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Representation Deficit in a New Democracy: Theoretical Considerations and the Hungarian Case[1]

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In harmony with recent literature the article combines different approaches to describe how representation has become more complex while also more ambiguous in the process of democratic transition. First, with respect to parliament, the author argues that still a public bias prevails towards "direct representation" in Hungary (i.e. people assume to realize personal or local interests with the help of their MPs). In line with this, MPs—however strongly they are tied to parties—seem to pay particular attention to constituency representation although they are reluctant to report on their connections with interest groups or other interest organizations. Second, regarding the party dimension, it is found that although the national party scene in Hungary has remained unchanged in the past seven years, enormous electoral uncertainties and representation deficit prevail in its background and electoral linkages are weak. Parties are not well organized externally as demonstrated by membership figures and by the number of local organizations; internally, the major intra-party events (like candidate selection or leadership election) only vaguely reveal the representative dimension. Finally, experiences in Hungary thus far prove that the responsible party model cannot be applied at all: party programmes do not include clear policies and even if so, the policies often change during the electoral cycle. © 1998 The Regents of the University of California. Published by Elsevier Science Ltd

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Introduction

In the formation of new democracies it is often assumed that their political institutions will be based on social demands and will represent the diversity of interests and values. In a way, this *assumption suggests that democratization equals more representation*. To test this hypothesis the article will analyse how the reality of representation has changed within the Hungarian polity, what have been the tendencies and prevalent patterns in the formative years, thus also

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clarifying the question how a new democracy is, if at all, different from more established ones from the perspective of representation.

My thesis is that in the process of democratic institution building the concept as well as the reality of representation have become more complex and more ambiguous while a representation deficit still prevails.

The conceptualization of representation is difficult even in stable democracies. Lately, a fruitful attempt was made to "rethink" the concept (Jennings et al., 1994). One can only agree with the major message of the book made explicit by one of the contributors, namely that rigid models of representation will not lead to the desired conclusion, that is they will not reveal the complexity of representation (Thomassen, 1994). Thus, it is advisable to apply different approaches, depending on the purpose they are used for.

Accordingly, this paper seeks to combine several approaches. First, the *parliamentary* approach, which is instructive because it reveals how "political thinking" on representation has developed both on the elite and the mass levels. Second, the *linkage approach*, which has a particular significance in an environment where democratic transition began and concentrated on the party level. Third, a *party organizational* approach, because it can grasp the concept of representation in the institutionalization process, which is again particularly instructive in a new democracy. Within this latter framework, the *responsible party* approach will be a target issue seeking to answer the question how the policy dimensions of the new representative institutions have developed. We shall see in turn that the application of these different approaches will help the new and complex reality of the concept of representation evolve in a new democracy. Besides, we hope to add arguments to the debate in what directions is the concept worth broadening to improve its analytical potential.

The Legacy

In the pre-democratic period the combination of a *radical* bias in the theory of representation together with *pragmatic* constituency representation prevailed. On the one hand, political slogans advocated the "true and real" representation of the people, while on the other hand, people's disbelief in this radical notion led them to look for the individual ways of interest representation. This controversial situation resulted in scepticism about representative political institutions which made individual or small group interest representation methods plausible.

As it is widely known, prior to 1989, political parties could not exist, but interests were accepted as diverse by the non-orthodox Hungarian communist party and thus were assumed to be represented through and by the internal pluralistic character of that party. Consequently, in the 1970s and 1980s, national organizations for functional interest representation also were allowed to develop—of course under the auspices of the communist party (Ilonszki, 1993). Theoretical radicalism was apparent in the carefully arranged representation environment of the Hungarian Parliament and since according to a 1983 law, multi-candidacy became a compulsory feature of the election process, the selected candidates were assumed to represent all the major groups of Hungarian society through territorial, single member districts. In addition, a special list was to ensure the presence of those of the highest political rank (e.g. members of the politburo), and the representation of the religious organizations and the professional intelligentsia, since, in their case the more "enlightened" communist party leadership did not want to apply the compulsion of the territorial representation any longer. Although throughout the entire period the share of communist party members in parliament was around 70% some significant changes in the ideology of "existing socialism" were apparent in the societal break-

down of the members of parliament (see *Table 1*). As the table demonstrates, the importance of the productive sphere grew as communism in Hungary became more pragmatic and expertise-oriented. In contrast, the number of "apparatchiks" somewhat decreased.

