

# HUNLYWOOD – EVOLUTION OF HUNGARIAN FILM PRODUCTION, THE ATTITUDE OF HUNGARIAN AUDIENCE

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*Abstract: Filmmaking in America is an integral part of the entertainment industry, while it remains in Europe as an expression of art, representing meaningful national values. Hungarian cinematography is not necessarily a business idea but an integral part of the national circulation of the national culture. In the last few years Hungarian film works have received worldwide attention. However, there are many dependables of making a film industry successful. This study shows the foundation and evolution of the Hungarian film industry, considering its milestones and future possibilities and also shows cinematography as an action of saving the national values of Hungary.*

*Keywords: Hungarian cinematography, film production, audience, national value, film financing*

## **Introduction**

During the last two years, unprecedented events took place in the Hungarian film industry, due to two Hungarian films which won the Oscar Award. In 2016, *Saul fia* (Son of Saul) won the highest ranking of the film industry, whereas in 2017 the so called *Mindenki* (Sing) received this award, making Hungary's position steady in cinematography. However, to understand how it could happen, it is necessary to know the Hungarian film industry, including the film support system. Most of Hungarian films are supported by the government, so they have an influence on the indicators of deficiency and debts and also have a major role in national judgment. To determine the present situation of the Hungarian film industry, cinematography and financing should be examined. Although, structurally the film industry is complicated and there are many steps when making a Hungarian film, the study deals only with the support and production activities of the Hungarian films and it does not investigate film distribution. It describes the integrated system of cinematography, including its past and also how financial issues had changed in Hungary from time to time. It also lists the awards given to Hungarian films during these years. Basically, these films are produced from public funds that is why the study also describes the personal equations of Hungarian viewers. Hungarian film industry has a successful past. It is a strategic sector which have a huge influence on Hungary's position in Europe. The study describes 4 main genres, which are feature films, documentary films, animated films and instructional films. TV shows and TV series do not appear in this study.

## Historical overview of film funding

Hungarian cinematography was controlled by the state and political censorship until 1991. Financing was also controlled centrally by the Film Directorate General of the Ministry of Culture based on official preferences. Inside film studios, the candidates applied with scenarios and synopsis which were rated by the leaderships of the film studio and the Directorate General at the same time. The structural change and evolution of the film industry cannot be related to an exact date. Independency came through many events. If the reader has a look at the independency of the promoting system in Hungary, one may see that cinematography and state are strongly related because cinematography is a cultural value. However when the method of financing is examined it is inevitable to consider the moment when private stock appeared in the Hungarian film industry (Cunningham, 2006). In 1963 two great company merged into MAFILM, these were Objektív and Dialóg film studios in 1976. One of the most significant inventions of the 1960s was television, which had a great influence on the film industry. Most of the film studios incomes were from productions made for Hungarian Television and from national and international lease works. That was the only way to exploit the capacity of the film studios, and the higher incomes from lease works made the opportunity to cross finance the more expensive feature films. The appropriation intended for Hungarian films was more or less limited, and the number of films to make in a year was also standing while the costs of production constantly increased. Film studios found hard to exploit the available appropriation. The appropriation of promotion left the inflation out of account as well, which constantly decreased at present value for 1986 causing crisis in film industry. The employment rate and waste of resources increased in film studios. As an effect MAFILM was taken by a new leadership, which ordered an inner settling and increased the production costs of the procurer film studios. Film studios protested against this increase and in 1987 the whole system was reorganized. Production company (MAFILM) and film studios were separated, so film studios not only could make films with MAFILM but could choose other independent producer as well. After the regime change more private production companies appeared including the most important The Motion Picture Public (MMA, MMKA) in 1991 (Varga, 2010). Decision making had two steps: first the National Board of Trustees decided about sponsoring the certain advisory board, and then these advisory boards decided about the promotion of certain genres. State promotions were not controlled yet, so many corporations favoured cinematography, such as:

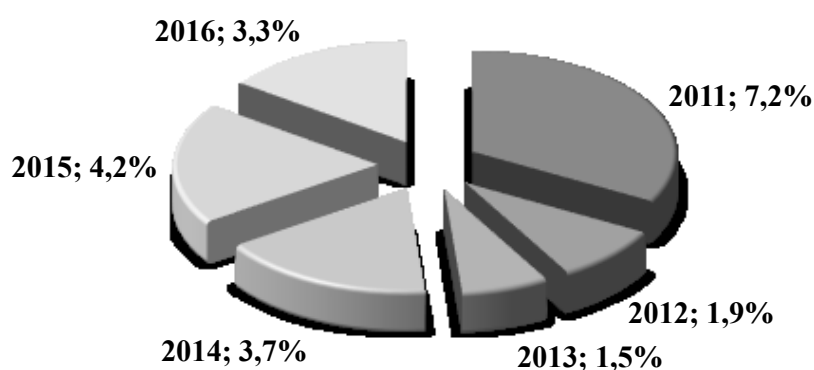
- ◆ Hungarian Historical Film Foundation, which promoted historical documentary films
- ◆ National Radio and Television Commission (ORTT) whose role was to promote community services shows, to maintain and improve culture and to guarantee a variety of shows
- ◆ National Cultural Fund of Hungary (NKA) was such a corporation that handed out small amount of promotions, which were just enough to start or finish making a film
- ◆ The Motion Picture Public (MMA, MMKA) was the main spring of support to Hungarian documentaries and feature films. Candidates could apply once a year to one of the four advisory boards, the condition of making a film was to complete by the end of the budget year. The awarded grant amounts were quite small, and the limited time frame, the lack of advance preparation jointly contributed to the deterioration of the quality of the films (Sárközy, 2013).

