
THE LIFE CYCLE OF THE NARROW-FILM CINEMA AS AN INNOVATION

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1. INTRODUCTION

Relying on some of the important results of modern researches which emanate from Schumter's theory of innovation processes KOVÁCS GY. (2004) accentuates: 'The social and economic actors can influence the fate of innovation with their selective behavior: their attitude can be supportive, neutral or obstructive.' 'The mechanisms for social selection are present during each phase of the innovation process and of the life cycle of a technology.' Referring to HUBER, J. he emphasizes: '... the logic of a selection process is substantially different in market-oriented and in centralized systems. In a transition economy the selection processes of both market-oriented and bureaucratic control can be present in a certain combination which may change from time to time.'

The present study is an attempt to confront the above theory with practice, examining the life cycle of the narrow-film network in Hungary.

2. QUESTIONS OF DISCIPLINE AND METHODOLOGY

The question may well arise whether the example chosen has its relevance to the scope of the study or not. The positive answer is substantiated by two facts.

The first: The narrow-film (16 mm) cinema is an innovation in the Schumpeterian sense - although it appeared as an alternative to the already widespread normal (35 mm) cinema - because in a technical sense it was a new product from an economic point of view a new service at lower costs, opening up new markets and new product placement possibilities. And all these - according to SCHUMPETER, J. A. (1980) - do not necessarily have to be based on a new scientific invention.

The second: The life cycle of the narrow-film cinema from 1938 to the mid 1990s in Hungary coincides predominantly with the period of a centralized economy and society, however the specific periods of certain regimes were dominated by different political ideologies. The war-time economy of the Horthy era prior to and during the war years had just as well a centralized nature as the planned economies of the Rákosi and Kádár eras. Only the mixed system of the transition period to market economy after the end of the 1980s can be considered an exception.

We will trace the spread of the narrow-film cinema alongside with the normal network which can be deemed traditional. This way the significance of the new technique and the selective attitude of the economic actors determining its life cycle can be appropriately perceived.

The study covered all the playing locations registered in the statistics where they played in the current year, with the exception of those ceased to exist within a year.

3. THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC ROOTS OF THE NARROW-CANVAS CINEMA IN HUNGARY AND THE ANTECEDENTS OF ITS DIFFUSION

The evolution of the cinema network in the 1930s, beside the appearance of sound film, was influenced also by important social and economic factors. As a result of the world slump and social destabilization along with radicalization, the merge and gradual domination of fascism, National Socialism and communism, and the whole film trade becoming politicized, the ideological charge of movies and the propagandized use of them increased in whole Europe.

After Hitler's rise to power – as an offset of the strong support of film production – started the 'standardization' of the German film production. The ruling power required pieces matching the politics and moral norms of National Socialism, and tolerated the employment only of those professionals who could prove their citizenship and Aryan origin.

From 1934 on the German imperial cinema law permits the prohibition of pieces offending the national socialist conceptions. In the same year Andrey Sdanov at the congress of the writers' association 'orders' the depiction of workers, party leaders, comsomolists, and pioneers. After this began the production of the so-called hero movies – Chapayev, And the Sun rises, The seamen of Kronstadt - in the Soviet Union.

Leni Riefenstahl at the congress of the National Socialist German Workers' Party prepares the 'Triumph of the Will' which is introduced in 1935, thus movie becomes also an official and declared means of expression of the Nazi state, transmitting its conception.

The French Popular Front – founded in 1934 – wins the elections in 1936. Jean Renoir directs propaganda movies: People of France, The Crime of Monsieur Lange, The Lower Depths, a Gorky adaptation lacking authenticity.

In 1937 General Franco forbids those movies in the areas under the control of the Falangist army, in which the participants of the collection organized to support the republicans play. This resulted in many of the greatest figures in the art of cinema being banned, like Charlie Chaplin, Clark Gable, Marlene Dietrich, Joan Crawford, Gary Cooper, Douglas Fairbanks (MARKÓ L. 1995).

In the same year the Turul Society requests the culture and the industry ministers in a memorandum to oust Jewish people from the film industry, and to replace them with Christian Hungarian writers, directors, composers, cinematographers and actors. With the announcement of XV Act of 1938 begins the discrimination against Jewish people in intellectual professions in Hungary, such as the film industry.

The desire to exploit the propagandist force residing in movies comes reasonably together with the expansion of the allocation means. In order to enlarge the impact of the newsreel interpreting the daily events in an adequate manner to actual politics and of the movies corresponding to the spirit of the age, the target areas of the expansion had to include those areas not preferred by the competitive markets, and rural areas which were obstructed from cinema operation by the government via a decree issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs. The involvement of these regions into the motion picture catering with the lowest possible capital investment, utilizing the establishments built to fulfill other functions, was realized by applying the 16 mm technique.

4. THE PHASES, CHARACTERISTICS, AND GEOGRAPHIC ASPECTS OF THE INNOVATION LIFE CYCLE OF THE NARROW-FILM CINEMA

The 16 mm film strip was developed by the Kodak works originally for amateur usage in 1923, but soon it was used primarily for educational film production. The feature film put into the circulation on the strength of the experiences acquired in this area. Some years after the practice was introduced abroad, the Royal Hungarian Ministry of Home Affairs – ending the prohibition earlier effective - by decree no. 111.001/1938. permitted the establishing of cinemas applying the narrow-film technique. At the time of the announcement of the decree there were already 8 000 narrow-film cinemas operating in France, more than 10 000 in Germany, and it was also widespread in the Scandinavian states (GÜTTLER A. 1938).

