group. Beyond being psychologists and specifically trained group leaders, the trainers themselves have several years' experience as group leaders on training and self-knowledge courses in the fields of manager training, higher education, health care and public education.

Topics

The general theme of the course was to develop the self-knowledge and self-image of the participating communicators, thereby developing their skills as communicators. Taking a didactic approach, the main topic was divided into several concrete topics, which were the following:

1. Behaviour in (unusual) situations, different from everyday communication.
2. Communication aimed at solving problems in pairs or groups.
3. The concept, types, obstacles and channels of interpersonal communication.
4. The self-image, self-knowledge of communicators and the image formed of them by others.
5. Analysing typical situations of radio communication.
6. Cooperation and influence.
7. Conformism and its relationship to power.
8. Non-verbal communication.
9. Communication styles.
10. Attentiveness and empathy in communication.
11. Group operation, communication within the group.
12. Analysis of success and failure.
13. Communication and cooperation between groups.

Beyond the concrete topics, which can almost be divided up like a schedule of classes, the course had a thematic unity—although expressed, still hidden in the background—which we tried to manifest throughout almost the entire two weeks.

Let us first mention our investigation of the process of creating impressions in order to affect others. What we wished to achieve was that the communicators would be confronted with the realisation of how their activities affect the behaviour of others.

Similarly, we examined the participation of individuals in different social situations. We tried to bring to the surface the characteristic features of the exchange of personal information, and to shed light on the relative importance of the communicators; their dominant or subordinate role; the degree of attentiveness and empathy; the means of acceptance and being accepted. In addition, we wished to furnish opportunities for manifesting intentions to carry out changes.

We believed it very important that the participants should gather experiences in the course of actions taking place in the group. They were to experience the influence of providing feedback and regulating behaviour (restricting or inspiring) exerted by the group as the primary social (moreover societal) medium. They were to get to know the individual elements of the dynamics of their own personality in the process of group dynamics and learn a higher degree of social—and communication—efficiency within the group.

Finally, it must be mentioned that the key word for the whole course developed through group training was self-knowledge. The exercises brought emotions to the surface and generated emotional interactions. And they, in their turn, initiated the development of self-knowledge, images, assumptions formed by the participants about themselves, i.e. the development of self-image. This was the only possible starting point for any kind of further decisions made by the communicators aiming at bringing about changes. (Naturally, the basis of those changes can only be internal motivation, and not external compulsion.)

Results

The course of communicator development in question served at the same time as a field of research. As one of the main objectives of the research (which is also its expected outcome), we would like to learn how the different group methods, schools and group leaders, as well as the methods and techniques they applied, influence the development of the participants' self-knowledge, personality and social, communication and other skills. Within the framework of the research, every participant fills out a series of questionnaires: before the starting of the course, at its completion and after another six months has elapsed. In our view, the processing and comparison of these may provide us with answers to the main questions of the research.

Still, as a first approach, certain questions in some of the questionnaires may provide some information about the effect and certain results of the course for radio communicators.

(A) One of the questionnaires dealt with what the participants gained from the training. In summary, we asked them in which fields they assumed they would be able to utilise their experiences. The group averages were as follows:

In which fields can the experiences gained in the group be used?
(the maximum possible agreement: 2.0, complete refusal: 0.0)

	Group average
In work	1.5
In family relationships	1.1
In partner relationships	1.5
In other human relationships	2.0

That is to say, the members of the group feel that, beyond their work and partner relationships, it is primarily in their different human relationships where they may put to good use what they learnt during the two one-week sessions.

In addition to the summarising questions, the questionnaire contained 19

statements with which the participants could agree or disagree.

The following statements met with *the highest degree of agreement:*

	Group average
I learnt how people see me	1.9
I am able to tell someone if I am angry with him/her	1.8
I have become more receptive to other people's feelings	1.8
I could be sincere to others	1.8
I can better place myself into the shoes of others in order to understand them better	1.8
I have become more tolerant towards the character and thinking of others	1.8
I understand myself better	1.6

The statements which received *the highest disagreement* are the following (it can be seen from the averages that what we are faced with is not much disagreement as indifference):

	Group average
I have become more content and let things happen to me	0.8
I find it easier to establish and maintain contacts	1.0
I have learnt to handle and solve my conflicts	1.0

It is not surprising that the professional communicators do not feel that they have attained a higher level in establishing and maintaining contacts since they were professionals in that field earlier too. For them the real result is that they have realised—and this is something they could never find out anywhere else beforehand—*what influence they exert on others.* This is a very important step in the direction of conscious communication. We may interpret in a similar manner the statement referring to *the extension of self-knowledge.*

Another separate fruit among the personal results is the appearance of greater openness, sincerity, empathy and tolerance towards other people. This is a laudable fact because beyond developing self-knowledge and communication strategies, there was a definite effort on our part to direct the attention of the communicators to the partner in communication (whether a report subject or a colleague).

We frequently encounter views that psychological methods set as their aims to achieve enthusiasm, uncritical relief and easy successes. Only those who have experienced real group processes may know that acquiring self-knowledge is the result of serious, hard and not always pleasant work. Thus it may be understood that "having become content" and "the happening of things" have been given last place in the list of results.

Finally, the above data also demonstrate that no matter how important it may be for people to be able to solve their conflicts, a short course of this kind is only suitable for directing attention to the existence of conflicts — giving patterns for their solution is beyond its scope.

(B) Another questionnaire dealt with the experiences which were declared by the members to be useful or useless within the group process.

Fourteen statements in the questionnaire had to be evaluated on a four-grade scale (the group average would be 4.0 in the case of complete agreement, 1.0 in the case of complete refusal; the mean value is 2.5).

The statements judged as *most important* were the following:

	Group average
The group helped me understand in what way I exerted an influence on others; the members told me sincerely what they thought of me and how I acted.	3.0
I understood why I thought and felt the way I did; I discovered traits of my personality I had considered unknown and unacceptable before.	2.9

The statements judged as *least important* were the following:

I could use my fellow group members and the leader as model, and follow them as examples. I saw how others handled their problems and how they dared to take risks; I received ideas and was encouraged to do the same.	1.6
In a way the group was like my family. Instead of neglecting my own problems with my parents and siblings, I could understand them. It was like reliving my childhood but this time I acted more consciously.	1.8
The members of the group or the leader of the group gave me direct advice or suggestions as to how I should handle the problems of my life or my significant relationships.	1.9

As to the positive results, the influence on others, experiencing the reflecting function of the group as well as emphasising self-knowledge coincide with the messages from the previous questionnaire.

The participants regarded problem-solving and changing behaviour according to a model as the least important factor. We believe that here too — similarly to the question of solving conflicts contained in the previous questionnaire — the explanation is that a short course is incapable of bringing about changes of such dimensions. True, we never encouraged the members to imitate each other or the leaders; we emphasised instead that everyone must find his own way. This is demonstrated by the result of direct advice and propositions having been included among the less important experiences.

Since the group was organised to develop professional skills and not to solve problems of individual life courses, it becomes understandable why the problems of family and childhood received little significance.

(C) A separate questionnaire dealt with changes in the personal communication style of the participants (this was made possible by everyone filling out the same questionnaire before the course started and after it was completed).

The 51 questions in the questionnaire can be classified in 11 style factors (since we used a five-grade scale, the group average can be between minimum 1.0 and maximum 5.0; the arithmetical mean value is 3.0).

The table on the next page tells us how the course participants judged their own personal communication style and the changes in it. Prior to the course their self-estimation was average; after the course it rose somewhat.

Naturally, just as in the questionnaires presented so far, changes in two directions hide within the average: for it is obvious that all kinds of development, while strengthening certain elements, weaken other elements (in addition to being non-changing, stable elements as well).

Significant positive change can be seen in four factors. There is an overlap in the increase of the values of impressiveness, power of expression and dramatism: behind the strengthening of influence on

	Before After the course		Extent and direction of change
Friendly, ready to help	3.3	2.9	Negative
Impressive, exerting a strong influence	3.5	4.0	Strongly positive
Relaxed, not tense	2.5	2.7	Negligible
Ready to argue	3.8	3.9	Negligible
Seriously attentive	3.8	3.9	Negligible
Punctual, accurate	2.2	2.7	Strongly positive
Expressive (non-verbally also)	3.3	4.0	Strongly positive
Dramatic	2.6	3.2	Strongly positive
Open, personal	3.5	3.2	Negative
Dominant	2.9	2.5	Negative
Opinion about oneself as a personal communicator	3.2	3.1	Negligible
Summarised group average	3.1	3.3	Negligible

others and personal impact hide the results of a number of our exercises and efforts to develop skills to that effect. (The group was repeatedly made to practise exerting an impression, non-verbal techniques enhancing the reliability of communication, different means of exerting influence, communication rich in emotions, etc.) Rising in rank (e.g. expressive style being promoted from place 6 to place 1—2) at the same time indicates a more conscious use of the personal means of communication, and its higher evaluation by the individual.

The fourth factor is accuracy. Earlier it occupied last place in the value system of the participants. Certain exercises in the course called attention to the content of communication, to the importance of accurate methods of handling information behind a practised style.

The three negative changes are more moderate. They are closely connected to the process of becoming uncertain mentioned earlier: to a more realistic self-image. Prior to the course, the participants looked upon themselves as particularly open people; it was the course that made them realise that their openness in communication concerned only a very narrow field of life. They were also brought to realise that they were by no means as friendly and ready to help as they had believed earlier. The increase in empathy mentioned earlier also may have encouraged the participants to reduce their dominance in communication and shift this trait to last place.

(D) Another questionnaire investigated the general attitude towards groups (including the course group). Here too the respondents had to take sides in statements representing different views: on the one hand, views emphasising the advantages and importance of group work, on the other, views expressing lack of confidence or prejudices in respect to groups. From this long questionnaire requiring complicated processing, only those statements where emphatic agreement or disagreement occurred are included below. It will serve as an illustration of the attitude of the participants at the end of the course. (In theory, the group average may move between 1.0 and 5.0; the mean value is 3.0).

The opinions with the highest degree of *agreement* are shown in the upper table on the following page, while the statements which were most emphatically *disagreed* with are presented in the lower one.

The data unequivocally demonstrate that the participants left the course with positive experiences and definite enthusiasm. They became acquainted with a new type of learning and considered it useful from the point of view of their own development. At the same time and equally unequivocally they show that

	Group average
Groups do not change us basic- ally, but in the meantime we learn a great deal about the world of people.	4.4
Too many inhibitions have been inculcated into us and that is why we are unable to establish rela- tionships. Groups help us get rid of them.	4.3
If politicians had experience of group behaviour, they would un- derstand better what people need.	4.3
The group is one of the few places where one can give and receive sincere emotions.	4.0
If it was left to me, I would have every teacher, doctor and manag- er attend such a course.	4.0

	Group average
Since group relationships last for a short while only, people are en- couraged to behave irresponsibly with each other.	1.1
In groups people get what is bothering them off their chests, resulting in a decrease in their in- terest in, and criticism of, social phenomena.	1.2
Whatever others may say, these groups are modern versions of "lonely hearts' clubs."	1.2
It frequently happens in groups that under the pretext of openness and sincerity people only say rude things to each other.	1.4
It is possible that there are people for whom groups represent a usfe ful medium, but by comparison, a great many people are subject to offences in such groups.	1.9
Groups do not change people at all: afterwards we are the same as we were before.	1.9
It is easy for leaders to manipulate groups for the sake of other ob- jectives.	1.9

prejudices, accusations and fears in res- pect of the group method—which the participants had brought along to the course as well—had been dispelled or proven to be unjustified by the end of the second week.

Summary of the course method

The results presented may, perhaps, draw too favourable a picture for the readers. It rarely happens that at the end of a course the participants are so enthu- siastic and expressly grateful, that they are so sorry that it has come to an end and that they would be happy to con- tinue it. We know from experience that this is not an unusual reaction and it is characteristic not only of radio experts. For it is a specific feature of the course method that it reaches personal develop- ment by connecting it to emotions and building upon experiences. On the other hand, the medium of the group strengthens the individual messages, provides protection and a safe frame- work for personal development.

Another specificity of the method is that the group leaders elaborating and putting into practice the programme of the course "tailored to the needs of the individual" are outsiders. They are not incorporated existentially or by other links into the hierarchical and com- plicated system of connections of the given organisation (in our case Hun- garian Radio). At the same time they are active in the field of mass communica- tion; therefore they are competent in con- textual questions as well.

An essential feature of the method is that the participants experience their own habits and style of communication as well as those of their group-mates in a riskfree situation. They have the oppor- tunity to observe their relationships and reactions in simulated communication situations, playful exercises, and prob- lem-solving tasks carried out by a group.

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With the help of video, they can form an objective picture about their behaviour, communicator strategies and problem-solving activities. They have the chance to observe their own reactions and those of their mates under different circumstances. With the help of tests, everyone may gain an insight into the most hidden traits of their personality and the incentives for their behaviour. The dynamics of the group provides new recognition and enables the participants to try new or modified behaviours and relationship strategies. The leaders of the course provide a theoretical framework for the experience and recognition of the participants.

Finally, let us compare traditional professional in-service training (including manager training) with the method of group training:

Traditional education	Group training
1. Its philosophy: the clever teacher (educator) teaches the innocent students (pupils).	1. Its philosophy: a) All the participants are adults. b) The participants are qualified in their profession just like the trainers (group leaders) are in theirs.
2. The main function of the teacher is to convey knowledge.	2. The main function of the trainer: to organise events offering an opportunity to collect experiences and to interpret those experiences.
3. It is built upon centrally worded and supposed (external) requirements.	3. It is built upon harmonised actual requirements of the organisation and the participants.

Traditional eduction	Group training
4. Its basic didactical principle: conveying knowledge.	4. Its basic didactical principle: learning by experience in the wide sense of the word.
5. Individual learning.	5. Group learning.
6. It operates at conceptual (rational) level.	6. It operates simultaneously at emotional, behavioural and rational levels.
7. Education is impersonal.	7. Development is tailored to the individual.
8. The logical principle of teaching is deduction (from theory to experience).	8. The logical principle of training is induction (from experience to theory).
9. The given training is completed at the end of the given course.	9. Development consists of several steps built one upon the other.
10. The training programme proceeds in one direction and its progress is independent of the reception of the students.	10. The development programme is multi-faceted and its progress depends on the reception of the participants.
11. The use of technical tools is functional (the teacher or the student uses them as instruments).	11. The use of technical tools is built upon the principle of feedback.
12. The direction of training: to increase the professional knowledge of the individual.	12. The direction of training: to develop group and organisational culture through the individual.

Other applications

Beyond the courses and in-service training for communicators (journalists, reporters, speakers) discussed so far, this method may be applied in a number of other fields from manager training through revealing organisational problems, up to systems analysis (among other things), in the following fields:

— Development of social skills and skills to establish contacts;
— Training of self-knowledge and mental hygiene;
— Development of managerial skills (at different levels);
— Training of future managers;
— Development of skills to negotiate and communicate;
— Training of power analysis;
— Development of cooperation within organisational units;

— Development of organisational problems;
— Establishment and development of teams;:
— Investigation of structures and operations;
— Systems analysis;
— Complex organisational development.

We do not believe that this method of training is applicable everywhere. However, experience has shown us that it is more profitable , more efficient and more human than teaching in the traditional way. And another advantage, perhaps not the least important one, is that it does not discourage those participating (as shown by our results too) but it tends to set their imagination in motion, encourages them to get to know themselves and thereby improves the self-knowledge of organisations too.

Judit Lendvay

Listening to the Radio in 1985

Did the radio listening habits observed at the beginning of the eighties change by the middle of the decade? The answer to this question can be found in the data from an opinion poll taken in 1985.

The Audience Research Department at the Mass Communication Research Centre carried out a series of studies about radio listening in the recent past in order to assist the efforts of sixty-year-old Hungarian Radio to renew itself.[1] In this series of investigations a survey was made into the level of radio receiver ownership in the population, a number of issues related to radio listening were examined and the impact of the structural modification introduced in October 1984, which was beginning to be felt already, was assessed.

In the course of investigation into radio listening habits in the eighties we concluded that the reduction in the time spent listening to the radio observed over several years had stopped by the middle of the decade among the adult population. As compared to the period four to five years earlier, listening to the radio began to be pushed off the list of activities pursued at the weekend, especially among active workers and the women on child-care leave. The changes which had taken place in radio listening habits were traced back partly to changes which had occurred in the social environment and partly to modifications in programming policy.

Our data clearly demonstrate that there had been a significant re-alignment in the ratings of the different radio stations in favour of Radio Petőfi. This means that its tone and style had won the approval of many listeners — but not of all of them: the popularity of Radio Kossuth had hardly been reduced among the oldest listeners and those who had had primary education only.

Now, a year later, we are trying to find an answer to the question of whether the tendencies outlined earlier are continuing or taking a different course — whether there are changes as compared to what was experienced in 1984.

135 minutes per day

was the time the adult population spent listening to the radio in 1985 — almost the same as a year earlier. Thus we did not see any change in the most comprehensive index, the volume of time spent listening to the radio.

The main radio listening day continues to be Monday,

in spite of the fact that average radio listening time on Monday was 19 minutes shorter in 1985 than in 1984. Programme editors concentrate their attention on

this day, and the possibility of the listeners' switching on their radios is the highest on this day. Editors are generally not constrained by having to compete with television on this day, while the latter try to spur the passing of the first, "strongest" workday of the week — if they can — by listening to the radio, spending their evening in this way for lack of a TV programme. However, according to our latest data, the reserves of the increase in the time spent listening to the radio on Monday are on the way to exhaustion, and radio listening in the busiest hours is beginning to be circumscribed in certain workplaces. Perhaps we may risk the supposition that on the first, "strongest" day of the week — rested — a great many people begin to pay close attention to the cause of improving work discipline; they leave a bit earlier for work in order to get there as early as possible and are not in such a hurry to leave the workplace at the end of the working day, so that they can leave as few unarranged matters behind as they can. On Mondays in the periods between 8 and 10 and 14 and 16 hours there are increasingly fewer opportunities to listen to the radio — probably these are the most intensive work periods.

On Sunday we are more likely to watch television

— on the last day of the week we spend eight minutes less than four hours in front of the screen: we hardly have time to listen to the radio. The change in the radio programme format on Sundays has resulted in a significant reduction in listeners too. The impact on Sundays of the format changes introduced in October 1984 was summarised by the study dealing with the direct influences exerted by the format changes as follows: "In the old format the listeners were entertained by "Sunday Cocktail", on Sunday morning, broadcast by Radio Kossuth and on the other hand, mostly by a cabaret programme broadcast by Radio Petőfi, and thus radio's total listening rate (adding the two stations) exceeded 25 per cent. In the new structure "Sunday Cocktail" has been moved to Radio Petőfi and in its old place the new *Gondolat—jel* (Thought-Sign) can be heard on Radio Kossuth. As a result, radio listening rates immediately decreased to 17.5 per cent."[2] The data collected since then have justified the initial gloomy views: as a direct influence of the format changes, we spent less time listening to the radio in the period between 10 and 12 a.m. in 1985 than a year before. Although the ratings of "Sunday Cocktail" increased somewhat as a consequence of its having been moved to Radio Petőfi, the reduction in Kossuth Radio's audience caused by the loss of "Sunday Cocktail" has not been made up for in the ratings of *Gondolat-jel*, which, though fulfilling important cultural policy objectives, has ratings of less than 6 per cent. The indirect influence of the format changes hits Radio Petőfi between 12 and 14 hours. Seemingly no essential changes have taken place, yet at this point the time spent listening to the radio decreased by six minutes on average. For a change has occured in the programme environment of the folk song programme entitled "Music to lunch well by." Part of the audience attracted by the preceding "Sunday Cocktail" programme is expressly put off by Hungarian folk songs, thus they are more inclined to switch off their sets than earlier after the radio cabaret. Prior to the format changes, for the sake of the cabaret programme broadcast together with the "Sunday Cocktail", certain listeners also joined the group of Radio Petőfi — listeners wo generally listen to the programmes of Radio Kossuth (e.g. pensioners). However this collection of Hungarian folk songs closely following "Sunday Cocktail" on Radio Petőfi lost not

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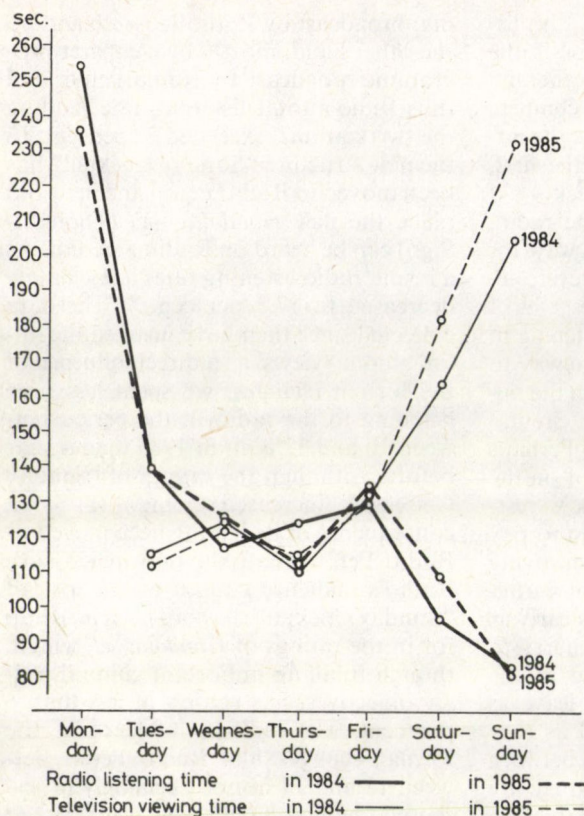
Figure 1
The time spent listening to the radio and watching television daily in 1984 and 1985 (minutes)

only these older groups of the audience but also those listeners in whose taste configuration dance music and Hungarian folk songs cannot stand next to each other. Earlier, the cabaret followed by Hungarian folk songs did not bring such a sharp clash of tastes.

The average time spent listening to radio and watching television in 1984 and 1985 is summarised in Figure 1.

So the average time of 135 minutes is practically unchanged but this unchanged situation has been brought about as a result of smaller or greater changes. These smaller changes are borne in varying degree by the social strata concerned to a different degree in their working activities.

**The most perseverent listeners
to the radio
are mothers on child-care leave,**

at least as far as the weekdays are concerned: they spend more than three hours on weekdays listening to the radio. The other two inactive groupings, pensioners

and the other supported groups (women active in the household, etc.) listened to the radio less on workdays than active workers in 1984, but in 1985 there was a significant reduction in the time spent listening to the radio by the latter (from 151 to 139 minutes), and thus they lagged behind the pensioners and the other supported audience who listened to the radio more in 1985 than a year earlier. On weekdays, this nascent departure of active audience groupings was mostly made up for by the increased involvement of the inactive strata.

On weekends, the radio listening habits of those on child-care leave are adjusted to those of the active spouses, at the same time the two other inactive groupings behave similarly to each other during the weekend too, just like on weekdays. On Saturdays, a significant increase in the time spent listening to the radio can be observed in all audience groupings and Sunday among those on childcare leave and the other supported people. It can concluded from the fact that the radio listening time on Sundays has decreased only among the active workers that the dynamics of weekend has changed with the intruduction of free Saturdays: the weekend stars already on Friday, Saturday has become more important, and a part of the population spend Sunday doing work brought home for the weekend as well as with preparation for the working day of Monday.

Radio Kossuth, Budapest ...

According to our data of 1985, the slow departure process which characterised Radio Kossuth for years has stopped. The processes unfavourable to Radio Kossuth have been halted and for the first time in many years the ratings have not shifted at the expense of this channel. Of every 100 minutes spent list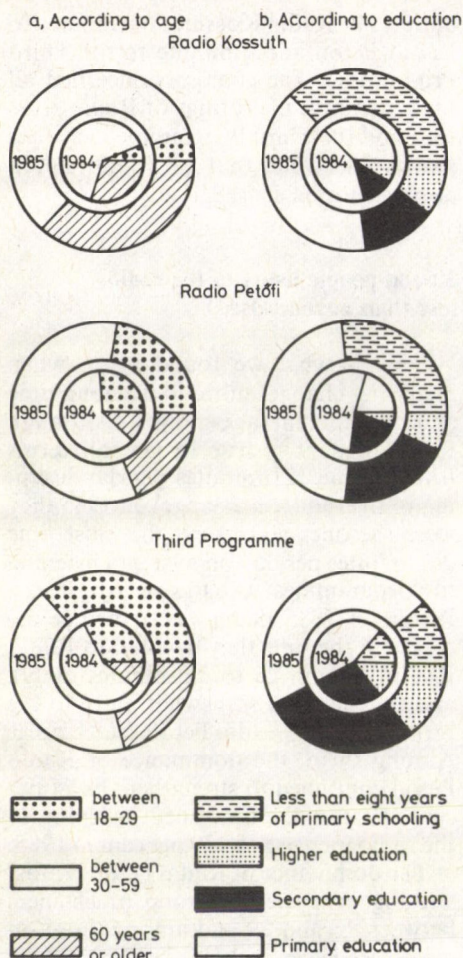ening to the radio in 1985, the listeners devoted 39 minutes to Radio Kossuth, 60 minutes to Radio Petőfi and 1 minute to the Third Programme. The changes concerned all three stations: the ratings of Radio Kossuth and the Third Programme increased somewhat, while that of Radio Petőfi decreased a bit in 1985.

Young people listen to the radio less than anyone else

— this is what we found again when analysing changes in radio listening time among different age-groups. Although this statement is true in general terms (they devote 121 minutes per day listening to the radio on averege), in 1985 they were the ones who spent the most time (96 minutes per day on average) listening to programmes broadcast by Radio Petőfi. In 1985 there was a further decrease in the time they devoted to Radio Kossuth (from 26 to 22 minutes daily), and they listened somewhat more to the programmes of Radio Petőfi than before. Among them, the dominance of Radio Petőfi continued to strengthen: its 77 per cent share of the time spent listening to the radio increased to 79 per cent in 1985.

The dominance of Radio Petőfi is most striking in a specific group of listeners between 18 and 29 and among those on child-care leave: in 1985 they listened on average to Radio Kossuth for 29 minutes per day, and to Radio Petőfi for 130 minutes daily, the rate of the former being substantially lower, and that of the latter significantly higher than a year earlier. This is the audience grouping in which Radio Kossuth and Radio Petőfi share in the most unfavourable proportion: the earlier proportion of 22:77 changed to 18—81 in 1985.

With the increase in age, the scale is gradually tipped in the direction of Radio Kossuth, although in 1985 the first signs of orientation towards Radio Petőfi were manifested among the elderly too.

a, According to age   b, According to education
Radio Kossuth

Radio Petőfi

Third Programme

▓ between 18–29		▓ Less than eight years of primary schooling	
▢ between 30–59		▓ Higher education	
▨ 60 years or older		■ Secondary education	
		▢ Primary education	

**Figure 2
The composition of listeners
to the three radio stations
in 1984 and 1985 (%)**

The audience groupings by education have not changed their preference for stations significantly: the dominance of Radio Petőfi continues to be strongest among those who have had primary and secondary education, although those having less than eight years of primary schooling devoted increasing attention to Radio Petőfi in 1985 as well.

It needs no special explanation for regular radio listeners why certain audience strata tend to be attracted to this station, while others tend to prefer the other. Beyond the unevenness of the possibilities of reception, a role in this may be played by the differences in the profiles of the stations, the details of programme format and the differences in the tone and style of the programmes, but the habits calcified over decades cannot be left out of consideration either. However, the opportunities provided by an opinion poll are not sufficient for performing a deeper analysis of these effects: this needs more refined means than we had at our disposal when carrying out our investigation.

The composition of radio audiences is an important aspect from the point of view of the fate and implementation of ideas related to programme policy.

It is according to age and qualification

that the greatest differences could be observed in the composition of the listeners to the three stations, among the socio-demographic variables we examined.

The composition of the audience of Radio Kossuth, Radio Petőfi and the Third Programme in 1984 and 1985 is demonstrated by Figure 2. As we can see, young people are less attracted by the programmes offered by Radio Kossuth and most attracted by those of the Third Programme. Their proportion decreased somewhat on Radio Kossuth and Radio Petőfi, and it increased slightly on the Third Programme in the period under examination (they listened to the Third Programme on the average for 2 minutes in 1984 and for 3 minutes in 1985). Their proportion in the audience of Radio Petőfi decreased in spite of their devoting more time to its programmes, since the oldest audience groupings — while they continued to be loyal to Radio Kossuth

— joined the listeners of Radio Petőfi in higher proportion than young people. The proportion of the oldest listeners also increased in the audiences of the Third Programme in the period examined, although they did not listen to this station more in 1985 than earlier. This can be explained by a significant decrease among the active audience groupings (their proportion decreased from 54 per cent in 1984 to 41 per cent in 1985). A slight departure by the active audience grouping can be seen with regard to the other two stations as well.