A significant portion of the Foundation's revenue, about 97 percent was government support. The unfavourable economic situation and the termination of TV offers put their mark on the operation of MAFILM, so there was a loss from the early eighties. So much so that in 1992 it liquidated, and in the same year Filmunió Ltd. purchased it. The film law of 2004 tried to put the tangling film industry on a more solid pedestal, which mostly defined and structured, to what extent the state has a role in the film production funding and support. It embraced a lot of important areas, namely to determine the extent of the subsidies, monitoring of compliance with this scheme, the establishment of a tax policy (incentives) which can be harmonized with the economy and film production, as well as the layout of the Hungarian film rights and property settlement. The Motion Picture Public got hold of a newly organized advisory board, which ordered a complete overhaul of the Foundation as a first decision. During a due diligence a 7.9 billion HUF commitment to flock mainly to the financing banks was found, which were mainly formed by overspending the available budget and irregular actions, bad debts and wasted resources aggravated the situation. As a result, the government abolished the foundation, and from 2011 the position was taken over by the Hungarian National Film Fund Non-profit. Its main task was to finance 8-10 big-budget feature films and one big-budget documentary per year, and to create a unified system instead of proportioning finances, that provides enough resources for the production and post-production phases of film making. An operational strategy had to be developed that can effectively make film industry competitive and operational. The Film Fund successfully agreed with three banks in 2011 to settle the debt portfolio of the earlier liquidated MMKA because of irresponsible management and impenetrability (Magyar Mozgókép Közalapítvány, 2010).

The Film Fund's plans included the restoration of the film assets and property possession, and expanded the scheme with an escrow account, which might have helped not only a single film, but the Hungarian film industry as a whole with the supporting cashing of companies. The Film Fund also began to deal with the international marketing of Hungarian films. However, the system still had a number of complicating factors; "single window" remained persistently among others. The organizers could only apply to the Film Fund, inhibiting diversity, which meant that if the committee did not like one certain scenario, the productions had to raise money from other sources, which is still a very difficult task. Discontent with the Film Fund was elevated by them so called last cutting rule filed in the supporting policy, according to which: The supporters have the right of approval to final cut a production. The rules in a case of a film meant that during the final stages of the production the Film Fund ruled over the scenes, the story and the act as well. In 2012, the Film Fund has added a new point to the rules, so that the right of the last cutting only belongs to them if there is a bonus given. In January 2012, the amended Film law was adopted, which ruled over revenues for the operation of the organization. The Film law also provided that 80 per cent of the "Hatoslottó's" tax (one of the largest Hungarian gambling service provider's draw games) was due to Film Fund (Állami Számvevőszék, 2016). The direct payments will be distributed based on a tender of scenarios, which may aid in cash or services (i.e. rental of a studio). The scenarios play a significant role in the support, as a production can only be supported if a scenario is strong and developed enough and The Film Fund helps this development. The support will be determined by the five-member Film Industry Arbitration Committee that enters into a contract with the manufacturing company established only for the film after the positive assessment of the project. In June 2014 the European Commission approved to an increase in support in the form of tax relief on the cost of film production in Hungary from 20 percent to 25 percent. The tax mainly benefits the foreign co-productions, which

were filmed in Hungary, but the supporters of the Hungarian film industry can also benefit from the discount, since, the amount of support paid, placed in an escrow account, may be deducted from tax base (OrienTax, 2014). According to the European Audiovisual Observatory data in 2011, the market share of Hungarian films was 7.2 per cent, it fell to 1.9 per cent in 2012, and then to 1.5 per cent in 2013. The 7 billion HUF amount of the subsidy in 2010 fell to 3 billion HUF in 2013. By 2014, however, due to an increase of 25 per cent in tax relief, film supporting grants of companies increased by 35 percent over the previous year. With the amendment of the Film law and the increase in support, the number of Hungarian films increased, which greatly increased the market share, notably with 3.7 percent in 2014 and with 4.2 percent in 2015. This ratio dropped to 3.3 percent in 2016, which can be explained by the strengthening of other European, like Czech film industry, and that in this year Hungary has invested more resources into the production of foreign co-production films (European Audiovisual Observatory, 2017).

**The market share of Hungarian films in Europe FROM 2011 to 2016**



*Figure 1 The market share of Hungarian films in Europe*

*Source: European Audiovisual Observatory, 2017*

In December 2016 the Film law was amended again, the most important provisions in order to further boost the Hungarian film industry are the following:

- ◆ The overall amount of the escrow account collecting company grants increased from 14 billion HUF to 25 billion HUF.
- ◆ The examination of applications relating to shoot a film in public areas is done by The Hungarian National Film Fund Non-profit, as a professional authority, so it also decides where to shoot.
- ◆ The motion picture industry training contribution is introduced, to where film production companies and producers are required to pay indirect support (Nemzeti Média- és Hírközlési Hatóság, 2017).