The contemporary trade press interpreted the piece of news as an event of historical significance: "The cultural and economic significance of narrow film was largely recognized abroad, thus its importance and adaptation gradually increased. The Hungarian government also espoused the huge significance of narrow film in the education and orientation of the public..." 'Hopefully this important section of cinematography will substantially contribute the liveliness of cultural life in the Hungarian countryside and to the improvement of its standard.' Anyhow it is a grateful cultural fact, that in those communities which can not sustain official film theatres, at least narrow-film cinemas can operate and this way even the population of the smallest villages can see the narrow Hungarian movies and newsreels" (LAJTA A. 1938).

4.1. The appearance

The ministry of home affairs gave permission to narrow-film cinemas in 26 settlements until the 20th of November 1938. The beneficiary settlements touched 13 out of the 25 counties. Pest-Pilis-Solt-Kiskun county was affected the most (by 5 counties). The first act of permitting meant the accessibility of movies to approximately 84 thousand village inhabitants at their place of residence.

By the end of 1939 the number of narrow-film cinemas in operation increased to 73 (five of them – Bős, Felsőszeli, Magyarszögyén, Muzsla and Szepsi – fell outside the present territory of Hungary) and affected nearly 234 thousand residents.

Screening permission was given to a very wide variety of premises: to community culture centers (Kenderes, Kóka, Kömlő, Polgárdi, Porcsalma), to restaurants (Szászvár, Biharugra, Ugod), to trade associations (Jászdózsa, Tass), to farmers' associations (Kápolnásnyék), to hotels (Balatonfűzfő), to premises at regional centers of detached farms utilizable for this function (Kutas, farm in the municipal boundary of Hódmezővásárhely), in some cases it was given to other establishments identified by a single postal address (LAJTA A. 1939, 1940). This phenomenon is strongly reminiscent of the appearance of motion picture, and of the initial period of its penetration that lasted until the first decade of the 20th century, when projecting premises were ad hoc undertakings, and the major part of them operated in catering establishments and coffee-houses enhancing their income. Others settled in the tents of a wide variety of entertainment facilities (Népliget in Budapest, the Ósbudavára, the Konstantinápoly) (BORSOS 2005). The latter ones were substituted in the case of narrow film by community premises - established in the meanwhile - with various functions (clubs, associations, local culture centers).

The bulk of the innovations was realized in Heves (10 settlements), Pest-Pilis-Solt-Kiskun and in Fejér county (9-9 settlements) and it reached in each of the three counties a population of over 30 thousand. Until the end of 1939 the process did not affect Békés and Zemplén counties at all, and it reached only one settlement in each of the following counties: Abaúj-Torna, Bihar, Csánád-Arad-Torontál, Hajdú, Nógrád, Tolna and Zala.

In the first one and a half year when the narrow-film cinema network was established - and which can be regarded as an initial period according to the innovation theory - there is probably no cause and effect relationship between the degree of population proportionate supply of certain counties till then, and the appearance of the new technique. We can find counties with high and also with low level of supply in both the groups reached by the first appearance, and in those left untouched. Pest (67.7%) and Heves (30.9%) counties are included in the first, Békés (78.6%) and Zemplén (28.9%) in the latter group.

The quality of the spatial relation and the distance between the first premises where the new technology was applied, and those settlements representing a higher level of the hierarchy, and presumably also a higher innovation potential (BELUSZKY P. 1973), show a rather mixed picture. Definite condensation can be recognized only around Baja. Nearby Székesfehérvár and Eger there were two settlements, while in the case of Szeged and Hódmezővásárhely permission was given to peripheral settlement parts. The spatial relation between the bulk of the first premises and those evaluated as bigger centers in the settlement hierarchy – either due to the distance or to the poor road conditions – was rather weak. Political logic might be in the background also here.

4.2. The first adopters, the early majority

The process of the diffusion was not slowed down neither by the country's indirect nor by the later de jure involvement in the war. The 1st of October 1943 – in the last year when there was no fighting yet on the territory of the country – the number of narrow-film cinema licences increased to 484 (LAJTA A. 1944). Out of the permission grants 378 fell on the present territory of the country, and it drawn 367 new settlements into the motion picture network. The affected places show large variance in settlement categories (*see table 1.*) and in spatial dispersion (*see table 2.*).

Table 1. Distribution of narrow-film cinemas by settlement types, 1943.