On the whole, pragmatism was a key word in the period of Kádárism both for the elite and the majority of citizens, and this was apparent in how representation really worked. Members of parliament, particularly those in the more influential economic or political positions were the key actors in constituency interest representation. Citizens used MPs as channels for interest representation in accordance with a political culture where redress of grievances, and individual life strategies and individual interest representation were dominant anyway.

In 1988–1989, in the process of party formation and after the first democratic elections in 1990, this individualistic approach was somewhat strengthened in parliament. First of all, the new parties mainly were elite initiated organizations and since they were rarely built on clear cleavages the notion of representation was missing from their political vocabulary. In other words, parties were not formed on policy issues or built on the representation of certain interests but were initially formed as protest groups voicing anti-system sentiments. This reality was manifest in the round-table discussions between the new and the old elites in 1989 when, understandably, there was more talk about institutional changes than about policies or interest representation. The leaders of the new democracy had to face the questions of representation only after the elections and first of all in the parliamentary environment, which made the parliamentary segment of representation particularly important: how did representation evolve; in what issues did it manifest itself; and how was representation learnt by significant actors of the new democracy?

Representation in Parliament

Political representation became manifest in parliament along party lines although the mixed electoral system (which somewhat resembles the German electoral system) seemed to provide a representative opportunity both to the district constituencies and to the parties. There are 176 direct mandates from single member districts with a run-off majority vote and 210 party list mandates either from regional party lists or a compensation national list based on the

Table 1. The social division of Members of Parliament 1967–1985

	1967	1971	1975	1980	1985
Industry and 3rd sector	82	94	118	119	131
Agriculture	63	56	48	50	71
Party apparatus	50	45	38	41	30
State apparatus	38	42	33	32	42
Apparatus of societal organizations	37	29	27	23	26
Employees of public sector (health, education)	62	68	63	56	71
Churches	6	6	6	7	8
Others	11	12	19	24	7
Total	349	352	352	352	386

(Kukorelli, 1988:85).

number of fragmented votes (*Table 2*). The electoral system was meant to stabilize the newly formed parties through the lists while also seeking to continue a more direct form of representation in the single member direct constituencies, which used to be the prevalent form in the decades of Kádárian communism. It is not incidental that during the round-table talks mainly the communist party delegates advocated the importance of single member districts while the majority of the new parties favoured party lists. Since evidence proved, however, that the party affiliation of a candidate mattered most in the directly elected seats as well, we can argue that parties immediately sought to absorb the representative component, irrespective of some minor efforts to help functional representation appear in parliament. Hungary provided a clear example in this respect because all the national parties were principally established on political tendencies and identified themselves accordingly (conservative, liberal, left, etc.) at both democratic elections, and they did not openly identify with interest groups, trade unions or religious organizations.

Both the first election in the spring of 1990 and the second in the spring of 1994 produced middle aged, highly educated and predominantly male parliaments. The democratic parliaments were somewhat younger than the communist ones (mean age being around 46 years). Males were over-represented: the percentage of women used to be well above 20% in the communist period, then it decreased to under 10% in the first, and reached to 11% in the second democratic parliament. Occupational and educational differences were the most obvious ones (*Table 3*). While it is difficult to classify data, particularly in the pre-1990 period, because party bureaucrats and cadres were put under the heading of their "original occupation" (mainly workers and peasants), it is clear that the number of professionals grew considerably at the expense of those classified as workers and peasants. Moreover, the professions most widely represented changed: the preferred experts in agriculture and engineering of the late communist period gave way to lawyers and other members of the intelligentsia, although in the second cycle some old tendencies gained ground again (*Table 4*).

These tendencies reveal that with the establishment of parties and the introduction of multi-party democracy the old radical concept of representation is over. It is no longer a priority for a parliament to mirror society. Party became the king. From now on, party interests and the requirements to fulfil governmental jobs determine who are to be the candidates at the parliamentary election.