In February 2017, at the request of The Hungarian National Film Fund Non-profit, analysts of OrienTax tax consulting firm compared the film industries' competitiveness of eleven countries that have similar characteristics as Hungary. Several economic factors were taken into account during the research, as the film subsidy system, living and wages, film industry infrastructure, political environment and currency stability based on the outcome Hungary occupies a prominent place. However, this is likely to benefit from co-productions to Hungary than Hungarian films, mostly because most of

the Hungarian films do not bring back the costs of production subsidies (OrientTax, 2017).

### RANKING OF MARKET COMPETITIVENESS

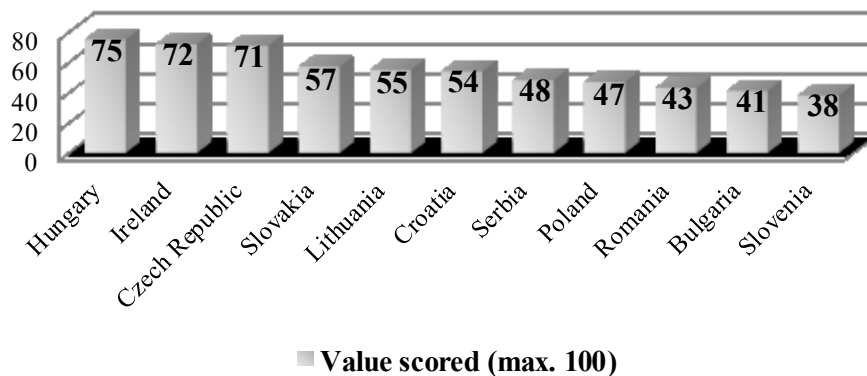


Figure 2 Ranking of market competitiveness

Source: OrientTax, 2017

While some films surpass the expectations thanks to popularity (Saul fia, Coming out), the majority of Hungarian films break even, or even there can be a loss (Vesztettek, Az éjszakám nappalod). The Hungarian National Film Fund Non-profit, from its foundation directed 42 feature films and this number do not include features and documentaries. The goal is not to maximize revenue and profit, but to preserve the existence of the Hungarian film industry and culture. However, it is also crucial to reach the professional success of a Hungarian film, and how good is the relationship with the audience (OrientTax, 2017).

### AID AMOUNTS AND ESTIMATED CINEMA TICKET REVENUES FOR FILMS SPONSORED BY THE FILM FUND

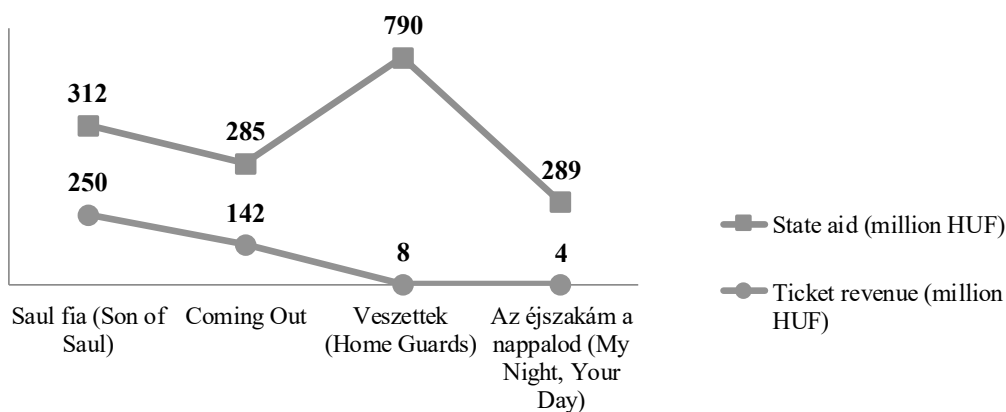


Figure 3 Loss-making and profitable movies supported by the Film Fund

Source: Nemzeti Média- és Hírközlési Hatóság, 2017

### Viewer perception

In the 1970s, 1980s many of the films sought the artistic status while entertaining the public remained in the background. As the studio-based operation made the production of quality films possible, or even impossible more and more films were