We experienced no significant shift in the composition of Radio Kossuth's audience from the point of view of education in the period examined. This station continues to be the one that can most rely on the interest of the audience groupings with higher qualifications, though they too are showing an increasing interest in the programmes of Radio Petőfi. And to the extent that the proportion of listeners with less than eight years of schooling increased on Radio Petőfi, did the proportion of listeners who had completed their primary school education decrease: the former devoted 8 per cent more time in 1985 to listening to the programmes of Radio Petőfi, while the latter spent 8 per cent less time than a year before — they together make up about half of the audience of Radio Petőfi. There was no essential difference in the proportion of the audience grouping with secondary education, at least between Radio Kossuth and Radio Petőfi, in either year, although the proportion of those who had completed the secondary school was somewhat higher on Radio Petőfi, and the proportion of listeners who had graduated from a college or university was a bit higher on Radio Kossuth: altogether about a quarter of the total audience of the two stations came from these two audience groupings. Their proportion is significantly higher among listeners to the Third Programme, which is not really surprising if we bear in mind the specific selection of programmes of the station as well as the more technically up-to-date stock of sets owned by the audience groupings with higher qualifications.

In general terms, the composition of Radio Petőfi's audience is similar to the composition of the adult population, while that of Radio Kossuth and the Third Programme significantly differs. The differences in audience composition relating to Radio Kossuth and Radio Petőfi derive primarily from listener expectations which change with age, which is also supported by the fact that the actual proportion of active workers is essentially lower, and of the pensioner audience grouping is significantly higher than their relative weight on Radio Kossuth. The specific audience composition of the Third Programme appears to be more a manifestation of the accumulation of social advantages and disadvantages: there is a greater chance for the message of the Third Programme to reach those in more favourable social circumstances than the audience groupings afflicted by social disadvantages.

Notes

1. The analyses of the series of studies are collected in the volume entitled *Kedves hallgatóink 1980—1985* (Dear listeners 1980 —1985). (Mass Communication Research Centre, Budapest, 1986. Tanulmányok No.6.)

2. DANKÁNICS, MÁRIA *A módosított műsorrend fogadtatása* (The acceptance of the changed programme format.) In *Kedves hallgatóink 1980—1985*. MCRC, Budapest, 1986. Tanulmányok, Vol. XVIII. No.6.p. 275.

Radio Danubius

In the registry of world radio stations there appeared for the first time in 1986 the code comm. beside the name of a Hungarian radio station, indicating that it was a commercially funded, business-oriented enterprise. The station's German-language programming is primarily targeted at foreign visitors. The following two articles deal with the experiences and potentials of Radio Danubius.

György Varga

Services and Business

In the past both the Hungarian and the foreign press have devoted significant space to Radio Danubius. What grabbed the attention was primarily the novelty of the initiative, everything Radio Danubius dealt with and the way it did it. Just in July and August, the foreign press devoted fifty-nine articles to the station; the expression "a wonder of the tourist trade" could be read in seventeen articles, and seven articles pointed out that this was a gesture, not simply spectacular but "with great political repercussions" for Hungary towards tourists coming from the West.

What was the actual objective? Hungarian Radio wished to offer services primarily to Hungarian tourism and foreign tourists. Services which had been lacking, and which were inevitably necesarry for visitors to Hungary to find their way around and feel at home. We did not deny the objective either that this station was at the same time of a commmercial character. After the „setting-in period" has elapsed it will definitely have to be self-sufficient but it would also be useful

if it could produce a profit, preferably in hard currency.

The programme — and later we shall justify it with figures too — has passed its exam successfully. We have managed to set up an internal format giving priority to music: originally intended to be four-fifths, this amount has been exceeded and spoken text account for barely 17 per cent of programme time, even including advertisements. So in last year's programming, entertainment, information and advertisements serving commercial purposes were present simultaneously.

This interesting audio cocktail had every right to meet with the listeners' approval. The poll taken among tourists* shows that in the Balaton region German-language speakers listened almost exclusively to Radio Danubius and in addition this was borne out by both verbal and written opinions which reached the station, apart from the opinion poll. However, the past year did not see the resolution of all the deficiencies in the system. For that very reason, it was necessary to survey and analyse what is·

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* taken by the press review bureau of DELTA

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left to be done. For the sake of perspective we present both the differencies and the positive results.

Let us start with what was beyond our control. Both foreign and Hungarian listeners would like to hear Radio Danubius for a longer period, in more places than it is possible now, and in an even wider frequency range. The opportunities will soon improve somewhat, since in addition to the 100.5 MHz Kabagnhegy transmitter, the programme will also be broadcast from Budapest on 103.3 MHz betwen May 1 and September 30. We have managed to extend the programme time from eleven hours to fourteen and a half hours daily, which means that Radio Danubius will start its programme at 6.30 a.m. and the listeners can enjoy it till 9.30 p.m. for 153 days. But we have only managed to solve a very small part of this problem so far. For we are unable to reach tourists before the border, whereas it is just there that they would need a number of indispensable pieces of information.

We receive an interesting picture if we take a look at how foreigners *learnt about* the existence of this programme (in percentage).

1. Prior to their arrival in Hungary, from the media in the home country ... 4
2. Prior to their arrival in Hungary, from Hungarian tourist promotions ... 0,5
3. On arrival at the border (from information leaflets) ... 15
4. On the motorway to Lake Balaton (from signs, Verkehrsfunk, the increase in signal intensity, etc.) ... 34
5. On arrival at a hotel ... 20
6. On arrival on a camping site ... 6
7. On arrival in a room rented from a family ... 2.5
8. From German-language media channels available in Hungary

(e.g. *Neueste Nachrichten, Daily News, Hungarhotels Newsletter,* leaflets, etc.) ... 0.5
9. From friends, acquaintances or travelling companions who had visited Hungary before ... 4.5
10. Heard about it for the first time (from the interviewer) ... 13

The above table justifies our worries. Before their arrival at the border, fewer than one in twenty tourists knew about the existence of Radio Danubius. At the same time thirteen out of a hundred learnt about it only from the interviewers. Those figures definitely prove that we can really assist the tourist if we manage to reach him before the border, and neither can it be denied that only this way can we reap the benefits of steering and influencing his interests while he is visiting. Obviously, we do not look upon broadcasting to Austria as an easy task. There is a lack of technical facilities (a proper transmitter, etc.) on the one hand, and of a legal agreement which is still waiting to be formulated in accordance with standing intergovernmental contracts, on the other.

Let us look at the *appeal indeces* registered in last year's poll:

1. The structure, language and style of news services ... 91
2. The content, objectivity and informative strength of news services ... 89
3. Traffic information ... 93
4. Other information (customs regulations, news about border checkpoints, etc.), its importance, way of processing, updatedness ... 87
5. Weather forecasts (reliability, style, daily frequency) ... 77
6. Cultural information, tourist information ... 78
7. The radio health service ... 75
8. Programmes about the secrets of Hungarian cuisine ... 82
9. Two-minute Hungarian mini-language course ... 82

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10. Colourful items about Hungarian history, interesting geographical information for touristic use   90
11. Fairy tale programme (luring little children to sleep in the afternoon)   83
12. Foreign economic news, trends, novelties, currency rates   94
13. Music programmes in general   89
14. Pop music as the "prevailing music style" of the station   89
15. Hard rock (with low play-rate but high signal level)   87
16. Golden oldies, nostalgia and light music, hit parade   90
17. Hungarian folk music   86
18. Traditional gypsy music   89
19. Austrian, German folk music   88
20. Operettas   89
21. Advertising in general   81
22. Advertising containing daily topical information, programme selection   83
23. Advertising related to purchasing opportunities and commercial ideas in Hungary   84
24. Reports with interesting Hungarian personalities and foreign celebrities staying in Hungary   89
25. Live programmes, quizzes on spots of topical interest around Lake Balaton (this primarily grew from requests)   89

The above statistics are edifying too. There are still a great many things missing: music and information constituting the main components of the programme must be made more colourful and diverse so that they should meet with the approval of the listeners and also our interests of tourism and commerce. Preparations have already been made and we believe that we shall be able to offer something new this year: this revamping will serve all the interests concerned. This year the doubled programme time as well as the inclusion of

Budapest and the Danube Bend will also give new responsibilities to the programme-makers.

We also interviewed the respondents to find out the breakdown by sex and age of listeners to Radio Danubius:

Women: 52 per cent of the total tourist group, but 41 per cent of regular listeners to Radio Danubius.

Men: 48 per cent of those concerned, but 59 per cent of regular listeners to Radio Danubius.

	percentage
0—10 years (target group for children's stories)	4
11—20 years (teenagers, the main consumers of rock music)	7
21—30 years (young adults with a high automobile mobility, listening mainly to night programmes	10
31—40 years (mainly the parents of the age group of 0—10, in the Balaton listening area: wide-ranging tastes)	16
41—50 years (economically, the top grouping, representing a high purchasing power, with a love of comfort and starting strong nostalgic traces in their taste for music)	23
51—60 years (big consumers of news services, health advice, gypsy music, information about economics)	19
61— (with mobility slowing down, increased demand for operettas, gypsy music, information coming from home with a tone they are accustomed to, commercial advertising)	21

The image shown by the cross-section revealed above is promising but it also reflects the tasks still to be fulfilled by Radio Danubius.

Lajos Horváth

The Competitors of Radio Danubius

What does it mean (and what could it mean in the future) for Hungarian Radio to step out of its familiar territory, the 60-70 MHz range, to the vicinity of 100 MHz? Thus put, the question can only be a rhetorical one, for it is almost certain that higher frequency in itself does not mean a higher standard and a higher degree of discrimination.

However, with that move upwards, whether it is known to the competent authorities or not, something new and significant may be introduced into the running of our radio. Those who have already moved to new flat know that such a change means new circumstances, new conditions, and, last but not least, new neighbours. And we may also know that these neighbours may not only be our friends but competitors too in "the struggle for survival." That is something we should reckon on from the very beginning.

For the first time the scope of Hungarian radio broadcasting has expanded (on a purely experimental basis in 1986) to include a product which must not only recoup its own start-up costs, but from which some profit would also be welcome. Radio Danubius represents the firts occasion in our country when it would be wildly inappropriate to rely on the support of the country's broadcasting policy-makers.

The fact that a transmitting station wants to broadcast in a foreign language (German) to listeners whose mother tongue is not Hungarian is nothing new in our radio practice (in the autumn of 1946 Hungarian Radio began to broadcast programmes in German as a part of the Hungarian News Service. It is all the more of a novelty that it was for the first

time that in the „registry" of world radio stations, *The World Radio, TV-Handbook,* next to the name of a Hungarian radio station the sign (Comm) was attached, which indicates stations with a commercial purpose and of a business character.

So Radio Danubius is a new product of Hungarian Radio — to continue with the simile from commercial, business life. And in the case of new products — this is a basic principle of commercial life — preliminary market research must be carried out in order to discover what reception, what market conditions, what competition the product can expect — be it washing powder, instant coffee or a radio programme.

Businessmen know very well that market research not only means knowledge of how they receive their goods from the producer or the wholesaler; it means to a much greater extent the knowledge of who and how many customers will buy those goods from them.

It is the most important thing for commercial radio programmers to know who their consumers will be and what they are happy to buy (listen to). Nor is it an unimportant piece of information who the competitors are, what they have got to offer and how — in what packaging — they send their goods to the consumers.

Off-shore "waves"

The listeners to Radio Danubius — it is not difficult to guess — are mainly foreign native speakers of German or foreigners who speak German, visiting Hungary. It is a well-known pheno-

menon among experts investigating the habits of listeners that people far away from their home in a foreign country, as a consequence of language and environmental isolation, are in great need of information which dissolves this isolation. It is particularly useful if this information reaches the people at the time they are accustomed to it, in the way well-known to them and under the circumstances they have got to like — and in the form of interesting announcements.

Supposing that we are faced with a radio listener of average interests, it may be calculated by and large beforehand what news, knowledge, information he would like to possess in order to fit in — even for a short while — without problems in a foreign country, and to make his stay here more pleasant. Some pieces of that information — e.g. related to the weather, the traffic situation, etc. — can best be "purchased" on the spot from the local radio stations; but other pieces of information can be purchased by foreign tourists "C.O.D.", which means that competing radio programmes can easily reach tourists and provide them with the information they require or are accustomed to.

Around Lake Balaton — but in many other parts of the country as well — one can listen to a number of stations in German, and in excellent, hi-fi quality. All Austrian Radio stations reach the tourists spending their vacation here (with the exception of Radio Blue Danube, in English and French, operating at 104 Mhz), and with not bad reception quality. In the CCIR range of 87-108 MHz, the first and the second programmes and the "Regional" can be heard very well, but the third programme, "Ö-III" is available in stereo too! The latter is a very popular entertainment and information programme, having quite a few permanent listeners in Hungary too; and it can be received with little effort, with a medium quality receiver and a high antenna in impeccable quality in Budapest and in other parts of the country too.

In addition to the Ultra Short Wave, German tourists staying in Hungary can listen to their favourite programmes in other ways too. Also with a medium-quality, portable or pocket radio, one can pick up Austrian Radio's medium wave first programme and some stations of the Ö-Regional too. But real competition, a wide choice of programmes can be found in the so-called Europa range, at 49 meters. There are many people who shrink from the inconvenience of listening to programmes on the Ultra Short Wave, but a great many people also know how to pick up these programmes, and the technique of "catching" the transmitter station is becoming increasingly easier. This purpose is served by very small sets, hardly bigger than a paperback, but operating in a wide frequency band, and even more by the appearance of receivers with PLL synthesised tuning — hardly differing in price from the traditional ones, on which the desired station can be listened to after pressing a few buttons, free from interference, with very high signal stability, and in excellent quality. This new way of tuning lures a number of listeners to the short waves who earlier considered it too cumbersome to find this or that station and were dissatisfied with the quality of reception.

Seven competitors

Now let us take a look at this breathtaking array, including those programmes which are prepared abroad for domestic audiences, but which are placed on the Europa range so that they can reach beyond the borders too. The selection neglects stations like Deutsche Welle or Deutschlandfunk which from the outset do not aim at a domestic audience.

On the basis of such viewpoints, in all probability the most typical station in the range is Bayerischer Rundfunk, the "B-III" programme. (True, at its frequency, the 6085 kiloherz it can only be heard in the summer months, i.e. in the tourist season, for in the remaining months of the year Bavarian Radio's first programme is broadcast here.) "B-III" is highly entertaining and broadcasts a great number of services, including those necessary for tourists staying abroad.

Süddeutscher Rundfunk broadcasts ist third programme at 6030 kHz, albeit at a somewhat higher signal strength than "B-III". The character and structure of its programming is identical to "B-III".

RIAS Berlin, transmitted from West Berlin, broadcasts its second programme at 6005 kHz, in a highly remarkable quality, and that programme is also made with the aim of offering entertainment and information.

Here we have to mention the RTL programme of Radio Luxemburg broadcast in German, which can be found at 6090 kHz twenty-four hours a day, and it is looked upon as specialising in quiz and phone-in programmes but its target audience — even here in the Europa range — is primarily not tourists!

Sender Freies Berlin and Radio Bremen peacefully share the same frequency, 6190 kHz, they take turns in the 24 hours of the day broadcasting their entertainment programmes.

The programme Südwestfunk III can also be heard on the short wave, not in the 49 m Europa range but up a bit, at 41 m, at a frequency of 7265 kHz. Reception is excellent here too and probably thanks to its transmitter capacity it can be received excellenty the whole day and in every season, in spite of the signal's tendency to wander.

From the point of view of our investigation, these are the most important German-language stations that can be picked up in Hungary. Although it can be assumed that they are directed at other groups of short-wave listeners as well, these services are primarily intended for German tourists staying abroad, including Hungary.

Programmes of the third type

Naturally, the proverb "Different strokes for different folks" holds true for international radio broadcasting practice too. The practice has been established in the German language territory and perhaps all over Western Europe that the first programme includes music and prose programmes of a discriminating, higher artistic level, while the third programme disseminates service and entertainment information, with the bulk of radio advertising also slotting into this channel.

In the German language territory the structure, style and tone of the programmes of the third type are so uniform, so close to one another, that it may be assumed that programme policy-makers carefully stick to an agreed set of guidelines, and that these guidelines are followed in the same way on all stations. (The second programme shows greater differences; it is of a mixed type, and it is here that local studios receive the opportunity to broadcast their own programmes, and also programmes of a more folkloric and ethnic character.)

Since the programmes of the third type primarily serve the purpose of light entertainment, it is only natural that their basis is formed by music: this makes up 70—80 per cent of total programme time. The greater part of the music is in English, though one may rarely hear songs in German too, if the playlist includes Falco or Genghis Khan. (An exception is "Ö—III", to the extent that it takes into account its listeners of Italian nationality and therefore it also includes some Italian hits in its programming.)

The formation of the programmes is of a discriminating taste in all the channels of the third type. They are of non-stop character, which means that although several different permanent programmes are broadcast in different parts of the day, the programmes flow as an uninterrupted torrent as if growing out from one another, as a continuation of one another.

Services and advertising

All the stations admit and proclaim their servicing character. "B—III," for example, announces every hour that it is Bavarian Radio's "servicing station". Generally speaking, the range of services is not too wide but very thorough. Among other things, they offer information about traffic and road conditions, the weather, and one or two transmitters broadcast from time to time a special want-ads service. News about international life and information about domestic events also occupy an important place. At the beginning of each hour all the stations broadcast news, generally for five minutes. (Austrian Radio's five-minute news is broadcast on all of its stations, and studio cross-overs are controlled by computer with the result that they are so smooth that the actual cross can never be detected.

In the summer months, in deference to the holiday season, weather forecasts are broadcast relating to all the countries and holiday areas of Europe where German and Austrian tourists may be staying. "B—III," "SWF—III," and "Ö-III" broadcast the present weather conditions in Hungary among other countries including the weather forecast for the Balaton region. In the majority of cases, only the basic data necessary for tourists are announced: clouds, rain, sunshine, temperature, etc.

On these stations traffic information is somewhat different from the broadcast-ing of *Útközben* (On the way) which we are used to in Hungary. Generally, the announcements follow the news at the beginning of every hour, but in the case of important and fresh information broadcasting is interrupted at any time (let us not forget that mainly music is to be heard!). News about traffic is never longer than 30—40 seconds and here too basic understandable and usable traffic information is given, e.g. in the following form: "Between town X and Y, at milemarker 38 the road is narrowed on account of roadworks, resulting in a three-kilometre bank-up. 65 minute delays can be expected.". Another example: "An accident has occurred in the centre of town X, at the intersection of streets Y and Q. The recommended detour is by streets A and N." That is all and no more: information easy to understand and utilise immediately. And another essential difference is that there is only one person who announces the traffic information, while in Hungary at times five to six, or even more people speak.

A service not to frequent on these wavelengths but encountered at times is conveying messages. We may hear such announcements: "Would X. Y. and his wife, who are probably staying in Hungary at present, travelling in a car with licence number N. N . . ., please call their flat in Munich." Announcements of that kind are usually read by interrupting the programme. Here in addition to providing a valuable and necessary service, the editors probably also achieve greather loyalty on the part of their long-distance listeners.

All the radio stations examined regularly broadcast news and radio advertisements. Moreover, it may even be said with a bit of exaggeration that music and all the other programmes are broadcast twenty-four hours a day simply to provide a framework for radio advertising. The majority of the radio stations broadcast advertisements every hour

(perhaps even twice) at the same point of time, e.g. a few minutes prior to the beginning of the news or before a block of text starting of the news or before a block of text starting every half-hour. Radio Luxemburg broadcasts advertisements several times every hour, four or five times even.

These advertisements are not distasteful at all. On the contrary, they are excellently composed, small works of art, exerting a very strong influence. Their secret is in all probability to be found in their presentation or "way of announcement" being carefully planned beforehand by choreographers of speech, as it were, and executed precisely. They are not productions left to the impromtu performance of actors or announcers. And their effect is exactly what was pre-planned by their creators: they are easy to follow, understandable and they are almost indelibly stuck into the memory of the listeners. The overall impression is one of pleasant attraction.

Programme-making technology

German-language third programme stations represent a specific and unique style.

On these radio stations the main role is played by pleasant and always up-to-date pop music. The proportion of approximately 70:30 per cent of music-text never changes under any circumstances. The music format is always consistent, and we never sense the bitter fight (in which in Hungary it is always the journalist who wins) to broadcasting a few minutes of words instead of music. Thus the programmes are not overcrowded with speech; text is economically constructed, with not too many words, therefore it never sounds like so much thinking-out-loud. From this we can conclude that the texts are prepared beforehand. The cultured, uncluttered (i. e. disciplined) presentation style seeks to avoid colouring the content of the anouncement with any actual or imagined attributes of the announcer.

When listening attentively to the programmes, the observer will soon notice that the fairly low number of speakers —be they in the capacity of anchormen, reporters, news readers, commentators or meteorologists—are all carefully selected, well-trained performers. The pleasant tone and the understandable and easy to follow delivery leave a lasting impression and, it seems, these are more important than anything else. It is quite probable that in some programme types there are "sound-designers" active (in Hungary scenarists figure in certain TV programmes), and they indicate on the running-sheet beforehand different delivery instructions (e.g. the "choreography" of tempo, volume, distance from the microphone), which gives the station a distinctive sound.

Well, this has been a sketchy overview of what the "competitors" of Radio Danubius are able to offer to those listeners whom they do not intend to lose while they are travelling abroad either. To "compete" with them successfully, there is need for a similarly high standard and approximately indentical production technology. To adjust to the habits of foreign tourists coming to Hungary is perhaps a simpler and more purposeful task than to try to force those visiting us to adopt new habits, or to simply neglect them.

Kécskei Hírek

Interview with Editor Albert Polyák

The programme bulletin of the culture house was transformed into a local paper in the town of Tiszakécske. Although *Kécskei Hírek* (Kécske News) is officially not a newspaper, it is considered to be one by both its editor and its readers.

The Tiszakécske newspaper, *Kécskei Hírek* does not figure in any register of papers. This "information publication" of the Arany János Cultural Centre—this is how the paper describes itself on its masthead—is published monthly. Its volume is 12—18 pages of normal size depending on the number and weight of the topics of public importance, its price is five forints per copy (covering the expenses of production). Its circulation is 1800 copies in the little town, which demonstrates a very high reading rate, namely that it is read in approximately 60 per cent of the households. Since Tiszakécske was proclaimed to be a town (January 1, 1986), the paper has been available to the inhabitants of the surrounding catchment area—Szentkirály, Lakitelek, Nyárlőrinc—as well; a further thousand copies are sold in these settlements of a total population of eight thousand.

How and why did and could this organ develop from a programme bulletin into an almost indispensible publication, relying solely on local resources? That was the most important question we asked Albert Polyák, director of the cultural centre and editor as well as responsible publisher of *Kécskei Hírek* to answer.

"Let us, perhaps, start where the history of Kécskei Hírek began."

"Ever since their establishment, cultural centres have been forums of local publicity too. They organise not only so-called cultural programmes but talks, in which the president of the local Consumers', Marketing and Purchasing Cooperative and the party secretary answer questions of the most everyday nature. Since, on account of the nature of the questions and the limitations of the venue, only a few dozen people could be informed about the most important topics, it was proposed that the most important pieces of information should be made public in some institutionalised from, enabling everyone interested to have access to them. And as we had been issuing a programme bulletin monthly for years, it seemed the most logical solution to extend it."

"Did you do that overnight?"

"No. This change in function was put into practice over a period of several years. As far as I can remember, we simply began publishing the railway guide in the programme bulletin still in its classic form, assuming that a great number of our visitors who found this information very important and the railway guide bulletin expensive—difficult to handle for the layman anyway—would be delighted to have it. In the next issue we published the time when the shops were open—and the following month we presented news of public life under the title "Others Events" as well. After the new Tiszakécske telephone exchange commenced operations, we published all the numbers that had been changed, as well as news like the time and agenda of the council meeting, open to the public

by law anyway. We only had one problem: the paper was printed in Kecskemét, on commission, slow and expensive. We could not have as many printed as necessary, since we did not have the money, and, to make it worse, some of the news had become outdated by the time they actually appeared."

"So you established a printing house of your own?"

"We were lucky. We had a public education expert, Ferenc Varga, working here. He had been a printer beforehand and he was the one who persuaded the president of the local council, István Mikó, to buy a machine, arguing that Kécske could not be without a printing house. They did buy a Romayor 313, together with all its accessories, the perforating, cutting units, etc. Naturally, it could only be used for printing but not for typesetting. Than Varga went to work somewhere else. It was at that time that the machine was delivered. It was lying in boxes, unpacked, in the yard of the council house and no-one knew too much about it. I, for example, when I first heard about it, did not even belive it. But when we unpacked it with my colleagues, we could see it with our own eyes. A store-room had just been emptied in the cultural house so we put it there and started work. At the beginning we produced small items for companies, bills and the like, until it occured to us that we could use it for making our own paper too. And we did make it. We bought and still buy the paper from the paper mill, since it is much cheaper that way. We have the typed manuscripts photograped onto a disk — this is the cheapest possible — and well-nigh primitive — process of newpaper-making."

"I am interested in the first reactions."

"To be frank, I did not show the first really extended issue to anyone beforehand as I did not consider it anything special either then or later on. I simply wanted to inform and that is what I want to do today too. Those who are unable to come to the meeting of the association of garden lovers should know what happens there too — it was such things that I filled the first issue with. And when the printer finished with it, I took a copy and gave it to the president. I want something like this, I said to him. He leafed through it and read it. He liked it very much. Then I went with him to the party committee and presented it there too."

"Obviously, they did not say anything bad about it, since that happened more than four years ago and Kécskei Hírek has been published regularly ever since. Moreover, now it also has an editorial board where the political and social organs are represented. Have you ever thought about asking for permission to publish an official paper?"

"For this? For me, *Kécskei Hírek* continues to be a programme bulletin of an informative nature, published by the cultural centre. That is the most legal way possible. Moreover, such publications would be useful everywhere and it is only an administrative question that there might be need for permission to publish them. But I don't think so, as it only contains information for the people of Tiszakécske and therefore it may very well be decided locally whether there is need for it or not."

"So Kécskei Hírek is not a newspaper?"

"Not in the classical sense of the word."

"Well, what is it then?"

"Perhaps I should describe it as a means of local information, but I would not call it that: it is purely a question of press theory. And what I deal with is not a theoretical issue but practical work, editing *Kécskei Hírek,* and I do so because — no matter what we consider it — there is a need for *Kécskei Hírek.* There is need for it because it is the forum and means of local publicity — local colour was badly lacking in the available press, local colour like you find in as-

sociations, clubs, groups and cosy pubs. Between the two World Wars, for example, here in Tiszakécske the industrial body had a headquarters of its own, with a small pub where people could sit at the tables they were accustomed to. They had different papers delivered to them from which they could get up-to-date information. They could find an excellent outlet for pent-up creative energy in their choir and self-improvement groups, and they held balls several times a year. What is important is that they knew what was going on. And it was not only the people from the industrial body who had their own forum, in addition there was the Legion of Old Students, the Citizens' Legion, the Farmers' League, and so on — and, of course, an independent Kécske paper was published regularly to boot."

"Does Kécskei Hírek make up for all that?"

"It does not and it cannot. Those were communities organised from below which are very infrequent today. Such communities cannot be organised by the cultural centre either, it may only provide a frame or venue for them should they exist."

"And are there any?"

"One or two. There is need for more, a lot more."

"The editor and publisher of Kécskei Hírek receives, as far as I know, some 2000 forints for his work quarterly. Has it ever occured to him to join the Association of Hungarian Journalists, for example?"

"No, because under the conditions of Tiszakécske, in the hierarchy of Tiszakécske I am looked upon not as a journalist but as an employee of the council, as the head of one of the institutions belonging to the council: and that is, at the same time, one of the greatest barriers for me."

"A barrier? In what sense?"

"If I were a journalist — officially, in status, I mean — I could be more independent as journalists are allowed to

do a great many things others are not. If any news appears in the columns of *Kécskei Hírek,* everyone knows that the director of the cultural centre had his hand in it. It cannot be in any other way. And if the news happens to be against the interest of someone, he will take it ill from me not as the editor of *Kécskei Hírek* but as the director of the cultural centre. For example, the smallest criticism related to the local Consumers' Marketing and Purchasing Cooperative may do harm to the relationship between the director of the cultural centre and the local Cooperative. While the local Cooperative admits that a journalist could rightly criticise it, it refuses to accept the same criticism from me, the director of the cultural centre, whom it has just granted, say, five thousand forints to assist the zither group. It would argue that I do not have the right to criticise it."

"Irrespective of the facts?"

"Irrespective of the facts. The facts do not matter at all, that's what I'm saying. The point at issue is never whether what I publish is true or not. People ask, 'How come the director of a cultural centre deals with things like that? What the hell has he got to do with it?'"

"And what can one do in a situation like this?"

"It's very simple. He must find the way to avoid such conflicts."

"And how can he do that?"

"Only by making compromises, but one is definitely forced to make compromises if he publishes a paper by himself. I am unable to participate in all forums, be informed about everything and dig down to the bottom of everything. I have to ask others to furnish me with information. But if, for example, I ask agricultural cooperatives to provide me with some material, there is a high degree of probability that everything in it will be good and beautiful. Then what I do is shorten the whole thing into two sentences: I discard the enthusiasm and

the sales pitch and leave the piece of news, the fact. It is out of the question for me to criticise since I do not have the necessary information."

"And if you did have it?"