Despite the changing institutional environment the expectations of the public did not change substantially. In the communist period the public tended to be "direct representation oriented", that is, it sought to realize personal or local interests with the help of the MPs, who were the

Table 2.   Division of seats in the First and Second Democratic Parliaments
   No. of mandates

	Direct 1990/1994	Regional list 1990/1994	National list 1990/1994	Total 1990/1994
MDF	114/5	41/18	10/15	164/38
SZDSZ	35/16	34/28	23/25	92/69
FKGP	11/1	16/14	17/11	44/26
MSZP	1/149	14/53	18/7	33/209
Fidesz	1/0	8/7	12/13	21/20
KDNP	3/3	8/7	10/14	21/22
Others	11/1	0/0	0/0	11/1
Total	176/176	120/125	90/85	386/386

Table 3.   The distribution of MPs according to education and profession 1990/1994

Profession	MDF	SZZDSZ	FKGP	MSZP	Fidesz	KDNP	Ind.	All
Number of MPs	165/38	94/70	44/26	32/209	22/20	21/22	7/1	386/386
Education								
Skilled worker schools	1/–	–/–	4/2	1/1	-/-	-/-	-/-	6/3
Secondary	–/–	6/2	1/1	1/3	6/-	1/-	-/-	15/6
Both	7/–	7/3	7/8	2/10	-/-	2/2	-/-	25/23
College	23/5	10/7	10/2	4/68	2/5	1/3	-/-	50/92
University	134/33	71/56	22/13	25/127	17/15	17/17	7/1	290/262
Firs occupation								
Manager	1/2	–/6	2/2	1/20	–/3	–/2	–/1	4/36
Professionals	120/36	70/58	18/12	21/156	15/16	11/16	6/–	261/294
Other white collar	13/–	11/4	8/1	4/10	–/–	2/4	–/–	38/19
Skilled worker	10/–	5/–	5/6	6/18	–/–	1/–	–/–	27/24
Unskilled worker	18/–	6/–	5/2	–/2	4/–	5/–	1/–	39/4
Self-employed	3/–	2/2	6/3	1/1	–/–	1/–	–/–	13/6
Other	–/–	–/–	–/–	–/2	–/1	1/–	–/–	1/3
No answer	–/–	–/–	–/–	–/–	3/–	–/–	–/–	3/–
Characteristic occupation								
Manager	18/14	12/19	16/9	18/105	–/3	1/7	4/1	69/158
Professionals	135/23	66/45	17/5	9/85	14/15	16/14	3/–	260/187
Other white collar	3/–	6/2	8/1	1/5	–/–	–/1	–/–	18/9
Skilled worker	4/–	3/1	–/6	1/9	–/–	1/–	–/–	9/16
Unskilled worker	1/–	1/–	1/1	–/–	–/–	–/–	–/–	3/1
Self-employed	4/1	6/2	2/3	4/4	2/–	3/–	–/–	21/10
Other	–/1	–/2	–/3	–/4	–/–	–/–	–/–	–/10
No answer	–/–	–/–	–/–	–/–	6/–	–/–	–/–	6/–
Latest occupation								
Manager	51/27	23/18	17/8	26/116	–/5	–/12	3/1	120/187
Professionals	96/11	54/49	18/6	2/63	15/15	17/6	4/–	206/150
Other white collar	2/–	5/1	2/2	1/4	–/–	–/1	–/–	10/8
Skilled worker	3/–	2/–	–/3	1/3	–/–	1/–	–/–	7/6
Unskilled worker	–/–	–/–	2/–	–/–	–/–	–/–	–/–	2/–
Self-employed	12/–	10/2	5/6	3/20	1/–	3/2	–/–	34/30
Other	–/–	–/–	–/1	–/3	–/–	–/1	–/–	–/4
No answer	1/–	–/–	–/–	–/–	–/–	–/–	–/–	1/–

Ágh-Kurtán, 1995:325 and Almanach, 1994:743.