made purely for supplying a deficiency to fill the annual film headcount. Low interest, low demand and indifferent attitude featured the domestic audience, which were closely related to the deterioration of the quality of Hungarian films and loss of prestige. The deep ravine and the drawing-away between the Hungarian films and the audience have not changed in the 2000s (Szabó, 2000). Accurate viewership and success details are hard to find, there are only accurate details in the archive of the National Media and Info communications Authority (NMHH) from 2007, so there is only a vague inference on the viewer perception of the former Hungarian films. The entire film system and its change of attitude, economic crisis, shattering distortion of information and foreign events (like the 2001 terrorist attacks in New York) were also influential in cultural judgement of Hungarian films. However, from 2010 the film industry renewed and a new era dawned on the Hungarian film industry, although, the enthusiasm of the audience was not affected. The interest in Hungarian films shows a negligible amount, which at first was explained by the continuity of the film regime change since the manufactured film frame failed to be redeemed and only five major feature film's production was ensured in 2012, but much emphasis was put the quality development of scenarios required by the system. The statistical data of films after the 2011 "regime change" are hardly traceable and can only be estimated, because the film office stopped data dissemination in March 2011, and has been subjected to NMHH. Between those years (2011-2013) only the Association of Film Distributors provided information on cinema attendance of Hungarian films, but these details were only approximate. The number of manufactured films in these years was almost zero or at least very low, the films showed undetectable traffic. Cinema audiences of Hungarian films were much stronger than the season before 2011 despite the turbulence of the film industry.<sup>1</sup> The Film Fund has only begun to review and improve the submission process and scenarios. Among others, that is the reason why a prestigious Hungarian film was not made during these years. Another influencing factor is that the Hungarian viewers prefers to watch significantly smaller-budget films than the American creations on TV or online. Furthermore, in case of cinemas, low viewing figures and decreasing audience make the cinema to quickly remove the films on the program, which also hinders the spread of Hungarian films to wider areas. Yet the Film Fund is holding back the marketing expenses to drive down the costs so the viewer is not informed about the films made.

### Professional glory

The renowned and professional judgment is essential to any artistic renderings whether, as the movies as well. The Hungarian film remuneration was stronger in the early 80's, when two films (1981 - Best Short Animated Film – *A légy* (The fly) Directed by Bence Rófusz, 1982 - Best Foreign Language Film – *Mephisto* Directed by István Szabó) won the Oscar prize, in spite of the professional recognition ceased in the early 2000s (Nemzeti Média- és Hírközlési Hatóság, 2017). After 2010 the scenario development and stringent quality control of the Film Fund, however, eventually bore fruit, so the international success of Hungarian films are not left out. For the first time in 2012 at the Berlin Film Festival, Bence Fliegauf's *Csak a szél* (Just the wind) film won the second-highest award, the Grand Jury Prize, then the prestigious professional recognitions followed each other. 2015 brought the biggest triumph for the new Hungarian film industry, because after 30 years a Hungarian film, directed by László

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<sup>1</sup> The two most popular Hungarian films every year have reached the 100,000 viewers that are considered good in relation to domestic films (Nemzeti Média- és Hírközlési Hatóság, 2017).

Jeles Nemes titled *Saul fia* (Son of Saul) took the Grand Prize at Cannes Film Festival and London's BAFTA awards and after he took the Oscar statue for the best foreign film in 2016 February. The film is considered the most prized Hungarian creations of all time, because it boasted with nearly 50 awards by the end of 2016. It was also a great glory for the Hungarian National Film Fund Nonprofit, as the lone supporter of the film. Not long after, Hungary boasted a new academic award, as *Mindenki* (Sing) directed by Kristóf Deák, won the Oscar Prize for the best short feature film but no matter the viewing figures and the list of successful existence, none of them fully reflects the attitude of the Hungarian audience. Another important aspect is that what kind of future the Hungarian film industry will have. To answer these and many other questions a primary research work was needed (Gazdasági Versenyhivatal, 2016; Háhner, 2017).

## **Empirical research**

### **Methodology**

After a deeper understanding of the assumptions, outlines, and processing of the literature it has been revealed that the structure of the Hungarian film industry and film support scheme completely transformed over the past 60 years. Information and resources on the old and the contemporary structure and system were, sometimes incomplete, sometimes worn, and more or less difficult to be obtained. In addition, information on what can be expected in the future can only minimally be found on both the scheme and structure of the film industry. The real attitude of Hungarian viewers and their relationship with Hungarian films are difficult as well, and there are no entirely new, aggregated data. The aim of my research is to get a deeper understanding and to outline this issue as much as possible. My theoretical research includes considerable amounts of various processing of source files in some places; however, there were some discrepancies between the data. This can be explained by the existing system of the chaotic film industry in 2011, but it can also be explained by the continuous development of the system since the foundation of the Film Fund, that the published statistical and numerical data were incomplete at the time of the regime change. In order to confirm these data, interviews of experts were needed. The Hungarian films are still made largely by state support, so it is worth checking out the audience side of how the relationship between viewers and Hungarian cinema develops. Actually, it is a theory-driven research, based on cognition to expand on the knowledge.

### **Methods qualitative and quantitative**

The issue to be examined is approached by both qualitative and quantitative research methods, because basically it is a complex subject. One of the most important methods of data collection was the depth interview, which aimed for an opinion from an expert in the subject. During the interview a film expert shared his views and experiences on the topic. As quantitative research methods surveys were shared among potential viewers, the same questionnaires aimed at the Hungarian public attitudes and to assess their opinions and knowledge.