"Well, even then I would definitely have to think it over twice whether it is worth taking the risk. What I am afraid of is not that I would lose my job or I would not receive a raise, but that the sponsor would stop assisting the zither group. If I step on his corn as an editor, he will not even think of taking revenge on me as an editor, for he would immediately be labelled as being afraid of criticism, an enemy of socialist democracy, and that would be a fairly heavy accusation. In no way would he take revenge on *Kécskei Hírek*. He will look for, and sooner or later find a good pretext to get back at me as the director of the cultural centre. It is always possible to figure out something: surely you know the joke about the bunny whom the wolf beats up on one ocassion for not wearing a cap, and on another occassion for wearing one. As a result, I do not really wish to make comments in *Kécskei Hírek*. I wish to inform since the facts can speak for themselves without a commentary too. Especially because even today there's a great number of secrets under seven seals, strictly confidential reports, and what is in them? Say, the cause of the rotting of tomatoes. But once everyone is interested in it, since it concerns everyone, it cannot be strictly confidential and it needs the highest degree of publicity."

"Does 'Kécskei Hírek' publish all such matters?"

"Quite a few. Perhaps not all but a lot. To mention an example: we introduced all the candidates before the elections and had the complete list of results off the press at dawn the following morning. We were the only ones to do so in the whole country. It is unfortunate that one has to talk about that, since it would be good to be able to look upon it as natural. It is necessary for different interestes to receive publicity. There are examples to that effect already in Kécske too—and one doesn't have to think of anything big right away. Not long ago some Müzli-lovers established a reform kitchen-club. Is that the most important thing for them? It is. Then let them do it. It would really be good to let people do what they want. In an old paper from Félegyháza I read the following advertisement: ' The one who said this to that person on this date should take this', and then came the answer with the writer's name and address, ready to accept the counterargument. The person in question dared to make the risk, and so did the paper. And nothing happened. Now the situation is that people talk about a lot of things amongst themselves for they are interested in a lot of things; a great number of those topics, however, cannot be discussed in newspapers for 'that would never do'; as a consequence of which, just because the papers do not deal with what the people deal with, their credibility is shrinking. There is a lack of institutionalised publicity, that is to say, institutionalised publicity is only ready to undertake as much as is in conformity with the given 'situation'. If, for example, the president ot the council keeps a dog in a small town, then in that small town the editor, whose judgement depends on the president of the council, will rather take a stand for keeping dogs than against it, even though there might be a hundred thousand reasons for him to take the opposite stand. From that point of view, for example, it is definitely bad that *Kécskei Hírek* is published by the cultural centre: it should be published by someone else."

"Our conversation has been pushed to the theoretical plane pretty much, whereas Kécskei Hírek is a good example for just the way how to judge things in their concreteness. Here in my hand I have the latest issue, of February, consisting of 14

pages. It reports on the session of the executive commitee of the town's party commitee, it publishes an appeal from the Red Cross, requesting peoble who have good clothes they no longer use to collect them for those in need. We can read here about freedom to choose your own doctor. It is asked in the paper what the tax contribution to settlement development was spent on, what tax reduction people who pay a contribution to the development of public utilities are entitled, why the selection in the supermarkets has deteriorated since the price rises, and the rest. The fourteen pages include exactly seventy-five pieces of information of greater or lesser importance, together with the small ads. The paper has been edited in the same manner for several years. What is the readers' opinion about it?"

"The thing that means most to me is that dozens of people come to get it already on the first day of every month. If it had to be stopped for some reason, a great many people would definitely miss it. Perhaps because they have got accustomed to it, and perhaps they have got accustomed to it because everything we can write, we do write. The other day when I was travelling on the bus to Kecskemét, I overheard some women talking angrily about the increasing number of stray dogs in Kécske. To this one of the women added with great satisfaction that it had been mentioned in *Kécskei Hírek* too. And they nodded, ascertaining how good it was that it had been discussed in the paper too, saying that now something must definitely happen. People can see that what they see is seen by the paper too. Moreover, it sees things beforehand: the rarest news items in *Kécskei Hírek* are those written in the past tense. We wish to inform the people not only about what has already happened but primarily about what is going to happen. We try to indicate changes before they really take place."

"To what extent can this kind of paper be looked upon as an example?"

"Well, let me put it like this: anyone could be as poor as we are in Kécske, for we have next to nothing. And we need no more for what we do. There is need for an editor who writes about everyday matters too, there is need for a few sheets of stencil paper and that's it. In my view, what matters is not the form but the content. The news one may not obtain from anywhere else in any other way, which once you know it, makes you feel better. Which makes you feel more at home. That's all there is to it.

József Ballai

Ildikó Kováts

Mass Communication in Hungary 1987—1988

Compared to the preceding years, substantial changes of approach have taken place in Hungarian mass communication in the 1980s as a result of its facing economic, political and technological challenges.

Main trends

The role played by the economic factor in making various communication policy decisions has been enhanced; the economic efficiency of information production has become a decisive element in bringing about organisational changes, in formulating development ideas, in selecting the forms of financing and in revising previous state monopolies.

Thus, for example, the whole oganisational and economic management system of Hungarian film-making and film distribution was changed in 1987, a measure governed by decentralisation and self-financing; the monopoly of Hungarian Post in newspaper and magazine distribution was questioned; commercial radio broadcasting continued to develop and plans were drawn up for the launching of commercial television. In addition, commercial publications are now leading to changes in the system of newspaper and book-publishing, a process going hand in hand with an increase in the proportion of private publishing within the field of book-publishing as a whole. In building up a mass communication infrastructure, the role played by private capital and private enterprise is growing; for instance, private capital is very much involved in expanding the telephone net-

work, while private enterprise is largely contributing to the effort to receive satellite TV programmes. Private enterprise works its way, legally or illegally, into areas not preferred or not financed by the state, performing the function of balancing supply and demand (e.g. importation of information means and programmes).

Increasing pressure is exerted by certain groups in society for the expansion of participation in mass communication and for the decentralisation of the existing system. The demand for the establishment and operation of local mass media is of particular importance. It often coincides with criticism of the channels of information made available at plants, factories etc. Quite a few cities have submitted a request for a licence to lunch their own papers; the number of local cable television clubs is growing rapidly and in the absence of a transmission network of their own they have asked to be allowed to use the central TV and radio network in order to improve local communication. Some groups in society are prepared to include local and private sources in the development programmes in an attempt to satisfy their communication needs. Parallel with this they have also called for the extension of the right to have a say in programming.

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1987 was the first year in which the new Hungarian Press Act was applied. It specifies the rights and duties of both the mass media and journalists in connection with the right of citizens to be kept informed and with the duty of state and social organs to supply information. A statement issued by the Association of Hungarian Journalists on November 30th, 1987 summarised the results and problems in connection with the task of expanding the media and the press.

A new phase began in the development of the technology and content of Hungarian mass communication following the signing of an agreement by Hungarian Post under which foreign satellite TV programmes can be received in the country. It has led to the broadening of the television "menu" with two channels in English, one in French and one in Russian.

However, Hungarian Post makes only a minimal contribution to ensuring the technical and financial conditions for the reception of satellite programmes, the viewers being made to cover most of the costs.

Changes in the regulations

The year 1987 saw no major development in the field of legalisation in the mass media. From among the factors listed by the 1986 Press Act as restricting press publicity, the concept of state and military secrets and their protection were formulated in legal provisions in Decree No. 5/1987 of the Presidential Council of the Hungarian People's Republic.

Decree No. 16. of May 13, 1987 issued by the Council of Ministers, concerning the development of telecommunications, specifies that users must pay part of the costs of the establishment or transfer of telecommunication equipment ("investment contribution").

Following an increase in the role played by private enterprise in the development of the infrastructure, a decree was issued to specify the rules governing the right to design telecommunication buildings and establishments and the conditions under which they can be erected, as well as conditions for the laying of wires and cables. (Decree No. 1. of 1987.

First year of the application of the Press Act

At the beginning of 1988 the Association of Hungarian Journalists summarised their experiences in the first year of the application of the 1986 Press Act and outlined current problems and the tasks to be accomplished. It was stated that the act was stimulating the press in the right direction. Press publicity had increased hand in hand with criticism voiced ·in respect of its work. The majority of public institutions and companies were found to have fulfilled their duties to supply information as specified by the Press Act, but quite often local regulations failed to concord with the provisions of national legislation. The notion of trade secrets needs urgent clarification. (As for state and military secrets, another type of secret specified by the Press Act, a relevant decree was issued in 1987 by the Presidential council.)

The reason for some of the problems is that the position of social publicity and its role in the present phase of social development are still to be clarified. That is why the principles and methods of its development remain to be worked out. While in the politico-economic sphere the presence of differing interests, together with their expression and impact, are fully accepted as existing factors, little if any of the articulation of interests can be indentified in the Hungarian mass media. This applies both to the individual forums as well as to the structure.

Direct intervention is still a method quite frequently adopted in the process of

controlling the press. Because of the prevailing problems neither the rights nor the duties of the owners of papers have as yet been clarified. Both material and technological conditions are deteriorating, and, because of business considerations, publishers are forced by financial difficulties to bring out a peripheral type of publication of rather an inferior level.

Radio

The following changes took place in radio during 1987:

1. What was known as the Third Programme assumed the name of composer Béla Bartók. The new name indicates that it is founded upon the broadcasting of classical music. Its transmission period was also lengthened by a morning programme intended for classical music fans.

2. Radio Danubius was launched in 1986 as a commercial station. It began by broadcasting information and advertisement programmes (1 third of programming time) in German and light music (2 thirds of programming) in the Balaton holiday region. In 1987, it widened its scope with an English broadcast containing useful pieces of information and expanded coverage to Budapest and the area around the capital city. Radio Danubius operates between may lst and September 30th.

3. A new regional station appeared on the air in the southern city of Szeged on July 1st, 1987. Its broadcasts can cover the three neighbouring countries and three times a week programmes are transmitted in Slovak and Rumanian to the ethnic minority groups living in the region.

4. The existing five regional radio stations in the country produce two ten minute programmes between Monday and Friday. They are included in one of the national programmes and broadcast during their programming time to the whole of Hungary. Most of the information transmitted nationwide contains useful and practical items for the local population. The station operating in the city of Szolnok broadcasts a 30 minute programme every morning.

Virtually the whole population of Hungary has been equipped with radio sets for several years now. Supply with sets stood at 98 per cent in 1987. About a quarter of the population have car radios (the figure is now stagnating as is the number of cars). 39 per cent of the people own stereo sets (showing an improvement on the corresponding 34 per cent in 1986). 86 per cent of the adult population turn on the radio at least once a day and 56 per cent listen to it more than once daily. On an average week-day 25 per cent of adults listen to the radio for less than one hour, while 22 per cent spend more than four hours a day listening to different radio programmes. 48 per cent listen to the news broadcasts several times a day as against 36 per cent who listen to them only once or twice daily.

34 per cent of the adult population listen several times a day or during the week to the serious music programmes broadcast by Radio Bartók, a station that can be heard on VHF only. 32 per cent pays attention to the programmes of local (regional) stations and 21 per cent to foreign radio stations, 11 of the 21 per cent listening only to music and 8 per cent to programmes in Hungarian prose.

The extent to which people listen to radio broadcasts, especially to music programmes is largely influenced by the nationwide spread of tape recorders and cassette recorders. 62 per cent of the adult population (over 18 years of age) have tape or cassette recorders in their homes. Half of them are stereo devices. About half of the owners use them several times a week or every day. In 1987, 40 per cent of adults possessed record players, most of which are stereo, and some 50 per cent use them every day or at least once or

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twice a week. In recent years the "walk-man" has spread at a very fast pace in the ranks of young people: 10 per cent of young people over 18 years of age had such a device in 1987 and the correspond-ing figure for the lower age bracket is most certainly higher.

Television

It is beyond any doubt that the greatest achievement in Hungarian television in 1987 was that it was made possible for viewers possessing the necessary devices to receive three programmes on satellite. Reacting to the demand posed by Bud-apest hotels accommodating tourists from the West, Hungarian Post began to make arrangements for creating the con-ditions for receiving satellite pro-grammes. They needed programmes in English, German and French. In January 1987, Hungarian Post signed an agree-ment with the owners of Sky Channel, Super Channel and TV 5 for the recep-tion and distribution of the programmes concerned. It also obtained a licence from Eutelsat allowing reception of pro-grammes broadcast by ECS I—F1 tele-communication satellite. Acquisition of the right to receive the German trans-mission 3 Sat will be delayed for techni-cal reasons. Hungarian Post can both obtain programmes and use the telecom-munication satellites free of charge. To provide the major Budapest hotels with programmes the Post Office has built up a system for receiving satellite trans-missions and another system for broad-casting programmes. As from June 1st 1987 the public at large have been able to receive satellite programmes following a political decision to this effect.

Both individual and collective re-ceivers are allowed to be used for receiv-ing the transmissions, but for reasons of price the collective method is much more popular. Thus the problem of receiving

programmes came to be linked with the question of development of the cable sys-tems. Presently this is considered by Post Office experts to be the most substantial development from the point of view of the organisation's infrastructure.

By taking advantage of an existing cable TV system, the cost of the estab-lishment of a reception system can be reduced to between 5 and 6 thousand forints (roughly equivalent to the month-ly national average income), if 20 to 25 flats contribute to it. The fee to be paid to Hungarian Post for reception is merely symbolic, for it barely amounts to 10 per cent of the subscription fee for MTV (Hungarian Television). Data relased by Hungarian Post show that there are per-haps some 40 thousand viewers of these programmes, while according to foreign (Sky Channel) estimates the figure stands closer to 100 thousand.

Naturally the opinion of Hungarian experts about the impact of the reception of satellite programmes is far from being uniform. Those giving priority to culture are particularly afraid that because of their difficult economic plight both the Hungarian national TV network as well as the local television stations will find it hard to compete successfully with them. Others hope that the development of cable television systems for the reception of satellite programmes will be a major stimulus and that competition will bring about the improvement of the "menu" offered to the viewers by the national television network.

However, Hungarians have been watching programmes other than those transmitted by the national television for several years. The small area and geo-graphical location of the country make it possible to receive the television pro-grammes of the neighbouring states in most parts of the land.

In 1987, one third of Hungary's adult population said that they regularly watched the broadcasts of one or another

foreign TV station. Czechoslovak television attracted the highest number of viewers (15 per cent) followed by Yugoslav (12 per cent), Austrian (11 per cent), Soviet (5 per cent) and Romanian (2 per cent) television. More favourable opportunities were provided last year for the reception of Soviet television's first channel because the transmissions received by Hungarian Post from a Soviet telecommunication satellite are retransmitted in Budapest and in the region around the capital. They can thus be received by ordinary TV sets. The language barrier, however, is a major factor hampering lots of people from watching foreign television broadcasts. It is an additional obstacle that virtually none of them give priority to attracting viewers with "spectacular" shows. The opportunity to receive satellite programmes can further reduce the number of their potential viewers in this country because of a special Hungarian problem: most of the present cable TV systems used by small, medium and large sized communities can receive only 5 or 6 programmes. To overcome this difficulty, instead of building a new cable system, in several places the number of opportunities to receive transmissions is simply being reduced.

During 1987 and 1988 MTV (Hungarian Television) was seeking the ways in which to react to growing competition and worsening economic conditions. In 1987, the amount to be allocated from the national budget to financing MTV was cut by 3 per cent. The situation was further aggravated by considerable pressure caused by inflation. It was not allowed to increase the subscription fee. Moreover, as from January 1st, 1988 people over 70 years of age need not pay the TV licence fee, a favour granted in order to counterbalance the effect of inflation on old age pensions. Thus it would run at a deficit should it rely merely on self-financing. Sources for development have run almost completely dry and

now MTV is forced to seek new ones. Under such conditions programming time cannot be lengthened, but guided by the desire to improve the quality of programmes on offer, the idea was raised to create conditions for Channels I and II to become independent. At the moment, advertising, which contributes to the allocation of an additional 4 per cent from the central budget to finance MTV, takes up some 3 per cent of total programming time. Early in 1988 MTV announced its intention to broadcast an experimental commercial television programme under the name "TV plus". The establisment of a joint-stock company was found to be suitable by Hungarian Television for developing its "Teletext" service. Parallel with the above efforts commercial activities such as book publishing and record production will be intensified. As well as this, MTV would like to have a larger share in the video business by selling video cassettes of previously broadcast programmes.

So far as viewing figures are concerned, 88 per cent of the adult population watch the programmes of Hungarian Television almost every day of broadcasting and 74 per cent every day as satellite programmes are working their way into the country. Non-viewers account for 3 per cent. Twenty-nine per cent watch TV one or two hours a day, 33 per cent spend two or three hours daily in front of the set and 25 per cent watch it even longer. On average Hungarian adults sit focussing their eyes on the screen 149 minutes per day (every day, except Monday, which is a "day off" for MTV; there are broadcasts on that day only on special occasions).

Channel I of Hungarian Television is watched by 97 per cent of the country's adult population. Channel II is less popular, with the coresponding percentage standing at 75 per cent. 97 per cent of the population possess a TV set and 31 per cent own more than one set.

In 1987, 36 per cent of the adult population had a colour TV set as compared to 26 per cent in the preceding year. A considerable improvement, but it must also be mentioned in this context that although quite a few sets of a comparatively wide range were imported the demand was so high that it could not always be satisfied. About a quarter of TV owners use a central aerial on the roof or a community antenna and so they are in a comparatively favourable situation regarding the equipment necessary for receiving satellite programmes.

Local television

There are two fundamental forms of local television in Hungary. One is regional broadcasting performed by two provincial studios of the national television network for which they also make programmes. The other is cable television. Over 30 provincial cities are supplied with it, but although each is of the large community type, it invariably covers only part of the town. There is full cable television coverage in one or two cities only. Up to 1988 programmes made by the local television studios were broadcast in the region concerned or nationwide only occasionally if a transmitter of the national television network was made available for this purpose for a specified period. In January 1988, this opportunity was expanded: in Miskolc, the second largest city in the country programmes of local interest are broadcast regularly by a small capacity transmitter in the vicinity on Monday, the day on which there is no regular programming by the national network.

Broadcasting by cable television emerged as a spectacular means of local programming and as such it developed at a fast pace. However, its inherent limits became only too obvious after a short time. The majority of the systems actually in operation make it possible to broadcast only 5 or 6 programmes simultaneously. This capacity now proves to be too narrow to offer the full "menu" of satellite programmes, a development which began in Hungary only recently. Technical problems, however, are not confined merely to the number of channels. The overwhelming majority of the necessary equipment must be imported from the West and acquisition is hampered by the shortage of hard currency. For this reason most of them are not available in the shops run by the state. Establisment of a cable television system is not subsidised from central government funds so it must be financed from local sources. The forms such financing takes are extremely varied: companies, enterprises, economic and social associations can embark on establishing and then maintaining cable television systems. The same applies to local programming. Relations between "patrons" and the editorial staff of local programmes are quite complicated because of both financial problems that are still to be clarified and differences of interest. The latter make every effort to achieve as large a measure of economic independence as they can: they make educational films and advertisements on their own in an attempt to become self-reliant and seek opportunities for the exchange and sales of their programmes. The amount of programmes made locally is quite small at the moment, for it fails to exceed one or two hours a week in general. In many places, however, the same channel is used for disseminating different types of information: advertisements, local or central teletext programmes, and even movie and video films are broadcast occasionally. It is not allowed to charge a subscription fee for local programmes, but charges are made for the above listed additional services.

Video

Video recorders owned by private individuals, various cultural and economic institutions and companies were estimated in 1987 to stand at around 250.000. It was these which largely contributed to establishing, practically overnight, the local studios referred to earlier. There are innumerable ways of using video in this country. Apart from home-viewing, these include video clubs (where the video recorders are attached to a central aerial system erected in the block of flats), video cinemas, video discos as well as being used for certain community, educational and advertisement purposes. The following data illustrate the extent to which video is used in this country: in 1987, the video was "within easy reach" of some 18 to 20 per cent of the adult population, meaning that they could watch video programmes at least once or twice a month, and there are indications that they never failed to seize this opportunity. In the same year about 70 per cent of the 18 to 19 year olds asserted that they often saw cassette video programmes. 8 per cent of those interviewed had video recorders of their own at home, 13 per cent were able to watch such programmes at their friends or relatives' places, 7 or 8 per cent in restaurants, bars, cafés, "espressos" and disco clubs and another 4 or 5 per cent at school or in clubs and community centres. The proportion of home video use increased. Two thirds of the owners of video recorders watch video programmes at least once a week, while 70 per cent of those not possessing them have access to such programmes once or twice a month or less frequently. There are several ways of gaining access to pre-recorded video cassettes. It must be noted in connection with this that the proportion of the purchasing or official borrowing of such cassettes is not particularly high. Informal or very often illegal acquisition is predominant. Two thirds of video viewers said that they watched cassettes borrowed from their friends and one quarter of them responded that they also saw programmes on cassettes borrowed from video libraries. Among the most popular are cartoons, karate films, westerns, sci-fi and horror films as well as video clips. Artistic films are comparatively more popular with the owners of video recorders than those not owning them.

The number of people making and publishing video programmes is very large. Most recently the staff of local studios joined the ranks of video programme-makers. In an effort to acquire funds for the development of their studios and gain additional income for themselves they are now making advertisements and other films quite intensively. As well as this, people earning their living from video can often be hired to make video films of family occasions and social events for an agreed fee. There has been a rise in the number of people attending courses, the certificate of which is indispensable for obtaining a video licence. Video and television are increasingly included as independent subjects in the curriculum of the training systems run by the different state and soial organisation, but training in general is a problem which cannot be regarded as having been settled satisfactorily.[*]

New initiatives

The years 1987 and 1988 saw continued development of certain services based upon telecommunication, the video and computers in Hungary. Their use is still negligible since they are as yet in their

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[*] For more detailed data on video use see Valkó, E. and Rosner, I.: The Characteristics of Video Use in Hungary on page 147 of this issue.

infancy i.e. at the market research stage. By taking advantage of the free computer capacity of a central library in Budapest, a competitor for Informatix emerged on the horizon. This had been established earlier as a computer and telephone-aided information system for public use. The public videotex network established by Hungarian Post is still in an experimental phase. The early part of 1988 saw the completion of the videotex service system established jointly by the Ministry of Industry and the Electric Energy Research Institute. It supplies and spreads industrial information, exchange rates, prices and market data and also performs an advertising function. For the time being it is a free service and even the terminals necessary for receiving the programmes are made available for users on a leasing basis. By now at least one company from each of Hungary's 19 counties has been involved in the scheme. The first video conference in the country was held in 1987 as a means of in-service training of tele-communication specialists. It was attended by 600 people and five major cities were connected together by Hungarian Post's videolink microwave network, which operated on a two-way basis with Budapest as its centre.

The National Information Centre for Public Culture issues a computer readable "disc-news" for use by local community centres all over the country. It contains lists of recommended programmes and events, advertisements and publicity items, competitions and other pieces of current information. It comes out monthly and is available to subscribers.

The press

There were only minor changes in the situation of the press, but there was a growing feeling that fundamental changes had to take place. Increased tension characterises the relations between political and cultural policy values; the differences of interest between the individual stages of producing a newspaper (editing, printing and distribution) grew sharper; attempts at decentralisation became more frequent and a growing number of doubts were raised as to the adequacy of the present structure of publishing papers; the problem of the technological backwardness of editing and publishing newspapers came very much to the fore and the negative impact exercised by the deficiencies of computerisation and the telecommunication network were increasingly voiced. The economic policy decisions made in 1987 led to further aggravation of the plight within this field.

According to a survey made in 1987, 84 per cent of the adult population read one or more daily and 54 per cent of them also read a local (not national) paper. 83 per cent of the people interviewed sad that they read weeklies, too, and 50 per cent of them read a journal or periodical as well. In addition to reading the Hungarian press, some 7 per cent of the country's population read papers or periodicals in a foreign language: either papers issued in this country for the ethnic groups or press publications brought from abroad.

The telecommunication infrastructure

From the point of view of the progress of Hungary's telecommunication infrastructure the most significant development in 1987 was the 70 million USD credit made available by the World Bank for Hungarian Post to improve its telephone network; its present state and the shortage of lines are the main obstacles to the introduction of new information services. Besides obtaining the credit, Hungarian Post, which is responsible for

the technical and technological aspects of transmission, made arrangements for broadcasting programmes produced by the staff of the newly established local radio station in the city of Szeged on the CCIR and OIRT bands. In addition, a new 100 kW short wave transmitter was put into operation in the south-western town of Székesfehérvár by the Post Office for broadcasting the programmes of Radio Kossuth (Budapest I) beyond Hungary's borders. Other achievements of the Post Office during the period in question include the establishment of a 1 kW NEC receiver for satellite programmes, in particular the one transmitted by the Soviet Union and the building up of a microwave system enabling the reception of Western satellite programmes by the major hotels in Budapest.

The following figures illustrate the extent to which radio and television stations were obtainable in Hungary in 1987: Radio Kossuth (Budapest I) on medium wave: 85 per cent, VHF: 78 per cent, the two together covering 96 per cent. Radio Petőfi (Budapest II) on medium wave: 65 per cent, VHF mono: 90 per cent and stereo: 61 per cent, the three of them together covering 93 per cent. Radio Bartók, VHF mono: 95 per cent, stereo: 76 per cent. Central Television, Channel I: 95 per cent, Channel II: 90 per cent.

Judit Pataki and Edit S. Molnár

Patterns of Thinking about Satisfaction

Examining the components of satisfaction, the authors tried to answer—among other things—the following questions: what is needed by the population to consider themselves satisfied and what opportunities do they see for increasing their level of satisfaction?

It was in 1978 that the Mass Communication Research Centre undertook a research project entitled *An attempt at investigating the components of satisfaction.* The draft showed the impact of the trend which could be observed in social research beginning from the second half of the 1960s and in the first half of, the 1970s, tracing professional debates about the introduction of certain social indicators.

Just to refresh our memory: in these debates a consensus was reached about using the economic GDP index to interpret the extent of economic development —"social well-being" in a narrowed-down sense. At the same time there was a difference of opinion over which criteria were economic indicators, and which were social indicators, as well as how they could be measured. The research centered upon distinguishing so-called objective indicators (measuring the objective characteristics of the social structure) from so-called subjective indicators (measuring how people sense and evaluate their situation and how satisfied they are with it). It started with high ambition and promised to bring fruitful results. But today the increasingly prevalent professional opinion is that these attempts were not really successful and that correlating objective and subjec-

tive indicators with each other, and then justifying their relationship to each other is not free of problems. We might rightly believe that this can be traced back to the fact that the methods applied for measuring satisfaction were not really reliable. This becomes less clear when we investigate the extent and degree of satisfaction related to just a few fields (e. g. housing), but it becomes clearer when we compare the level of satisfaction experienced in several qualitatively different fields using the same yardstick. Since, however, we regularly examine the level of statisfaction of the population in specific fields in our opinion surveys, we believed it necessary, taking into account the lessons of international experience as well, to attempt a comparative examination of the level of statisfaction in the different fields.

Our approach is closest to the small sample investigations performed in England by Abrams, Hall and Ring in the early 1970s. In these opinion polls the respondents were given the task to e-valuate their "well-being" or satisfaction in 11 or 12 categories, using an eleven-point scaling system. Their evaluation referred not only to the present but the state of the respondents 4—5 years earlier as well as what could be expected in 4—5 years' time. In each category the

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respondents were also asked what level of satisfaction they believed was "just" for people living under similar conditions and also what level of satisfaction they considered as characteristic of different social strata in each category. Finally, inquiries were made about the changes necessary to increase satisfaction in each category. More detailed examinations were carried out in certain fields (e.g. satisfaction with the housing situation).

Research with similar aims was undertaken in the Hungarian social sciences as well. Without intending to provide a complete list, among the initiators we must mention the names of Rudolf Andorka and János Illés, who approached this problem from the angle of the necessity to differentiate the system of social statistics, pointing out the potential in establishing and utilising so-called "objective" and "subjective" indicators. In the field of empirical sociology, the first so-called "life quality investigations" were mainly associated with the names of Elemér Hankiss and Róbert Manchin. Finally, mention must be made of the questionnaire investigating life style prepared by the Social Science Institute of the Central Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party and the Central Statistical Office in 1981—82. The title of this questionnaire is "The opinions of the population," and though its results are not yet known it is the one that comes perhaps closest in its approach and construction to investigation carried out abroad.

Efforts to widen the concept of social "well-being", to extend it into the fields of human behaviour and public morale, and to make it measurable can be observed in economic research as well (c. f. János Kornai et. al), and concrete analyses have also been carried out in some more specific fields (primarily in the works of Zsuzsa Dániel).

As an "antecedent" to our research, we have to refer to a whole series of opinion surveys on political and economic questions made in the Mass Communication Research Centre in the 1970s, which, having posed a number of diverse questions related to satisfaction, provide us with a great deal of information.

Finally, a questionnaire survey among the urban population was carried out at the end of 1980. We looked upon it as a methodological trial, and its results were summarised in our publication entitled "An attempt at investigating the components of satisfaction" (Mass Communication Research Centre, *Tanulmányok* 1982, Vol. XIV, No. 2.).

Three years later, in 1983, we took another survey, this time on a national representative sample of 1000 people. Perhaps it is not superfluous to mention that by then the renaissance of so-called "satisfaction investigations" had largely died out in the international arena; the not too optimistic conclusion was that a number of unsolved methodological difficulties had been built into the investigations, on account of which the incorporation of subjective indicators of satisfaction into an aggregated indicator expressing the "well-being" of a given country similar to GDP was more problematic than earlier assumed. We, on our own part, would have liked to carry through to the end our testing of the structures of questions related to satisfaction in the Hungarian population, but we were also hoping to establish a set of factors that could at least function as a barometer measuring the level of and fluctuations in both general and individual satisfaction in the population.