Table 4. Distribution of degrees among MPs in three consecutive Parliaments

Type of degree	1985–1990		1990		1994	
	No.	**%**	**No.**	**%**	**No.**	**%**
Engineering	58	25.3	38	11.2	51	14.5
Agriculture	64	27.9	30	8.8	60	17.0
Medicine	34	14.8	39	11.5	19	5.4
Economy	21	9.2	39	11.5	55	15.6
Law	14	6.1	75	22.1	69	19.6
Pedagogy	38	16.6	96	28.2	77	21.8
Art			6	1.8	12	3.4
Theology			13	3.8	5	1.4
Military			3	0.9	5	1.4
Unknown			1	0.3		

Almanach, 1994:744 (Table no. 21).

"closest to the fire". A Hungarian Public Opinion Research Institute Survey in autumn 1989 (thus, still before the first democratic elections) found that the respondents ranked the opinion of the constituents as the most important factor representatives should consider in the perform-ance of their parliamentary duties. When asked whether MPs should vote according to the demands of their constituency, or according to their own conscience, 69% of respondents chose the former, 10% the latter, and the remainder maintained that there should be a balance between constituency and individual conscience. When asked specifically about how party MPs should vote, 69% again said they should vote according to the demands of their constituency, with only 13% believing that representatives should vote in the interests of the party, while the remainder said they should consider both dimensions. (Judge and Ilonszki, 1995:166). These data clearly indicate the strength of sentiments regarding constituency representation.

While this representative requirement is viewed from a different perspective by the new parliamentary elites, the latter also seem to give in to electoral expectations. Two surveys, conducted in the Hungarian parliaments (the first in 1992 and the second in 1995), demonstrate the diversity of the representative focus (*Table 5*).

Data show that representation of the nation's interest occupies the most important place, and the importance of it has even grown. Electoral constituency representation comes second, again with some increase in the second cycle. Representation of the party is in the third place, with a decreasing trend. This can be doubted, however, in view of the centrality of parties in the political system and the dominance of party discipline in parliament. We can witness a change in the strength of representation of social strata and city/region, the latter becoming stronger. Altogether, the geographical focus of representation has grown (including both the constituency—which refers to a geographically located electoral district—and city/region). This gives justification to the assumptions stemming from the first survey, namely that MPs, how-ever strongly they are tied to parties, should pay a *particular attention to constituency* represen-tation under electoral pressure. The pressure in this direction is partially rooted in tradition and socialization trends and is partially due to the still underdeveloped nature of other forms of interest representation.

The representative dimension in parliament becomes even clearer when we identify MPs' means of communication with constituents (*Table 6*). These interesting data demonstrate how the institutionalization of representation has been taking place on the constituency level. MPs

Table 5. Primary focus of representation cited by respondents, March 1992 and October 1995 by source of electoral mandate (percentages in parentheses)

Focus of representation	Source of mandate					
	Constituency/Direct		Party list		All	
	1992	**1995**	**1992**	**1995**	**1992**	**1995**
Nation (all citizens)	21 (37.4)	17 (26.2)	17 (27.8)	32 (49.2)	38 (32.5)	50 (38.2)
Constituency	24 (42.9)	32 (49.2)	2 (3.3)	1 (1.5)	26 (22.2)	33 (25.2)
Party	5 (8.9)	5 (7.7)	15 (24.6)	11 (16.9)	20 (17.1)	16 (12.2)
Social stratum	2 (3.6)	2 (3.1)	10 (16.4)	7 (10.8)	12 (10.3)	9 (6.9)
City or region	2 (3.6)	6 (9.2)	9 (14.8)	9 (13.8)	11 (9.4)	15 (11.5)
Ethnic group	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (1.6)	1 (1.5)	1 (0.8)	1 (0.8)
Interest group	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (3.3)	2 (3.1)	2 (1.7)	2 (1.5)
Other	2 (3.6)	3 (4.6)	5 (8.2)	2 (3.1)	7 (6)	5 (3.8)
Total	56 (100)	66 (100)	61 (100)	65 (100)	117 (100)	132 (100)

+ one "no answer" in 1995.
Judge and Ilonszki, 1995:169 and Ilonszki, 1996:517.

