

THE 1980—1981 SUNDAY POPULARIZING LECTURES DELIVERED IN THE “GRIGORE ANTIPA” MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

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On établit un ordre relatif des thèmes du cycle de conférences dominicales 1980—1981. On propose un test qui offre la possibilité de saisir les opinions du public concernant les conférences.

Within the relationship of the “Grigore Antipa” Museum of Natural History with the public, the Sunday lectures play a double role: on the one hand, they offer new scientific information to the public and on the other hand, they give to the Museum a better knowledge on the public.

Fully aware of the importance of the aspects of this activity, the Museum’s specialists have undertaken interesting studies related to it: Dumitrescu, Murariu, Manoleli (1975), Dumitrescu (1976, 1977), Dumitrescu, Murariu, Găldean, Manoleli (1979), Găldean (1980), and Găldean, Constantinescu (1981).

Some of these studies were focussed on the structure and the opinions of the public (Dumitrescu, Murariu, Manoleli op. cit.) and on the dynamic of the audience along several lecture cycles (Găldean, Constantinescu op. cit.).

In the present paper, we submit some conclusions drawn on the data collected about the audience of the 1980—1981 Sunday lectures.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

We took our data from the daily reports drawn up by the museographers, on duty, at the end of each day. As for the method analysis, we considered that a separation of the lecture cycle into four periods (A, B, C and D) would be proper. The first three periods were delimited taking into account the similar aspects of the curves registered by the percentage of each lecture from the total audience of the cycles from 1974 until 1980 (Găldean, Constantinescu op. cit.). As the fourth period exceeds the common limits of the 1974—1980 cycles, it can be considered as relatively determined.

Each of the above mentioned periods gathered three groups of lectures corresponding to the three subjects of the present cycle.

We compared the means of the lecture groups of each period, considering different standard deviations. The used formula were taken from S n e d e c o r (1968).

1. For the groups with equal numbers of lectures ($n_1 = n_2 = n$) in which \bar{X} is the estimate mean of a variable and $S_{X_1-X_2}$ the estimate of standard deviation of the difference between means

$$t = \frac{\bar{X}_1 - \bar{X}_2}{S_{X_1-X_2}}$$
2. For the groups with unequal numbers of lectures ($n_1 \neq n_2$) t was similarly calculated, but it was compared with t representing a mean of two t (one for n_1-1 and one for n_2-1), which was dependent on S_1^2/n_1 and on S_2^2/n_2

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The 1980—1981 popularizing lecture cycle, the longest in the last ten years, has a mean of persons attending a lecture (98) almost equal to that of the last six cycles (99, tab. 1).

TABLE I

The number of lectures and the audience mean per lecture for the 1975—1981 cycles

Cycle	Audience mean/lecture	Number of lectures
1975—1976	85	23
1976—1977	110	20
1977—1978	81	25
1978—1979	98	29
1979—1980	122	28
1980—1981	98	36

It began on the 28th of September 1980 and lasted until the 21st of May 1981, gathering 33 lectures to which were added 3 film galas. The lectures were grouped according to three subjects: “*The Ocean and the man*” (subject 1), “*Zoological kaleidoscope*” (2) and “*Terra ecosystems*” (3); (the distribution of subjects as well as of the film galas Fig. 1).

In accordance with the apparent preference order of the audience, the subjects would succeed as follows: subject 3 (111.42 — mean of audience per lecture), subject 1 (92.75) and subject 2 (76.9).

Two aspects should be however examined: the heterogeneity of the information given by means of a subject and the date when the lecture was delivered within the cycle.