Settlements		Having license for narrow-film cinema	Rate of licensed (%)	Distribution of licenses (%)
Categories by population size	Number			
X – 500	614	-	0.0	0.0
501 – 1,000	924	12	1.3	3.2
1,001 – 1,500	543	32	5.9	8.5
1,501 – 2,000	313	68	21.7	18.0
2,001 – 3,000	342	126	36.8	33.3
3,001 – 5,000	276	112	40.6	29.6
5,001 – 10,000	151	22	14.6	5.8
10,001 – 20,000	78	4	5.1	1.1
20,001 – 50,000	36	-	0.0	0.0
50,001 – 100,000	10	1	10.0	0.3
100,001 – X	3	1	33.4	0.3
Total	3,290	378		≈100.0

Source: Lajta A., KSH, the author's own calculation

Nearly two third (63%) of the network expansion was realized in settlements with a population of 2-5 thousand, 18.9% in settlements with a population of 1-2 thousand. Those with a population less than a thousand or more than ten thousand were hardly affected by the expansion. The lack of interest in the first case was definitely due to the hopeless prospects for operation above or at break-even, in the latter one it was due to the already existing normal (35 mm) network.

When examining the spatial dispersion, the strong influence of the settlement structure characteristics can clearly be detected. In counties predominantly composed of tiny villages (Abaúj, Baranya, Szatmár-Bereg, Vas, Zala) hardly any of the settlements (with a dispersion of 0.8-4.2%) was touched by the process, in contrast to counties with a significant number of large villages (Pest-Pilis-Solt-Nagykun: 64.9%, Fejér: 54.4%, Heves: 45.2%). Beside the disparities between areas and between settlement types, by the end of 1943 the 71.6% of the citizens on the post-Trianon territory of the country had access to cinema services.

In this period of the narrow-film cinema expansion, primarily the intention to reach rural areas with a relatively high population concentration can be detected. But then beside the market economy-like motives of innovation diffusion a new element appears prominently, namely the ideological background generating the whole process. This is shown by the government indulgence in opposition to previous regulations, and also the fact that 201 out of the cinema licenses (53.1%) were granted to settlements where the orders issued earlier by the ministry of home affairs (148.000/1928., and 164.500/1933.) straightly forbade the set up of motion picture works. This is implied from the end of the 1930s by the centralized obligatory determination of films and newsreels to be played by the movie theaters just as much as by the particular program policy of the newly established network: 'Each program was set up of a Hungarian newsreel, an educational agriculture movie, and a feature film' (GÜTLER A. 1938). This program structure (newsreel, a short movie of public utility, long feature film) dominated – in spite of the changes in the political background – the whole cinema network until the mid 1980s.

Table 2. Distribution of settlements having cinema by counties, 1943.

Counties	Number of settlements	Settlements having normal cinema		Settlements having narrow-film cinema		Total	
		Number	Rate (%)	Number	Rate (%)	Number	Rate (%)
Abaúj	129	3	2.3	1	0.8	4	3.1
Bács-Bodrog	27	10	37.0	11	40.7	21	77.8
Baranya	309	15	4.8	11	3.6	26	8.4
Békés	30	23	76.7	4	13.3	27	90.0
Bihar	61	8	13.1	9	14.7	17	27.9
Borsod-Gömör	198	13	6.6	18	9.1	31	15.7
Csanád	42	18	42.9	7	16.7	25	59.5
Csongrád	22	10	45.4	4	18.2	*12	54.5
Fejér	101	16	15.8	41	40.6	*55	54.4
Győr-Moson	102	7	6.9	9	8.8	16	15.7
Hajdú	20	12	60.0	7	35.0	19	95.0
Heves	115	14	12.2	39	33.9	*52	45.2
Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok	53	24	45.3	18	33.9	42	73.2
Komárom-Esztergom	68	17	25.0	18	26.5	35	51.5
Nógrád-Hont	154	13	8.4	15	9.7	28	18.2
Pest-Pilis-Solt-Kiskun	231	107	46.3	47	20.3	*150	64.9
Somogy	308	13	4.2	29	9.4	42	13.6
Sopron	114	5	4.4	10	8.8	15	13.2
Szabolcs	133	16	12.0	9	6.8	25	18.8
Szatmár-Bereg	114	5	4.4	4	3.5	9	7.9
Tolna	114	17	14.9	18	15.8	*34	29.9
Vas	264	8	3.0	11	4.2	19	7.2
Veszprém	179	15	8.4	25	13.9	*39	21.8
Zala	387	13	3.4	6	1.5	19	4.9
Zemplén	76	6	7.9	7	9.2	13	17.1
Counties total	3,351	408	12.2	378	11.3	*775	23.1
Budapest	1	1	100.0	1	100.0	1	100.0
Country total	3,352	409	12.2	379	11.3	776	23.1

* Hódmezővásárhely, Szeged, Érd, Perkáta, Kápolna, Nagytétény, Sződ, Tápiószéle, Vecsés, Gyöngyös, Balatonfűzfő had either types of cinema in 1943.

Source: Lajta A., KSH, the author's own calculation

4.3. A break in the process

Due to the period between 1944 and 1948, the country's becoming a seat of war and the uncertainties of recommencement, restoring and transformation characterizing the whole social and economic life in Hungary, there was a break in the evolution of the cinema network, similarly to other areas of the social and economic sphere in Hungarian. After the end of the war most of the functioning units (studios, works, and cinemas) of the whole motion picture trade were apportioned by some political parties, representing the major political power, among themselves. For managing cinema issues separate organizations were established.