In four directions

Our approach was to put a large number of so-called open questions in our questionnaire. We chose this method because in the 1980 survey, one of the greatest difficulties we encountered in processing

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and analysing the data was that we could perceive great differences in interpretation underlying the scores which we were unable to quantify. This time the new questionnaire contained four wider topics:

1. We asked in an open form what the respondents believed was necessary for someone to consider himself happy and then in a closed form we asked them how they graded themselves (with marks from 5 to 1) as to their general satisfaction.

2. In another block of questions we inquired about how our respondents evaluated themselves as compared to the majority: whether they were more satisfied or less satisfied than the majority or as satisfied as the majority. In the form of an open question we inquired about the reasons, and also about who the respondents believed were more satisfied and less satisfied than themselves.

3. In a separate part of the questionnaire thirteen factors of everyday life were listed: income, housing situation, leisure time, sexual life, the individual's health, work, friendship, the health of the family, settling everyday matters, family life, the economic situation of the country, politics.

The respondents received a list of these "factors" on a card too. We also asked them how satisfied they were in respect of each field and the grading method was identical to the former one. This sequence of questions may be typically referred to as "questions in table form, which differed from the universally applied method in respect of both the appearance of printing technique and the way of posing the questions, in that after each numerical response, we asked for a subjective explanation. So if the respondent gave a five, we asked why he evaluated his level of satisfaction thus, or if he gave a four or less, what would be necessary to make him more satisfied.

4. Finally, the fourth part of the questionnaire inquired about so-called fairytale wishes.

The responses were processed in several ways; one of the methods was to analyse the contents of the text of the reply given to the so-called open questions, related freely. With this method we could examine the patterns which characterise the people's way of thinking related to their satisfaction. In our paper we shall stress two aspects of the latter research findings. Firstly we shall show the typical answers to a question like, "What do you need to be able to declare yourself satisfied?" Then we shall reveal the details of how people think about the opportunities for increasing their satisfaction.

What do you need to be able to declare yourself satisfied?

The respondents were very happy to answer this question, and listed a variety of elements of satisfaction: in our category system, the 3338 responses were divided into more than a hundred subgroups. Only a few respondents were reluctant to answer this question, reasoning that "satisfaction is too complex a matter, therefore it is difficult to give a real answer to it" (only 2 per cent). Evasive answers were not given by many respondents either ("everyone has different needs," "everyone is made happy by different things"—4 per cent). The majority of the sample made use of the opportunity to list concrete things (83 per cent) or attached some more general remarks to the list of concrete things (e. g. "that is a very complex matter", "it is not sure that these are the only things"—about 10 per cent). Only two persons believed that the appropriate answer to the question was "there is no such situation," or "you can never be satisfied".

The wording of about one fifth of the replies revealed that many of the respondents, when thinking about the components of satisfaction, were—quite un-

derstandably—unable to separate themselves from their own personal situation; thus the list of concrete things acquired an emotional colouring. The content of that emotional colouring can be boastful (it may appear from the whole of the answer or certain details that the respondent is proud of himself; he may be proud of having achieved something, or of having done everything himself; he is satisfied with himself); or it can be complaining, dissatisfied or critical (the concrete things necessary for being satisfied are listed with remarks pointing out that these are things that the respondent is in great need of). The existence of the boastful attitude, however, does not exclusively correlate with situations which may be regarded as objectively good (e. g. good financial situation, success, etc.), but it has some additional function of self-justification too. Primarily in the case of those considering it necessary to influence satisfaction consciously, through "their own efforts", it may be observed that they frequently boast of "leading a normal life," or "being modest," unlike other people. No matter how understandable the mechanism of this attitude is, it is still a modern-day symptom worth pondering if peace of mind, a well-balanced personality, warm human relationships, which are really of basic importance from the point of view of being satisfied, dominate the scene in compensation for good but inaccessible objective conditions.

Another characteristic feature is that the way of thinking about the components of satisfaction is fairly well structured. It seems that some system of social norms has been established in this issue. Roughly speaking, this is also reflected in the ranking (on the basis of frequency of occurrence) of the main types of components mentioned, shown in the following table.

This ranking is in general agreement with the results of international research,

Ranking of the components of satisfaction:	Frequency, expressed as a percentage (N = 3338)
1. money, financial matters	20
2. family	17
3. work	13
4. psychological values	9
5. health	8
6. leisure time, culture, public education	7
7. personally generated satisfaction	7
8. housing	6
9. politics, public life	5
10. the economic situation of the country	5
11. infrastructure	2
12. cultural items	1
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where the role of individual factors in influencing satisfaction decreases when proceeding from the "personal sphere" towards more general topics or factors at the "social level." Another experience in international investigations is that there are three fields in general which exercise the greatest influence on feelings of satisfaction: health, family circumstances and financial situation.

As far as our earlier investigation is concerned, it is remarkable that in 1980 most people looked upon health as being the most important component (this factor headed the list), followed by family, then housing (it was an urban sample!). Income and financial matters came fourth and work was placed fifth. Now, in our view, a definite change in opinion can be seen underlying the factor of health being relatively pushed into the background, the great dominance of money and financial matters, as well as the prominence given to the factor of work. There is an increase in the central role of money, income and income-producing work. When looking at Hungarian morbidity and mortality rates, the fact that

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the role of health has been pushed back into a less important position — for the reasons mentioned above — must be regarded as a contributing factor. As far as the decrease in the importance of housing is concerned, it may be partly explained by the fact that, as compared to the urban sample of 1980, this time village inhabitants with better housing conditions have also been included in the sample, and partly by the point which had become increasingly more clear that significant financial resources are necessary to resolve the problem of housing. If one has enough money, one can get a flat or a house.

Now let us turn to the main topic of our study and look at the strength of articulation the different ranges of satisfaction received in the opinions revealed.

Money, financial matters

It can be looked upon as natural that the majority of people consider "a lot of money" or "wealth" as one of the components of satisfaction. However, having taken a close look at the responses, it seemed that the most obvious means of categorisation was how much money the respondents had in mind when thinking about their satisfaction. We distinguished three "typical" categories: "a lot of money" (well-being; sufficient money to realise all ambitions; abundance, wealth), "enough money" (a salary adequate for avoiding everyday financial problems, adequate living conditions), and, finally, "enough money to live on" (an amount to provide for one's needs, enough money to dress properly, etc.). Among the three categories, "enough money" was mentioned most frequently. It is a highly remarkable result of the opinion survey that in 1983 close to 40 per cent of the adult population looked upon not a lot of money, wealth but "an adequate salary" or "getting rid of every-

day financial problems" as most important in order to feel satisfied or contented.

Though the primary meaning of the responses undoubtedly referred to the quantity of money, as a secondary meaning we can find a great number of references primarily to the way of life "approved of", "cosidered desirable" or "qualified as normal" which may be secured with the amount of money imagined. Some of the responses outline a lifestyle which seems to be almost out of reach: "to be rich" or "to live in wealth". Others, however, refer to moral norms with the underlying idea (which may only be conjectured) that "I can be satisfied if I have enough money to adhere to certain basic norms" such as:

— "to have everything a family might need"

— "to have money in the bank"

— "to dress propely"

— "to be able to give the children everything", etc.

Behind these declarations the image of the "orderly family" looms up, a family which lives in a nicely furnished home, whose members are properly dressed, whose parents give their children a good education, with some surplus income that can be saved, etc.

Albeit infrequently, the role of "money" or "financial resources" was mentioned in a negative context as well: "money does not make one happy" (other matters are more important, it is not worth accumulating wealth), which is a clear reflection of moral teaching for "the poor", and its declaration reflects the "self-justifying" attitude mentioned above.

There is hardly any social researcher dealing with survey-type investigations who has never encountered the following situation: if the respondents are asked to state how much money they would need, then the desires revealed — not restricted by anyone — tend to be fairly moderate.

The probable explanation for this phenomenon is that fantasy is restricted by the "moral code" of society: one is "supposed to" desire just enough money to lead a life society approves of, considers normal and looks upon as a pattern to follow. This kind of response may to a certain extent be encouraged by the way the actual question is formulated. A typical way of posing such a question is: "What is the monthly income a family like yours needs in order to live comfortably?" The text of the question steers the replies towards a "socially accepted mean," and this is proved by a detailed analysis of the actual income of the respondents compared to what they declared to be necessary.*

Family and family life

The dominant place occupied by family and family life in the ranking correlates with both international experience and the results of similar Hungarian investigations; the fact that it plays an outstanding role in satisfaction needs no comment.

It is also obvious that most people confirm the importance of the family with its funcion of imparting emotional security, for which purpose they use adjectives as follows: "loving," "understanding," "harmonious," "happy," "helping each other," etc. After the need for "enough money," this was mentioned with the highest frequency, by more than a quarter of the sample. Thus it is second in weight among more than one hundred types of response within the main topics.

However, included in the importance placed on the family and family life, great significance was given to the image of the

so-called "normal family" as well. It is quite probable that a great number of people feel satisfied just because they believe that their family life is "in order," "proper," "normal," and that it meets the expectations of society and its norms. Of course, this is in no way an unnatural requirement. If, however, people consider it important from the point of view of being content, it must be assumed that the preference of the so-called "personal sphere" is not free from "social" elements of a higher level at all, according to which the personal sphere operates properly if the image formulated of it passes the test on external, social criteria.

It seems quite probable that these two kinds of motivation are separated in the assessment of good family life: the dominance of the emotional function of the family and that of adjusting the institution of the family to social norms and expectations. This stance is supported by the fact that people use commonplaces in defining good family life which differ in content when revealing their opinions. This is what we observed when a great number of the respondents referred to the functions of individual members of the family (spouse, child, grandparent) in "good family life". The emotional role of the family is stressed by the stereotypes "good husband," "understanding wife" and "the child who secures the harmony of the family." At the same time people confirm the importance of "normal family" with elements highlighting the proper operation of the family as an institution, such as to raise children "properly" or "in an orderly manner;" to "look after elderly parents," etc.

These observations may be applied when preparing other questionnaires re-

* c. f. Angelusz, Róbert; Nagy, Lajos Géza and Tardos, Róbert: *A megfelelőnek tartott jövedelem* (Income: how much is sufficient?) In: *Gazdaság és életszínvonal a közgondolkodásban* (Economics and living standards in public thinking). Kossuth Könyvkiadó, 1984. 84—97.

lating to family life as well; firstly in the respect that people may be satisfied or dissatisfied with family life — in frameworks of comparison very different from each other — and secondly keeping in mind that the difference between the two previously mentioned main types does not involve a value judgement (i.e. we have no grounds for stating that one type is "better," "of a higher order" or "more acceptable" than the other).

Work

Aware of the concepts and classifications used in labour sociology, we cannot find it surprising that satisfaction with work and workplace has a very broad meaning and a great number of components. However, it also exceeded our expectations that we encountered a very wide scale of expectations related to work and workplace in the material we examined. For our question concerned general satisfaction, and at first it seemed to be unbelievable that satisfaction in general — in addition to factors of great importance like a good financial situation or family harmony — can be fundamentally influenced by partial questions which almost seem "trifling", such as whether one can have a shower in the workplace.

The fact that people most frequently mentioned good atmosphere in the workplace within the main topic may be accounted for by our observation that frustrations in the workplace play a decisive role with regard to feelings of satisfaction. From the content of the responses, in addition to the opinion frequently mentioned, it can be stated with little qualification that the two dominating elements of the atmosphere at the workplace are
— the relationship among the colleauges, and

— the relationship between boss and employees.

As far as the first is concerned, behind the accompanying comments (e. g. "they should agree," "should help each other," "one should find friends," "there should be no conflicts among them," etc.) we also see a glimpse of some kind of a requirement for so-called "community values". Our question was—as has already been emphasised several times — "what is it one needs to be able to declare himself satisfied?" If someone is discriminating about good human relationships — and, hopefully, most people are—and he has the opportunity to make friends too and belong to real communities, then it is of almost secondary importance whether they originate from his workplace or not. However, as a result of today's lifestyle and the poverty of community life, in our days—outside the narrow family circle—it is almost exclusively the workplaces which fulfil the function of people maintaining contacts with each other, and foster so-called friendships.

The references to the "boss/employee" relationship as a characteristic feature of the workplace (the boss "should appreciate," "evaluate" and "acknowledge" the work of his men) are typically too general for us to think that what is behind them is simply the following: a rigid, unjust boss makes the lives of his men miserable. They express the following instead: a basic component of decisive importance to general satisfaction is that one should not feel his efforts and endeavours to be futile and that they should be measured by the appreciative control of society.

The claims for both friendly ties, appreciation and recognition are basic, natural human desires. What may be looked upon as interesting and "specific to our times" is that those claims and desires appear in the range of "work" and "workplace." We are all the more justified in thinking so, since the responses

related to work in general, creative work or the pleasure of doing any kind of work as a main factor influencing satisfaction are separated from each other; they do not appear together with the comments related to "the atmosphere at the workplace." The emphasis on comments of this kind at the same time goes to show that work done with pleasure is a decisive factor in one's general satisfaction.

At the same time it is remarkable that the opportunity to perform extra work appears with about the same frequency in the responses: there are a significant number of people for whom it is necessary to have access to some work of this kind in order to feel satisfied at all. This time too we are faced with what we saw earlier too: the real opinion — which again appears within the range of "work" —is the desire for a lot of money or enough money, which is perhaps declared in a somewhat "more bashful way" if people refer to the activities through which that amount of money may be acquired. (Such a connection may even be assumed between "the good atmosphere at the workplace" and desiring "a lot" or "enough money," since good connections with colleauges and a good "boss/employee" relationship may also be necessary in order to be able to join an in-company economic partnership.)

Finally, strongly situation-bound are the opinions which list different favourable working conditions considered desirable, whose existence might make people satisfied, such as:

— "shorter working time"
— "how well the workplace is equipped"
— "the difficulty of the work" — "it should not exhaust the workers"
— "washing facilities," etc.

It is quite probable that what lies behind these factors are very bad objective conditions at the workplace which exert a very harmful influence on the general feeling of satisfaction of the people.

Social-psychic values

At first glance it seemed strange to us too that the number of opinions classified under the concept "social-psychic values" was relatively high, preceding other fields of basic importance in everyday life, such as health or housing. A more careful analysis of the responses enabled us to conclude that they were fairly characteristically concentrated around the quite strong requirement of "peace," "quiet" and protection from external frustrations in general. Its appearance could already be observed in the survey of 1980 (e. g. among the so-called "three wishes"), however, the wording of the responses demonstrated some kind of amplification of that requirement.

What is also interesting is that this claim that it is important to have a "peaceful life" (from the point of view of satisfaction) is also articulated from two points of view.

One of these viewpoints (mentioned more frequently) emphasises the defencelessness and exposure of individuals, circumstances which are difficult to change (e. g. "life should not be that overworked"). The other dimension (mentioned less frequently) points out that there is need for an improvement in relationships among people, and that this could be achieved through certain "voluntary activities," which many of the respondents would look upon as obligatory to themselves (e. g. "we should be more tolerant and considerate towards each other," "there is need for greater understanding among people").

Another group, though smaller in its proportions but easy to separate as to its content, is made up of opinions mentioning the importance of social life ("one should not be lonely," "one should have

friends," "good neighbours," "company," etc.) The appearance of this requirement among the things considered important from the point of view of satisfaction indicates an aggravating deficiency in our everyday life. It is a paradoxical situation that in the economically active years this requirement is covered or frequently satisfied by "appearance-friendships" or "appearance-connections" established in the workplace (which have already been referred to: for this reason many people feel that they have friends) and they only realise the real deficiency when the workplace or the family ceases to exist (e. g. the children grow up).

It may be related to different components of individual motivation that people mentioned a wide variety of specific groups of social-psychic values but very few mentioned just one or two of them: e. g. happiness, love, affection, respect, security, or success.

Health

In relation to health, two groups of responses could be distinguished by content. Many of the respondents expressed conventional wisdoms like, "if one has health, he has everything." This sort of thing was stated by a sizeable proportion of the respondents (altogether exceeding 20 per cent) in an impersonal manner without referring to their own state of health. The uniform nature of these opinions tended to make us suspect that many of the respondents were not expressing their own convictions but rather some kind of social consensus about this being the "correct answer" to the question "What is it you need to be satisfied?" (Quite probably it is one of the most general "golden rules;" using commonplace wording in the question more than likely pre-ordains a similarly worded answer.)

The other opinions, representing a much smaller group proportionally, tended to emphasise that—frequently bringing examples from the respondents' own lives or their families—if someone has a lasting ailment, an incureable disease or a reduced ability to work, etc, he can never be satisfied again. Both the contentual and proportional differences seen in the responses, and a much more limited understanding of what constitutes good health correlate with our knowledge obtained from other sources that today in Hungary the so-called health culture is of a fairly low level. Frequently good health, or a healthy lifestyle are only seen to be important or valuable when some irrevocable deterioration has already occurred in health.

Free time, culture, public education

Compared to the investigation of 1980, the area of leisure time has also been brought up in the ranking. The primary reason for this is, perhaps, that increasingly more people spend their free time in activities aimed at making money. In addition to mentioning free time in itself, without any "accompanying comment," we could frequently read the following remarks of explanation too: "for there isn't enough time," "one must work too much," or even put like this: "you need more free time just so that you can get more work done."

In addition to stressing the value of leisure time, occasionally there were references to "desired activities" in which people would be happy to indulge in their real free time, and which—they believe —would really make them satisfied. The list is topped by "entertainment, unwinding," followed by "travelling," "holidays" and "excursions," as well as the requirement for "company" and "friends." Even though the rate at which

this is mentioned is low, it is still worth considering that there are people for whom "resting" in itself or "spending more time with the family" would be sufficient to feel satisfied. The typical leisure time activities (e. g. theatre, reading, studying or public education, hobbies, sports) only very infrequently appear as desirable ways of spending one's leisure time, necessary for satisfaction.

Personally generated satisfaction

It appeared from a part of the responses, their context and their wording that the view "We consider ourselves responsible for our satisfaction, and that satisfaction also depends on our own behaviour", is strongly reflected in public opinion (or in a part of it).

These opinions have two characteristic types, both being well-known stereotypes.

The opinions which fall into the first category emphasise the "psychic" aspect of personally generated satisfaction: one needs a "good disposition" to get over problems with ease. For example:

— "you shouldn't allow problems to bother you too much"

— "internal balance, harmony, well-balanced state of mind, self-knowledge"

— "to find the silver lining in every could" and

—"to be able to find pleasure in little things"

— "wisdom," "to look at things from above" and

— "to neglect unimportant matters"

— "faitch," "ideals," "religion" etc.

The second group includes the opinion that a way of life in harmony with social norms is in itself a sign of people being satisfied with themselves. These opinions — and how they are structured as well —are real pearls of proverbial wisdom pointing out the right way to behave:

— "One must work a lot," "One must work industriously and then he will have everything he needs."

— "Do as you're told," "Adapt in order to meet demands."

— "One must not think big," "One must have realistic objectives," "Look after and be thankful for what you've got."

— "Live within your means," "You've simply got to manage your money well."

— "Make the best of all your opportunities."

— "Live a regular life," "Don't drink," "Don't play the fool," "Don't gamble."

— "Don't go looking for fights."

The way the opinions are declared again reveals a kind of "self-justifying" attitude—we are compensated for the lack of unattainable riches by living an impeccable life in accordance with the external expectations, and through being looked upon as decent, respectable people.

Naturally, it is necessary to pose the following question: were the opinions revealed influenced by some kind of intention on the part of the respondents to "appear in a favourable light" before the external observer, the interviewer? Although that motive can really not be excluded, it is remarkable and characteristic in itself that there are people who want to formulate this favourable picture about themselves just by declaring their identification with precisely this type of moral norm.

Housing

It has already been mentioned that the outstanding role of housing among the factors determining satisfaction seems to have been reduced as compared to 1980. One of the explanations can be found in the difference in composition of the samples, and the other reason may probably be that, as a consequence of wider possi-

bilities for "obtaining a flat or a house for a lot of money," a part of the claims for housing are, in all probability, included in the desire for "a lot of money." This stance is supported by the fact that the proportion of hints about a "very good flat or house" (e. g. a villa, a separate room for everyone, luxury, etc.) represents only a fraction in the internal distribution of the direct references to housing (which we were able to examine on the basis of the quality of the flat or house desired). It is quite probable that demands for this kind of luxury housing were incorporated in the claims for "affluence," discussed earlier with regard to money.

The proportion of references to flats of an "appropriate" type (e. g. with all conveniences, suitable size, etc.) was relatively low too. What we could conclude instead was that those referring to housing as a satisfaction-determining factor were palpably considering the existence of the flat in general, perhaps privately owned, but at least an independent flat.

Politics, public life

In accordance with international experience, the area of politics and public life as part of the so-called social sphere —strongly lagging behind the private sphere—was only ranked among the last three areas in importance. However, it is also a "symptom of our age" that two-thirds of all the remarks related to politics and public life (this at the same time accounts for more than 10 per cent of the respondents) referred to "peace", international life free from conflicts, a safe future and the improvement of the international situation as exerting the greatest influence upon feelings of satisfaction.

Far fewer respondents emphasised the importance of peaceful political circumstances in Hungary. Finally, though mentioned infrequently, problems of politics and public life (whose inclusion, it seems, has a definite critical aim), came to the surface too. For example:
— "looking after the man in the street"
— "there should be no indifference or bureaucratic ways of handling people"
— "freedom of religion and opinions," "freedom of conviction"
— "to be well-informed about politics," "objective mass media," etc.

The economic situation of the country

As for the references to the correlation between general satisfaction and the economic situation of the country, no specific "analysis of content" is required. There is a fairly wide consensus (and the declarations were formulated in an identical manner) that people would be more content if:
— the standard of living were improved
— wages and pensions were higher
— prices were lower—or at least stable.

Although it may be looked upon as natural that people cannot very well think of economic management (e. g. the economic-technological development of the country, innovations, distribution of incomes, social policy, etc,) as the direct components of personal satisfaction and content, it is still interesting that, albeit sporadically, such references were made at all. What we can probably recognise behind them is the impact of mass media and economic propaganda. Clearly there are people who wish to give articulation to their well-informed character when indicating the "economic components" of their satisfaction with such headwords.

Infrastructure

The relatively low rate of mention is firstly related to those living in villages and small scattered settlements, for whom the

lack of infrastructure may be a highly frustrating factor ("there is nothing here on this farm"); among the subgroups the claims for "good public supply," "good supply of goods" and "shopping facilities" have a dominating role.

Cultural items

Here, things mentioned at an almost exclusively "individual level" appear to have more a "situational" context. There are lists of wishes which are almost living in the concrete desires and plans of the respondents (e. g. colour television, tape-recorder, household appliances, beautiful clothes, etc.). Among them two things —a car and beautiful furniture—are given prominence by their higher rate of mention. They also represent a relatively higher value and in our days they are the ones which perhaps best symbolise the "desired" and "still accessible" lifestyle. We consider these remarks situational because we believe that they do not conceal a conviction that satisfaction is secured by a car, a tape-recorder or some household appliance: what is more prorable is that if we have access to such things it is a definite source of pleasure.

Before finishing the discussion of this range of questions, we have to make a remark. It has been pointed out several times that some kinds of things, or this or that component of satisfaction was mentioned by a higher or lower proportion of the respondents. However, in view of the fact that they generally referred to the rate of mention, they do not in themselves convey the (generally accepted) value judgement with statistical accuracy that things mentioned "more frequently" are of greater importance for people, while things mentioned "less frequently" are less important. Just as in the case of every open question, this time too responses can only be arranged on a normative scale. Correctly speaking only the

things mentioned by the people can be named. Every single instance of mention —irrespective of its number—indicates that there are people who consider the thing mentioned as the most important factor for their being satisfied.

Nevertheless we consider some subgroups of the components of satisfaction mentioned by an outstanding number of respondents as characteristic, having an informative strength at the level of opinion polls. For example: 40 per cent of all the respondents stressed "enough money," more than 25 per cent stressed the family community performing emotional functions, and 10 per cent referred to peace as of fundamental importance. We have called attention to them specifically in the appropriate places.

What would you need to be more satisfied?

This was the question we put to all the respondents who proved dissatisfied with one of the areas of their lives, having given marks below five. (Their proportions were the following: income: 54 per cent, the economic situation of the country: 48 per cent, leisure time: 47 per cent, health: 41 per cent, arranging everyday matters: 37 per cent, the health of the family: 32 per cent, housing: 29 per cent, sexual life: 25 per cent, workplace: 23 per cent, work: 19 per cent, friendships: 18 per cent, family life: 13 per cent.)

Naturally, the things and circumstances from which people could expect an increase in their satisfaction at all are very different from each other in the various areas, therefore introducing them in detail would exceed the framework of this article. Instead, let us turn our attention to whether or not there is a scheme or pattern in the way of thinking and formulating opinions which is aimed at bringing about a possible improvement in the situation.

External circumstances

One of the most characteristic properties of the opinions revealed is that—whichever field we are concerned with—a change in the unfavourable situation may only be initiated by a change (improvement) in external circumstances which in turn can only little or not at all be influenced by the respondents themselves.

On occassion this phenomenon results in tautological responses, which is, perhaps, encouraged to some extent by the situation of being interviewed as well. If someone gives a mark two or three to his income, it is only natural that he should say that he would be more satisfied if it was higher: if he has no flat, he would be satisfied if he had one; if he is ill, he would be content to be healthy etc. However, this is not characteristic in general. As far as those dissatisfied with their income are concerned, only a part of them give such a brief reply ("I need more money"), another group also touches upon problems which reflect a dissatisfaction with the distribution of wages or social benefits. To give a few examples: I would be more satisfied if:

Housing situation: I lived in a house with a garden; I did not live in a housing estate; I lived in a well-appointed flat.

Income: I had a bigger pension; there were no disproportions in distributing wages; raising more children were not a handicap; I received more significant social benefits.

Leisure time: I had more free time; I could freely decide how to spend my time.

Health: I did not have an incurable disease.

The health of the family: my elderly parents were not ill.

Work: the supply of raw materials were better; it were more varied; it were easier.

Workplace: I had a better boss; I had different colleagues.

Friendships: I had friends; I had more helpful friends.

Arranging everyday matters: the shops were open till a later hour; bureaucracy were less extensive.

Family life: I had a child born of the desired sex; I were not lonely; I could have a family.

The economic situation of the country: management were more sensible or more capable; managers were more knowledgeable; production were cheaper.

Politics: we were not lagging behind international development; the situation of the Hungarians living in the neighbouring countries improved; there were no threat of war.

The essential fields of improvement

There are close connections between the individual areas: many of the opinions pointed out that improvement in certain fields would almost automatically result in improvement in other fields as well. The most crucial areas are income, health and leisure time, and in practically all the other areas these were mentioned as the ones which could bring about significant improvement; it is precisely the lack of one or some of them which is the cause of dissatisfaction, the "critical point" in other fields too.

It would be superfluous to explain the role of income, and the wish for improvement in the areas of housing and working life. One of the topical problems of our days is expressed in the connection between income on the one hand, and free time and health, on the other. Those respondents dissatisfied in these areas believe that the solution would be if they did not have to do extra work in their free time, if they had money to spend on entertainment, trips and travel, and if medical care were cheaper. The correla-

tion between family life and friendships is also worth considering: it seems that these two "taboo topics" are also strongly linked with financial resources. Lack of money leads to family conflicts and arguments, and it also hinders people in fostering friendly connections, having guests in their houses or going out together.

It has been mentioned in relation to the area of health that its role — as compared to 1980 — seems to have weakened, and that it has been pushed back in the ranking of responses to the question, "What do you need to make you more satisfied?" This time, however, when we put the question not to the whole sample but only to that group of respondents dissatisfied in this area, we saw that its role seemed to have increased among this group: in eight other fields people would be more satisfield if either they themselves were more healthy or their environment (e. g. dwelling place, workplace) did not have a detrimental influence on their health. This only confirms ours statements made above: it is quite unfortunate that the value of health only increases in a critical, sad situation.

In a similar manner, leisure time has a diverse connection with several fields of everyday life: it is only with an increase in their free time that a great number of the respondents could imagine an improvement in their family life, friendly ties and state of health — on the other hand, they would be more content with their financial situation if they had more time to secure an extra income.

Our next observation is not without interest either: the influence exerted on other fields by family life is only faintly voiced in the opinions, whereas its role (both its emotional functions and as the embodiment of "an orderly way of life") in general feelings of satisfaction is considered as outstanding by most people. Still, only few of them mentioned that they would be more satisfied in other

fields of life if their family life were better. Remarks to this effect were found in relation to leisure time (one would be more satisfied if one could spend more time with one's family; if the work schedules of the family members were not so different), in connection with working life (if one could devote more time to one's work because one would not be bothered so much by family problems; if bringing up children were not so time-consuming), and in relation to arranging everday matters (if the family were more understanding and helpful: one would not have to arrange everything oneself). The faint role of the beneficial impact exercised by family life on other fields may, perhaps, be attributed to the fact that a high proportion of the respondents (64 per cent) were satisfied with their family life, and they "would have proved to be inconsistent" if they had later on announced that a better family life would increase their level of satisfaction in other fields as well. However, our data gained by experience demonstrate that family problems and conflicts exert a much greater influence on several other fields of life than it appears from the responses, which again reinforces the taboo nature of the topic of family life.