#### *Sample*

During the depth interview a Hungarian filmmaker and screenwriter was asked. During the questionnaire survey, the extrapolation was the primary consideration when determining the target population. Since the study wanted to measure the attitudes of

Hungarian viewers about Hungarian films, only Hungarian fillers were relevant. Sampling was randomized by sharing forums through online social networking sites. The definition of the target population did not include the knowledge of the Hungarian films, as an indifferent insight provides useful information. The questionnaire was available for three days on online social networking sites and in general forums, with a sample size of 144 (it contained 5 foreign fillers), so after the data were cleaned, the study was examining the opinions of 139 respondents. Research results are not representative, but based on the results it can be inferred the opinion of the target population. To analyse the open issues, the study used a frequency analyser and online word cloud software. It was used statistical calculations with the SPSS program for analysing demographic data (using nominal scales), including age (Jánosa, 2011). These statistical calculations showed that the average age was approximately 23 years. Most filler (i.e. mode) were 21 years old and the average deviation was 7,276. The lowest value (i.e. min) was 11 years and the highest value (i.e. max) was 50 years, which shows diversity. There was no minimum age for filling in, as there are Hungarian films that try to address all ages (a good example for this is the film *Mindenki* (Sing)). However, as the average age of respondents was 23 years, the results are mainly related to the younger Y generations (which are why the questionnaire is disseminated). There were 68 students, 30 employees, 5 managers and 2 unemployed fillers, and 34 fillers were students and employees at the same time. The survey also published the demographic characteristics of the school, which distinguished the studies based on the basic, intermediate and advanced level. By filling, 28 completed elementary, 60 completed secondary school and 51 graduates had a higher education degree. From these data it is also apparent that the majority of fillers were young, Y generational individuals who completed their secondary or higher education.

## Results

### Survey

As far as demographic data are concerned, the survey has not drawn a limit, since the results are important for all gender, age, occupation and qualifications. It was used the SPSS program to evaluate the questionnaire and to examine the correlation of some data. The questionnaire utilized various techniques and contained open (5) and closed questions (13). After clarifying the demographic data, the survey tried to evaluate the attitudes of the fillers in 13 further questions, which the study evaluates one by one. Among these, the first two questions focused on mapping the most popular and best-known Hungarian films they liked. The results were evaluated using a frequency analysis program, an online word cloud program, Word Cloud Generator, which was developed by Jason Davies, an English software developer. For the first question, which measured the most popular Hungarian films focusing on the fillers, the film *Üvegtigris* (Glass Tiger) was most frequently mentioned, followed by films such as *Kincsem*, *Valami Amerika* (A kind of America), *Indul a bakterház* (The Stationmaster Meets his Match), *Kontroll* (Control), or *Magyar Vándor* (Hungarian Vagabond). The next question happened in a same way, and it was curious about how many Hungarian films were known about fillers and which movie titles were most frequently displayed. During the responses, the survey also asked for the title of the movies in the text, but the number of fillers could be assigned so that it could later determine the interval on how many movies they knew averagely. The filling ranged from 6 to 60 films, the most common



value (i.e. mode) was the 15. The result of the analytical program was that the most mentioned Hungarian film was the *Saul fia* (Son of Saul), which was not surprising, since it is a popular, internationally recognized work. Anyhow, there were mentioned excellent nationally and internationally prized films such as *Mindenki* (Sing), *Tízta szívvvel* (Kills on Wheels), or *Fehér tenyér* (White Palms). Again, *Kincsem*, *Valami Amerika* (A kind of America) and *Üvegtigris* (Glass Tiger) enjoyed great popularity as in the previous issue, but also entertaining works like *Coming out* or *SOS Szerelem* (SOS Love) came up. There was apparent from the data that the majority of fillers' knowledge was around prized and entertaining works.

In order to get a better understanding of the attitudes of audience, the next more interactive question asked the fillers, to express one comment on how they think of average Hungarian films. To analyse data, like the previous two questions, the study used Word Cloud Generator. From the results it was found that most of the Hungarian films are considered "humorous" and "funny", which can be traced back to the previous questions as most of the works mentioned are classified as entertaining films. Nonetheless, the word cloud also contains negative indicators such as "bad" or "not good", which confirms the results of the theoretical research on which the attitudes of Hungarian viewers are mostly open minded. The word "Hungarian" was used as a sign, which would be worthy of clarifying the meaning in the future. The following two questions are intended to assess the viewing habits of respondents, in which the survey was curious about where and how often the fillers watch Hungarian films. Based on the results (8 people in the cinema, 63 people on TV, 56 people online, 12 people nowhere), fillers are more likely to watch Hungarian movies at home, and only 5-7 percent go to cinema. As far as frequency is concerned, not a single person said that they would watch Hungarian films every day, but only seven people would watch these works several times a week. According to commonness 42 fillers per month, 82 fillers per year and 8 fillers never watch Hungarian movies. The result shows that if the Hungarian viewer is allowed, they watch Hungarian films at home, they does not pay for it, and the frequency of it is limited only to a few films a year or less. The study used the Word Cloud Generator program to evaluate the following question, using a projective technique that called sentence supplementation. The fillers had to complete the following statement: "I will go to Hungarian cinema if ...". When evaluating the results, the phrase "red snow falls" was a common term that is a well-known Hungarian proverb, meaning that an event or activity will never occurred. The answer was related to the results of previous questions, which confirms that fillers rarely go to Hungarian movies in the cinema. The next prominent value was "interested" or "find interesting". The answers to the first questions are helpful in order to determine exactly what is considering being the filler's interest in entertaining or award-winning works.

