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MEASURING LATENT ANTI-SEMITISM

One of the greatest problems of empirical research on prejudice is that we must draw conclusions about the prejudices of members of a surveyed groups on the basis of opinions that prejudiced people in particular may be reluctant to express openly under certain social conditions.

As Róbert Angelusz has shown in his analyses of latent public opinion (Angelusz 1996a: 9-39), the main factor determining whether opinions are hidden or clearly manifested is the political and social system, operating mainly through the structure of the public sphere. On the one hand, opinions may be hard to measure in the course of research because certain members of the society don't readily form opinions about relevant subjects. On the other hand, the difficulty may stem from the fact that some individuals hide their opinions on account of "a refined attempt to seek psychological advantage, ... existential dependence, or a fear of harder social consequences" (Angelusz 1996a: 21). Even in advanced democratic societies with well-functioning public spheres, racial, religious, and other group prejudices belong in a category of opinions that are often kept hidden because their public expression would amount to an open breach of the consensus rejecting such views. As in the case of any other form of illegitimate public behaviour, this would give rise to psychological conflicts and possibly even personal disadvantage.

Research on prejudice, and on anti-Semitism in particular, has revealed a strong latency pressure (Latenzdruck) among respondents: they consider it risky to express anti-Jewish opinions. For example, in the course of a survey performed in Austria in the summer of 1991, 27 percent of respondents avoided making a response when they were asked whether the number of Jews in influential positions should be limited, while 31 percent refused to take a position on whether a law should regulate the amount of property or land obtainable by Austrian Jews (Karmasin 1992: 31-34). In Germany, in 1989, 20 percent of respondents in a survey of a representative sample of the adult population agreed with the statement "if I am talking about Jews, I am always very careful, because it is very easy to get your fingers burnt", while 15 percent stated that "I don't tell just anybody what I think about Jews" (Bergmann-Erb 1991: 280). This same statement was accepted by 25 percent of respondents in a 1993 survey of Hungarian university students, while 52 percent of the same students thought that "if you say something bad about Jews, you are immediately branded an anti-Semite" (Kovács 1997: 58).

Of course, for researchers concerned with measuring anti-Semitism, the most important issue is whether or not the feeling of latency pressures induces respondents to hide their real opinions in the course of the interviews. Obviously this will depend on whether respondents consider the sociological interview to be public discourse (in which case they might tend to express socially approved, conformist opinions) or a form of communication that is similar to a private discussion (in which case they might tend to say what they really think even about sensitive issues). There is no general theoretical answer to this question. In the course of their research in Germany, Bergmann and Erb concluded that while about one-quarter of respondents strongly felt latency pressure, it was primarily anti-Semites - those who otherwise

did not hide their opinions in the course of the survey - who considered the expression of anti-Jewish views to be risky. According to Bergmann and Erb, who found that 12 percent of the whole population was very anti-Semitic and 7 percent extremely anti-Semitic, at most a further 4 percent of the surveyed population could be hidden or latent anti-Semites (Bergmann-Erb 1991: 282).

The 1993 survey of a representative sample of Hungarian university and college students produced similar results. It was shown that those who gave anti-Semitic answers in the course of the interview felt the strongest latency pressure, and that this did not stop them from openly expressing their opinions in the interview-situation. On the basis of the results of the survey, I calculated that 7.5 percent of the students were extremely anti-Semitic, 18 percent were anti-Semitic, and a further maximum 9 percent (but probably less) were latent anti-Semites (Kovács 1997: 59; 62). Róbert Angelusz, on the other hand, discovered higher levels of latent anti-Semitism following a national survey of a representative sample: over and above the 12 percent of openly anti-Semitic respondents, he identified a further 12 percent as latent anti-Semites (Angelusz 1996b: 211).

The different results may perhaps be explained by the fact that different questions were asked. But another point to consider is the extent to which the three groups - West-German respondents, Hungarian university students, and members of the representative sample of Hungarian society - considered the sociological interview to be an anonymous and non-public situation. One could well argue that members of the last group were the least confident, and that this explains their tendency to hide their opinions. Thus, when attempting to form an impression of the strength and incidence of anti-Semitic prejudice in Hungary, we should definitely examine whether - owing to the fact that a significant number of respondents conceal their real opinions - it is necessary to adjust results obtained on the basis of opinions openly expressed in the course of the interviews.