As far as the area of friendships is concerned, its role is also negligible in other fields; it is only among those dissatisfied with their leisure time where we find arguments like: "he doesn't have a group of friends with whom to fill in time . . ." Furthermore, among those fighting with problems at their workplace, we read that "the community spirit is bad;" "he could not make friends there." This is in harmony with what has been said about the concept and interpretation of friendly relationships earlier.

It is also worth mentioning that the two typical "social spheres" (the economic situation of the country and politics) are also separated from the "personal spheres" in that they reveal inter-

connecting relationships which can be examined only in relation to each other (e. g. the economic situation would be better if the leaders were better; if there was no danger of war).

Income is the only personal sphere whose change in a more favourable direction people see as dependent upon developments in these social spheres (e. g. a better, more just distribution of incomes and wages; lower prices; better social policy, etc.).

General state of mind

Those people who are not satisfied in one or more areas of their life frequently mentioned a superbusy, restless way of life, as well as a great number of things they are nervous and upset about, as the causes of their dissatisfaction on the on hand, and the claim for a peaceful life on the other. It is a specific feature of these opinions that they only seem to be related to one or other area: rather they are characteristics of a general state of mind, and it is arbitrary in which area the respondents declare their existence. Still perhaps the most characteristic example is health (perhaps this is where it occurs to most people): only one group of respondents giving a bad mark to this area refer to concrete diseases and would see the solution in recovering from them; another group clearly point out that they have no "real" diseases they could supply with a name, but they would be more content if they "could rest more," "live a more peaceful and quiet life, "had no serious problems," "were not afflicted by anciety," or "their nerves were not wrecked." The same holds true for the health of the family: they would be more satisfied if "they were not constantly nervous, tired or exhausted."

Working life is the area where these general complaints are concentrated to the greatest extent: "a soul-destroying, senseless rat-race," "nervousness," "very hard work"—those are the factors which greatly influence this general state of mind. But even family life is not exempt from it: the few who gave a low mark to it would find the solution if "they were more tolerant to each other;" "quarrelled less;" if family life were more peaceful "in general;" or if "there were not so many people interfering."

Passivity

The other side of the coin is that people who are dissatisfied with their lives (in one respect or another), being unwilling to look upon unfavourable external circumstances of their hard, restless and completely entrenched way of life as the source of their problems, are less inclined to think that they can change their situation "with their own resources," or "of their own volition." Answering the question "what do you need to make you satisfied," the proportion of respondents who stressed the importance of personally generated satisfaction was quite remarkable. This, however—it seems—is primarily the opinion of the so-called "contented people". Among those too, for example, who consider themselves more satisfied than the majority, emphasis is given to the attitude that they consider themselves to be people of "good disposition," possessing very favourable human characteristics, who are capable of doing things to make themselves feel happier. Those giving a five to their own situation in certain fields also try to find the way to compensate for their objectively less advantageous circumstances by presenting their individual characteristics in a favourable light (e.g. their skillfulness, industriousness, etc.).

At the same time among those who gave a mark below five, rarely do we find opinions or ideas that they could also

improve upon their situation. Such trends appear in the form of "common-places" only, e.g. "I should live a healthier life;" "I should give up smoking;" "perhaps I should work out a better schedule," etc; they—meaning an unhealthy way of life, little exercise, smoking, keeping a bad schedule—are so-called forgiveable sins. There is no-one among the dissatisfied people who believe that they would be more satisfied if they "worked industriously," if they "had an exemplary family life," if they "did not make mountains out of mole-hills," if they "did not want to get too much out of life," etc. Whereas all those arguments figured among the justifications of the contented. The probable explanation is that those who are dissatisfied (who gave low marks) really look upon their situtation (at least in a significant proportion of the cases) as hopeless in respect of opportunities to change it from their own resources and will.

It is perhaps worth mentioning that in the so-called social spheres, mainly when evaluating the economic situation of the country, the hope is "kindled" that it could also be improved by some individual activities: more diligent work, greater discipline at work, a more economical life and a more modest way of life. However, it appears unequivocally from the context of the answers of this type that those sharing this opinion never think of themselves but only of others, since the source of national problems—so to speak—is that others are not industrious, others lack discipline in work, do not economise, have high requirements, etc.

The background of the marks

It is frequently experienced in opinion polls that the more differentiated the way of thinking of the people interviewed (e.g. the higher their level of education),

the more difficult it is for them to give categorical answers. There is no doubt that the five grades of marking enable those of a more differentiated thinking to formulate opinions with finer nuances. Moreover, we must assume that a number of them would find it easier if they could use even more grades. (In our depth interviews several of the respondents wished to give marks of two thirds, three quarters, and four fifths.) It seems probable that some of our respondents, comparing their dissatisfaction in a given field with some kind of imaginary "ideal" situation, would have been happy to use a more differentiated marking system. It stems from that fact that more differentiated thinking has the a priori chance to be connected to marks lower than five. It must be remarked here that it is also the original idea of the researchers that this is the way marking is carried out. In practice, however—and this is supported by a number of opinion polls taken by us —it is not so at all, for a very important role in formulating opinions is played by the responses drawing comparisons with the situation of others and with different response strategies. The latter opinions tend to be more "simplified" or categorical, this cross-effect may also influence the proportion of "five" marks given.

It may also be attributed to this fact that contrary to the researchers' expectations, the interpretation of certain concepts (e.g. good family life, good friendly ties) was poor and colourless when the respondents evaluated them with a five, and it was much more complete and genuine when given a four or even lower. (Such is for example, in relation to family life the contrast between the evaluation of five given to "they are orderly people," "they do not smoke or drink"—and that of lower marks given to "love," "respect," "good sexual life;" or, in respect to friendships, a five may be given if someone "has no enemy," "gets along well with everyone," but a lower mark on

occasion because "he has few real friends.")

Thus the complexity of the attitudes behind the marks is indicated not only by the fact that the objective situation of those giving "worse" marks can be better or even much better than that of those giving a five (as a consequense of the difference in their levels of requirement). According to the different interpretations of certain concepts and value categories, among those very people making themselves out to be dissatisfied there might have been more who live according to "more beautiful," "more noble," "more humane," or "more honest" norms of behaviour and morals, and who are "dissatisfied" if everything does not fall into place in accordance with their wishes and objectives.

"Just don't let it get worse"

In all areas examined we encountered a group of fatalistic opinions. It is understandable in certain cases that the respondents simply cannot answer the question "what would you need to be more satisfied," since if they gave a bad mark to their health on account of an incureable illness or to their family life on account of the death of a spouse, they could not very well imagine an improvement in their situation. However, such opinions as, "I need nothing," "it is all right as it is," "I will learn to live with it," and just don't let it get worse," also keep occur-

ring among those who give a low mark to their housing situation, income, leisure time, work, workplace, the economic situation and politics. The wording of the responses allows us to conclude that the majority of fatalistic opinions come from elderly pensioners or those close to retirement—it is a sad event that in our days they look upon it as natural that they are supposed to spend the last third of life in privation and compromise.

As far as the fatalistic opinions seen in the evaluation of the economic situation of the country and politics are concerned, it may be concluded that in 1983 quite a few of the respondents believed that the present situation can be maintained in the long term, however, care must be taken that "it should not deteriorate further." In our opinion, this approach deserves attention from the point of view of mass communication activities too: "if we do not do anything, we shall not create trouble either," "the present level should be simply maintained." This approach had been strongly revealed already in our opinion poll taken in 1980. Since that time the standard of living has clearly and palpably deteriorated, still in public opinion there has survived an attitude which is inclined to "accept" it in order that no further deterioration need be reckoned with. It would be shortsighted policy to focus on the stability of the "attitude of fatalism" instead of the opinions—still revealed somewhat cautiously, worded carefully—which criticise, take the initiative and express "dissatisfaction."

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Magdolna Barcy and Márta Hoffmann

Happy TV World

An investigation into the portrayal of family life on television was carried out within the frame of an international research series—Prix Jeunesse—organised by Bayerische Rundfunk. This time in addition to Hungary, Denmark and Great Britain also participated in the survey.

When the participants in the international study decided that the next topic of their research series entitled Television and the Family[1] would be the difference between reality and its representation on television, the smallest difficulty, strangely enough, was to select those social problems through which the situation of the family could be grasped in all three countries. This was so in spite of the fact that family traditions, lifestyle, economic and cultural traditions are different in the countries concerned. Still it seemed that they had problems in common. In all the three societies there is a rapid increase in the number of disrupted families, loneliness and children growing up in single-parent households. The number of children is decreasing and the life of the family is undergoing a change on account of the employment of women.

However, those general problems can only be understood, represented and remedied in view of a concrete social medium. Therefore when examining how Hungarian Television presents family-related phenomena, our starting point could only be the real situation of Hungarian families. Thus our primary aim was to learn from the people what, in their view, were the most topical problems of today's Hungarian society and what they felt about the changed family situation as well as the personal and institutional conditions of family life.

The sample of the questionnaire survey was made up of six family types identified as characteristic:

—two-generation, nuclear family with one or two children

—two-generation, nuclear family with at least three children

—three-or-more-generation family with one-three children

—broken family, single woman with one-three children

—unmarried young people living with their parents

—elderly married couples or widows living separately from their children.

We constructed all the groups to have as many women as men (except for the broken families); half of them living in Budapest, half of them having had at least secondary school education, half of them not having completed it. Thus the composition of our sample was significantly different from the national average. In spite of this we found that their media-use habits were greatly similar to the ones measured in representative samples.

Is the family in crisis?

When reading statistics about the increasing number of divorces, the decrease in the intention to remarry and have children, the aging of society and de-

teriorating living conditions, we are inclined to believe that the family is in crisis. But if we consider literary examples, such as the work of Flaubert, Chekhov and Strindberg, we can immediately see that this crisis is nothing new. The fact is, quite probably, that with change in family living conditions, stresses have been shifted to new areas: the family has always been an arena of conflict, and it is only the concrete contents of those conflicts which change over time.

Still the majority of the people we interviewed believe that families prior to 1945 were more lasting and better communities than they are today. Only 15 per cent consider today's families happier. The primary argument for family life having been better in the past than it is today is that prior to the war women did not have earning occupations (at least far fewer of them did), so they had time and energy for their children and parents, and also for keeping the family together. The second most frequent argument was the change in lifestyle: today people keep running, they live in a rat-race, they have no time for each other. A great number of the respondents accounted for the old families appearing to have been more lasting and solid communities by the changes in traditions. These people think that in those days people not only stuck together more but they were thrown upon each other more as well. Since then people have lived in accordance with other values and morals. Today there is greater freedom (as is reflected in divorce rates and disrespect for parents) and a lighter emphasis is placed on religion and love.

Naturally, a significant number of people—exactly half of the sample—are also aware that earlier the family life was not ideal in every respect. There were also pressing financial reasons for sticking together. Women were financially dependent, and they could not have chosen jobs to support them fully even if they had wanted to. A great many things were governed by traditions, and people considered appearances more important than they do today.

It is probably difficult to judge the question objectively, as these responses are coloured by a great deal of nostalgia which makes the past look more beautiful than the present. It is almost natural that young people have a greater aversion to old family lifestyles than older people do. Thus among twenty to thirty-year-olds, just half think that life was better before the war than it is now, as opposed to 80 per cent of the seventy-plus age group. The elderly and those living in traditional families stress the emotional factor: in their opinion today the individuals in families are more dependent on each other, and there is also an increase in family solidarity. It is remarkable that both families with many children and broken families explain the deterioration of family life by the fact that women are not able to stay at home.

The gravest problems of Hungarian families today:

Many broken families	2.73*
Poor housing situation	2.71
Many divorces	2.66
Poor financial situation	2.51
Parent-child relationship is not good enough	2.38
Many lonely women without a family	2.25
High proportion of pensioners and elderly people	2.12
Low birth rate	2.02
Women in the workforce	2.02
Many lonely men without a family	1.93
Women have fewer opportunities for advancement than men	1.83

* Weighted averages; highest possible score 3, lowest 1.

Although this list of problems related to the family was put together by us, it is demonstrated by the data that each of them figures as a burning issue in peoples' minds.

We examined the correlations of these social phenomena with the help of factor analysis. We found that the gravest two factors were related to the situation of people without families (lonely men and women) and those who had lost their families (divorces and broken families). Thus both of them are related to a lack of family. This datum indirectly confirms our experience that hardships connected to family life do not question the value of the family itself. The TV programmes analysed in the previous survey[2] carried a similar message too: it is the most cherished hope of those with no family to be able to live in a family framework.

In the factor analysis the physical conditions which under normal circumstances are necesarry to establish a family only ranked third: i.e. a flat and the appropriate financial resources. The next group contains those questions which people mainly expect to be solved by social policy: to encourage people to have children, to look after elderly people, to improve the chances of women to get ahead. Those phenomena looked upon as classical family problems rank last: the deterioration in the parent-child relationship and the employment of women, the latter being the source of a lot of family problems.

The stratification of society is allocated a partial role in the judgement of the above problems. Where things are viewed similarly by people of different sexes, ages and family situations, we are probably faced with complex social problems which exceed the scope of the individual. Examples of such problems are that today in Hungary there are very many broken families, the birth rate is too low, or that the forced employment of women and their limited opportunities

for promotion have an impact on family life. One of the peculiarities of today's Hungarian society can be seen in our data that housing is not a problem for pensioners and single mothers. For by this time pensioners have supposedly managed to build a home for themselves and divorced women are allocated a flat by the court when custody of the child is also granted. In a similar manner, financial circumstances become crucial questions for two specific groups: for families with many children (who are clearly in the worst situation) and for nuclear families with one or two children. The probable reason for this is that their financial ambitions are not thrown into the background by emotional problems (unlike, for example, lonely pensioners and divorcees) or simply survival problems (afflicting, for example, young people about to establish a family and those frequently living together in a traditional family with the older generation because they have no other choice) which appear in all the other family types.

In addition to the possibilities provided beforehand, the respondents indicated the following problems: lack of time resulting in the formalisation of human relationships, the struggle to make a living, and extra work, neglect of young people as a consequence of chasing money, giving rise to deviance.

The family on television

The above mentioned previous survey demonstrated that Hungarian Television —in spite of a number of its programmes dealing with the family—does not pay enough attention to the problems of the family in its documentary programmes. Only 7 per cent of current affairs programmes, magazines, news and popular scientific programmes dealt with family problems.[3] This could partly be accounted for by the arbitrariness of the selected

week of programmes. Now, however, it was confirmed by the people interviewed too that they also believed that television did not pay enough attention to the questions and hardships related to family life. People are more content with films and dramatic programmes in this respect: only a quarter of the respondents believe that family problems are not dealt with sufficiently in them, the majority are satisfied.

The most neglected topics which are not given enough emphasis either in films or in reporting are the situation of lonely people, women and elderly people as well as the financial problems of families. It is quite understandable that documentaries presented on TV are better able than films to speak meaningfully about the social side of the family (e.g. the situation of different social strata), and dramatic programmes and films can better represent the conflicts going hand in hand with coexistence and personal relationships. However, people believe that much less attention is given even to objective questions related to the family in documentaries than in films, which poorly reflect the reality of modern-day Hungarian life. Hungarian Television has a number of magazine programmes directly aimed at certain groups and problems (elderly people, parents, young people). In spite of this, people feel that in the case of the family, more attention is given in films and drama series than in even service programmes concentrating on specific topics. Sexuality and parent-child relationships are more thoroughly explored in artistic abstraction.

Differences stemming from the peculiarities of individual genres are felt by the viewers too. A different family image is revealed when they are interrogated about documentaries and when interviewed about families depicted in films. We analysed the structure and construction of these problems with the help of factor analysis. Our experience is that while in the case of films and TV plays the different family programmes are inseparable from each other, the image of the family in documentaries is not so homogeneous in peoples' minds. The institution and structure of the family appear in different aspects. The endeavours of documentaries to deal with the intact character of the family, the strengthening of the relationships and the safety of children is separated from efforts to speak about external problems affecting the family. Such are, for example, housing and financial situation or the specific problems related to women. A third grouping contains questions related to the division of labour between the family and the different institutions (e.g. the situation of elderly people, the family and the school, solving family problems). It may be felt that there are fields connected to the family which can be better represented in dramatised programmes. This is seen in the construction of a separate group of topics which are regarded as "fit for films:" sex, establishing a family and the disruption of the family.

The poor rich, the rich poor

One of the most important questions posed by the investigation was how films and TV plays reflect reality. Similarly to other European countries, Hungarian Television also broadcats a great number of films made abroad (their proportion amounts to about two-thirds).[4] Therefore in our analysis we separated TV programmes and films made in Hungary, socialist and capitalist countries.

Studies focussing on the social composition of characters in the programmes have revealed that both in Hungary and abroad television gives preference to middle-class, educated, young, white, intellectual men.[5] Women, elderly people, coloured people, manual workers, un-

educated people and children figure in the programmes to a much lesser degree. Hungarian Television is no exception in this tendency either.

When comparing Hungarian TV films and reality, the opinion of the respondents in general was that the characters in Hungarian TV films live under much better financial and housing circumstances than in real life. These people living in well-kept, more beautiful and better flats are mostly young or middle-aged, educated people, often in management positions, living with their spouse, with one or two children. The respondents believe that lonely people bringing up their children alone in an emotionally and financially difficult situation (mostly women), members of broken families, the elderly, agricultural workers and those living on the periphery of society are difficult to fit into the world of Hungarian TV films.

Strangely enough, the quantitative variables which operate well in other investigations (sex, age, education, place of living, etc.) did not correlate with variations in opinion on this topic. However, more significant was the extent to which the respondents felt that TV films were sufficiently sensitive in their treatment of family problems. For those who think that television deals extensively with family questions in its dramatised programmes seem to have a distorted view: they believe that on television they see fewer characters in management positions, more rural and manual workers, and more deviant characters living on the fringes of society — more so, at least, than in real life. Those, however, who feel that television sugarcoats reality, tends to prefer stories about the lives of leaders and intellectuals to programmes dealing with disadvantaged groups or individuals, also point out that television does not devote too much attention to the problems of today's Hungarian society related to the family either. These

people hold similar views about the reality of the financial and housing conditions of Hungarian families in the films, the issue of divorce as well as the representation of single mothers and lonely women in general.

When comparing the TV products made in Hungary and abroad, the viewers perceive the greatest differences in financial questions (money, housing) and in the presentation of problems related to young people. They believe that family life in TV products coming from socialist countries are less problematic than in the Hungarian or West-European productions, especially as to the number of divorces and deviant young people. At the same time the "socialist" heroes are much poorer than the Hungarians and especially the West-Europeans who live in wonderful flats. However, the life of the latter is far from being free from problems: they have to pay the price of being rich with problematic human relationships. In their countries there are many lonely people and there are problems with young people and human rights. So the simple formula that is presented to us is the following: people living in poverty are happier and they stick together more: problems and conflicts begin when they start to be too well-off. What it finally boils down to is that this idea, far from being a new one, appears in the films shown on Hungarian television so that the division of the world into a socialist and capitalist part brings into play the concepts of puritanism and deterioration as well.

Happy are
the TV heroes ...

Now how do the viewers see the world of TV films — this time independently of whether we are talking about Hungarian, eastern or western films?

They mostly see it as a happy one. This

is what comes to light from the opinions of the persons interviewed (76 per cent). And in making that judgement people are not influenced either by their age or their family situation. However, they are much more influenced by the extent to which they have an optimistic or pessimistic view of the reality surrounding them. Another factor is the degree to which they are satisfied with the sensitivity of TV films to problems. For those who felt that these were serious family problems in Hungarian society were also inclined to see families in TV films as unhappy and afflicted by problems. In a similar manner, those who felt that Hungarian Television was not sensitive enough to family problems were more inclined to perceive the difficulties people have to face in the films as well. These people who were critical of television came mostly from those who did not watch TV frequently.

The majority of those watching TV believe that the life of TV heroes is not characterised by extremities and that TV families are generally happy though they have minor problems. One third of the sample assumed that happiness and the weight of problems were not in harmony in TV films. They came to this conclusion on the basis of two considerations diametrically opposed to each other: one group believes that the families in TV films are happy in spite of their grave problems. The same thing was said about the world of socialist TV films, though in a different context. The second group feels a dissonance because it holds the view that TV families are unhappy in spite of their having only minor problems. And this approach coincided with the image formulated about western TV films.

There is an interesting correlation in how much time the respondent spent watching TV. The more discriminating viewer (the more selective) tended to regard the heroes of TV films as being unjustifiedly happy. And, parallel to that, the more time someone spends sitting in front of the screen, the more he is inclined to consider TV heroes to be happy people without problems.

Is the world of TV realistic?

During the investigation we used a variety of indirect methods, analysing the results of detailed questions, in order to discover how people judged the relationship between reality and television. Finally, we also asked them in a direct form about their opinion of the extent to which programmes on Hungarian television provide a realistic image of the family. Well, only 16 per cent of the respondents considered this image realistic. The majority (71 per cent) only partially, and 12 per cent did not believe that it was realistic at all. The opinions were grouped around three motives: many, in the analogy of the happy TV world, feel that TV provides an idealistically distorted picture. To put it bluntly, it paints the darker hues rosy. Others replied that the genre of television is bound up in superficiality and convention. Still others dislike in television not the "sugarcoating" of subtleties but the emphasis on contrasts. They accuse television of giving preference to extremes, what is conspicuous, i.e. they rail against just what the former were missing: the curious, the atypical.

Parallel to the rise in educational level, there is a corresponding reduction in the number of respondents who consider the family image of TV realistic. The most critical opinions come from those with the highest education: these are the respondents who most frequently accuse television of sensationalism. As a result we might have expected the ever-critical intellectuals to see the greatest intention to manipulate behind the distortions of television. Yet that is not what we ex-

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perienced. Those with a primary school education gave opinions to this effect twice as frequently as the respondents with higher and secondary qualifications. Here too we saw that it is not always the opinions of educated people television has to beware of, since they are frequently outdone by the semi-educated. However, TV has unlimited authority and respect when it comes to the opinions of the uneducated.

Typical or individual?

Two thirds of the respondents believe that there are a number of people in Hungary living a life similar to theirs today. Thus their life may be looked upon as typical. In spite of that, very many of the respondents (80 per cent) state that they see very infrequently or not at all a family like theirs on the screen. (Naturally, the desire of someone to see his own situation or similar on TV is independent of his opinion about how much television deals with the situation of people similar to him.) Most frequently people are happy if television shows the life of people who are similar to them because they would like to receive advice and see

examples. For them it is of help even to know that they are not the only ones who have run into trouble, there are many other people grappling with similar difficulties. The other group of the reasons is based upon the far-from-naive faith that the media, with the power and strength of publicity, may force the competent authorities to take measures or pay attention to the concrete problems of individual people. A third group would like their situation to appear on the screen because they believe that their own life is edifying or exemplary for others too.

Neither should we forget the one third of the respondents who definitely would not like the screen to be full of the lives of people like them. In accordance with their opinions about the presentation of extreme characters, and the conventions of television presentation, as mentioned above, they feel that television is to offer entertainment and diversion and does not derive its legitimacy from the portrayal of personal problems. Either they consider their average life neither interesting nor entertaining, or they are simply sceptical towards TV, saying that television will not solve their problems for them.

Notes

1 BARCY, M. and HANÁK, K.: Television and the family. The Hungarian Report. In: *Television and the Image of the Family*. Stiftung Prix Jeunesse, München, 1984.
2 BARCY, MAGDOLNA and HANÁK, KATALIN: *A család képe a televízióban* (The image of the family on television). MCRC *Tanulmányok,* Budapest, 1986.
3 See the works quoted.

4 HOFFMANN, MÁRTA: *Néhány külföldi televízió műsorstruktúrája* (The programme structure of a few foreign televisions). *Tájékozódás,* MCRC, 1986. No. 12.
5 GERBNER, G., GROSS, L., MORGAN, M. and SIGNORELLI, N.: *Media and the Family. Images and Impact.* The Annenberg School of Communication, University of Pennsylvania. Philadelphia, 1980.

Research in Brief

The following selection presents short summaries of recent studies carried out and published by the Mass Communication Research Centre, offering an insight into the Institute's activity in the different fields of communication research in the last 4 to 5 years.

Public Opinion

Róbert Angelusz, Lajos Géza Nagy and Róbert Tardos

Social Political Issues in Public Opinion

Hungarian research on public opinion on social political questions has only sporadic precedents. The economic developments in recent years, the problems with the means of living in various strata of the population, and the propositions to transform the system of social political institutions have urged a better knowledge of the attitudes developed in public opinion. In 1982 and in 1984 the Mass Communication Research Center carried out two questionnaire surveys to approach these issues on a national representative sample of 1000. The first study conducted in the fall of 1982 examined general views on social political institutions (opinions on the principles of social support that are considered right, on the groups to be supported, on the existence and causes of poverty, the global judgement of the functioning of these intitutions) and analysed in detail two specific issues, those related to pension and family allowance. The findings of this survey are presented in the first part of the study.

The data collection in the fall of 1984 repeated various blocks of questions ask-

ed in 1982. In order to make a comparison in time, the investigation concentrated on those topics which seemed relevant from the point of view of the changes in general social political views. The second part of this study gives prominence to those issues—eg. the increased importance of the problem concerning pensions or the greater emphasis on the social motives among the reasons for poverty—in which a considerable opinion change could be detected. On the other hand, this study was the first to approach opinions on the difficulties in finding a job and on the possibility of unemployment. It was also the first to outline—based on its findings—some more general dimensions of social political views and to set up a typology of the different ways of thinking (which empirically differentiates between the "restrictive", "welfare", "paternalistic" and "levelling" types of views).

The volume also contains a detailed Appendix on the comparison of basic data collected in 1982 and 1984 and on the breakdown of the 1984 data by certain socio-demographic characteristics.

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*Katalin Ilona Farkas, Judit Pataki, Róbert Tardos
and Tamás Terestyéni*

Economic Information in the Mass Media and Public Opinion on the Economic Situation in 1986

This comprehensive study is one of those analyses surveying economic contents transmitted by the media and public opinion on economic issues during a year.

Chapter I is based on a content analysis of economic information published by the media in 1986, making comparisons with the findings of similar studies done previously. The analysis, which embraces the economic contents of both the electronic and the print press, discusses quantitative trends as well as the thematic structure of economic information, the emphasis on economic achievements, problems, tasks and the total image emerging from the overall content process. The recent fluctuations in the treatment of economic issues and the changes in the proportions of the achievements and problems treated by the media (the latter are not independent of actual economic movements) are also analysed.

The chapter which deals with the 1986 trends of public opinion on the economy is based on data obtained by those questionnaires which have been constructed by the Mass Communication Research Centre with regularly repeated, standard blocks of questions on the evaluation of the economic situation of the country and the personal financial situation of the population for more than a decade. The 1986 studies clearly revealed that public opinion focussed on the economic problems of the country. Apart from the anxiety concerning certain issues, the analyses deal with the explanations public opinion gives to the problems. The summary of the findings of economic studies also discusses how the families consider their financial situation, the possibilities of saving, certain issues of social policy, the opportunities of finding a job and the possibility of unemployment as well as the strategies of the families in adjustment to new economic conditions.

Judit Pataki and Edit S. Molnár

Opinions on Housing Conditions—1985

Since the beginning of the 1970s, the Mass Communication Research Centre has been regularly surveying the changes in public opinion on the housing situation. The last poll, taken in 1984 on a national representative sample of one thousand individuals, was aimed at examining the following problems:
(1) What is considered to be a "good", "adequate" home? What are the norms

on the basis of which people consider a house or a flat acceptable?

(2) What kind of knowledge and beliefs have developed on the chances of acquiring a flat?

(3) What perspectives does the population see in the solution of housing problems? What do they regard as the main obstacles?

Concerning the first problem, the most important finding is that there is hardly any correlation between the judgment of the existing flat and the demands on a flat in general. In other words: it is not people's own value choice (e.g. what they consider very important in connection with a flat) that plays a role in the evaluation of the existing flats but those relative frames of comparison which are shaped by the actual housing conditions of the country. People tend to highly appreciate the qualities of their flat, even though it does not completely satisfy their needs, since their situation is judged according to opportunities and not on the basis of their requirements.

Opinions on the chances of acquiring a flat are shaped partly by experiences (today even more interviewees than previously hold the view that absolutely good financial circumstances are necessary for this), partly by the knowledge of social political practice (whether people know which strata or families are given preference by the state), and partly by certain beliefs and prejudices.

In 1984 the population held more pessimistic views on the future development of housing conditions and on the time needed for the solution of housing problems than in 1977 or in 1979. About one-fifth of the interviewees thought that it would take ten to twenty years to solve housing problems and another one-quarter gave the answer that these would practically never be solved. Most people see the reasons in the unfavourable economic situation of the country.

Guy Lázár and Judit Pataki

Public Opinion on the Economic Weekly "Heti Világgazdaság"

In 1979, the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce launched an economic magazine entitled *Heti Világgazdaság* (World Economy Weekly), which multiplied its circulation within a short period. The Mass Communication Research Centre carried out two public opinion polls among readers of the weekly in 1983 and 1984. The first survey principally examined the social composition of the paper's readership, reading habits and opinions on the weekly. The second poll continued the first one on the one hand, and examined what opinions readers held on the most important issues of Hungarian economic life on the other.