In the following question, with the help of an ocular differential scale, the survey tried to assess the average viewpoint of the respondents about the Hungarian films, in which they had to evaluate how they generally think about Hungarian films on a semantic differential scale from 1 to 6. At the two ends of the scale, two opposing adjectives were shown (terrible, great). Respondents had to select the value that they think is the most characteristic of the phenomenon. The most common value was 4 (40 percent of fillers), which is roughly median. However, 19 per cent of fillers were more inclined (2 per cent more) towards negative value judgment of 3 than the positive value of 5. On the basis of these, it can be said that, on the whole, the fillers neutralize Hungarian films, but more people are inclined towards the negative attitude. In the next question, the survey also tried to assess the attitudes of fillers with Likert's scale. They

had to evaluate six different statements, on a scale from 1 to 5 (where number 1 is totally disagree, and number 5 is fully agree) according to how they agree or disagree with them. The allegations contained four positive statements with respect to Hungarian films and two negative statements. Among the four positive statements, one claimed that Hungarian films succeeded in the cinemas received a median of 2 on the basis of the respondents' values, which put the standard in the negative range. The other three statements (a lot more Hungarian films should be awarded, Hungarian films have place on the international film chart, Hungarian audiences would like to have as many Hungarian films made as possible) in one case got a mean of 3 and in two cases a mean of 4. It is clear that respondents would rather support the completion of Hungarian films. In their opinion, Hungarian works have a place on the international level, but are uncertain whether they deserve more prizes. Based on the answers to the two negative statements (there is no standard in Hungarian films that the audience expects, Hungarian films are more lethargic than entertaining) the mean value was 3, which means uncertainty. The fillers are therefore uncertain whether the Hungarian films are of sufficient quality and they split the opinion of whether they find them entertaining or lethargic. The study wanted to observe the relationship between the issues done by Likert scale and the semantic differential scattering, the relationship between the various statements and the average attitude towards Hungarian films. The strongest link was “the Hungarian films have a place on the international film chart”, which showed 0.666 values, what is somewhat stronger than the middle. The relationship is significant (at the value of  $p = 0.95$ ) and moderately strong (Spearman correlation 0.643). The result shows that the majority of fillers like Hungarian films and believe that they have place on the international film chart.

The rest of the questionnaire was dealt with films that the fillers knew. On this question, the respondents had seen different movie titles, then they had to evaluate how much they liked (5-totally liked) or did not like (1-totally disliked) each of the creations. As an option, the “not seen” option was given, which was zero in the evaluation. The question selected films based on the number of prizes, recognition and movie rating. During the evaluation, the study analysed the most well-known and least known films with the Friedman test (non-parametric test, different predicted values, mostly position mean values, such as a mode). Based on the Friedman test (at the value of  $p = 0.95$ ) there was a significant difference in the popularity of the films. It is also clear from the result that *Üvegtigris* (Glass Tiger) was the most well-known, so the fillers saw this movie and rated it the best. This was followed by the *Kontroll* (Control), the *Saul fia* (Son of Saul), and then the *Kincsem*. The high-budget film *Veszettek* (Home Guards) by Kriszta Goda was not seen by a large number of fillers, and the films like *Fehér tenyér* (White Palms) and *A nyomozó* (The Investigator) that were rewarded with several domestic film awards showed the same values. Though the *Kincsem* and the *Saul fia* (Son of Saul) were seen by many, they were not fond of the work, which was a bit contradicted by the results of the first issue, which listed *Kincsem* as the most popular works. This can be explained by the fact that respondents are divided by this film. The most optimistic result was achieved by *Kontroll* (Control) and *Üvegtigris* (Glass Tiger), which confirms the results of the first question, as several of these films have been mentioned. However, except for *Üvegtigris* (Glass Tiger), the most common value for each movie was 0, so the respondents did not see that work.

In the following question, the fillers had to name movies according to three photographs. Each picture depicts a famous scene of three films like *Mindenki* (Sing), *A torinói ló* (The Turin Horse) and *Fehér Isten* (White God), which are famous and

recognized Hungarian works. During the qualification, the question used two values: 0-do not know, 1-recognized. The results revealed that identification in the mirror of international recognition and awards is declining negatively. This means that while the Oscar winner *Mindenki* (Sing) has reached the highest value (recognized by 101 people), the Karlovy Vary prize-winning *Fehér Isten* (White God) was already considerably lesser, (only 56 of the 139 fillers recognized it) and the most respected Hungarian director's film, *A torinói ló* (The Turin Horse) was hardly identified (only 8 people). In the last question, the survey wondered how much the respondents are aware of the Hungarian film financing system and do they know how many Hungarian films are produced annually in our country. The result was an average of 21.46 films, but the most commonly recorded value was 5 films per year, which is closer to the number of 8-10 real films made per year. Nonetheless, the number of fillers dropped to a fairly wide scale (2 and 500), and the average is well above the real value, which shows that many people are not aware of the number of Hungarian films being shot in Hungary.