In March 1995, we conducted interviews lasting about sixty minutes with 1500 individuals. Overall the respondents were representative of the total adult Hungarian population (over 18 years of age) in terms of gender, age, place of residence, and educational qualifications.[1] In order to measure anti-Semitism based on one of the most widely employed versions of the prejudice theories, we elaborated three independent scales. We created independent measurements of the content of anti-Jewish prejudice, the emotional saturation of prejudice, and the tendency to discriminate against Jews. On the basis of their scores on the three scales, we then classified respondents into three groups of differing levels of prejudice. The results of our procedure are shown in table 1.[2]

Table 1. The current proportion of anti-Semites in the adult Hungarian population

	N	Percentage
Non-anti-Semite	420	29
Stereotyper	478	32
Anti-Semite	246	17
Extreme anti-Semite	116	8
Unclassifiable	213	14
Total	**1473**	**100**

The results indicate that 29 percent of the adult Hungarian population is non-anti-Semitic, 25 percent is anti-Semitic, while 32 percent accept the centuries-old economic stereotypes about Jews without displaying any particular anti-Semitic feeling.[3] The attitudes of a further 14 percent of the population cannot be measured because of the large number of non-responses. Given their lack of any attitudes, this group may also be placed among the non-anti-Semites.

The above results indicate that one-quarter of the adult population of present day Hungary may be classed as anti-Semitic. The question is, however, whether we must adjust this measured result because some of the respondents concealed their real opinions when answering the factor questions.

Using Luhman's definition (Luhmann 1984: 458), scholars concerned with the problem of latency distinguish between two forms it may take. They speak of conscious or factual latency where a respondent has no developed opinions about the issues under examination, and of communicative or functional latency where participants in the communication hide their real opinions (Bergmann-Erb 1986, 1991; Bellers 1990). Opinions may be concealed in two ways: it may be that respondents avoid responding to questions even though they do hold opinions; but it is also possible that they declare views that are not their real ones.

For our examination of latency, we used a group of questions that had already been used in three other surveys. The first group of questions measures the extent to which latency pressure is felt, and allows us to examine where individuals inclining to latency are placed on the anti-Semitism scale. The second group of questions indicate how strong various respondents consider anti-Semitism to be in society, and, on the basis of their position on the anti-Semitism scale, whether they see themselves belonging to what they consider to be the majority or the minority. This analysis is important if we wish to estimate latency, because previous research has shown that certain groups react to latency pressure by projecting their real opinions onto other people, in particular onto "the majority of society" (Angelusz 1996b: 205). Finally, we assessed whether individual respondents consider a series of statements expressing varying degrees of anti-Semitic views to be anti-Semitic or not. We may consider negative responses to indicate latency, because respondents may be able to dissolve the cognitive dissonance stemming from the illegitimate nature of their suppressed anti-Semitic views by declaring these views to be non-anti-Semitic (i.e. legitimate). As a next step indices were prepared from the responses to the three groups of questions which were then used as

indicators of latency. The distribution of responses and the indices are shown in the following six tables.

Table 2. The feeling of latency pressure (percentage)

	True	False	Don't know/no response
...I don't tell just anyone what I think about Jews	29	62	9
...I think many people don't dare say openly what they think about Jews	54	35	11
...If you say something bad about Jews, you are immediately branded an anti-Semite	44	41	15

Table 3. Latency-index (percentage)

None of the statements is true	29
One of the statements is true	29
Two of the statements are true	29
All three statements are true	13

Table 4. Estimates of the strength of anti-Semitism (percentage)

	Very many (4)	Many (3)	Few (2)	Very few (1)	DK/NR(0)
In Hungary today, how many people do you think are hostile to the Jews?	2	23	48	16	11
And how many people might want to limit the influence of Jews in the country?	2	23	46	16	13
And how many people think it would be better if Jews were to emigrate?	1	17	44	24	14

Table 5. Estimate-index based on the sum of responses to the three questions (percentage)

There are very few anti-Semites (1-3 points)	15
There are few anti-Semites (4-6 points)	48
There are many anti-Semites (7-8 points)	14
There are very many anti-Semites (9-12 points)	14
Unable to guess (0 points)	9