The surveys have shown that *Heti Világgazdaság* (HVG), which was originally aimed at Hungarian management circles, soon became one of the most important sources of economic—and political—information for the educated general public, not competent in economic issues. According to readers' opinion, this was first of all due to the informativeness of the weekly, i.e. to the fact that it offered readers 1) rapid, 2) detailed and 3) objective information on

recent developments in international and domestic economic life. Further development was also suggested in terms of enhancing oppenness and sincerity.

The majority of readers agreed that HVG had introduced a new style in Hungarian journalism, and most of them considered the paper easy to understand, concise and interesting to read.

From among the articles published in HVG, the interviewees were mostly interested in those dealing with economic life in capitalist countries. These were followed by the writings directly related to the problem of their living conditions and living standard or generally dwelling on the economic situation and the relationship between world economy and Hungarian economy. A considerable part of the readers calls for a more thorough analysis of Hungarian economic and social problems on the pages of the weekly.

The hunger for information determined to a great extent the popularity of the different columns. Those were the most popular which served the objective of getting information; among them, brief news in the first place. Less readers were attracted by columns playing a complementary role to this information activity or—like puzzles—merely serving entertainment.

The great majority of the respondents did not read HVG continuously, from the beginning, but either decided from week to week where to start reading or always read a specific column first, mostly at the end of the paper.

With respect to opinions on current issues of Hungarian economic life, the great majority of readers rejected economic measures striving for autarky and thought that Hungary should develop economic relationships with western rather than socialist countries. Amongst the changes brought about by the 1968 economic reform, those were considered to be the most important which allowed greater independence to companies.

Most part of the readers were in favour of carrying on with economic reforms, and considered inadequate use of labour and lack of personal interest and incentive as the main problems of Hungarian economic life the reforms are expected to solve.

Tibor Ferenczi and János Vecsenyi

Agriculture and Market

Opinions and Suggestions of Agro-Industrial Managers

What are the main obstacles and barriers between agricultural production and the market? How could market orientation be improved? How feasible are the solutions suggested? What are the main conditions of increasing feasibility?

These questions were to be answered by 89 agro-industrial experts including 33 members of the Hungarian Parliament and other top managers in agrobusiness at a task force meeting in Budapest in April, 1987. The meeting was the first step in a joint research enterprise by the Karl Marx University of Economics and the Mass Communication Research Centre, serving as a basis, at the same

time, for collecting ideas for further research and for conducting an opinion poll in that special field.

Analysing the statements of the participants collected by Nominal Group Techniques and brain-storming, the conclusion is rather straightforward. The experts representing the agro-business have proposed the extension of market influence and the repression of the existing strong state interventions, the system of subsidies and taxes. The opinion of the highly influential representatives of agro-industrial production is that the Government as an actor of the market should formulate a definite agro-economic policy collaborating with the entrepreneurs.

Based on this policy, the Goverment should use stable monetary tools and intervention funds and should prevent the use of natural prescriptions in order to improve market influence. Among the necessary measures, the elimination of monopolies and the establishment of the stock market and auctions for selling agricultural goods in the country were suggested. According to these views, the modification of the systems of prices, subsidies and taxes and the autonomy of business units are also of vital importance.

These significant changes could be implemented only within the frame of an overall socio-economic reform. The top managers of the agro-business urged the formulation and implementation of a reform making a breakthrough in agricultural management.

Press

Ildikó Kováts and János Tölgyesi

The 1985 Parliamentary and Council Elections in the Press

On June 8, 1985 general elections were held in Hungary both for council members and parliamentary representatives. It was a new feature of these elections that, according to Act III of 1983, each constituency had to nominate at least two candidates, and, apart from this, the participants of the conventions also could propose candidates on the spot.

The Mass Communication Research Centre launched two parallel studies to examine those social phenomena related to the elections. One, based on personal interviews, analysed the knowledge and opinions of the population, while the other, the results of which are reported on in this paper, carried out a content analysis of the election campaign in the press.

In the latter study the researchers collected the articles published between March (when the press campaign was started) and July 1985 (the time of supplementary elections). Altogether 3675 articles written to both national and country papers were examined. These were categorised in 25 types, of which two topics were selected that, in researchers' opinion, best reflected the ways in which society reacted to the elections. On these two categories a detailed content analysis was carried out. One of them

(altogether 798 articles) included reports on the conventions. The journalists presented the candidates, the constituents, the representatives of the local administration, outlined the tasks of the candidates and also mentioned some results and troubles. The study supported with figures those treatments in the newspapers which made the portraits of the candidates similar rather than different. These results were confirmed by the analyses of the other type of articles as well, which presented the candidates for Parliament (514 writings). These so-called "portraits" laid great emphasis on the individual lives of the given personalities, however, their ideas regarding their job and their activity as representatives were scarcely reflected.

The press campaign of the 1985 elections showed that the preparation and organisation of the elections had been a considerable political event in Hungary. The studies have revealed that the local press gave a richer and more coloured presentation of the course of events and their actors than did the central papers of national scope.

József Ballai

The Situation and Problems of the Local Press in Bács-Kiskun County in the 80s

The Hungarian mass media are characterised by a paradox in the 80s: foreign political events are often broadcast live by television, while there is no newspaper offering detailed information for the population of a provincial town on what kind of measures were taken—and why—by its council members on their session the day before. It is hard to understand this, since interest in central papers—i.e., centrally directed information—has been gradually declining: in the last 10 years, the circulation of the central daily *Népszabadság* fell by 6.5 per cent, while county papers could reach a 33.7 per cent higher circulation. Even so, the smaller a population, the less chances it has to regularly receive information from a press product on the everyday problems and tasks that can be solved only by the contribution of the inhabitants of the given settlement.

It is all the same in Bács-Kiskun, the largest county of Hungary, which is in a rather contradictory situation from many points of view (almost every sixth inhabitant lives in a detached farm or in the outskirts of towns, yet they are registered as inhabitans of towns or large villages; 30 thousand people in Kecskemét live in housing estates; population density is low and cultural backwardness is remarkable; the number of suicides and alcoholists is outstandingly high etc.). Although in the past years community television began to broadcast in Kecskemét, in summer a seasonal radio is on the air for a few days in Baja and a number of settlements have founded their own newspaper from local resources, it should not be forgotten that in Kecskemét alone three dailies, four weeklies and two monthlies were published—in 1910.

The study gives a detailed analysis of the mass communication system of Bács-Kiskun county—the county paper *Petőfi Népe,* together with its mutations, the factory papers, the new town newspapers (a part of them are made totally from local resources, with the simplest possible means), the community television in Kecskemét and the radio in Baja—and, for a conclusion, it presents the changes to be expected in the near future, pointing out: socialist democracy cannot be developed without offering the population the chance of participation in decision-making, in guiding their own lives. And, concludes the author, within the system of political institutions, the local press can—or could—be one of the most important means of participation.

Ildikó Kováts and János Tölgyesi

Ecological Issues in the Press

Within the frames of a series of joint research on ecological issues, the authors made a content analysis on the articles of ecological relevance published in a few Hungarian newspapers and journals. Similar studies with compared methods were carried out in the Leningrad Institute of Socio-Economic Problems of the Soviet Academy of Sciences and at the State University of Tartu. The starting point for the joint content analysis lied in the so-called paradigmatic analysis suggested by K. Pietila. Its frames were modified and adapted to the sphere of ecological problems.

The Hungarian findings show that the dailies presented the problem of man and his environment in simple, one-dimensional conceptual frames. They generally raised the problems referring to only one basic value or starting point and showed only one reason leading to the development of the given situation. They also suggested only one type of solution or measures. The literary weekly *Élet és Irodalom* (Life and Literature) stressed the traditional roots of the present situation, its temporal characteristics, its antecedents and cultural ties, considering moral and aesthetic aspects. *Búvár* (The Diver), the paper specialised in the protection of the environment pointed out various basic values, reasons and ways of solution in most of its articles.

The study has revealed that the journalists' personal interest and insufficient knowledge greatly influenced their lack of opinion and often resulted in an uncritical presentation and acceptance of the other party's arguments.

Radio

Dear Listeners 1980—1985

The changes that took place in the last five years again made it necessary to carry out a comprehensive survey of the situation of listening to the radio. This demand was answered by the Audience Research Department of the Mass Communication Research Centre by making a multi-sided analysis in 1985. The studies were aimed at contributing to the evaluation of the new programme structure introduced in October, 1984 and to the preparation of the new middle-term plan. Research findings are presented in the following studies:

Emőke Valkó makes a thorough analysis of the supply with radio receivers and draws the conclusion that in spite of worse reception conditions, the ratings of the programmes broadcast by Radio Petőfi are higher than those of the two other stations. It is a fact worth pondering over that two-thirds of the population do not enjoy the advantages of the VHF band–either because they have no radio set apt for VHF reception or because they simply do not turn on the VHF band.

Judit Lendvay discusses the main trends of radio listening between tion and 1980–1985. She looks for answers to the questions who, when and how much listen to the radio and what programmes are preferred. Her study also reveals that only radio listening in the morning can be considered as an everyday activity in social dimensions. In the periods when television means strong competition–and this is also testified by international comparisons–there is a sharp fall in the ratio of radio listeners.

Marianne Oszlányi deals with the morning programmes on Radio Kossuth and Radio Petőfi and with listening to

the radio late at night. Her paper offers information–among other things–on who, when and to what proportions listen to the radio in the morning and which station is the most popular. The description of peak listening times in the different social strata may contribute to a more conscious programming in the morning, aimed at various target audiences. Her study also reveals that certain repetitions late at night attract only a very small segment of the audience–listeners mostly wish to relax and look for entertainment during late hours as well.

Attila Malecz's study calls attention to the increasing role of background listening in our days, i. e. to the fact that radio can reckon less and less with attentive listeners concentrating on the programme. People are more and more frequently engaged in other activities while listening to the radio. This habit is not necessarily negative–and today even attentive listening cannot be considered as a marginal phenomenon either. The study tries to show the relationship between the two kinds of listening in the light of programme types and certain socio-demographic and communication variables. Attention is also paid to the nature of the activities accompanying radio listening.

Mária Vásárhelyi tries to describe what the three radio stations transmit during the same programme minutes, i. e. the offer of the three programmes broadcast simultaneously. Summarising her findings, she draws the conclusion that programming in general is not careful enough to offer a wide choice for listeners in the same programme minutes. At the same time, she also points out certain efforts–more or less prevalent

during the different hours of the day–that reflect this intention. Wider choice is hampered by the present structure of the Third Programme and the generally very high ratio of classical music programmes.

Mária Dankánics analyses–mostly based on the data of audience research among adults and partly among children–the influence of the changes in programme structure on radio listening. She examines the new and renewed programme bands on Radio Kossuth and Radio Petőfi, the entertainment/information blocks on weekends and certain special programmes. The reception of the programme "In the Daytime" and similar weekend blocks proves that these

programmes satisfy existing needs of the audience. However, its servicing character and the growing ratio of entertainment programmes further increased the already obvious dominance of Radio Petőfi. The study warns that continuing the present practice of programme specialisation can result in a further shift in listening, to the detriment of the first national station (Radio Kossuth).

Sándor Erdősi's final paper recalls, interprets and at some points completes the findings included in the previous studies.

Judit Perniss compiled a bibliography containing the works published by the Mass Communication Research Center on listening to the radio in Hungary.

Endre Hann and Márta Hoffmann

One Week of the Large World—on Five Wavelengths

The authors present a comparative analysis on news transmitted by Hungarian Radio and four western radio stations broadcasting in Hungarian (BBC, Voice of America, Deutschlandfunk and Radio Free Europe). In autumn 1984 altogether more than 3,000 news items transmitted during a week were examined by the method of quantitative content analysis. The study covered such quantitative aspects as the number of news items, their order and length, the structure of repetitions on the one hand and qualitative factors on the other, e.g. the tematic compositions of news, nationality and activity of actors, treatment of quotations and background information. The concluding chapter illustrates the findings of the content analysis by a "microanalysis" of the development of some concrete news items.

The news on international life are generally dominated by diplomacy in all the five stations, but the ratio of diplomacy is the highest in Hungarian Radio, most closely followed by the thematic structure of RFE.

Hungarian Radio reports on news coming from the Soviet Union in considerably higher proportions than western radios do, while news originating from the United States represent a somewhat lower ratio than in western stations. This, however, only adds some shade to the general image: news coming from western countries predominate in all stations, including Hungarian Radio.

Similar differences can be observed with regard to the nationality of the protagonists of news. In this respect, BBC offers the most balanced image. The news by Voice of America and RFE are

characterised by the predominance of American actors, while Hungarian Radio transmits more news with Soviet protagonists. In the latter the news with Soviet actors usually precede those with American protagonists.

Hungarian Radio and BBC transmit a higher ratio of news focussing on actual, physical action (in contrast to verbal action) than the other three stations. But while in the case of the British station this means relatively more agressive and other unfriendly actions, Hungarian Radio reports more frequently on positive activities which improve relationships. Such activities are attributed to Soviet actors only by Hungarian Radio, however, it never mentions American actors in this context.

As to the affective-emotional content of news, Hungarian Radio is remarkably different from western stations, since it transmits the smallest amount of neutral or ambivalent news items and the highest number of positive, progressive, optimistic, i.e., "good" news. It broadcasts, however, considerably more negative news on domestic policy, mostly on the national problems and conflicts of western countries.

The analysis also covered how frequently and in what ways the different stations quoted the actors in the news.

From this aspect, Hungarian Radio seemed to be the most objective: the representatives of the other political camp spoke almost as frequently as friendly politicians did and (again similarly to BBC) the doubting, alienating form of quoting the statements of the other party are used relatively rarely. On the other hand, the news editors of Hungarian Radio often lay stress on the quotations of statements reflecting official Hungarian standpoints, in a way that these almost rise to the level of facts. At last it can also be pointed out that biased background information, giving an unfavourable impression on the political "adversary" or declaring unilateral standpoints, is employed by Hungarian Radio less frequently than by stations of American interests, but somewhat more frequently than by BBC.

Maybe it is one of the main conclusions of the study that the structure and content of news transmission by the five stations are not considerably different and none of them violates apparently the classical requirement of objectivity. However, the figures revealed by the analysis confirm the hypothesis that the news broadcast by all stations more or less reflect the political value system and the interests of the editorial staff and the institutional system and political power behind them.

Images

Judit Lendvay

The Image of Austrians—1983

To compare the opinions on two neighbouring peoples—this was the aim of an Austrian—Hungarian joint research project of which one report is presented to the reader under the above title. Two towns were selected for field work, which

"in good old, peaceful times" were situated in a geographically unified area: the Austrian colleagues investigated in Eisenstadt and we in Sopron.

Sopron proved to be an excellent research field: the personal presence of Austrian tourists—and of Austrian economic experts in the past few years—and the media messages of Austria (almost everybody watches Austrian television programmes more or less regularly) made everyday conversation topics from Austrian shopping tourism or from Austrian hotel construction, but all kinds of news and events concerning Austria are widely discussed in the public opinion of Sopron. In order to detect the effects resulting from the personal and mass communicational presence of Austrians, from the geographical proximity of Austria, a control sample was also used, provided by the city of Eger, which from the point of nationality and mass communication effects can be considered neutral.

Having completed the analyses we drew the conclusion that the image of Austrians formed by the inhabitants of Sopron showed some specific features: 1) The people in Sopron mostly observe the Austrians during shopping, in restaurants and in the streets. In their opinion the Austrians' behaviour does not show any sign of that cold, reserved elegance which according to the inhabitants of Eger characterises Western

tourists. 2) Austrian shopping tourism is concentrated in a well confinable area —in the centre of Sopron—, therefore day by day rivalling situations develop between Austrian tourists and the natives of Sopron: in the supermarket they compete for goods and for the "favours" of shop-assistants, in the restaurants for tables and for the "favours" of waiters, in the street for scarce parking opportunities. In these rivalling situations the Austrian tourists—because of the national interest of obtaining hard currency —participate with such an advantage that the inhabitants of Sopron cannot catch up with them. This exerts a negative influence on the image formed about Austrians in Sopron. In Eger it is not the primary aim of Austrian tourists to do shopping, to exploit the favourable conditions of the Hungarian price system and the rate of exchange. Here it is the shopping of Czech, Polish and Rumanian people which annoys natives: other foreigners come as tourists—in the traditional sense of the word. They are elegant if they come from the "West", and less elegant, if they arrive from the "East" (i. e. from socialist countries). With (or without) a map in their hands, they walk leisurely in the city, looking for historical monuments.

In the following research stage we would like to find an answer to the question what factors influence image formation, in which direction they shift opinions, and what structure they form.

Márta Hoffmann and Judit Lendvay

Some Theoretical and Methodological Problems of National Image Studies

The Case of Austria and Hungary

This paper presents the findings of a many-year-long study carried out by a bilateral team under the auspices of UNESCO. The first part of the research was mainly descriptive with a focus on the contents of national images in the bordering areas of Austria and Hungary. In the second part the efforts were aimed at exploring the mechanism of image formation, the dimensions of national images and the structure of influencing factors in the case of the neighbouring countries to Hungary.

The most important findings of the study can be summarised as follows:

—The structure of cognitive elements is highly influenced by geographical distance and the opportunity to build personal contacts.

—Consequently, parallel with the increase of geographical distance and the decrease of the opportunity of building personal contacts, the images carried by the media come into prominence.

—The analysis of the affective components of images explored a mainly positive, loose knit, value laden picture, nevertheless close patterns of negative attribution were also met.

—The findings of content analyses showed that the press was carrying a far-from-everyday picture so it can hardly play an image organising role.

—The peculiarity of Hungarian tourist leaflets targeting Austria was that they were lacking the traditional Hungarian clichés (e. g. *"puszta"*, *"paprika"*, gipsy, music etc.) and the emphasis shifted towards modernisation.

Media Use and Communication Behaviour

Mária Vásárhelyi

A New Source of Information: Teletext

By the end of 1984 there were approximately 13,000 households in Hungary equipped with decoder television sets apt for the reception of teletext pages. The Audience Research Department of the Mass Communication Research Centre sent questionnaires to 1,500 owners of such television sets to gain information on how they used and what opinions they had formed about this new service.

The great majority of those who have decoder sets are among the highly educated, middle-aged city dwellers with incomes considerably higher than average. A further characteristic of this stratum is

that it is also supplied with other durable consumer goods—with electronic media as well—to a much higher than average degree. The high level media supply of decoder set owners, however, does not mean more frequent use of these media. The members of this group do not excel within their social strata with more intense information habits and news consumption, although one could presume that mostly those people spend a considerable sum on these sets for whom it is particularly important to learn fresh news as quickly as possible. Half of the respondents bought their sets without having seen them before and one of the most frequently mentioned motives of buying consisted in considering it to be the most up-to-date television set in domestic supply.

Constant use, however, develops strong bonds to this service, the majority of users would not give it up today. -

Teletext soon becomes integrated into the information habits of its users who —even after a few months' use—regularly turn to this medium for certain types of information.

Comfortable access to rapid and fresh information—this is regarded as the most important advantage of Teletext by most users, in contrast to other media. Another often mentioned positive feature of this service is that from Teletext everyone can get information at the time most favourable for him and the topics can be chosen according to interest, it is not necessary for the user to listen to or watch the entire programme in order to get the information he is interested in. Many also appreciate that the news are brief, concise, "they stick to the essentials". Some users consider that Teletext information is more colourful, more interesting and embraces a greater variety of topics than the traditional mass media.

Emőke Valkó

Use of Tape Recorders in the Eighties

According to research findings, by the mid-80s every second adult (55 per cent) lived in homes equipped with devices apt for sound recording and radio recorders had also begun to spread rapidly and on a massive scale (36 per cent.) It is not infrequent either to have various tape recorders for personal use in a family. In 1985, 35 per cent of the adults had mono and 25 per cent had stereo sets, while 45 per cent possessed portable sets. Of a hundred adults, five had a car equipped with tape recorder.

The use of tape recorders has become general among adults as well as among young people. One-fourth of adults ac-

tively use their sets, they listen to materials recorded on tape or make records various times a week. 40 per cent of adults have more than ten hours of records, and less than that are possessed by 15 per cent. Approximately 100 million hours of sound recordings are stored by the population: 80 per cent pop music, 10 per cent classical music and 10 per cent prose —mostly non-professional, personal recordings.

The supply and turnover of programme cassettes are gradually increasing, however, the most general and cheapest way of expanding the stock of tapes at home is recording radio pro-

grammes. 33 per cent of the adults record light music, 2 per cent classical music and 13 per cent prose (mostly cabaret).

The new media that make it possible to record sound and picture as well have begun to spread only in recent times in Hungary. In the "prevideo" era only sound could be recorded from the music supply of television. More than one-tenth of adults record sound from various television programmes (80 per cent light music, 20 per cent prose and 2 per cent classical music).

The number of tape recorders is expected to increase in the future as well. It must be taken into consideration that the effect of popular music programmes and cabaret shows is multiplied by the fact that listeners keep them on tapes and can mix a "request programme" for themselves any time they want to.

Tamás Terestyéni

Some Characteristics of Vernacular Communication Culture in Hungary

Apart from the consumption of media products, it is also an important characteristic of communication behaviour in what kind of verbal interactions people take part in the different scenes of everyday life, which verbal forms and ways of communication they cultivate, how they assess the use of the language by themselves and by others in their surroundings, which linguistic-interactional forms are considered as standards or patterns to be followed and which ones are rejected. The term "vernacular communication culture" refers to this, relatively less investigated part of communication behaviour. The Mass Communication Research Centre carried out a sociolinguistic survey on a national representative sample of 1000 individuals taken from the adult population to offer some contributions to the study of some of the more important components of vernacular communication culture in Hungary.

The first block of the study focussed on the role of verbal communication (chats, conversations) in everyday life. The findings indicate that a considerable part of the population—mostly elderly people and housewives—suffer from conversation deficiency and consider their opportunities to speak and to express their feelings inadequate. On the other hand, it was also revealed that in large masses of the population—first of all among the less educated—literacy, i.e. the use of written information had not become an organic part of everyday life. Partly it is due to the low technological standards and the low levels of organisation in the Hungarian national economy that many jobs or tasks hardly require intellectual information handling apart from verbal communication (reading and producing written documents, calculating, programming etc.) Many—and again mostly the less educated strata and those at the lower grades of labour division are meant —have problems with administration in writing and with acting verbally on the

fora of everyday life which may imply that these strata have limited capacities to express and enforce their interests.

The second block of the study tried to grasp the structure of attitudes and opinions related to the use of the language. By factor analysis three dimensions were revealed along which the opinions on the verbal manifestations of the surroundings are arranged. In the dimension of "intelligibility of public speech" people express to what extent they can understand and interpret the speeches made on different public fora and how they can participate in communication on these fora. In the dimension of "socio-cultural specification of language use" the members of the vernacular community are divided by the extent to which they perceive the socio-cultural indicator character of language use and are willing to accept socio-cultural differences reflected by the use of the mother tongue. Finally, the "form/content" dimension differentiates according to the importance attributed to the linguistic form in communication acts: whether people can perceive and are aware of the fact that the linguistic form largely determines the content and efficiency of the messages.

In the third block of the study the interviewees solved a test in which they had to recognise those parts in a short text which were different from everyday language and violated grammatical standards. They also had to detect spelling mistakes. The results of this test rendered rough estimates on which and how large parts of the vernacular community spoke such socio-cultural dialects that did not correspond to the norms cultivated in public education and mass communication, i.e. in the institutionalised "high" culture.

Attila Malecz

Tastes in Music in Hungary

In the first stage, the author determines how ten musical genres are related to each other on the one hand and to the audience on the other, outlining certain orientations in musical taste as well as their socio-demographic determinants. The study unambiguously presents a general trend, namely that about four-fifths of the population like artifical Hungarian folk songs, dance-music and original folk-songs, i.e., four-fifths reject classical music. By revealing the patterns of attraction and repulsion among different tastes in music, the author also points out those "taste bridges" which can play an important part in taste development. (Such bridge-builder genres between light and classical music are for instance jazz and original folk songs.)

After this superficial examination, the author turns to computer factor analysis to explore the deep structures of taste. In this manner four main taste dimensions are revealed among the Hungarian population: a relatively progressive trend of loving classical music; another progressive dimension in liking pop music; preference of both artifical and original Hungarian folk songs (flok music); and at last, tastelessness in music: the world of operetta, the sweet music of Dreamland.

In the next phase, characteristic groupings of taste were searched for by the

computer. As a result of cluster analysis, six groups were obtained. Only one of them showed a definitely positive relationship to a taste dimension: the group of classical music-lovers. The remaining five groups were characterised by intolerance or indifference to other taste dimensions.

Having a closer look at these groups, however, permits the author to reval that the most exigent listeners (those who go to concerts, collect records and listen to tapes) can be found beside—or rather, before—classical music lovers, among those who reject artifical folk songs, i.e. in a definitely intolerant group. About one-third of the adult population belong to the above mentioned two groups.

There is a sharp difference between the former and those three intolerant groups which reject certain light genres, and are basically indifferent to any taste trend. These are all characterised by a disadvantageous socio-cultural situation, and constitute another one-third of the adult population.

The remaining one-third includes those strata which are indifferent to all musical trends. Their simple taste in music hides cultural reasons rather than economic considerations: the white spots of our system of educational and musical institutions.

Sociology

Péter Sterk

Some Relationships between Social Mobility and Socialisation

This study examines an important new development of the stratification of Hungarian society: the phenomenon of circular mobility, which is getting a dominant role in situation changing as large-scale structural movements are dying down, and within this, downward mobility, rather neglected by previous research. It focusses on the interaction between some objective and subjective factors of downward mobility, with special regard to some aspects of consciousness (socialisation and values).

Thus the report deals with some issues of the interaction between social mobility and socialisation by the family: with the effect of authoritarian education on the development of a rigid value system and among the different types of family background, with the more intense socialising role of intellectual families.

The study is related in various respects to value research. The findings about the differences between intellectual and skilled worker values (e.g. the priority given to creativity over more traditional value elements: discipline and family-centredness) support many statements of recent Hungarian studies.

The basic research theme—examination of certain cases of social mobility —raises the question how public thinking (and within this, the way of thinking of the different social strata) might be affected by the growing weight of circular mobility and the increasing ratio of "downward" mobile persons.

Árpád Pünkösti

Belonging to the Elite

*The System of Relationships
of the Presidents of Agricultural
Cooperatives*

Until recently, the presidents of agricultural cooperatives were the only group of economic managers in Hungary more or less chosen by election. The questionnaire survey taken in late 1983 and early 1984 covered one-quarter of this group and also summarised the data and opinions of about a hundred retired presidents, in the present study concerning their relationships in public and private life.

The study has revealed that rising to this leading position, i.e. belonging to the elite makes the manager lonely. Even though the majority of marital, family and friendly relationships do not change after one is elected president, many (35 —40 per cent) pay with the loosening of their bonds. On the other hand, the relationships in public life are rather improved by the fact of becoming president. Both private and public relationships undergo a synchronous change in their respective group.

The presidents have two outstanding relationships: one links them to the family, the other to cooperative members. The great majority considered the latter to be fairly good (the average score is higher than that referring to family relations), however, these ties get looser and looser.

Cooperative management is characterised by fundamentally good work relationships, half of the president interviewed did not mention any internal conflict and even those who did emphasised

its healthy and natural character. While retired presidents mostly mention high level conflicts, their active counterparts point out problems on the middle level (that mostly stem from the different interests of the leaders of various cooperative branches). Among high level conflicts, the struggle for power has a determining role, in which sometimes the party secretary is one of the central figures. Regarding the relationship between the cooperative manager and the party secretary, many presidents—including former party workers—hold the opinion that dualism should not be permitted in leadership.

Relationships play an ever increasing role in agricultural management, the presidents say Hungary seems to become a relationship-country. Generally the later one is elected president, the better his public relations, these partly feudal conditions seem to maintain their dominant role. The structure of social management also contributes to the conservation of this situation.

One-fifth of retired and one-third of active presidents are members of the Hunters' Club. This is one of the ways and means of integration into the elite. University degree and party membership have become so general among presidents that in order to excel it is now worth joining the Hunters' Club. Parallel with the loosening of local ties, the process of excelling is more and more infected with relationships.

Although two-thirds of the presidents interviewed said that influential leaders rarely asked them some personal favour, the new coop managers complain more and more of official entertainment, of cherishing social contacts. The data reflect a moral decadence and a growing aversion to corruption. The possibility cannot be excluded that decentralisation may be accompanied by moral dangers. This side-effect of the reform measures may stem from backward political and social reforms and may also be attributed to the shortage economy and the distorted value system prevailing in our society.

Emőke Valkó and Imre Rosner

The Characteristics
of Video Use in Hungary

Following the communication revolution in the industrialised countries, the new mass media appeared in Hungary too, including video which is perhaps spreading the most rapidly in public consumption. On the basis of data collected by the Mass Communication Research Centre in the first half of 1987, we have the opportunity to examine the market for private consumption of video technology.