Table 6. Means of communication with constituents cited by respondents, March 1992 and October 1995 by source of electoral mandate (percentages rounded)

Means of communication	Source of mandate					
	Constituency/Direct		Party list		All	
	1992	**1995**	**1992**	**1995**	**1992**	**1995**
Meetings	80	77	71	57	75	67
Regular visits	85	96	45	40	64	68
Local office	77	74	31	40	48	58
Permanent staff	66	74	31	48	48	61
Letters	59	62	29	28	43	45
Only limited contact	4	0	5	3	4	2
No constituency	0	0	39	52	20	26

Judge and Ilonszki, 1995:171 and Ilonszki, 1996:524.

with direct mandate substantially increased the number of their own regular visits to their constituencies as well as the number of their permanent staff there, and even MPs with list mandates tended to establish a local office and hire permanent staff to organize local/regional affairs. However, it is still intriguing how little we know about other dimensions of representation (such as the role of interest groups) or the actual techniques and procedures taking place either in the constituency or in other areas. Interviews with a representative group of MPs concerning the policy-making process in parliament strengthen the view that it is very difficult to reveal the concrete representation processes (Ilonszki, 1997). MPs are reluctant to report on their connections with interest groups or other interest organizations and on the ways they

operate. This same tendency was reported on the experiences of other post-communist countries, when, for example, in Slovenia it was found that "the number of (interest) groups mentioned by Slovenian MPs seem to be very small compared to the official number of all organizations" (Fink-Hafner, 1996:224). This leads us to a conclusion that *personalized interest representation continues to prevail*. Similarly to the communist period when voters sought to articulate their interest on an individual basis (that is not in organized groups) and hoped their interest to be fulfilled through a personal connection with the MP, even now these types of connections matter most. In the interviews, Hungarian MPs mainly report on learning even about group interests or wider societal interests from personal contacts, for instance, if they are somehow personally connected to these groups. The visibility of organizations and associations based on interest representation is still low.

We can conclude our analysis about the parliamentary focus of representation with ambiguous remarks: the radical approach about what kind of a representation should be reflected in a parliament got off the agenda; public expectations on the extent of constituency representation are high—although they contrast with the low esteem of parliament in general; the role perceptions of the new parliamentary elites include direct representation and MPs tend to implement and fulfil constituency representation as based on tradition and as expected by the constituency. At the same time, however, the importance of the party as king has gained ground in contrast with public expectations and with elites' admitted views.

Parties and Representation

The paradoxes of representation in the parliamentary arena lead us to the analysis of parties, which will be crucial in understanding the complexity of representation because parties have been the major actors in the transition and in the new democratic period. Do parties perform representative functions at all, and if so how does interest representation appear in the parties? Despite substantial and wide ranging research, including analytical as well as concrete field research, it is still hard to give a comprehensive and systematically sound answer (e.g. Ågh, 1995).

To discuss the representative dimension of parties it makes sense to combine three approaches: (a) the *linkage*, (b) the *organizational* and (c) the *policy* or responsible party approach, which might provide a systemic theoretical framework for the analysis of representation in the new democracies where parties have been the major actors.

(a) Linkage. Although in the process of transition, parties did not acquire representative functions immediately, very soon they sought to absorb these functions. To put it bluntly, they sought to invent new alignments for themselves. In some cases this proved easy because target groups were obvious; in other cases it was more difficult. We can rightly assume that in the process of party consolidation, successful identification (or the successful make-believe of the identification) with a social group or certain interests was one explanatory factor. An example could be the success of the FKGP (the Smallholders Party) with the peasantry, in contrast to the failure of the MSZDP (the Socialdemocrats) with the working class. Whenever a party was able to build up an image that it "belongs" to a large social group, electoral success followed.