The year of 1948 brought radical changes for the profession operating under rather chaotic circumstances. With setting up offices to ensure the functioning of the central controlling apparatus of the state, with putting restrictions on private enterprises or rather eliminating them the process of secularization began, which resulted in the Hungarian film industry's operating under manual control by the state based on political decisions during four decades. Besides market mechanisms and as alternatives to them regulating features of political intention appear in the motion picture industry.

Despite all the uncertainty as an accomplishment of the renovation by the end of 1948 the cinema network – including the narrow cinema – quasi reached again its condition of 1943 (*see table 3*). Significant difference in the regional, settlement-structural characteristics is not perceptible.

Table 3. Distribution of movie network in Hungary, 1948.

Counties	Number of settlements	Settlements having normal cinema		Settlements having narrow-film cinema		Total	
		Number	Rate (%)	Number	Rate (%)	Number	Rate (%)
Abaúj	125	2	1.6	1	0.8	3	2.4
Bács-Bodrog	31	9	29.0	11	35.5	20	64.5
Baranya	299	15	5.0	14	4.7	29	9.7
Békés	34	25	73.5	4	11.8	29	85.3
Bihar	61	7	11.5	14	22.9	21	34.4
Borsod-Gömör	182	10	5.5	31	17.0	*39	21.4
Csanád	43	14	32.6	10	23.2	24	55.8
Csongrád	26	9	34.6	5	19.2	*13	50.0
Fejér	96	11	11.5	19	19.8	30	31.3
Győr-Moson	98	5	5.1	9	9.2	14	14.3
Hajdú	23	11	47.8	5	21.7	16	69.5
Heves	125	12	9.6	30	24.0	42	33.6
Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok	60	24	40.0	23	38.3	*45	75.0
Komárom-Esztergom	65	15	23.0	7	10.8	22	33.8
Nógrád-Hont	150	9	6.0	10	6.7	19	12.7
Pest-Pilis-Solt-Kiskun	251	98	39.0	41	16.3	*137	54.6
Somogy	301	9	3.0	27	9.0	36	12.0
Sopron	112	6	5.4	7	6.2	13	11.6
Szabolcs	135	14	10.4	13	9.6	27	20.0
Szatmár-Bereg	115	3	2.6	5	4.3	8	6.9
Tolna	111	13	11.7	25	22.5	38	34.2
Vas	244	8	3.3	8	3.3	16	6.6
Veszprém	190	15	7.9	20	10.5	35	18.4
Zala	355	11	3.1	7	1.9	18	5.0
Zemplén	73	6	8.2	6	8.2	12	16.4
Counties total	3,305	361	10.9	352	10.7	*706	21.4
Budapest	1	1	100.0	1	100.0	1	100.0
Country total	3,306	362	10.9	353	10.7	707	21.4

*Borsodnádásd, Disznóshorvát, Szeged, Tiszaföldvár, Törökszentmiklós, Kecskemét, Kiskunmajsa had either types of cinema in 1948.

Source: LAJTA A. (1949), the author's own calculation

4.4. The phase of extensive socialistic development until super saturation

The XXV. Act of 1949 about the first five-year plan leaves no more doubt concerning the role intended for the movie by the new regime: 'Cinema issues must be devoted to the education and entertainment of people. Every community needs to be provided with narrow-gauge projectors or with traveling cinemas, in order to have this important tool of cultural education available to the workers of the village.'

After secularization the management rights of the cinemas was assigned to the county councils. Cinema corporations of each county were established. Even a competition evolved among the organizations established with supply-duty for conducting the tasks defined by politics, primarily in order to ensure the supplying of the villages with films.

Market economy was replaced by the so-called plan economy, a system of state curtailment and redistribution in which the features of market economy had no more part. Innovations were not based on organic market processes, but social-, economic- and cultural policy decisions motivated by class struggle ideology. As an achievement of the dynamic expansion aspiring to fully comprehensive supply until 1960, the number of cinemas in Hungary has been multiplied by 6.5 that of the narrow film by 11 compared to 1948 (*see table 4.*).

Table 4. The Hungarian cinema network in 1960

Counties	Number of settlements		Number of normal cinemas		Number of narrow-film cinemas		Settlements provided with cinema		
							Number		Rate (%)*
	Cities	Villages	Cities	Villages	Cities	Villages *	Cities	Villages *	Villages
Bács- Kiskun	5	108	8	40	31	112	5	108	100.0
Baranya	3	323	16	11	39	325	3	286	88.5
Békés	3	76	7	38	13	100	3	76	100.0
Borsod-Abaúj-Z.	4	363	20	28	27	349	4	317	87.3
Csongrád	5	63	12	16	59	64	5	63	100.0
Fejér	2	105	6	21	7	147	2	104	99.0
Győr- Sopron	3	174	13	13	14	193	3	168	96.6
Hajdú	4	79	12	21	38	107	4	79	100.0
Heves	3	117	8	18	11	121	3	115	98.3
Komárom	5	72	14	19	15	89	5	72	100.0
Nógrád	2	136	7	19	7	127	2	121	89.0
Pest	4	183	7	54	26	180	4	181	98.9
Somogy	1	252	2	23	9	244	1	208	82.5
Szabolcs-Szatmár	1	234	5	18	15	236	1	205	87.6
Szolnok	7	72	15	25	23	78	7	72	100.0
Tolna	1	107	2	22	5	127	1	107	100.0
Vas	2	229	3	7	11	224	2	211	92.1
Veszprém	5	260	12	23	22	249	5	235	90.4
Zala	2	257	4	11	13	218	2	208	80.9
County total	62	3,210	173	427	385	3,290	62	2,936	91.5
Budapest	1	-	133	-	149	*1	1	-	-
Country total	63	3,210	306	427	534	3,291	63	2,936	91.5

* Including the travelling cinemas too. Its total number was: 34.

