

PREFACE

Ever since he discovered future for himself, man is tossed about between the Scylla and Charybdis of despair and hope. His despair fed on failures, on hopes unrealized, or realized in unwanted, therefore, apparently mysterious ways. His hopes got justification from the encouraging successes and victories he achieved from time to time in his struggle for the conquest of the future.

Man has learnt to grasp the future, for his hopes urge him to do that, and he is capable of hope, because he is able to get an insight into future possibilities. Yet hope itself does not fill our image formed on the future with rational content. There is a long, and by no means easy way to go from the desired to the possible future, and from that to the realized one.

We live in a world, where not only the good, but also the bad things may become realized. Good things awaken hope in us, yet, at the same time they caution us to be vigilant. Success and the prevention of failure demand conscious efforts, a strong sense of responsibility, determination, readiness for action from all, who commit themselves to future research serving the survival and progress of mankind.

The authors of this volume, representatives of most diverse fields of research, have all been contributing to the development of Hungarian future research from its beginnings. With hardly fifteen years of experience behind them, they considered the time ripe for introducing themselves, as a collective of authors, to the English-speaking world. In their studies, they publish the results of their research, their ideas, hypotheses about the near and distant future, perspectives of the world and of Hungary. They give an account of perspectives, development trends, perils to be reckoned with on the basis of past and present experiences, and of the most urgent tasks to be dealt with in the interest of optimally influencing our future.

The studies of this volume were selected with the aim of giving the best possible insight for the English reader into the workshops of Hungarian future researchers, and of giving as reliable a picture as possible about current prognostic activity in Hungary.

The title of the volume *Future Research in Hungary* indicates that also some features of tomorrow's Hungary will be presented. The contributors as responsible and dedicated persons, who do everything within their power to bring this future within reachable nearness, take a stand in favour of a progressive, humane future.

The present volume of essays contains 25 studies by Hungarian scientists engaged in various fields of future research. There is no single central basis in Hungary for future research; various research workshops are engaged in this field. The authors of this volume scrutinize problems of future research generally *parallel with* problems of their specific scientific interests.

The first part of the volume approaches future research from the *historical aspect*. The second part is aimed at *ideological-historical* analysis and at introducing *world tendencies*. The third part provides a comprehensive review of the *methodological* experiences of Hungarian future research. The 17 essays of the fourth part guide the reader into the *workshops of future research* in Hungary. Here we find the most diverse prognostic studies, dealing with questions of *technology, industry, energetics, agriculture and food supplies, biology, demographic and economic planning, urban studies, computer technology and ecology*. We may also find studies outlining the perspectives of *social structure and mobility, consumption, life styles and the educational system*.

The works vary considerably in respect of their *type, character* and volume. Some of them (studies, essays) are more or less informative, while others provide comprehensive treatment. The *fundamental themes* of future research (sphere of subjects, conceptual apparatus, technical terms, historical approach, etc.) return on occasion in several articles, though usually in quite various approaches: sometimes in world dimensions, elsewhere in terms of the East European region and at other times related to Hungarian conditions. As a rule, the future images and prognoses in this volume cover the period to the year 2000, but some of them also deal with the first decades of the next century.

The future research concepts, modes of treatment, styles of the authors differ from one another in more than one aspect. While there are fortunate identities in interpretations and standpoints, striking differences are not rare either. The same applies also to sources and the ways and frequency of how references are made. We have reckoned with the heterogeneity of the book from the start. We consciously avoided interferences as injurious to the freedom of research and the sovereignty of the authors. What matters is that the volume presents a uniform picture because of the Marxist approach and treatment of future research problems. The authors never forget that future research tasks have to be adjusted to the demands of planning.

The authors were led by the conviction that future research cannot do without a thorough and reliable analysis of the past and the present. Analysis of the past and the present is particularly important in this volume, since the only way open to English-speaking readers towards understanding Hungarian plans for the future is to become acquainted with the past, and the earlier achievements of economic, technological, social and cultural progress.

The authors are outstanding representatives of Hungarian scientific life, well known not only in Hungary but also in international scientific circles. All of them started future research several years ago and this is indicated by a great number of Hungarian and foreign publications.

By publishing this book, we want to present some major results of Hungarian future research in order to provide a comprehensive picture of Hungary's achievements,

efforts and ideas, and to further a more effective participation of Hungarians in international research.

We are deeply obliged to Akadémiai Kiadó, the Publishing House of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, for having promoted the realization of the above aim by publishing this volume. The editors also express their gratitude to Imre Korán and Ádám Schmidt, who played a significant role in editing the present volume.

It was three years ago that we decided to bring out a book presenting the results of Hungarian future research. The manuscript was closed down in December, 1982.

We hope that the present volume will satisfy the expectations of those interested in the Hungarian future research in the 1970s. If this book is a step in that direction, our efforts will prove to be useful.

The Editors