### Professional interview

The expert interviewer, András Réz, was a member of the Hungarian Film Science Institute between 1979 and 1982, and from 1983 to 1987 he worked as Director of Arts at the Film Directorate of the Ministry of Culture. His main activities include the teaching of the theory of advertising and mass culture in the ELTE Faculty of Humanities. He is also creative director at the Grant Advertising Agency and also working as a permanent art director at the Werk Academy. As a filmmaker and, on several occasions' industry as an art department manager, he has gained profound experience in the field of films and has extensive knowledge of film production, support system and overall film industry as a whole. The depth interview took place in a personal meeting and the conversation lasted for 1.5 hours. During the conversation, a voice record was made; the depth interview guide featured semi-structured, open questions about the past, present and future of the film support system. The guide pondered the successes of Hungarian films, their influences on Hungary, as well as questions about the reasons for judging the attitudes of the current audience. This guide moreover only managed the interview to find answers to the existing shortcomings in an informal conversation. Firstly, were asked from András Réz for a brief overview of mapping the film support system, for information that may not be described in the theoretical research. Basically, the information on the structure of the MMKA did not deviate from the structure outlined in the literature. To sum up, in the 1960s, the system operated in a way that the high advisory boards and multi-faceted professional classes decided to finance the films. Since András Réz was a member of a college, he had the opportunity to see into the system, about which he said:

*“Then it turned out that we really did not have too much to say, because the big advisory board was a kind of mapping of parliamentary relations. So in the big advisory board - there would be no misunderstanding -, they were not filmmakers, and even made sure that even the members of filmmaker's advisory board were not really a filmmakers, but rather people who roughly mapped political power in the country.”*

This also supports the literature data that the system was strongly politically oriented. András Réz explained in the interview that the funding was distributed on a “friendly basis”. As a consequence, from the professional point of view, no attention was paid to the quality and quantity of all-night Hungarian films. Much more Hungarian

movies were produced than the cinemas could have bought, and the members of the foundation did not even have the goal of bringing the Hungarian films to the movie theatres or to the audience. The distribution of film grants was so generous; decisions were mostly unfounded, hoping for government support. They did not make sure that the viewers had access to the movies; marketing was completely out of the question. This is what the expert said:

*“And even more serious, you need to make sure viewers know that the movie is ready. We do this as a generous marketing bundle. This can be achieved in a wide variety of pictures so that viewers can get to know the film, but the practice was - and so far it have remained - that we got the money, spent on the movie, thank you very much, there is no money left for advertising.”*

According to the expert's statement, it may be a common phenomenon that the producer does not look to the most appropriate tools when he wants to promote a movie. As an example, he introduced the film *Veszettek* (Home Guards) a billboard campaign was used to reach the public, but most of the people did not even know that it promoted a film. According to András Réz, the increased viewership and communication of Hungarian films is still an unresolved issue, and as a primary aspect the funds are intended to produce the film. The expert said that a Hungarian film cannot be profitable in Hungary, because viewers like to see foreign films at current movie ticket rates. However, this is not the only exclusionary reason, since the Hungarian film market is basically small. For comparison, he has brought Poland as an example, as a proper size of a movie market where, without film export, can a movie be profitable. In short, were asked the expert whether it would be desirable for a Hungarian director to settle abroad. In his reply, he explained that a Hungarian director is not only a director, but works independently in television or film production, and that a traditionally produced national film production does not have a particular need for importers. The expert talked about the effects of the Hungarian films' success on the film industry, which revealed that the successes did not affect Hungarian cinema but the movie market. This means that the flourishing of the film industry will enable the training of professionals, which is extremely favourable for co-productions coming from abroad, not to mention the 25 percent tax incentive that is unique in Europe. In the 90's, it was a problem to serve foreign productions both technically and as a labour force. With regard to today's situation, the film industry is technically equipped and the Hungarian filmmakers have a very high degree of qualification. The film industry has been successful in foreign co-productions, but this is only influenced Hungarian filmmaking in a way that Hungarian professionals working in a larger foreign production could gain a wide range of experience, which can be easily exploited later in the Hungarian production as well. Another connection is related to the support of the Hungarian films in a peculiar manner in which they try to generate yields through wage work or even renting equipment. However, he replied on the current film support system and structural build-up, that he believes that there will be no change in the future. András Réz talked about whether of high popularity or internationally renowned films could contribute to the development of the Hungarian film industry. The expert said that some films, such as the *Saul fia* (Son of Saul), have been given a kind of “commodity” by the Oscar prize and produce profits. In spite of, *Saul fia* (Son of Saul) did not made profits from domestic performances, but after the awards ceremony, it bought the film rights at Sony and distributed the film worldwide, producing profits, and promoting the film industry of Hungary to foreign productions. András Réz talked about the film *Kincsem*, and was primarily accused of

this film being the highest budget movie. As a counterpart, he introduced *Hídember* (The Bridgeman) produced by Géza Bereményi, that, based on estimated figures, was produced of 7 million USD (which is almost 2.01 billion HUF in the current 287.17 purchase price), somewhat higher than the *Kincsem* budget of 2 billion. Though, these state supports often come with grants from larger companies, which the Film Fund does not need to account for as it is not a state funding. According to the specialist, these subsidies may be based on the relationship capital, if a film exceeds the budget frame. However, Hungarian filmmaking is not a source of profits, but it one of its most important functions is called “identity creation”.