Source: KSH, the author's own calculation

The enlargement of the network resulted in all the large- and giant-villages of the Great Plain counties (Bács-Kiskun, Békés, Csongrád, Hajdú-Bihar, Szolnok), and all the settlements of Komárom and Tolna counties being provided with cinemas by 1960. The program of providing each settlement with cinema was realizable in the 80-90% of the communities in counties with tiny

villages.

The intention to meet the centrally defined expectations concluded in besides a compromise on moral, quality, engineering and technology principles also in other anomalies:

- 'The aspiration to enhance the quantity ... inherently resulted in establishing cinemas often in buildings less adequate for the purpose (pubs, stables etc.)' (GERGELY R. 1981).
- The realization of high plan objectives necessarily forced the low-cost and simplified solutions. As one of the low investment versions of this, the new projecting places were set up in leased estates in the possession of local councils or co-ops.
- The narrow film although originally introduced to serve the countryside and rural areas gained also ground in towns in this period of comprehensive expansion, and with its 83.9% share it became the dominant technique in the Hungarian cinema network by 1960. 58.3% of the urban cinemas and 86% of village cinemas used narrow films.
- Justification the primacy of the new social system and the better position of culture by all means led to the discrepancy between reality and statistical data. A large variety of institutes and organizations were indicated as cinemas in the statistics for the simple reason of one or two projections per year. This can be the only explanation for the branch statistics survey recording 37 cinemas in Debrecen (7 normal film, 30 narrow-film) 28 in Miskolc (14-14 normal and narrow), 36 in Pécs (12 normal, 24 narrow), 28 in Szeged (3 normal, 25 narrow) in 1960.

The evolution of the Hungarian narrow-film cinema between 1949 and 1960 can not be interpreted according to the classical models of spatial diffusion of innovation. That is the decisions about network expansion were taken in ruling administrative centers like verdicts, primary innovation centers can not be defined, the process itself is conversed, as it penetrates as a makeshift from peripheral places, from the villages into the centers of social and economic life, into towns and towns of county rank.

4.5. The years of intensive development, the beginning of decline

The size of the whole cinema network – including narrow-film cinema network – reached its peak in 1960. The one and a half decade ended in the mid 1970s is a peculiar period colored by contradictions.

If the decade after secularization was the phase of quantity enhancement, then the following years were the phase of improving quality. One of the target areas of engineering and technological improvement was the retooling of 16 mm cinemas to normal 35 mm movies of higher quality, which caused an automatic decrease in the number of narrow-film cinemas.

The operation of the cinema network became loss-making in Hungary after 1963. With few exceptions all the 16 mm projecting places had a negative operating balance. The deficit was undertaken by the state budget, and the difference was disbursed to the cinema corporations under the title of sale price amplification (GERGELY R. 1981). This fact enforced the rationalization of the overdeveloped network and concluded in the elimination of uneconomical and useless parallelism. By the closure of projecting places the capital was affected the most, and the villages the least. Examples can be found also to the opposite tendency: The branch statistics survey registered in Debrecen 46 cinemas (11 normal, 35 narrow) in contrast to the 37 in 1960.

The domination of narrow-film cinemas within the network notably decreased, the proportion of narrow-film projecting places fell to 69.7%.

In 1960 the Hungarian Television switched to 5 days a week program service. The rival war for spectators has begun. The enticement of television proved to be strong, in 1967 it had already 1 million subscribers.

The in all elements descending Hungarian cinema network – obviously as a result of the subsidy system – reached its 95.7% peak in the proportion of villages provided with cinema in 1965, and until 1974 despite the significant shrinkage the political target declared a quarter of a century ago was not notably harmed (see table 5.).

Table 5. Spatial distribution of Hungarian cinema network, 1960-1974

Year	Number of cinemas				Out of them		Rate of villages pro-vided with cinema
	Budapest	Cities	Villages	Total	Normal	Narrow	
1960	283	559	3,716	4,558	733	3,825	91.5%
1965	216	472	3,747	4,435	981	3,454	95.7%
1974	154	456	2,985	3,595	1,088	2,507	90.2%

Forrás: KSH, the author's own calculation

4.6. The years of ostensible (relative) stabilization

The decade after the mid 1970s – considering only the cumulative statistical data – could be a decade of moderate growth and balanced functioning. However behind the increasing number of film theatres it's the opening scissors between the endowment of urban and rural areas lying. Prominent differences appear between counties with diverse settlement structures apparently to the disadvantage of the areas of tiny villages (see table 6.). 58% of the settlements with less than 500 inhabitants, and 17.4% of the settlements with inhabitants between 501 -1,000 became unprovided. The portion of narrow-film cinemas within the whole network did not change appreciably. The significance of traveling cinemas increased in the supply of villages.