Table 6. Are people anti-Semites if they ...(percentage)

	anti-Semite	non-anti-Semite	DK/NR
...Always seek to know who is Jewish in their surrounding	23	66	11
...Don't consider Jews living in Hungary to be Hungarians	57	31	12
...Wouldn't marry a Jew	52	36	12
...Want to limit the number of Jews in certain professions	67	22	11
...Think that Jews can never become full Hungarians whatever the conditions	60	28	12
...Think that Jews have recognisable features	19	70	11
...Think that the murder of Christ is the unforgivable sin of the Jews	37	42	21
...Think that Jews should be encouraged to emigrate from Hungary	77	13	10
...Think that the interests of Jews in Hungary are very different from the interests of non-Jews	35	50	15
...Think that Jews are no longer capable of integrating into Hungarian society	48	38	14
...Think that the crimes committed against the Jews were no greater than those against the victims of Communism	30	51	19

...Think that Jews are responsible for the period of Communist rule in Hungary	45	34	21
...Think that Jews divide and weaken nations that accept them	65	21	14
...Think that Jews are hostile to the Christian faith	42	39	19

Table 7. Index of denial of anti-Semitism (percentage)

0-3 statements were anti-Semitic	23
4-6 statements were anti-Semitic	25
7-9 statements were anti-Semitic	28
10-14 statements were anti-Semitic	24

Thus, in the surveyed population, there are two groups whom we may suspect of concealing their real opinions in the course of the interviews or of not expressing their real attitudes. The first group are those respondents who gave no real answers to a great number of the questions, i.e. those who did not answer or who selected the "don't know" response. The second group comprises of respondents who perhaps did not say what they were really thinking and responded to the questions raised with answers they considered to be appropriate or legitimate.

Two types of motivation may explain why a respondent avoids answering questions. Some people simply may not have developed opinions about the issues raised; perhaps the problems of the survey are of no interest to them. But it is also possible that the refusal to give a full answer is a means of hiding opinions. Using Luhman's categories, the first group is characterised by factual latency, and the second group by communication latency. Gilljam and Granberg call the former "real nonattitudes or true negatives", and the latter "pseudo-nonattitudes or false negatives" (Gilljam-Granberg 1993: 349). Our analysis should concentrate primarily on this second group.

We examined the group of respondents who regularly avoided answering with the help of the questions we had used to divide the respondents into groups according to the strength of anti-Semitism. The share of no responses to the 25 questions used to form the anti-Semitism scale was the following:

Table 8. The proportion of no response (NR) and don't know (DK) answers to the 25 scale questions (percentage)

Zero DK/NR	43
Less than 10 percent DK/NR	19
10-20 percent DK/NR	16

20-30 percent DK/NR	6
30-40 percent DK/NR	6
More than 40 percent DK/NR	10

Thus, 22 percent of respondents gave no answer to at least six questions, which means in effect that they gave no full answers to the questions about the strength of anti-Semitic prejudice. In this group, respondents who avoided answering more than ten questions (40 percent) form the only clearly identifiable subgroup: in this group there are significantly higher than average numbers of village inhabitants, poorly educated people, people with low status, and poor people - all of whom also often failed to give full responses to the questions examining general economic and political attitudes. Also of interest is the fact that women are slightly more inclined to avoid answering, while a higher propensity to respond is characteristic of Budapest residents. We also examined whether we could identify differences between the various groups (classified according to their propensity to avoid responding) in terms of the strength of xenophobia, anomie, and conservatism - that is, on the basis of three attitudes which, according to the results of our previous survey, give rise to anti-Semitism (Kovács 1999: 413). Our examination did not reveal any significant differences. This result again indicates that refusal of response usually reflects a lack of attitudes rather than latency.

This impression is strengthened by the analysis carried out with the help of the latency-index and the estimate-index. The suspicion of latency arises above all in connection with those who failed to give full responses to a great number of questions but who, on the other hand, were placed in relatively high positions on the latency and estimate indices. An analysis of the responses revealed that 73 of those 321 persons (22 percent of the total surveyed population) who gave no response to more than 20 percent of the scale questions (i.e. to more than five questions) agreed with at least two of the statements forming the latency index, while forty of them thought that anti-Semites are very numerous in Hungary, and sixteen of them featured in the group with high scores on both indices. Based on these results, we may state that between 5 percent and 25 percent of those who avoided giving full responses may, in doing so, have concealed their anti-Semitic prejudice. This makes between 1 percent and 5 percent of the full sample.

Closer study of the group revealed once again that in a large majority of cases the refusal of response was more likely to indicate non-attitude or factual latency. When, for instance, we examined whether, within the group of non-anti-Semites, there were any differences between those suspected of latency and the others in terms of the strength of attitudes such as xenophobia, anomie, and conservatism (all of which have a proven causal role in the formation of anti-Semitic prejudice), we found no significant differences. Thus, employing Gilljam and Granberg's category, we may classify this group as "real nonattitudes or true negatives". This means that, when measuring anti-Semitism, we were right not to regard the group of unclassifiables (i.e. those with a large number of no responses) as anti-Semites.