*“We are preparing them for ourselves, our life, our problems, our cramps, our tensions.”*

The expert explained the viewers’ refusing attitude towards Hungarian filmmaking. András Réz first introduced examples from the 60s on the factors influencing the viewing habits of Hungarian viewers such as TVs, home cinema and the spread of the Internet, which changed the habits of the Hungarian viewers to cinema, so the cinema's viewership was rather limited to popular foreign films. In the 1970s, Hungarian films featured as “new aesthetics”, which were mostly inspired by history, but most of the audience was indifferent as they were not entertained. Overall, he said that a Hungarian viewer is looking at a Hungarian movie in the cinema if it is a prize-winning or a mass-movie / entertainment movie.

*“At present, Hungarian viewers have settled in if there is worldwide fame, hang it, we will watch it.”*

It is also important for Hungarian directors to obtain a high degree of recognition, such as a high number of viewers, as they gain a reputation and consolidate their work in the future. According to him, Hungarian films are made more for a professional audience than the average viewer, so this “movie language” becomes complicated for the viewer and makes Hungarian films unreasonable. Finally, András Réz talked about how he would encourage audiences to watch Hungarian movies. Explained the fact that Hungarian films are sometimes projected by televisions, especially public service media such as Hungarian Media Service Support and Asset Management Fund (MTVA), but they do not achieve high ratings because they are not sufficiently advertised. There is no state channel on television that would have a larger number of Hungarian films. According to the specialist, a separate channel could help increase the viewership of Hungarian films as it would make Hungarian films available to the audience, which cannot be seen online or otherwise. There are also a number of Hungarian films such as *Üvegtigris* (Glass Tiger) or *Valami Amerika* (Kind of America), which the Hungarian audience would be happy to see. There were, of course, initiatives (such as the MTVA public service channel, M5), but later stopped. As a next option, he said that an effective promotional catch could be the use of pre-presentations, audience meetings and conversations, that is, the use of word-of-mouth advertising after the film’s completion. He talked again about TV channels that he lacked the presence of film-chatting shows where the current works could be talked about. András Réz thinks it is important that the production of a film is communicated to the audience from the moment of ordering to the moment of appearance, thus increasing the audience's interest. The expert lacks the existence of movie journals, printed pages, where both creators and film critics can communicate with viewers.

*“This would not be the trick of having impersonal advertisements, but bringing films much, but much closer to the viewer.”*

## Conclusion and future plan

Summarizing the results of the questionnaire, it turns out that a large number of respondents are not fully satisfied with the current level of Hungarian film making but in the future this attitude may change as they support Hungarian film making and believe they have chance at the international film level. The current attitude is therefore passive, but there is a chance for the future to progress in the positive direction. The respondents know many Hungarian films, but their acceptance are limited to prized or high-achieving works, and it is much more important for them if a movie is rather entertaining than being recognized. The film *Üvegtigris* (Glass Tiger), produced by Péter Rudolf, has beaten the other works, which proves that comedy is needed. The interest of audience has not risen rapidly with the remuneration and the attitudes of the Hungarian viewers have not improved drastically. Nevertheless, the results of the quantitative research suggest that viewers are open to the development of film production and Hungarian cinematography.

The data provided by András Réz regarding the structure of the film support system was basically the same as the data collected during the processing of the literature, but his experience gained at the Committee of the Film College's College, that the distribution of grants was "generous and professionally unfounded" was new information. The interview revealed that the role of Hungarian filmmaking is rather the creation of identity, and the successes of Hungarian films are a big advantage for foreign co-productions coming in from a growing number of countries. The attitude of Hungarian viewers was similar to the data collected in the theoretical research and the results of the questionnaire research, so the viewers reject the Hungarian films. One of the reasons for this is that the Hungarian directors are preparing the films for the professionals (however, the mass movies are aiming at the average). Another, more important reason is the poor communication of Hungarian film production with viewers and the negligible role of marketing in film distribution. As a suggestion, as the most effective tool, word-of-mouth marketing can be mentioned, since a Hungarian film, as a national value, mostly deals with current issues and problems. It worthwhile to do research in the future about what are the best marketing tools for motivating the Hungarian audience and how much change can be made to increase the viewership of Hungarian films. Based on the results, it also worthwhile to extend the field of research and to look at the foreign co-productions produced in Hungary, as it has been shown in the research that Hungarian filmmaking has low effect on economy but on film production abroad, as it utilizes Hungarian workforce and it can have an impact on the gross domestic product as well thanks to the tax refund.

Following all of these researches it can said that the value creation of Hungarian films is unquestionable, and the flourishing of film production has a great impact on international recognition. Hungarian film production has grown into a profitable market in recent years, which can take even better turnarounds.

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