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CiCe  
Institute for Policy Studies in Education  
London Metropolitan University  
166 – 220 Holloway Road  
London N7 8DB  
UK

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## **The ideal citizen, as reflected in the Hungarian curricula before and after the political changes**

*Ákos Gocsál*, Pécsi Tudományegyetem (University of Pécs) (Hungary)

*Ágnes Huszár*, Veszprémi Egyetem (University of Veszprém) (Hungary)

The ideology of socialism declared the absolute priority of collectivism with reference to the relationship of the individual to the community. The development of the individual had to be in harmony with the community and lead to identification with the aims of the community (Schwartz 1992). A strict opposition of collective and the individual, the former being positive, the latter negative, was a characteristic of the socialist view of society. Recent research has pointed out the false nature of this simplified model (Reykowski-Smolenska 1993).

The main aim of socialist education was to bring the ideal, ideologically-formulated, person, into practice. The basic documents of public education convey these value preferences, and the result of the educational process based on those documents was expected to be the idealistic citizen of the socialist society. Before the political changes the most important document of public education was the *Tanterv és utasítás* [Curriculum and Ordinance]. The preamble included the 'goals of education', which described the official ideological view of the educational goals for man. This paper examines how collectivism, the most important concept of the socialist society, changed in the fundamental educational documents over the past 40 years in Hungary. Three documents are compared, the curricula of 1962, 1978 and 1995. The first two were written during the socialist period, while the third already has the traits of the democratic processes.

The titles of the preambles in the curricula are 'The goals and tasks of primary education'. This outlines the view of man and education, the idealised citizen that comes about as a successful completion of the educational process. A content analysis of these preambles shows how the relations between the idealised man and community changed in Hungarian education.

It is interesting to first compare the two documents from the communist period, written in two overtly different periods of the socialist society.

1. The 1962 curricula was written six years after the 1956 revolution. The educational system of that period was ideologically controlled by the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party in a strictly centralised manner and schools were expected to implement its commands. The preamble of the curriculum is very short, consisting of only five sentences. It states that the aim of primary education is 'to establish the personality formation of a communist man'. The next sentences mention, among other goals, the provision of uniform and up-to-date education and, tautologically, a determined development 'of the moral characteristics of the communist man'. The final sentences deal with education for citizenship, which is given as 'the students should love our socialist fatherland'. This formulation is a paraphrase of 'socialist

patriotism', which was defined as the opposite to nationalism in the HSWP's ideological documents. Their main characteristics are as follows:

**Socialist patriotism**

future oriented  
active  
constructive  
appreciating other peoples

**Nationalism**

looking into the past  
passive  
destructive  
over-appreciating own people

Socialist patriotism includes the command that 'they should love ... the people of other countries'. This formulation, together with that of 'working people' in a following section, suggests that 'love' must be understood as loving the *working people*. (In the case of socialist countries, this meant all of the people; but for the capitalist countries, only the members of the working or 'exploited' classes.) This corresponds to the definition of proletarian internationalism, which also occurs in the documents of the HSWP. As a constructive element of this, solidarity, as empathy and charity, is bound to a certain societal class, based on the relations to owning the instruments of production.

The aim of citizen education is described so that 'the students should take part in realising the goals of our society'. The phrase 'realising the goals of our society', having no agent, projects the perspective of obedient participants of the educational system. The final sentence of the preamble declares that the aim of citizen education is that students 'should become self-aware workers and protectors of our fatherland and the future's society'. Another concept applied to workers is 'developed in *all aspects*' (all-round), an expression used in Hungarian educational documents as a result of a poor translation of the Russian 'many-sided man'. The educational literature of the 1960s and 1970s raised this expression to the rank of an accepted term. According to the arguments, civic (non-socialist) education is satisfied with the 'many-sided' man, as a goal of education. The superiority of the socialist type of man is also manifested in that the 'all-sided' man is expressed among the goals of education.

2. The 1977 curriculum was the product of a developed socialist society, or, as we might refer to it today, a 'softening dictatorship'. As opposed to the laconic preamble of five sentences in the 1962 curriculum, that of the 1977 curriculum is much larger, consisting of 83 sentences. From a philological point of view, it is overt that the final aim of the educational process is not the 'development of the communist man', but 'the approach of the Marxist-Leninist idealistic man'. This accorded with the ideological documents of the HSWP, which designated the period concerned as 'mature socialism'. During those years, according to the documents of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the Soviet Union was in the process of building communism. Hungary, together with the other socialist countries, was at the stage prior to communism, that is, building the 'developed, mature' socialism.

The preamble to the 1977 curriculum establishes the 'formation of Marxist-Leninist ideological conviction' as the primary aim of education. Students were required to

know the idealist and religious ideologies and to 'represent with conviction his/her materialist, atheist point of view'. The monolithic society needed people with unified conviction, that is, with Marxist-Leninist ideology, and the main aim of the socialist education was to produce unified individuals for that society.

As far as collectivism is concerned, while the 1962 preamble has implicit references, the 1997 preamble has an explicit declaration of the dualism of socialist patriotism and proletarian internationalism. The promotion of 'progressive tradition' is declared to be a content of socialist patriotism. Again, this can be understood as an opposition to nationalism: socialist patriotism can only accept undertaking 'progressive' traditions that harmonise with previously declared social class priorities. The concept of proletarian internationalism can be characterised as something 'intellectual[ly] and emotional[ly] binding' with the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries, and as sympathy with 'the fight and revolution of the working class, the working people in the capitalist and developing countries'. This also expresses the priority of social class in the way of thinking.

The 1962 curriculum only declared 'participation in realising the aims of our society', as the task of the citizens, but the preamble of the 1977 curriculum describes a more active concept of collectivism, mentioning the preparation for 'participation in constructing the country' and 'practising democracy in public life'. It should be noted that the word democracy is not mentioned at all in the preamble of the 1962 curriculum, and can only be found once in the 1977 preamble. However, it has a central role in the National Curriculum of 1995, which was ordered by the Law 79 of 1993, and its 1995 Amendment.

The Preamble of the 1995 National Curriculum insists that the requirements formulated in the curricula 'are penetrated by the values of democracy'. These values are, however, not listed. It is a feature of the National Curriculum that its way of thinking resolves the false dichotomy of the individual and the community used in the previous period, stating that it is democratic behaviour that can bring the interests of the individual and the community into balance. According to the 1995 curriculum, community is defined in gradually broadening categories: nation, Europe and the human race. Openness to and understanding of different cultures is also highlighted. As a major departure from the former curricula, the 1995 National Curriculum explicitly mentions the development of skills and competences. The ten major fields of education, which can be converted into subjects by the schools, also include a number of areas which can contribute to personality development corresponding to the demands of our age. The requirements common to all fields of education include topics related to knowledge of fatherland and its people, joining Europe and the world, environmental education, culture of communication, mental and physical health, learning and professional orientation.

Comparing the preambles to the three curricula, it can be seen that only five years after the political changes, a new idealistic person, representing the expectations of the new society, was fairly well described as the aim of education. However, some expressions do exist in the documents of both periods. Further analysis is needed, for example, to

reveal the differences between today's concept of active citizenship and that of the previous period.