Of course, the suspicion of latency does not only arise in the case of those who avoided answering many questions. It is also possible that some respondents gave misleading answers rather than answering what they really thought. If a large number of the respondents reacted to the feeling of latency pressure by giving conformist answers, and on the basis of these answers were placed among the non-anti-Semites, then we must definitely adjust our estimate of the proportion of anti-Semites. Thus, we have to examine whether the group that was

placed among the non-anti-Semites on the basis of its answers but received high scores on the latent scale, is in reality anti-Semitic.

Among non-anti-Semites there was a fairly large group of those who felt latency pressure. Of 897 non-anti-Semites 239 individuals (27 percent) felt that there are many anti-Semites in the country and 386 (43 percent) agreed with at least two of the latency index statements. The number of non-anti-Semites who received high scores on both indices, i.e. who agreed with at least two of the latency index statements and who were also of the view that there are many anti-Semites in the country, was 112, which is more than 12 percent of the non-anti-Semites' group.

A more detailed examination revealed that in the first group - the group that is non-anti-Semitic but supposes a high number of anti-Semites - there were significantly higher than average numbers of young people (18-29 age group), residents of Budapest, the better educated, and middle class people. This result corresponds with the findings of Róbert Angelusz, who also concluded that highly educated and young Budapest residents belong in this group (Angelusz 1996b: 207). In terms of the strength of attitudes that give rise to anti-Semitism, however, the group suspected of latency was no different from the other non-anti-Semitic groups.

The group that is non-anti-Semitic but feels a strong latency pressure hardly differed from the other non-anti-Semitic groups with regard to most social and demographic indices. However, there were significantly more women, fewer young people, and more people with higher educational qualifications or belonging to the upper middle-class in the group. In terms of attitudes that give rise to anti-Semitic prejudice, there were a few small differences between non-anti-Semites suspected of latency and other non-anti-Semites: among the former group the feeling of anomie was significantly stronger than among the latter group, which indicates that anti-Semites may be hiding in this group.

The third indicator used to measure latency is the denial of the anti-Semitic nature of anti-Semitic statements. As we have seen (table 6), 48 percent of respondents considered at most six of fourteen of the statements to be anti-Semitic. Even if we take into account the fact that 10 percent of those interviewed gave "don't know" responses to at least 8 questions, the suspicion may still arise in connection with almost 40 percent of the respondents that they did not confess what they really thought when they were asked about anti-Semitism. Naturally, the denial of the anti-Semite content of anti-Semite statements does not have to be a manifestation of latency; it is possible that a respondent does not perceive the meaning of what are consensually considered to be anti-Semitic statements, or that he or she is uncertain about judging the statements and therefore gives arbitrary responses. For these reasons, the suspicion of latency is strongest in connection with those who received high scores on all three indices measuring latency and who were placed in one of the non-anti-Semitic groups when anti-Semitism was being measured.

Thus, as a first step, we examined how many of the respondents who were placed among the non-anti-Semites (i.e. in the non-anti-Semitic or stereotyping groups) when anti-Semitism was being measured but who agree with at least two of the statements measuring latency, feel that there were many anti-Semites living in the country and, furthermore, do not regard at least eight anti-Semitic statements as anti-Semitic. The result of this calculation may be considered to be the minimum estimate of latency. In the sample (N = 1473) we found 39 such

individuals. This means that we must adjust the measured proportion of anti-Semites by at least 3 percent, so that the figure for the whole of the sample may be put at 28 percent.

To calculate the maximum estimate of latency, we created a new index by combining the three latency indices. The maximum possible score on the index was 11, which respondents reached if they agreed with all three statements measuring latency, were of the opinion that there were many anti-Semites in the country, and considered at most three of the anti-Semitic statements to be anti-Semitic.[4]

Table 9. Combined latency index

	Percentage	N
Non-latent (index score of 2-5)	45	661
Somewhat latent (index score of 6-7)	36	521
Latent (index score of 8-11)	19	277

Table 10. Latency and anti-Semitism (percentage)

	Non-latent	Somewhat latent	Latent
Non-anti-Semite	52	34	14
Stereotyper	49	38	13
Anti-Semite	12	30	58
Extreme anti-Semite	12	30	58
Unclassifiable	64	25	11