An important turn in the development of video in Hungary occurred as recently as 1984. At the end of 1984, the import of VCRs for non-professional use, which up to that point had been exclusively entrusted to the decisions of private individuals—resulting in a fair amount of chaos—was brought in line with the general tariff regulations.[1] With that we joined, as it were, the video market for the VHS system widely spread in Western Europe which facilitated the development of video marketing in Hungary.[2] In 1986, the situation of video programmes was settled both as cultural and mass-communication products and the potential for both producing and marketing programmes was clarified.[3] The purchasing price of video sets –both in Hungary and abroad—which was identical with the price of a car in the early eighties, is now approaching that of a colour television set, and this has led to a further increase in consumption. From 1985 to 1986, the average price of video sets sold in Hungary decreased from 64,500 to 45,600 Ft and at the same time sales increased by 510 per cent. A total of 24,100 video sets were sold on the domestic market in 1986.[4] With that, video became the most dynamically increasing

field in the marketing of equipment used in telecommunication.[5]

Marketing films is a state monopoly in Hungary, which has so far made it possible for cultural authorities to mould the supply of films in accordance with their own efforts. As a side-effect, video technology has also broken a monopolistic situation, since its inexpensiveness, exceeding the potential of film technology, ensures individual film consumption based upon free choice. This led to a rapid increase in the demand for films and video programmes and the establishment of the legal and illegal video markets.

Owners of sets

Beginning in 1984, public institutions and companies became significant buyers of video sets (the former received state subsidies too). Today there are approximately three thousand sets in the possession of educational institutions and close to one thousand five hundred in that of public education institutions.[6] Their users are primarily young people who—as is also shown in the survey—account for the majority in the camp of

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video users. In accordance with the purposes of cultural policy, public institutions are collectors of mainly literary adaptations, popular scientific and narrative films, educational materials and classic film productions, which has accelerated the establishment of video marketing and production in Hungary, still in its initial stages today. Later on this may influence the establishment of a legal market for video films meeting private demands as well. We have no exact data on the number of sets in the possession of companies—we estimate it to be around seven to eight thousand.

These phenomena may be interpreted as indicating further expansion of video-watching in Hungary in the future, however, establishing the background of watching video is something that we must wait for a bit longer. The present relatively low market penetration of colour television receivers in Hungary (33 per cent) may slow down the further spread of video.

A lasting discrepancy between demand and supply of programmes may lead to the strengthening of the black market and may bring about the deterioration of the legal market of video programmes. The main source of income—and thus its main supporter —of the developed video markets is renting cassettes, which has proved to be a successful business venture.[7] The scope of mobility of the Hungarian legal video market (from production to marketing) will only be widened if supply finally meets demand.

The past two years have brought about significant changes in supply levels in the electronic mass media in Hungary and it has also modified the structure of consumption to a significant extent. The most recent trend has been the spread of video. As opposed to 10 per cent at the beginning of 1985, already 20 per cent of the adult population regularly watched video in the first half of 1987.

In parallel, the proportion of radio receivers with Ultra Short Wave (from 60 to 65 per cent), with stereo (from 29 to 38 per cent), as well as combined with tape recorders (from 36 to 45 per cent) continued to increase. A great many people bought tape-recorders (the proportion of people with tape-recorders increased from 55 to 62 per cent) and record players (their proportion increased form 39 to 44 per cent) in the past two years. The ratio of people with colour television sets increased at a much higher rate. While in 1985 one fifth (21 per cent) of the adult population had colour TV sets, in 1987 their proportion reached one third, thus the rapid increase in the number of colour television sets favours the spread of video.

The proportion of people with VCRs in their homes was 4.4 per cent at the beginning of 1987, i.e. 350,000 adults possessed such sets. On that basis, the number of sets in private possession can be estimated at around 175 thousand, but this figure probably exceeds 200 thousand. We base this braver estimation on 6 per cent of the adults, i.e. 480 thousand people, stating that they watched video in their homes (too). If we take two adults in one family on the average, it makes 240,000 sets possible, and from that we have to subtract only the small number of people who regularly hire them. A group of those possessing video sets may be afraid of something (perhaps the economic police?), because a quarter of those who admitted that they watched video in their homes (1.6 per cent from the 6 per cent) during the survey, half an hour later did not consider it useful for their videos to be included in our figures.

The frequency of watching video

Getting acquainted with this new medium is becoming more and more widespread in Hungary too; today the

number of those having had experience of video can be estimated to be more than one and a half million. Half a million Hungarians watch programmes played form cassettes weekly (once, twice or more often). Six hundred thousand people watch video daily (once or twice) and five hundred thousand less frequently.[9] One third of these people watch programmes regularly, two thirds only occasionally, determined by what is available in Hungary.

Those involved in such activities and those who are regular customers change in their proportion significantly if we examine the groups of society in different situations. Age is a decisive differentiating factor. The break-up according to age is the following: 18—19 years 70 per cent, 20—24 years 46 per cent, 25—29 years 29 per cent, 30—39 years 27 per cent, 40—49 years 16 per cent, 50—59 years 8 per cent and above 60 5 per cent. If we narrow down the circle to the regular users of video (watching it once or more weekly), then from 18 to 60 years the proportion of those watching video regularly decreases from 31 to 2 per cent.[10]

In Budapest every third, in rural towns every fifth, and in the countryside every tenth person answered yes to the question, "Do you watch video programmes from video sets?" 12 per cent of the public in Budapest, 6 per cent of the people living in rural towns and 3 per cent of the population living in the countryside watch video programmes regularly. If we take a look at the people watching video, we shall see that 33 per cent live in Budapest, 40 per cent live in rural towns and 27 per cent live in the countryside.

The comparison of the data for 1985 and 1987 shows that higher than average growth can be found among women, those living in the countryside and people above thirty, so this group of people who have been won over by the new medium

is constantly expanding, and not only their number is increasing.[11], [12]

In Budapest 38 per cent of men, 28 per cent of women, in rural towns 23 per cent of men, 17 per cent of women, and in the countryside 13 per cent of men and 11 per cent of women watch video programmes. The new form of entertainment spread sooner among men in all the age-groups.[12] The differences coming from schooling significantly differentiate the quantitative and qualitative indices of video habits. In the past few years, the proportion of those joining the group of regular video-watchers increased from 18 to 30 per cent among university graduates, from 17 to 32 per cent among secondary school graduates, from 10 to 20 per cent among primary school graduates, and from 2 to 4 per cent among people with less than 8 years of primary schooling. When analysing the effect of schooling and location together, it is revealed that in Budapest the proportion of people watching video is equally high (35—36 per cent) among primary school, secondary school and college or university graduates. People who failed to complete their primary school studies watch video programmes in a much smaller proportion whether they live in Budapest or in the country (3 and 6 per cent, respectively). Those with secondary and higher education qualifications take to this new means of entertainment in higher proportions than the average both in rural towns and the countryside.[13]

Video habits are similar to the habits of watching television or going to the cinema. They may be compared to the former in that people watch the small screen here too, and to the latter in that films can also be watched on video. Moreover, in the majority of cases people have to leave home if they want to watch video just as if they were going to the cinema. Those who also watch video on days when there are no TV programmes,

watch video more than those watching TV every day or infrequently.[14]

The requirements of regular and frequent film-watching audience groups cannot be fully satisfied by the supply of movies and television. Those who had to travel abroad to see films which were not shown by Hungarian cinemas or television, or films whose release was delayed by several years, are now in a comfortable situation. The latest creations of the world's film and video industries reach customers in a matter of a few weeks through different invisible channels. Cinema- and film-lovers engage in video-watching more readily than those who do not yet or who no longer take much interest in film (or never did).

In the private retail and rental market for video cassettes, the majority of the films and programmes are available in foreign languages. Before the number of dubbed and subtitled films available on the market increases, those speaking foreign languages will be in a more advantageous situation. Today 15 per cent of the adults speaking no foreign languages and 31 per cent of those understanding some foreign language replied to our question that they watch video programmes. (15 per cent of the adult population state that they understand some foreign language.)

The diverse potentials of video may be really used by those with videos, but the complete possession of the medium includes the use of a video camera as well. The number of cameras in private ownership and use is not known to us. Video today means the playback of picture and sound materials of a diverse origin, mostly recorded on cassettes. The majority of the viewers must leave home if they want to watch video programmes. They do not have access to this new form of entertainment as frequently as those who have a set of their own. Only 22 per cent of those indulging in video (20 per cent of adults)

have videos (4.4 per cent of adults), and the rest must leave home if they want to watch video.

The frequency of watching video among those with and without video sets in 1987
(percentage of adults)

Video-watching frequency	Video-owners	Non-video-owners
Several times a week	39	5
Once or twice a week	28	17
Several times a month	9	8
Once or twice a month	9	36
Less frequently than that	9	34
Does not watch video	6	—

The extension of venues for watching video in 1985, 1986, 1987
(percentage of adults)

	1985	1986	1987
Personal	7	12	20
Institutional	6	8	16

The proportion of those watching video in the different adult groups according to cinema-going frequency
(percentage)

Cinema-going frequency	1985	1986	1987
Weekly (once or more)	38	48	55
Once or twice monthly	24	36	41
Several times yearly	10	21	31
Less frequently than that	5	10	22
Never	2	2	7
Adult average	9	15	20

So the interviewers encountered persons who have a video set in their family but they themselves do not watch it. Two-thirds of video owners, (67 per cent), and 22 per cent of those who do not have a video watch video programmes weekly (once or several times). 70 per cent of those watching video but not having a VCR have the opportunity to go to places where there is a set and programmes they find interesting to watch once or twice a month or less frequently than that. Access opportunities in the two groups cannot be compared to each other.

With a continuous increase in the number of VCRs, the number of possible venues for watching video and access opportunities can be traced in the responses to the question asked repeatedly over three years ("Where do you usually watch video?"). At the beginning of 1987, 6 per cent of adults watched video programmes in their homes, 14 per cent in the homes of friends and acquaintances, 7 per cent in places of entertainment as discos, 5 per cent in schools and culture centres or clubs, and 4 per cent in their workplaces. A significant proportion of those watching video make use of not only one but several opportunities and watch programmes in several places. This is why the total of the above percentages exceeds twenty. In the past two years private video usage (watching it at home or in the flats of friends) has increased at a rate similar to that in institutions (places of entertainment, school, workplace).

With that, the one per cent difference between those participating in private video-watching and public opportunities has increased to four per cent. If we take a closer look at the venues for watching video, we can conclude from the changes in proportions that the significance of the private sphere of video has increased. The increase in the number of VCRs and widening interest result in the following:

in 1987 69 per cent of video watchers participated in meetings with friends or acquaintances enjoying "films" in small groups, while in 1985 this was characteristic of only 36 per cent. In 1985 400,000 adults visited acquaintances with the purpose of watching video but in 1987 this figure had already reached one million! Two years ago 300,000 Hungarian adults watched videos in places of entertainment and discos, but today 570,000 people do so. Video programmes shown in educational and public education institutions were watched by 140,000 people in 1985, but today they are enjoyed by 370,000 adult viewers.[15]

Where do the video programmes in circulation come from?

This year for the first time we asked our video-watching respondents how frequently they watched programmes sold in different ways, rented or recorded at home from television. We did not ask questions about private video cassette collections. Among other things, we were interested in borrowings and rentals, the significance and role of official video-hire facilities, and the role of pre-recorded video cassettes bought on the video market. In addition to the contentual side of video consumption, the relative popularity and demand for different genres and types of films, we considered it important to identify the most frequent purchasing sources for video-watchers with their own VCRs. (At the beginning, the owners of sets do not really know where to go to find new programmes.) In this way, we could only make a somewhat distant, deficient as well as dim snapshot of the colourful, teeming, extending world of the video market. Prior to the completion of further data collection and processing, we wish to call the reader's attention to a hitherto little-known field, using the available data.

This kind of secondary distribution of Hungarian Television programmes can be seen as significant in the present situation of video too, for the number of those who have the opportunity to see older programmes in "home" repetitions can be estimated at around 640,000. 65 per cent of people with VCRs probably not only saw but themselves made recordings of Hungarian Television programmes.

Films and programmes recorded from foreign television stations (this may have taken place within the borders of the country too) have already been watched by 880 thousand people. Among video-watchers enjoying programmes recorded from foreign televisions is more frequent than from Hungarian television, but this situation is reversed in the case of VCR owners.

The categories applied in the question were not worded in a way excluding each other. For example, material recorded from a television programme can be both purchased (Televideo) or borrowed, etc.

People participating in the practice of video are familiar with the different ways of renting cassettes: institutionally and non-institutionally, as a favour or for money, on a mutual basis or by way of exchange. Now for the first time we have the opportunity to plot the scale of these activities.

A predominant role is played by cassettes borrowed from acquaintances. This group is larger than the commercial rental network and the black market combined. The viewers of cassettes borrowed from acquaintances may be estimated at around one million (1,040,000). At the beginning of 1987, 320 thousand people enjoyed cassettes coming from "non-official" or "other" places, for which money changed hands, while 400,000 viewers watched cassettes originating from official video-hire facilities.

Pre-recorded cassettes are relatively expensive to buy, and their marketing

The viewing rate of programmes recorded onto video cassettes from television
(percentage)

	Among adults	Among video-watch-ers	Among video-owners	Non-video-owners
Proportion of viewers of films or programmes recorded from Hungarian TV	8	40	65	32
Proportion of viewers of films or programmes recorded from foreign television stations	11	56	50	58

The viewing rate of video programmes from various sources
(percentage)

	Among adults	Among video-watch-ers	Among video-owners	Non-video-owners
Proportion of viewers of cassettes rented from video hire shops or libraries	5	25	25	25
Proportion of viewers of cassettes rented from other places for money	4	21	11	25
Proportion of viewers of cassettes borrowed from acquaintances	13	67	87	61

also started later than their renting. Still, 480,000 people have already watched such video programmes. 6 per cent of adults, 30 per cent of video-watchers, 22

per cent of VCR-owners and 33 per cent of non-owners replied that they had already seen programmes from such cassettes.

The majority of VCR-owners (87 per cent) are engaged in non-commercial circulation of cassettes, on a mutual basis. Only a quarter of them watch programmes from video libraries and one tenth of them enjoy programmes rented from the non-official network for money.

Those video lovers who do not have a VCR and can enjoy such programmes as guests in other people's houses or in places of entertainment, educational or public education institutions, also watch in the highest proportion programmes borrowed from acquaintances (61 per cent).

**What do
video lovers watch?**

Our data demonstrate that the best-known, most frequently watched programmes among the video-watching population are the following in a rank order: cartoons and tales for children, videoclips, karate, western, sci-fi, horror and pornographic films, i.e. films of entertainment.[16] A similar image can be seen in the consumption of infrequent video watchers, as well as among non-video-owners. Comparing the data of those watching video several times weekly with those of any group under examination, it is here that we find the highest values with each genre or type of films, i.e. they are the ones who know best and watch the widest variety of films examined within the boundaries of supply.

48 per cent of the video-watching population have already seen (frequently or rarely) pornographic films, and this accounts for 9 per cent of the adult population. This high rate of viewing was achieved in spite of completely opposing cultural policy, and our laws punishing their distribution. It is quite probable that these results actually gloss up the real situation, that not just 48 per cent of video viewers have seen pornographic films. (We have no data about the video habits of young people under 18.)

Except among VCR-owners, art, documentary, educational or professional as well as amateur video recordings have the lowest viewing rate. The genres of entertainment—including the prohibited genres—are the best-known among video lovers; these are the genres that private video viewing covers most extensively. Its functions are light entertainment, tasting the forbidden fruits, diversion and getting acquainted with the aspects of foreign countries less known so far.

To our question "Have you seen on video ...?" different types of films, the persons interviewed gave very different replies in accordance with their aducational level. Parallel to a rise in qualification the viewers watch different and increasingly more types of programmes. Among those with a low level of education (having attended less than 8 years of schooling), cartoons and tales, westerns and videoclips are best known. In addition to them, the group of primary school gradutes are fairly familiar with and quite frequently watch horror and sci-fi films too. Those with medium and higher qualifications know and watch the whole spectrum available. Among them, a high viewing rate of pornographic films was measured—exceeding 50 per cent. Parallel to a rise in schooling not only are the genres watched richer but the proportion of the individual types of films is higher as well. For example, among those with a lower educational level, not only is the proportion of video viewers lower than average, but also the range and variety of programmes watched is more limited. On the other hand, those having graduated from higher education institutions not only watch video in higher proportions,

but they are also the ones who have got acquainted with all the genres available.

The programme preference of groups formed according to age is very similar, the differences experienced can be summarised as follows. Wiewers under forty are more familiar than average with cartoons, videoclips, karate, pornographic, horror, western and sci-fi films. Video lovers under 24 watch all the genres mentioned more frequently than average; it seems that everything video offers today is interesting for them. The video habits of people over 40 differ from those of the younger generations in that they watch horror, karate, porno films as well as the light music videoclips less frequently than average. Among them, art, documentary, educational and amateur films are more popular. It is a remarkable fact that 18 to 19-year-old young adults are much more familiar than average—29 per cent—with educational or professional materials, which are among the types of films viewed less frequently in general (7 per cent of adults have already seen such films). This fact indicates that young people get acquainted with the new cultural medium to a significant degree in institutions too.

Both the knowledge of films and participation in video viewing of the adult population in Budapest, rural towns, and the countryside are different from each other by orders of magnitude. At the same time, preferences for individual types of films are indentical within the groups. In all three places the same six genres were indicated as the best-known ones (cartoons and tales, karate, horror, western, sci-fi films as well as videoclips).

On average, 35 per cent of the population watching video in places of entertainment, schools, culture houses, clubs and workplaces are familiar with and watch some of the genres listed. This value is barely 10 per cent higher among those watching video in their homes. On the other hand, those watching video in the homes of friends or acquaintances (also) knew and watched all the genres under examination in a higher proportion—above 55 per cent.

Our data demonstrate that the viewers of the individual types of films came from both sexes with the same frequency. The survey investigating the habits of men and women related to watching television did not find any essential difference between men and women in their selection of television programmes either. Watching video is a form of social entertainment too; it is watched by men and women together, just as in the case of television.

It seems on the basis of the different data at our disposal that the provision of friendly gatherings watching video in private flats with pre-recorded cassettes is the richest. One of the reasons for this may be that supplies in the legal prerecorded video market still being developed are exceeded by the richness of programmes available from private sources.

Notes

[1] The publication of the Ministry of Finance. December 1, 1984. *Magyar Közlöny No. 52.* p. *1099.*

[2] JAKAB, ZOLTÁN: *A video helyzete néhány fejlett ipari országban* (The situation of video in a few developed industrial countries). *Jel-Kép* 1984/4. pp. 102-108.o

[3] Press Act 1986/II. *Magyar Közlöny,* No. 16. Aug. 1, 1986. Decree number 23/1986/VI. 26. MT. on the pursuit of individual cultural activities. *Magyar Közlöny,* No. 24.

[4] The distribution of durable consumer goods in the retail trade in 1986. Ministry of Home Trade, Információ, February, 1987.

⁵The marketing of telecommunication equipment in 1986, in the percentage of 1985

Telecommunication media	Equipment marketed in 1986 as a percentage of the previous year
CB radio transmitter-receivers	75
Record players	118
Black-and-white television sets	98
Colour television sets	153
Hi-Fi tape-recorders	90
Video recorders	512

⁶ On the basis of an interview with István Fogarasi, deputy head of the Pedagogical Division of the National Centre for Educational Technology.

⁷ AVAR, JÁNOS: *Gyere a moziba be! Videózás az USA-ban* (Come to the movies! Video habits in the USA). HVG, 1984/39.;

CLEVENZ, PETER: *Videothek: Ausbauen oder auflösen? Die Einzelhandels Berater*, 1985/3.

⁸ On the basis of data collected by yearly personal interviews in the Mass Communication Research Centre. The size of the national representative sample was 9,000 in 1985 and 1986, and 2,000 at the beginning of 1987.

⁹Video-watching frequency among adults (percentage)

	1985	1986	1987
Several times a week	0.7	1.3	2.4
Once or twice a week	2.0	2.8	3.8
Several times a month	1.3	2.0	1.7
Once or twice a month	2.9	5.1	6.1
Less frequently than that	3.4	5.1	6.5
Does not watch video	89.4	83.2	79.6
Lack of data	0.4	0.6	0.8
Total of adult video viewers	10.3	16.3	19.6

1% = 80 thousand adults

¹⁰The proportion of regular video viewers (at least once a week) and those watching video infrequently (once or twice a month or less frequently) in the different social groups at the beginning of 1987 (percentage)

	Adults	18—19	20—24	25—29	30—39	40—49	50—59	60—X	Budapest	Town	Country-side	—8 years of schooling	8 years of schooling	Secondary school	University
Regularly	6,2	31	12	6	10	5	2	2	12	6	3	2	8	8	9
Rarely	13,4	39	34	23	17	11	6	3	20	16	9	2	12	24	21
Total of video watchers	19,6	70	46	29	2	16	8	5	32	22	12	4	20	32	30

[11] The proportion of video viewers in 1985 and 1987 in the different social groups
(percentage)

	Among adults	Men	Women	Buda-pest	Town	Coun-tryside	—8 years of schooling	8 years of schooling	Sec-ondary school	Univer-sity
1985	10.3	15	7	16	11	5	2	10	17	18
1987	19.6	23	17	32	22	12	4	20	32	30

	18—19 years	20—24 years	25—29 years	30—39 years	40—49 years	50—59 years	above 60 years
1985	40	30	25	10	7	2	2
1987	70	46	29	27	16	8	5

[12] Men and women watching video in the different age-groups in 1985 and 1987
(percentage)

	18—19 years	20—24 years	25—29 years	30—39 years	40—49 years	50—59 years	above 60 years
				Men			
1985	47	34	23	15	8	5	3
1987	86	60	33	28	17	8	5
				Women			
1985	33	26	6	5	6	1	1
1987	51	37	25	25	14	9	4

[13] The proportion of adults watching video in Budapest, rural towns and the countryside according to schooling in 1987
(percentage)

	Buda-pest	Town	Coun-tryside
Less than eight years of schooling	6	3	3
Primary school	35	22	14
Secondary school	36	36	21
University	35	28	28

[14] Video viewers as a proportion of television viewers according to viewing frequency in 1985, 1986 and 1987
(percentage)

Tv-watching frequency	1985	1986	1987
On every day of broadcasting	8	14	19
Several times a week	18	19	27
Once or twice a week	13	22	20
Rarely	7	7	14
Average among adults	9	15	20

[15] Changes in video-watching venues among adults and video viewers
(percentage)
(One respondent may watch video in several places therefore the total exceeds the proportion of video viewers and 100 percent.)

	1985		1986		1987	
	Adults	Video viewers	Adults	Video viewers	Adults	Video viewers
1. At home	1.9	16	3.2	17	6.1	31
2. Friends, acquaintances, relatives	4.8	36	9.0	57	13.5	69
3. Places of entertainment, disco	3.8	35	4.6	33	7.1	36
4. School, culture centre, club	1.7	18	1.8	19	4.6	23
5. Workplace	0.9	10	1.3	11	3.7	19

[16] How many percent in the respondents' groups saw which types of films once, twice or several times?
(percentage)

	Adults	Video viewers	Video owners	Non-owners	Several times a week	Several times a month	Once or twice a month
					watch video		
Cartoons or tales	17	84	91	82	96	85	85
Videoclips, light-music programmes	16	80	83	79	82	95	81
Karate or action films	16	79	78	80	85	74	80
Pornographic films	9	48	48	48	68	50	47
Horror films	12	61	54	62	79	58	62
Adventure or western films	15	77	89	74	96	85	74
Sci-fi films	13	67	79	63	83	68	69
Art films	7	36	51	32	52	41	36
Documentary films	5	26	35	24	48	23	25
Educational or professional materials	7	33	26	35	50	50	35
Amateur video recordings	5	26	28	31	40	32	25

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More Rapidly, More Credibly

Some Opinions about the Media

According to a poll on mass media taken in the spring of 1986 on a sample of 1000 representing the adult population, people think that good information mainly requires rapidity and credibility. These requirements are met above all by radio and television —although to a less extent than in 1981.

If something important happens in Hungary or abroad, people learn about it primarily from the radio (that was the reply of 28 per cent in 1978 and 35 per cent in 1986). In this raking second place is occupied by television (19 and 17 per cent respectively) and third place is taken by the press (16 and 10 per cent). There are few people who obtain information about the events through the channels of personal communication (4 and 4 per cent respectively).

When wishing to be informed about further details, people primarily use the press (17 and 22 per cent). A significant proportion of the population resorts to television (12 and 13 per cent respectively) and personal information sources (13 and 18 per cent), and the lowest proportion of the population relies on radio (9 and 7 percent respectively).

People believe that good information mainly requires credibility and rapidity and they consider interest and detail much less important. In 1981 they placed rapidity in the first place and credibility in the second (46 and 38 per cent respectively). In 1986 the two viewpoints changed places with each other (37 and 41 per cent respectively) but interest and detail were pushed into the background in both cases.

As to the question of the differences among the three mass media from the point of view of credibility, this time people took much more differentiated stances than a few years ago. In 1981 the overwhelming majority, 74 per cent,

stated that the three sources of information did not differ from each other in this field, while 14 per cent gave the highest credibility to television. By 1986, the proportion of the respondents taking a neutral stance had been reduced by 50 per cent (36), and the proportion of those voting for television had been doubled (30 per cent).

The fact that people see television as the most credible information source is demonstrated by other research findings as well. If different information were given about an event, say an accident, by the press, radio and television, 49 per cent would believe the information provided by television; 9 per cent would give credibility to the radio and 8 per cent would favour the dailies; 11 per cent were of the opinion that a situation like that could not occur in the Hungarian mass media.
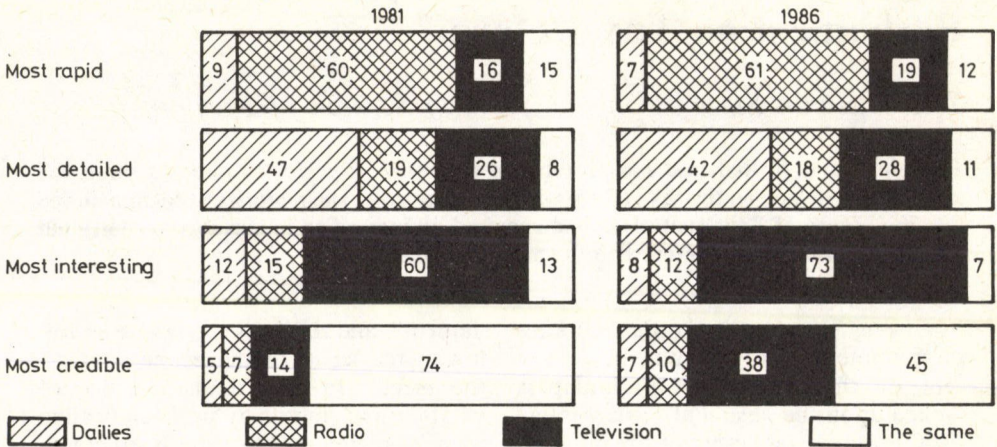
As to rapidity and topicality, on both occasions the respondents placed radio first (60 per cent in 1981 and 50 per cent in 1986), while they considered television the most interesting.

There was a higher polarisation among the people on the question of which of the mass media provided the most detailed information. Most of the respondents voted for the dailies (47 and 35 per cent), but quite a few of them mentioned television too (26 and 23 per cent).

The majority of the population looks upon the Hungarian mass media as good, but satisfaction has decreased in that respect in the past few years. While

	1981	1986
Most rapid	9 / 60 / 16 / 15	7 / 61 / 19 / 12
Most detailed	47 / 19 / 26 / 8	42 / 18 / 28 / 11
Most interesting	12 / 15 / 60 / 13	8 / 12 / 73 / 7
Most credible	5 / 7 / 14 / 74	7 / 10 / 38 / 45

Legend: Dailies · Radio · Television · The same

in 1981 81 per cent of the respondents said that the radio news gave proper treatment to each important topic, this opinion was shared by only 73 per cent in 1986.

The evaluation of the two current affairs programmes of television, the TV News and *A Hét* (The Week) has also become less favourable: in November 1981 far more people stated about both programmes that they gave appropriate treatment to all the important topics (86 and 88 per cent respectively) than in 1986 (70 and 78 per cent respectively). And in the case of TV News, there was a sharp increase in the proportion of the respondents, from 9 to 22 per cent, who held the opposite view.

As to the evaluation of dailies, we only have data from 1986. At that time 63 per cent of the population believed that the dailies provided proper information about all the important topics, while the opposite stance was revealed by 17 per cent . That means that among the three mass media the respondents evaluated the press the least favourably.

Dissatisfaction with mass media has increased in other respects too. While in 1984 18 per cent of the respondents said that they had heard people discussing domestic or foreign events which were only later reported by the radio and the press, the media were accused of that error by twice as many pople in 1986 (39 per cent). And there was also increase in the proportion (from 10 to 15 per cent) of those respondents who knew about events which had not been reported by the mass media at all.

Eszter Virágh

Parliament on Tax Reform

Two Opinion Surveys on the Autumn Session of Parliament

The inhabitants of Budapest looked forward with tense expectation to this session and followed the debate on the tax reform with great interest. The majority of them believed that the House of Representatives had acquired an increasing importance recently but that the real decisions continued to be made elsewhere.*

Following the debate on the working programme of the government, 81 per cent of the population of Budapest looked upon the session of Parlament as the most important event of the past few days. After the debate on the tax reform, the proportion of those people increased to 92 per cent. That is all the more remarkable since the media had reported on the Soviet-American disarmament agreement of outstanding significance on the day when the second survey was taken. (It was mentioned by 7 per cent of the respondents.)