Despite the parties' efforts to create an image of the representative linkage, however, *inconsistency* would be the proper term (Morlino, 1996) to describe the incongruence in Hungary

between parties as a supply and the sectors of civil society as a demand factor in the development of connections between citizens/voters and party politicians. "Inconsistency" describes a situation when what parties *offer* is not what society really *needs*. Moreover, there is no continuous and lively *communication* between party political elites and society. Finally, we can witness inconsistency in the contradiction between *highly institutionalized* and professional party hierarchies facing still *vaguely institutionalized* social organizations and demands. Thus, inconsistency prevails in the contents, forms and processes alike: parties do not offer clear policies, and if so, these policies do not have a clearcut representative dimension which could reveal whose interests and values are represented by them; parties do not pursue a dialogue with society and alternatives are discussed by elite circles only; communication is not helped by different languages where the ideologically packed speech of the majority of parties has been in contrast with the more concrete and direct language expected by the people. All of this takes place in an environment where party hierarchies are well organized but civil society organizations and other representative organizations have not yet adjusted to the rules of game of the democratic political system.

The concept of linkage is often interpreted more directly, that is as the electoral linkage between parties and the electorate. Data tend to prove that there are presently in Hungary two and half obvious cleavage lines on which parties are based: nomenclature, religion and to a lesser degree place of residence (Körösényi, 1998). Accordingly, previous communist party membership appears as the main feature among socialist (MSZP) voters, religious background among the Christian Democratic People's Party (KDNP) voters, while village dwellers have a tendency to vote for the Smallholders (FKGP). Nevertheless, these connections only vaguely describe representation tendencies and, after all, exist at the bottom of very weak party identification trends.

Although two election periods provide only limited information, and comparison with the prevalent trends in established democracies is often difficult because party identification is measured differently in different countries, some tendencies are still visible. While the number of individuals identifying with a particular party has generally gone down in western Europe, it still remained around the 50% level at the end of the 1980s with the exception of Norway which registered 10% above the average and the Netherlands with 10% below the average with strong identifiers constituting somewhat less than half of this previous group (Holmberg, 1994). In contrast, in Hungary, party identification level is much lower. At repeated monthly surveys, about 50% of the electorate cannot report a party identification at all. Linkage deficit is obvious in Hungary and is not exceptional among other new democracies. In former East Germany, for example, in 1990–1991 people with no party identification accounted for 40–50% of the electorate (Kaase and Klingemann, 1994).

In addition, party identification also has a directional dimension related to voting (Holmberg, 1984). A sociological survey carried out in the summer of 1994 found four categories of party identifiers in a representative 1500 sample survey after the second democratic elections (Gazsó and Stumpf, 1995). The four categories broadly overlap those setup by Holmberg (1994):99), that is, (i) stable identifiers–stable voters, (ii) stable identifiers–variable voters, (iii) variable identifiers–stable voters, and (iv) variable identifiers–variable voters. The comparison is particularly intriguing when the distribution of these categories is concerned. In Hungary strong identifiers (those who vote both consistently and according to their party sympathies) constitute only about 7% of the electorate, while in the Western sample they have generally been around the 70% level. The second group (with strong party sympathies but with changes in voting behaviour if dissatisfied with the party) represents a 7% group both in Hungary and in the

Western patterns. Weak identifiers will vote consistently without any particular party sympathies, virtually alienated from parties mainly for practical reasons. They represent more than a quarter of the sample in Hungary while they are a small group, around 4–5% in the Western sample. Finally, the group without party identification or voting preferences, adds up to more than half of the electorate in Hungary, constituting 10–15% of the Western sample. *Table 7* introduces these four groups according to party divisions, and demonstrates that all the national parties, without exception, suffer from the same feature: they do not have a stable electorate. Electoral volatility is high. At the 1994 elections only 27% of the electorate voted for the same party as in 1990. At the end of 1995, it was found that party identification *per se* was around 36% as compared to the 1994 election among the entire electorate with respect to the six parliamentary parties (Zavecz, 1996).

While the national party scene in Hungary has remained unchanged in the past seven years enormous *electoral uncertainties and representation deficit* prevail in its background. One can rightly conclude that since parties were not built on cleavages and societal demands but were "invented" by the elites (both new and old) linkages are understandably weak. This is a general tendency in the new democracies. As Kaase and Klingemann (1994:139) argue "... whatever partisanship orientations exist in the East, they are not yet firmly established and are very much subject to the political agenda prevailing in the country. In interpreting this instability, next to the political issues of the day, we certainly have to look at the insufficient build-up of intermediary structures linking citizens with the parties." Thus, linkage as a possible dimension of representation is still to be developed to achieve better representation.