As shown in the table, anti-Semites experience latency pressure much more strongly than non-anti-Semites, and yet in the course of the interviews most of them did not conceal their views and thus, on the basis of their responses, were placed in the anti-Semitic group. This result coincides with the findings of other surveys and confirms the validity of our measurement - at least as regards to the low significance of the distorting effect of respondents who concealed their views. Nevertheless, one should also note that out of the group displaying strong latency on the combined latency index (N = 277) 140 individuals, i.e. about half of the group, showed up as non-anti-Semites in the course of the measurement procedure - that is, were placed among the non-anti-Semites, stereotypers, or unclassifiables. It is these two groups that must be compared in order to find out whether latency disguises a tendency to prejudice. *The comparison of the groups of non-anti-Semites with low and high scores on the latency index showed that non-anti-Semites with high scores differ from those with low scores in just the same dimensions as those which generally distinguish anti-Semites from non-anti-Semites.* With regard to the social and demographic indicators, among members of the group displaying high latency, there were significantly greater numbers of inhabitant of Budapest and those who were born in Budapest, relatively highly educated people, and those whose parents were from Budapest (in each case $chi^2 < .04$). Those with high latency scores

are more similar in terms of their attitudes to anti-Semites rather than to the non-anti-Semites who were placed in the same group on the anti-Semitism scale: among the former group xenophobia and anomie are significantly stronger than among the latter (Sig.F = .000 or .04). With regard to the various cluster groups formed on the basis of attitudes, the fact that high scorers on the latency index were significantly more numerous among the "left-wing and frustrated" cluster group than among other cluster groups is of particular interest and serves to confirm the suspicion that the group may contain a good number of latent anti-Semites. This phenomenon may be easily explained: it was electors of parties rejecting anti-Semitism in their public ideology (Hungarian Socialist Party/MSZP, Workers' Party/Munkáspárt) who formed the majority of the "left-wing frustrated", a group of people who achieved higher than average scores on the scalesmeasuring personal frustration, distrust of politics and the democratic institutions of the state, social distress and the loss of norms, as well as nostalgia for the communist past.[5]

Finally, therefore, we may conclude that in this group of 140 individuals - which amounts to almost 10 percent of the complete sample - numerous hidden anti-Semites may be present. Thus, based on the results of the measurement of latency, we should adjust our estimate of the size of the anti-Semitic groups by a minimum of 2 percent and a maximum of 10 percent. This means that the proportion of anti-Semites in contemporary Hungarian society could be between one-quarter and one-third of the total adult population.

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2. For the methods and procedures of measurement, see Kovács, 1999b.

3. Respondents placed in the stereotypers' group received a high score on the stereotype-scale on the basis of their significantly greater acceptance of five stereotypes - cunning, greedy, materialistic, pushy, rapacious. They were not inclined, however, to accept three other stereotypes on the factor - vengeful, supercilious, aggressive. Apart from the traditional Shylock stereotypes, members of this group were unlikely to accept the other anti-Semitic stereotypes; indeed, more often than not, they rejected anti-Semitic statements. Apart from the above five stereotypes, the opinions expressed by the group on the sclae-questions were more or less the same as the opinions of the non-anti-Semites, and therefore this group may be classified as non-anti-Semitic rather than anti-Semitic.

4. Possible scores on the latent-index: 0 (none of the statements is true) - 3 (all three statements are true); possible scores on the estimate-index: 1 (there are very few anti-Semites) - 4 (there are very many anti-Semites); possible scores on the denial-index: 1 (7-14 statements are anti-Semitic) - 4 (0-3 statements are anti-Semitic)

5. In the course of the survey we distinguished two frustrated groups on the basis of a combination of various attitudes. The "right-wing frustrated" comprised respondents who - when we asked them about the state of things after 1990 - agreed with opinions revealing high levels of personal frustration and strong feelings of anomie, and who were also characterised

by strong national and religious sentiments and a conservative outlook on life. The "left-wing frustrated" comprised respondents with high levels of personal frustration and anomie who strongly rejected national and religious sentiments. See Kovács 1999b: 221.

6. Our observation coincides with the findings of Enyedi, Erõs and Fábián who - in the course of an empirical study on authoritarianism in 1994 - measured relatively high F-scale scores among voters on the left of the political spectrum, which had a causal relationship with the level of anti-Semitic prejudice (Enyedi-Erõs-Fábián 1997).