

ADVERTISING & SOCIALISM

A Study of the Nature and Extent of Consumer Advertising in the Soviet Union, Poland, Hungary and Yugoslavia

Philip Hanson



ADVERTISING AND SOCIALISM

By the same author

The Consumer in the Soviet Economy

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The Nature and Extent of Consumer Advertising in
the Soviet Union, Poland, Hungary and Yugoslavia

Philip Hanson

*Senior Lecturer, Centre for Russian and East European Studies,
University of Birmingham*

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Preface

The idea of making a study of advertising in socialist countries was originally suggested to me by Mr Harold Lind of the (British) Advertising Association. It seemed an intrinsically interesting subject, as well as a natural extension of work I had done earlier on the consumer sector of the Soviet economy. I had doubts, though, about whether there was really much advertising to investigate, at least in the Comecon countries. A preliminary check suggested that there was, after all, a tiny but growing volume of consumer advertising even in countries such as the Soviet Union, which had detailed central planning, and substantially more in the recently decentralised Hungarian economy and pre-invasion Czechoslovakia. And of course, outside the Soviet orbit there was the relatively market-oriented and Westernised Yugoslav economy. This suggested that there were after all some interesting questions to answer: Why did an administrative economy like the Soviet one have any domestic consumer advertising at all, and why was it, apparently, growing? What did evidence from Hungary and Yugoslavia suggest about the scale and functions of advertising in more decentralised socialist economies?

The bulk of the research was done in 1970 and 1971, with the assistance of a research grant from the Advertising Association, and written up in 1971–2. I looked first at the Soviet situation and then at that in Poland, Hungary and Yugoslavia. The reasons for this choice of countries are explained in the Introduction. In the case of the Soviet Union this study is based on a reading of the rapidly-growing Soviet literature on marketing and a series of interviews with Soviet marketing people in the summer of 1970. In the case of the East European countries I have relied more heavily on interviews, conducted in 1971, and have not attempted to survey the very large marketing literature of these three countries. In general, statements made in this book about