(b) Organization. Representation can be given a more dynamic dimension with the introduction of the organizational perspective, meant as both external organization and internal organization.

Externally speaking, parties are not well organized at all. This is supported by membership figures and the small number of local organizations (*Table 8*), and also by the fact that, with the possible exception of the Socialist party and its trade union connections, it is very difficult to identify organizations, associations or other representative bodies that are attached to parties. Several attempts to tie new trade union movements or other organizations to parties, proved unsuccessful.

The case of the only significant existing representative connection between the Socialist party, and the largest trade union association is also ambiguous. The trade union leader was second on the party's electoral list and according to an agreement trade union representatives were offered several parliamentary seats. Neoliberal economic policies and trade union interests make an unfortunate mix, however, which necessarily results in controversial policies and

Table 7.   Division of party voters according to identification

	Strong	**Inconsistent**	**Weak**	**Unstable**
MSZP	9.3	15.6	16.5	58.4
SZDSZ	9.2	5.9	37.4	47.5
MDF	13	2.8	48.1	36.1
FKGP	13.4	7.3	30.5	48.8
KDNP	15.8	12.3	19.3	52.6
Fidesz	2	6.1	38.8	53.1

(Gazsó and Stumpf, 1995:579).

Table 8. Party membership and local strength

		MDF	SZDSZ	FKGP	MSZP	Fidesz	KDNP	MSZMP
Membership	**1990**	21	15	40	50	5	3	82
figures in	**1992**	30	32	60	40	13	18	n.a.
thousands	**1995**	23	35	70	37	10	26	25
No. of local	**1990**	327	320	n.a.	n.a.	150	n.a.	n.a.
organization	**1992**	824	900	1630	1844	468	700	n.a.
	1995	719	737	2100	433	363	684	1310

Körösényi, 1998.

makes the intra-party divisions, particularly in the parliamentary party group and on the party leadership level, more obvious than in any other party. The Socialist leadership's identification with functional interest representation up to now has not helped governance, and led to coalition conflicts and intra-party conflicts as well.

The Socialist party seems exceptional on the Hungarian political scene also because its intra-party divisions often mirror representation lines. For example, beside trade unions there is an organized section for entrepreneurs in the Socialist party. This is not the case in other parties where intra-party tendencies are not connected to interests but most often express personal conflicts or differences of political style.

Representation tendencies in the internal organization of parties are similarly blurred. As suggested by Lawson (Lawson, 1994) to reveal the forms of representation in the internal organization it is best to analyse the concrete roles of key actors, for example, in leadership election or candidate selection procedures. The major feature of the Hungarian parties is that they are highly centralized and that the parliamentary party groups dominate party activities. The parliamentary party groups have an absolute authority over the party executives and other agencies of party leadership (Ilonszki, 1998). The dominant position of the parliamentary party groups once again draws our attention to the fact that parties were born as elite initiated organizations without an initial representative dimension, and the professionalization of new party politicians took place in the parliamentary arena. Ideally, party executives absorb some representative dimensions. In Hungary, however, at most they reflect differences in political style (more or less radicalism), attitudes towards other parties (coalition formation issues) or toward certain leading party figures. For example, these features mattered the most when the MDF, the largest party of the first parliamentary cycle, split twice and thus changed the entire political character of the consolidation, or likewise they were at stake in the extended conflict and then disintegration of the KDNP.

The major intra-party events cannot be tied easily to the representative dimension in Hungary. In leadership elections personal ambitions and interpersonal connections are the most important, and where the personal contest happened to have a representative connection (that is the contesting leaders obviously declared different political views) the representative consequences were not clear at all. With respect to candidate selection, in the case of direct candidates local constituency background was an important selection criteria, particularly at the second democratic elections, but it was consequential only for the largest parliamentary party group (the Socialists) which eventually won 149 out of the 176 direct seats. In contrast, with the exception of the socialists, list candidacies did not embody significant representative dimensions and did not send messages to the electorate about possible representative linkages.