Table 6. Hungarian cinema network in 1985

Counties	Number of settlements		Number of normal cinemas		Number of narrow-film cinemas		Settlements provided with cinema		
							Number		Rate (%)*
	Cities	Villages	Cities	Villages	Cities	Villages *	Cities	Villages *	Villages
Bács- Kiskun	6	105	23	47	5	66	6	105	100.0
Baranya	5	291	22	13	11	195	5	175	60.1
Békés	6	68	17	37	10	45	6	64	94.1
Borsod-Abaúj-Z.	9	338	35	27	59	213	9	199	58.9
Csongrád	5	54	19	30	11	22	5	44	81.5
Fejér	3	103	12	37	4	65	3	94	91.3
Győr- Sopron	5	159	23	26	16	119	5	117	73.6
Hajdú	5	74	22	29	11	75	5	70	94.6
Heves	4	113	18	31	14	102	4	107	94.7
Komárom	6	66	22	21	4	54	6	65	98.5
Nógrád	3	117	9	25	19	108	3	104	88.9
Pest	8	173	22	82	16	169	8	163	94.2
Somogy	5	233	14	25	4	125	5	129	55.4
Szabolcs-Szatmár	6	219	9	27	23	173	6	179	81.7
Szolnok	8	67	19	30	14	64	8	67	100.0
Tolna	5	104	14	29	28	90	5	101	97.1
Vas	6	209	17	17	18	163	6	162	77.5
Veszprém	8	212	28	53	23	162	8	164	77.4
Zala	5	250	27	40	38	152	5	152	60.8
County total	108	2,955	372	626	328	2,162	108	2,261	76.5
Budapest	1	-	122	-	135	-	1	-	-
Country total	109	2,955	494	626	463	2,162	109	2,261	76.5

* Including 140 travelling cinema

Source: KSH, the author's own calculation

4.7. The appearance of market mechanisms, the decline of narrow-film cinemas

The key-words of VII. Act of 1985 legitimating the 7th five-year plan – 'the enhancement of international economic relationships', 'performance orientation, the enhancement of competition', 'incentive for entrepreneur-like activities', reduction and gradual elimination of uneconomical activities' – were testifying the incapability of the plan economy system, the necessity of market orientation.

The transformation of the subsidy system in film trade, the drastic curtailment of cinema operation support, the liberalization of cultural services, breaking by administrative measures the monopoly position of organizations established for this purpose, and last but not least the explosive diffusion of video technique in households shook the whole cinema network to its base. While between 1960 and 1985 the cinema network hardly suffered a decrease of 18%, between 1985 and 1990 it shrank by half. This decrease results unambiguously from the closure of village projecting places mostly of 16mm films operating with low effectiveness, or with deficit.

The tendency was not curbed either by some of the local councils making efforts in the period to save the cinema operating on their territory. They waived the lease fee of projecting places in their possession, compensated in various ways, or took partly over the operating loss, widening the scope for action of the cinema works corporations in this manner (BORSOS Á. 1995).

The number of narrow-film cinemas ebbed by 65 % in the meanwhile, and the proportion of villages provided with cinema fell to 44.3% (*see table 7.*). In 88.8% of the villages with less than 500 inhabitants, in the 60.6% of those with a population between 501-1,000, and in the 36% of those with inhabitants between 1,001-2,000 there was no film showing on the screen.

Table 7. Hungarian cinema network in 1990

Counties	Number of settlements		Number of normal cinemas		Number of narrow-film cinemas		Settlements provided with cinema		
							Number		Rate (%)*
	Cities	Villages	Cities	Villages	Cities	Villages *	Cities	Villages *	Villages
Bács- Kiskun	11	105	30	40	1	39	11	74	70.5
Baranya	5	292	14	13	2	20	5	30	10.3
Békés	12	62	24	29	4	29	12	50	80.6
Borsod-Abaúj-Z.	14	333	25	12	2	53	13	56	16.8
Csongrád	7	52	23	21	1	19	7	35	67.3
Fejér	6	99	14	32	1	42	5	78	78.8
Győr-M.-Sopron	5	162	15	27	2	36	5	64	39.5
Hajdú	11	68	30	20	1	46	11	54	79.4
Heves	6	112	16	28	2	69	6	91	81.2
Jász- N.-Szolnok	12	62	22	28	3	24	12	52	83.9
Komárom-Esztergom	8	63	19	13	1	26	8	42	66.7
Nógrád	6	115	13	19	4	20	6	39	33.9
Pest	14	168	34	59	11	85	14	119	70.8
Somogy	9	228	22	18	3	71	9	118	51.8
Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg	10	217	12	22	4	44	10	121	55.8
Tolna	7	101	13	22	8	31	7	49	48.5
Vas	7	206	12	12	3	53	7	59	28.6
Veszprém	9	211	23	38	5	29	9	49	23.2
Zala	6	249	24	30	13	110	6	108	43.4
County total	165	2,905	383	483	71	846	163	1,288	44.3
Budapest	1	-	79	-	-	-	1	-	-
Country total	166	2,905	464	483	71	846	164	1,288	44.3

* Including 70 travelling cinema

Source: The author's own calculation

Besides the sore loss of rural areas we can face a fact never experienced in the history of Hungarian cinemas before: In 1990 appeared the first towns without cinema (Gárdony, Tokaj).