The surveys revealed that 99—100 per cent of the respondents were informed about the session of Parliament and 71—72 per cent of them had talked about what was going to take place in Parliament already prior to the opening of the session. The increased interest was primarily directed at the second point on the agenda of the meeting: while 55 per cent of the respondents shared their views on the debate on the government programme with others, 76 per cent discussed the debate on the tax reform with other people.

The above data indicate that already after the discussion of the first point on the agenda people considered the meeting in Parliament as the "tax reform Parliament", and that was even more so following the debate on the second point on the agenda. In reply to the question of what Parliament was or had been dealing with, changing the tax reform was mentioned by 71 per cent of the respondents in the first survey and by 89 per cent in the second one. At the same time, between the two surveys the proportion of the respondents who referred to the (economic) situation of the country decreased from 43 to 22 per cent, and the proportion of those who mentioned the debate on the working programme was reduced from 25 to 20 per cent.

This is even more outstanding since 85 per cent of Budapest residents had heard that Parliament had a debate on the government programme. The respondents referred to the (economic) situation of the country as the primary reason for the elaboration of the programme (67 per cent). Only 4 per cent connected it to the development programme of the party and another 4 per cent to the new Prime Minister's coming to office.

As demonstrated by the replies, 49 per cent of Budapest residents were informed about the statement made by Prime Minister Károly Grósz; 33 per cent had familiarised themselves with only the most important parts of the address and 12 per

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* The surveys were taken among owners of telephones in Budapest on September 18th and 20th 1987, with samples of 300 people. The respondents reflected the population of the capital from the point of view of sex and education in fairly close approximation. (Persons having finished less than eight classes of education, accounting for 10 per cent of the population of Budapest, were replaced by those having completed their primary education.)

cent had studied it fully. None of the questions touched upon by the Prime Minister were regarded as outstandingly important by the respondents. Most of them mentioned what he had said about the economic situation and the tax reform (14 per cent respectively).

44 per cent of those familiar with the speech believed that Károly Grósz had touched upon all the important issues. However, 30 per cent of the respondents who knew the speech thought that he had failed to cover all the important matters; these people primarily mentioned that Grósz had neglected the topic of social problems.

Still, the overwhelming majority of the population of Budapest stated that the Prime Minister had presented the situation of the country in accordance with reality; only 10 per cent said that the head of the government had coloured the truth and 6 per cent felt he had drawn a picture less favourable than was justified. In accordance with that, 76 per cent of the respondents said that they had found Károly Grósz's speech convincing.

The favourable reception of the speech made by the Prime Minister does not mean that the population of Budapest are satisfied with the government programme. The people's opinion was equally divided on the question of whether the measures planned were sufficient for a substantial improvement in conditions in the country: those trusting it accounted for 40 per cent and those entertaining doubts made up 40 per cent also.

The people of Budapest do not really believe that the leadership of the country is able to put its ideas into practice. Only 51 per cent of the respondents familiar with the Prime Minister's statement expected a successful realisation of the government programme; 38 per cent of them were uncertain and 8 per cent placed no trust in it. This attitude was also common among those people who

regarded the proposals outlined in the programme as sufficient.

58 per cent of the population of Budapest were familiar with Secretary General János Kádár's address; 42 per cent were familiar with the most important details and 16 per cent with the whole speech. People took note of the discussion of the question of responsibility and the analysis of the economic situation from the Secretary-General's address in even greater proportions (18 and 14 per cent, respectively).

While only 49 per cent of the population of Budapest had familiarised themselves with the Prime Minister's speech, 69 per cent of them followed the press conference. From the exchange of views conducted with the jorunalists, it was primarily its tone, style and the role played by the head of the government that attracted the attention of people (44 per cent); none of the topics of the exchange of views was stressed by the respondents in a significant proportion (exceeding 4 per cent).

The atmosphere of the press conference very probably contributed to the people of Budapest judging the new Prime Minister favourably on the whole. To the question of how satisfied they were with the activities of the head of the government, 69 per cent of the people gave meaningful answers ($N = 205$). 61 per cent of the respondents declared themselves to be highly satisfied, 31 per cent expressed medium satisfaction, 5 per cent low satisfaction and 3 per cent stated that they were not satisfied with the Prime Minister at all. On the basis of these replies it may be stated that the popularity index of Károly Grósz was 83 points among those revealing their opinions about the activities of the head of the government. (The maximum score would have been 100.)

The people believed that the discussion of the points on the agenda of the autumn session of Parliament was

characterised by debate rather than consensus, but within that it was the issue of tax reform that provoked the most heated responses: while only 50 per cent of the respondents said that the discussion of the government programme was more characterised by debate, 70 per cent of them said so in respect of the discussion of tax reform.

In the debate on tax reform the people's attention was primarily attracted by the clashes about the issue of personal versus family income tax, i.e. by the remarks, propositions voiced in relation to taxation and the situation of families with many children, pensioners and people with low incomes in general.

The overwhelming majority of the people knew that the representatives had accepted both the working programme and the tax reform (91—91 per cent, respectively), and the majority also knew that the reform of the taxation system had been accepted with countervotes and abstentions (85 per cent). At the same time the majority of the respondents, 60 per cent also said about the government programme that it had been accepted by the House of Representatives with counter-votes and abstentions. However, what lay behind this was primarily not that they had heard about the complexity of the voting but the fact mentioned before that they were familar with the debates preceding it.

Half the residents of Budapest would also have been ready to accept the tax reform: this was declared by 51 per cent prior to the voting and 53 per cent after the voting. These people would mainly have acted so because they believed that there was no other alternative (in the current economic situation). One fourth of the respondents (24—26 per cent) would have refused to change the taxation system. They primarily referred to the fact that personal income tax would hit those living from fixed incomes. A

further one fourth of the respondents did not take unequivocal sides.

Irrespective of their intentions "to vote", the population of the capital also believe that the changes decided upon by Parliament will concern most unfavourably those social groups in a disadvantaged position. Among them most people mentioned pensioners, then those with large families and people with low incomes in general. In addition, a great many people expect the situation of people living on fixed incomes to deteriorate.

At the same time the majority of the respondents believed that the decisions made by Parliament will favour the "social groups in a privileged situation" most, primarily those with high incomes, well-to-do people and those having invisible incomes.

Under the influence of the debates in Parliament, people judged the role of Parliament to be much greater than earlier. In July 1987 only 26 per cent of the population of Budapest stated that what happened in the House of Representatives had a decisive influence on what was taking place in the country; following the session of Parliament, this reply was given by 56 per cent. Simultaneously, the proportion of those who believed that the role played by Parliament in recent times had grown in significance, increased from 47 to 70 per cent. At the same time only a minority continue to believe that the real decisions are made in Parliament (29 and 32 per cent, respectively).

It was mainly through television that the people of Budapest learnt about the work of Parliament. Four fifths of them considered the information provided about the session of the House of Representatives sufficient, but they believed it important for Parliamentary debates to be transmitted live in the future too.

Imre Dobossy, Guy Lázár
and **Mária Vásárhelyi**

Should There Be Unemployment?

In the autumn of 1986 the Hungarian population was interviewed about whether they would approve of unemployment in Hungary. The survey was taken on a sample of 1000, representing the adult population. The public is more and more aware of increasing difficulties in finding work, however, people still hold ambiguous views on unemployment. A significant proportion simultaneously approves of both maintaining full employment and dismissing superfluous labour.

Between 1984 and 1986 there was a 10 per cent increase in the proportion of people, from 42 to 51 per cent, who believed that there were people in Hungary trying to cope with difficulties in finding employment. This problem is felt more strongly by the youngest, those with high qualifications and intellectuals than the people belonging to other strata. Among young people, the proportion of those who are aware of these difficulties remains unchanged at 75 per cent, while in the other age groups there was an increase in the proportion of those who believe that there are people who find it difficult to get a job.

In 1984 a bit more than half of the population expected an increase in difficulties in finding employment in the future, and in 1986 already two thirds of the people held that view. Membership of different socio-demoraphic groups influences the distribution of the responses in much the same way as above.

As early as 1984, a relatively large proportion of the population, about 40 per cent, were aware of the possibility that in the years to come there would be people without work for a shorter or longer period of time. The proportion of those people had risen to 55 per cent by 1986. Again the proportion of those expecting the appearance of unemployment was higher among those with higher qualifications or in white-collar jobs.

Public opinion continues to be fairly uncertain about the explanation for unemployment, but people consider it an increasingly greater problem if someone loses his job or is unable to find a proper job. In 1986 a higher proportion of the population counted as unemployed any worker who is dismissed from his workplace and cannot find a job (47 per cent, as opposed to 38 per cent in 1984); a worker whose company has gone out of business and who is unable to find a job (43 and 33 per cent); a young person starting his career who cannot find a job fitting his qualifications and therefore does not take a job (42 and 33 per cent); and the housewife who would like to find a job but is unable to (31 and 23 per cent).

The uncertainty dominating public thinking is best shown by the ambiguity in defining unemployment. The majority of the respondents, 70 per cent continued to believe that full employment must be maintained at any cost, and 74 per cent were of the opinion that unemployment could not be reconciled with the principles of socialism. At the same time 86 per cent agreed that those working badly should be dismissed and 70 per cent also accepted that superfluous labour should be dismissed everywhere. Almost half of the people believed it right to grant unemployment benefits to those who had been dismissed.

In the autumn of 1986 36 per cent of the adult population knew about the introduction of a job-seeker's assistance

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benefit. A higher proportion of the people with high qualifications, urban dwellers and the younger generation were familiar with this provision than members of other strata. One third of those who had heard about the job-seeker's assistance benefit judged it as being not different to unemloyment benefit.

Mária Vásárhelyi

From Difficulties to Find a Job to Unemployment

The findings of a recent opinion poll, taken on a sample of 1000 people representing the adult population, show that the changes taking place in the labour market produced a considerable effect on public opinion and even more people are concerned about changes expected in the future.

While in the autumn of 1984 a minority of respondents, 42 per cent agreed that there were people having difficulties in finding a job, this answer was given by the majority—54 per cent of the respondents—in the spring of 1987. The responses equally demonstrate the impact of being concerned and being informed, i.e. the scope of vision. The proportion of young people starting their careers who reported problems in finding a job was much higher than the average. Additional responses related to this question referred primarily to the problems of young people with higher qualifications. It was partly being concerned and partly more comprehensive experience which was reflected in the fact that the rise in the proportion of respondents aware of difficulties in finding a job bore close correlation with the level of education (reaching 67 per cent in the case of people with a university education). The differences according to occupation and dwelling place indicate the different positions in the labour market of the individual strata varying from region to region: among intellectuals it was those living in the capital, while among manual workers it was those living in the country who mentioned difficulties in finding a job more frequently.

Being concerned personally is even more directly expressed in the fact that at the end of 1986 less than one third of country-dwellers believed that they would find it easy to get a job if need be (as opposed to 48 per cent of the population of the capital), and the disadvantages of women compared to men were perceived in the same proportions. Among both white-collar and blue-collar workers it was the unqualified employees who found the labour supply the least extensive. (Structural transformations will also affect these trata to the greatest extent.)

Between the autumn of 1986 and the spring of 1987 there was a further increase, reaching 78 per cent, in the proportion of those respondents who believed that there would be people struggling with difficulties to find employment in the years to come. The sharp rise of more than 10 per cent runs parallel to the quick turn which occurred in public

Are there people in Hungary who are having difficulties in finding employment?

Will there be people in the years to come who will have difficulties in finding employment?

Will there be people in the years to come who will be unemployed for a shorter or longer period of time?
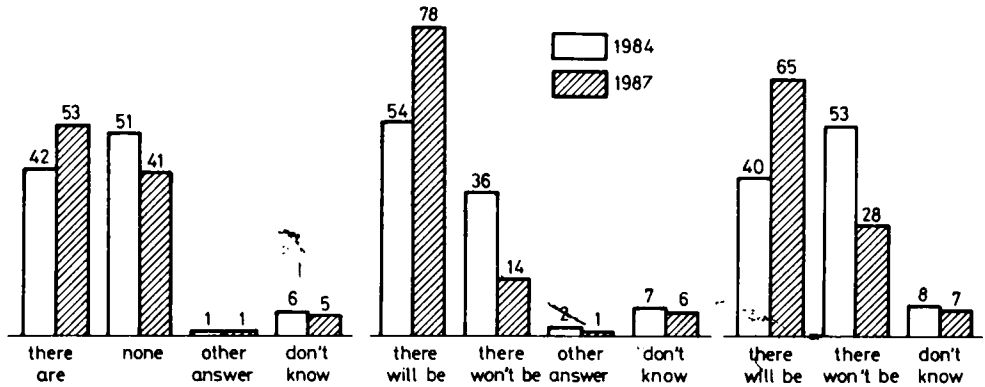
opinion about the dimensions and time span of the economic difficulties afflicting the country. Albeit with certain differences, today all social groups have recognised in general that there will be employment problems for them to face in the future.

This conscious recognition of the problem is related to the concept of unemployment more intensively than before. In 1984, a significant proportion of those reckoning on having problems in finding a job in the future did not yet think of unemployment. Today, however, the two opinions are strongly connected to each other. The proportion of respondents who believed that there would be people unemployed for a shorter or longer period of time in the next few years increased from 40 per cent in 1984 to 65 per cent in 1987.

The lack of ideological clarification related to unemployment came to the surface on surveys made earlier, in that people were reluctant to apply this concept to different concrete situations. Reluctance has been reduced and this is probably related to a gradual change in the public's handling of those problems. Still, only 54 per cent of respondents qualified as unemployed those workers

looking for a job on account of having been dismissed (while 49 per cent qualified as unemployed those looking for a job because their company had gone out of business; 45 per cent looked upon young people starting their careers but unable to find a job compatible with their qualification as unemployed; and 31 per cent considered housewives trying to find a job as unemployed). It relates to the continuance of ideological sensitivity that in the majority of cases party members were less inclined to an interpretation related to the concept of unemployment than justified by their level of general education. (As to the individual questions, a 20–30 per cent higher proportion of people with diplomas gave answers of this type than those with the lowest qualifications.)

The change in the perceived image of unemployment is best shown by the changes which have occurred in the explanation for unemployment. In 1984 the respondents—if they believed future unemployment to be possible at all—traced it back mainly to individual reasons (deviant behaviour, vagrancy, etc.) as opposed to difficulties in finding a job which already they largely attributed to a lack of appropriate local openings and

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the problems of young people starting their careers. Since that time, social factors have gained a more important role in the explanation of both phenomena. Problems related to "overtraining", and the lack of openings appropriate for qualifications have become one of the most typical causes of the existing difficulties in finding employment. Deviant forms of behaviour have been pushed into the background somewhat among the causes of unemployment in the future, from 50 to 44 per cent, and there has been a sharp increase in the references made to dismissals and liquidations of companies (from 7 to 29 and from 8 to 20 per cent, respectively). Social explanations continue to be more frequent in the groups with higher qualifications.

Where unemployment problems rank among topics of interest in public opinion is also a significant factor in the interpretation of the above findings. The latest data at our disposal were collected in the autumn of 1986. At that time, difficulties in finding employment were ranked last both in the case of problems directly concerning the respondents and in the case of problems giving rise to a more general concern (among 7 and 13 topics provided, respectively). The changes in opinions described above are probably due to problems of employment having been promoted in this ranking. However, it is not likely that they have yet reached the top of the ranking.

Róbert Tardos

A Question of Viewpoint

The Situation of the Hungarian Economy in the Ranking of CMEA Countries

In the past decade the development level of Hungary has been revalued compared to the other socialist countries.*

When in the early seventies an opinion poll was taken about the ranking of the CMEA countries from the point of view of their development level, the respondents placed the Hungarian economy fourth among the nine countries, after the Soviet Union, the GDR and Czechoslovakia. By the mind-80s, Hungary had taken a step up on the scale: it preceded the Czechoslovak economy.

Obviously, these opinions are not based upon comparable statistics. (In-

cidentally, they are available in large quantities; they have perhaps become somewhat less frequent in the past few years.) Other data related to the evaluation of the economic situation allow us to conclude that the revaluation of the development level stems not so much from the respondents' satisfaction with their own situation but rather from their comparison framework: from the devaluation of the development level of the CMEA environment. In the past decade

* The opinion poll was taken on a sample of 1000, representative of the adult population of the country.
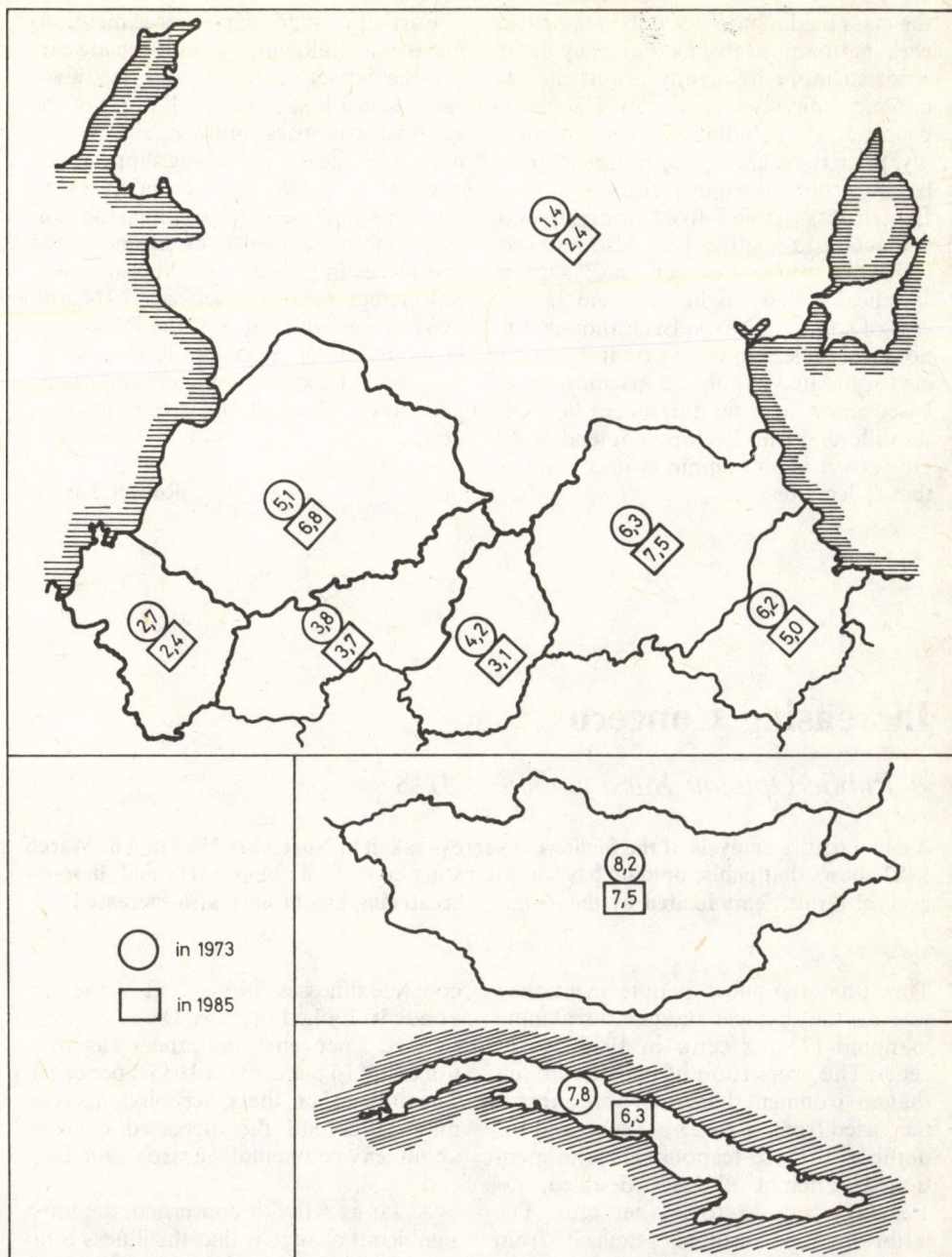
The rank order of the development level of the CMEA countries in the mind of the public

○ in 1973

□ in 1985

the mass media have not only dealt more with national problems but they have reported more frequently about the economic difficulties of the other socialist countries — including problems of supply, price rises, energy restrictions directly concerning the population—as well. Experiences gained from tourism and contacts with relatives have also revealed increasing difficulties and have shed a specifically sharp light on them in the case of some countries. Even though it is not always clear to what extent the ranking formulated in public consciousness is based upon realistic differences in level, the differences in development tendencies are shown in the opinions in a manner that reflects reality.

Further changes that deserve mentioning are the following: while a decade earlier the Soviet economy was unequivocally placed first in the rank order of the socialist countries, now it shares this place with the GDR (having slipped back one unit as to the rank order average). From its intermediate position, the Polish economy slipped back to one of the last places in the eighties. And an essential change occurred between 1974 and 1984 in the evaluation of the Romanian economy, its development level was further devaluated in public consciousness and now it shares last place with Mongolia.

Róbert Tardos

Increasing Concern

A Public Opinion Survey about AIDS

A comparative analysis of the findings of surveys taken in November 1985 and in March 1987 shows that public opinion has become rather concerned about AIDS and, in more general terms, fears incited by the dangers threatening health have also increased.*

This time too most people mentioned war as the greatest danger threatening mankind (73 per cent; in 1985 74 per cent). The proportion of people who felt that environmental hazards were a threat increased from 16 to 23 per cent, and the number of those respondents who mentioned different illnesses doubled, increasing from 15 to 31 per cent. The latter increase resulted primarily from the more frequent references made to two

concrete illnesses: 19 per cent of the respondents looked upon AIDS as a threat (in 1985 5 per cent), and cancer was mentioned by 16 per cent (in 1985 8 per cent). The impact of the Chernobyl disaster may lie behind the increased concern about environmental hazards and cancer.

As far as AIDS is concerned, the most significant change is that the illness is no longer unknown to the masses. In 1985

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* The survey was taken on a sample of 1000, representative of the adult population.

more than one third of the respondents stated that they had not heard about AIDS at all; in 1987 that answer was given by less than one tenth of the respondents. However, the awareness of the only partly informed majority continued to be undifferentiated: 28 per cent of the respondents with some knowledge of AIDS knew nothing essential about the illness, and only 13 per cent of them could mention more then two important characteristics of the disease. While professional knowledge related to AIDS did not increase significantly, the concern of the public has grown: as opposed to 33 per cent in 1985, now 49 per cent of the respondents stated that they were worried or very worried about themselves or some of their acquaintances contracting the illness. The spread of anxiety is more emphatically expressed by 62 per cent of the respondents who believed that others, "people in general", were worried or very worried about it—in 1985 only 36 per cent of the respondents were of that opinion. There was a significant increase also in the proportion of those—from 43 to 54 per cent—who considered it probable or very probable that AIDS would become an epidemic affecting wide masses of people.

At the same time a significant change occurred in the knowledge of the public related to steps taken in Hungary: while in November 1985 only 52 per cent of the population knew about measures which had been taken agaits AIDS, in the spring of 1987 81 per cent belonged to this group. True, at that time 33 per cent of those who had been informed about the measures looked upon them as insufficient, whereas now 42 per cent of those respondents believed so. Most of them urged the intensification of research as well as the implementation of organisational measures in health care.

Information about AIDS still does not fully satisfy the requirements of the population: the proportion of the public who considered the information provided about the illness to be inadequate decreased from 43 to 29 per cent, but the ratio of those who did not believe it honest enough continued to amount to 17 per cent. At the same time the enlightenment campaign was not ineffective. Today people feel less helpless than before: as opposed to 72 per cent in 1985, 83 per cent in 1987 stated that they too could do something against AIDS. Among the precautions mentioned, careful choice of partners and the importance of monogamy were recognised by increasingly more people: this time twice as many respondents referred to these points as before.

Endre Hann

The First Mass Broadcast on Television

The Mass Broadcast from Matthias Church

The overwhelming majority of the population of Budapest approved of the night mass on Christmas Eve being broadcast from Matthias Church on Hungarian television, and the majority interviewed agree that there should be more religious programmes on television.

Five days afterwards, only 22 per cent of the population of Budapest looked upon the broadcast of the midnight mass on Hungarian television as a novel or unusual piece of Christmas programming. A slightly higher percentage than that spoke in general terms about the number of programmes emphasising the religious character of Christmas having been higher than usual (27 per cent).

At the time the survey was taken almost four times as many people knew about the mass being broadcast than the number of those who considered it a novelty. 62 per cent of residents of the capital had been informed about the broadcast beforehand and 17 per cent read or heard about it only afterwards. (21 per cent learnt from the survey that there had been a broadcast of that kind). Religious people and men knew about the programme in a proportion higher than the average.

The plan of the broadcast was not included in the programme bulletin since the preparatory talks ended after the paper had gone to press. Those who knew about the broadcast learnt about the change in the programme primarily from the television news (45 per cent), but a great number of people were informed about it from the newspapers and personal sources as well (27 and 26 per cent, respectively). Those who learnt about the broadcast afterwards heard about it mainly from personal sources: relatives, acquaintances and colleagues.

28 per cent of Budapest residents watched the mass on television till the end and another 9 per cent watched a part of the programme (mostly the beginning). This proportion of about one third is almost certainly higher than the number who normally participate in midnight masses. However, only those people could participate in this electronic mass who had known about it beforehand. As has already been indicated, 62 per cent of the population of Budapest were classified in this group. If they are considered as the potential audience (i.e. 100 per cent), then the actual audience of Budapest account for altogether 58 per cent. (44 per cent of them watched the broadcast till its end and 14 per cent watched a part of it.)

Among the viewers, a proportion higher than the average was represented by women, religious people and those above fifty. (63, 70 and 71 per cent, respectively.) 64 per cent of those who were not informed beforehand said that they would have watched the mass. Together with their number, the total audience would have amounted to 60 per cent of the dwellers of Budapest.

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* The survey was taken among the owners of telephones in Budapest on December 29th. The respondents reflected the population of the capital in close approximation from the point of view of sex, age and education. Altogether 190 interviews were completed.

The first mass broadcast on Hungarian television was qualifed as a very significant event by 58 per cent of the population of Budapest; 31 per cent considered it of medium significance, and only 7 per cent failed to attribute any significance to it. The broadcast was looked upon as a significant event mainly by the people with religious feelings (84 per cent), those above 50 (73 per cent) and those who had a secondary education (70 per cent).

In spite of the fairly strong polarisation of the opinions related to the significance of the broadcast, the overwhelming majority of Budapest residents, 89 per cent, approved of it. The greatest difference appeared between the opinions of religious and non-religious respondents; the former approved of the decision almost without exception.

38 per cent of the respondents approving of the broadcast supported their opinions with arguments related expressly to satisfying *religious* requirements and facilitating the practicing of religion. 33 per cent of them spoke about the religious origin of the *holiday culture* of Christmas, the importance of being familiar with religious traditions as well as the desirable influence which might be exerted by fostering religious traditions primarily on the moral backbone of young people. Finally, another 33 per cent referred to the importance of freedom of religion and the good relationships between the state and the church, pointing out that this gesture might at least render some spiritual comfort and compensation to some people for the disadvantages suffered in financial/economic respects.

It was mainly women and people of a lower educational level as well as those with religious feelings who referred to religious considerations, while the political aspects were mentioned by non-religious respondents, those of a higher educational level and men.

There were very few respondents who justified their reservations related to the broadcast. Some argued that religious requirements could be satisfied in churches. Others pointed out that this broadcast (too) served to alleviate the bad public morale.

Fewer respondents would support religious ceremonies becoming more frequent on Hungarian television than the number ot those approving of the broadcast of the midnight mass. 68 per cent of the population of the capital would agree with it, 15 per cent would be indifferent and 10 per cent would oppose it. (3 per cent were against this broadcast too and 4 per cent were unable to answer.)

At the same time 76 per cent of the inhabitants of Budapest would approve of television broadcasting the services of other religions too, 12 per cent would be indifferent to it and 5 per cent would be against it. The people of Catholic religion were more tolerant in this question than those of other religions: as opposed to the 80 per cent of the former, only 69 per cent of the latter approved of broadcasting non-Catholic services.

60 per cent of Budapest residents assummed that the majority would be happy if there were religious programmes on television or if their number were increased. 11 per cent believed that the majority would be indifferent to it and only 7 per cent anticipated a hostile reaction. 7 per cent of the respondents were unable to answer and 15 per cent presumed that the reaction would be dependent primarily on the approach of individuals to religion. And indeed, this time the opinions were divided almost exclusively by religious feelings: as opposed to the 77 per cent of believers, only 50 per cent of non-believers thought that an increase in the number of religious programmes would be received favourably by public opinion. At the same time, the uncertainty of young people below 30 was conspicuous: 17 per cent were unable

to answer, 20 per cent thought that the reaction was dependent upon the religious inclination of individuals, 23 per cent anticipated an indifferent reception and 10 per cent anticipated a hostile one. These ratios reached (or sometimes exceeded) the double of the responses to the same questions from older and middle-aged respondents. In contrast, not even half of the young people (30 per cent) expected a favourable reception of religious programmes.

S. E.