(c) Policy or the Responsible Party Model. The model suggests that political parties present different policy alternatives to voters, who have policy preferences, know party policies, and act accordingly. The responsible party model is built on the notion that there must be a rational representative connection between parties and the electorate. Experiences in Hungary thus far prove that this model cannot be applied at all. Party programmes do not include clear policies and even if so, the policies often change during the electoral cycle without parties being made responsible for these changes. Moreover, policies only rarely reflect representative demands or can be connected to such demands. For example, the parties responded neither to the newly emerging regional dimension, despite the growing differences between different parts of the country, nor to the challenges emerging from the agriculture, despite the recent destruction of the once successful agricultural sector. The catch-all party character or, as some even argue, the cartel party character of the Hungarian parties is an institutional excuse for the parties' inability to establish a representative image for themselves.

Interests and demands regularly remain hidden, thus increasing the representation deficit. This is explained by several factors: still relatively few actors are on the political scene and act as pressure groups or civil organizations; moreover, parties are not built on important cleavages; and even in cases where representation is at work lack of transparency makes it extremely difficult to identify the concrete representative mechanisms. Regularly, personal connections would bring representation into the policy process while institutionalized forms are weak.

It is no wonder that communication between party hierarchies and society is fragile, as demonstrated by the low esteem of parties and party politicians in Hungarian society. The antagonism which exists between the highly structured reality of the political realm, including parties, in this respect, and the still amorphous reality of the society, is not conducive for fostering the development of representative linkages. An overall representation deficit in the party framework explains the recurring demands for functional representation, for example, the demand to introduce a second parliamentary chamber which would absorb representative dimensions on regional, religious, ethnic and other grounds.

Deficit and the Future

Together with the wide ranging social and political transition the entire environment of representation has changed in Hungary. It is clear that one must consider many additional aspects now than before the changes, to be able to introduce this problem area in a systematic fashion. The one-dimensional view of direct representation and its occasional pragmatic implementation were replaced by the institutions of representative government. Our conclusion still is that elites and society are not apparently tied by representation, as far as its concrete procedures are concerned.

Party political elites have difficulties identifying with possible societal demands or interests, and presenting party programmes accordingly. As a result, the overall majority of citizens think that they are not represented by the politicians and the distance between elites and the public has not decreased considerably in the democratic period as compared to communism. The parliamentary elite tends to respond to the still obvious representation deficit with more active concrete constituency representation, while the citizens, in accordance with the experiences of previous generations, tend to accept this more individualistic and personal and less institutionalized representation mechanism.

The record shows that after all, representative institutions have developed in Hungary. In

some respects they are similar to those in well established democracies: for example the complexity of representation has been accepted; or the notions about representation among the parliamentary elites are similar to Western patterns. In other respects they are still different: for example they are more personal than institutionalized; the linkage based on the stable party identity–stable electoral pattern is very weak; moreover, the concrete mechanisms of representation are underdeveloped. As a result, the policy dimension is still vague. One can rightly conclude that the glass is both empty and full with respect to representation (Comisso, 1997).

One must note that the connections between representative government, responsive government and responsible government deserve particular attention in new democracies. These concepts are close to each other and deficit in one area brings about shortcomings in the other areas as well. As Birch stated (Birch, 1964) representation might indicate the activities, the personal characteristics or the manner of selection of the representatives, while responsibility includes responsiveness, pursuing prudent and consistent policies and accountability as well. Thus, one can hardly exist without the other, they are intertwined and are each others' prerequisites. This makes representation a key concept in the consolidation of a new democracy. We have seen that the representation deficit has a negative impact on decision making and on governmental responsibility alike, because the political decision making processes are not transparent—not within the parties nor at the wider societal level—and, therefore, the notion of a responsible party model cannot be applied.

Also, the processes of European unification might be a blow to the representation environment in Hungary, and in other new democracies as well. What in some Western countries emerges as a problem of sovereignty, in Hungary might take the form of a representation crisis. It will be difficult to connect national institutions to the European ones, to understand their inter-relatedness and recognize their representative dimensions when on the national level a representation deficit still prevails.

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