The narrow-film cinema loses its dominance within the network, its share from the entire network falls back to 49.1%.

A peculiarity of the period that a new rival, the small community local televiewing appears on the market of motion picture transmission (BORSOS Á. 2003).

4.8. The switch to the market economy model, the agony of narrow-film cinema

With the democratic transformation the reorganization of the Hungarian economy to market conditions was declaredly started.

The sectoral leaders focused on the radical altering of the state subvention system, on its socialization, the preservation of nominal value of the state's subsidy and this latter was not a small task. It had no professional conception for the transformation of the entire film sector.

The restructuring of the state's property mass, its conveyance to the local authorities and its privatization within the film sector affected primarily the operating of cinemas. The residual property of cinema corporations organized on territorial principles was portioned out among local authorities according to the public utilities' locality based, instead of functional logic. This way the remainder of the network disintegrated to elements and then to atoms, its interest articulation in opposition to purely profit oriented film distribution intensely decreased.

After all due to the changed ideological basics the central authorities abandoned the cinema. The movies found themselves without any transition to be exposed to market competition, and took a nose dive never experienced before. By the mid 1990s the narrow-film cinema network practically ceased to exist, the degree of supply dropped to 8.5% in the villages (see table 8.).

Table 8. Hungarian cinema network on the 31st of December 1995

Counties	Number of settlements		Number of normal cinema screens		Number of narrow-film cinemas		Settlements provided with cinema			
	Cities	Villages	Cities	Villages	Cities	Villages	Number		Rate (%)	
							Cities	Villages	Cities	Villages
Bács- Kiskun	15	103	23	15	-	-	13	15	86.7	14.6
Baranya	7	295	15	9	-	-	6	9	85.7	3.1
Békés	13	62	16	17	-	-	12	17	92.3	27.4
Borsod-Abaúj-Z.	15	340	19	7	1	2	11	10	73.3	2.9
Csongrád	8	51	15	16	-	-	7	16	87.5	31.4
Fejér	7	99	12	7	-	-	7	7	100.0	7.1
Győr-M.-Sopron	6	167	13	17	-	-	6	17	100.0	10.2
Hajdú	15	67	21	4	-	-	14	4	93.3	6.0
Heves	7	111	11	18	-	-	6	17	85.7	15.3
Jász- N.-Szolnok	15	63	19	9	-	-	15	9	100.0	14.3
Komárom-Esztergom	8	65	11	12	-	2	7	13	87.5	20.0
Nógrád	6	121	9	13	-	-	6	13	100.0	10.7
Pest	16	168	19	15	-	-	12	15	75.0	8.9
Somogy	12	231	13	14	-	-	9	14	75.0	6.1
Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg	16	212	15	9	-	-	11	9	68.8	4.2
Tolna	9	99	8	10	-	-	7	10	77.8	10.1
Vas	8	208	13	11	-	-	7	11	87.5	5.3
Veszprém	9	214	18	25	-	-	9	21	100.0	9.8
Zala	7	250	17	21	-	-	7	21	100.0	8.4
County total	199	2,926	287	249	1	4	172	248	86.4	8.5
Budapest	1	-	54	-	-	-	1	-	100.0	-
Country total	200	2,931	341	249	1	4	173	248	86.5	8.5

Source: KSH, MKM, the author's own calculation

The decay of the Hungarian cinema network did not stop at the cease of the narrow network. The normal film theaters were not left unaffected by the tendency either. By the turn of the Millennium in 96.1% of the villages and 39.8% of the towns there was no cinema in function. This pro-

portion declined further to 55.3 in towns and to 97.9 in the communities by 2004. (BORSOS Á. 2006). Further more according to a sectoral supplying of date there were functioning cinemas only in 119 settlements on the 31st of December 2006 (in the 35.6% of towns and in the 0.6% of vil-lages).

The leading role in transmitting movie films to the spectators – besides attending its other functions – was taken over by the television program services, which gained strength and became professionally and technically diversified in the meanwhile, and by the videotheques. However the experience offered by the cinema can not be fully substituted either in spectacle or in the attitude of perception by these techniques (BORSOS Á. 2004, 2006).

5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS

When the Hungarian narrow-film cinema network was established and it evolved, politics had an overwhelming role among those social actors that had impact on the fate of innovations. There are several reasons to believe that the introduction and stimulation of the narrow-film cinema network is also a result of political intention. It was of primary interest to the political and administrative leaders of a state preparing to, and then entering the war to extend the communication of current politics also to those areas of the country which were not favored by the motion picture market. The possibility of expanding the areas supplied by the normal 35 mm technology lied in the finding of more simple solutions for film distribution and for setting up and operating transmitting units, that is cinemas at lower costs. The 16 mm technology developed for amateur users and for educational films perfectly met these requirements. The fast penetration of the technology – also under the circumstances in a wartime economy – reflected the social demand for, and the positive reception of the political initiative.

In the phase of the innovation life cycle after the cataclysm caused by the war the evolution of the network remained dependent on political purposes – although with a widely different ideological content – but in the new, plan economy system market had no role. The sustaining of the – taking the market economy approach – overdeveloped network was affirmed by economic regulations and also by state subventions (sale price amplification) if it was needed.

The loosening political pressure caused by the ideological, social, and economical crisis, the infiltration of market mechanisms in the Hungarian economy – which could already deemed mixed – led to the rapid shrinking of the network. The recovery of market economy relations brought the full liquidation of the narrow-film cinemas with itself (*see figure 1*).

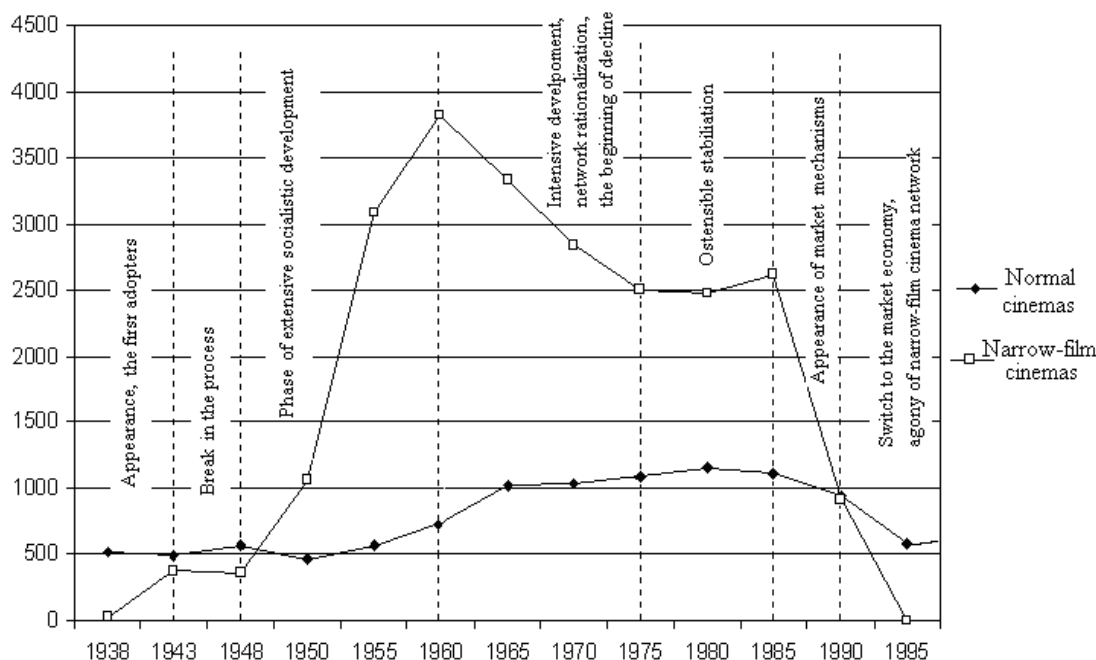
The mechanism of the spatial diffusion of innovation reflects the discrepancy between market based and centralized economy. In the case of narrow-film cinema diffusion can not be described using the classical models. The process was reversed, the penetration advanced from the peripheries towards the central areas. The potential technology for peripheral supply appeared in the centers after a phase delay. The role of fortune in the diffusion can not be excluded either (RECHNITZER J. 2002).

The example of the narrow-film cinema network warns rightly that an innovation or expansion program being overfavoured or generated by an initiative of politics and of the state, will or may cease to exist when the will of political and administrative leadership weakens or when preferences change. The prolongation of its life cycle, just as much as putting it into practice means an extra, unnecessary burden to the central and also to the local budgets, with a proportion defined by the degree of market-like mechanisms.

A potential danger of innovations generated by an invention of the political and administrative leadership, that the adaptation of the new technology, technique or method becomes a campaign duty and generates a fashion wave disregarding the individual particularities. The collection of examples varies in a wide range either in the case of centralized, mixed or market economy:

- Here can be mentioned the spill (chocolate-milk) resistant computer keyboard in nursery-schools meant to elevate the standard of ICT-culture even as the interactive school board proclaimed as the magic gun of pedagogy, especially when the winner of the tender can set up the tool only in a leaking class room with walls shedding plaster.
- Here can be mentioned all the investments lacking well-grounded sustainability and cost-benefit analysis whether it is a school swimming pool planned without water circulator and heater equipments or an unheatable gymnasium.

Figure 1. The life cycle of Hungarian narrow-film cinema network



Source: KSH, MKM, the author's own calculation and compilation

- A sports arena built with more than 1.5 milliard HUF investment, in a small quasi town of 3,000, 30-40 km away from the county seat, convenient for organizing international programs can not be labeled differently either. Especially if the transport network and other infrastructure (general catering, health care, accommodation ... etc. capacity) for the desired programs attracting the whole world is missing and will not be created within a reasonable time.
- And to carry on with the examples we can mention the industry parks which can play a prominent role in economic restructuring and in workplace creation under certain circumstances. But just because of this they can not be labeled as the 'cure-all' of the Hungarian economy. For a community of some hundred inhabitants encircled by a natural surroundings deserving exquisite protection, the propagation of rural tourism can be a more reasonable program, than the desired industry park.

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