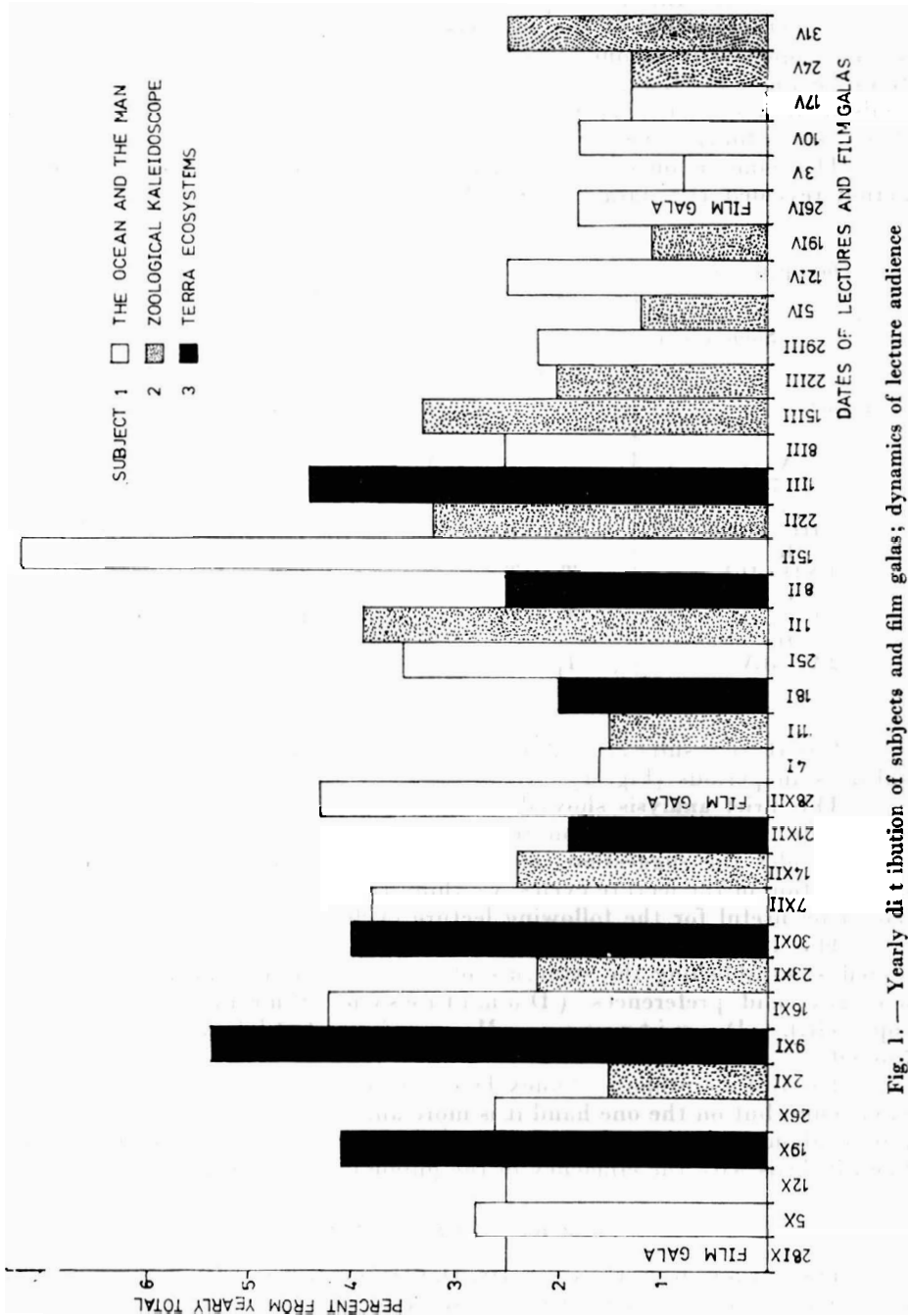


Fig. 1. — Yearly distribution of subjects and film galas; dynamics of lecture audience

As concerns the first aspect, we noticed, as one could expect, that the greatest heterogeneity of the subjects was recorded within the "Zoological kaleidoscope". The second aspect was analysed for six successive cycles by Găldean and Constantinescu (op. cit.). We took over the periods delimited in the above mentioned paper (A, B, C) and we relatively delimited a fourth one (D).

The comparison of the audience means of the three subjects within a period revealed the data of table 2.

TABLE 2

The equality ($t_{\text{obtained}} \leq t_{0.05}$) or inequality ($t_{\text{obtained}} > t_{0.05}$) relationship between the subject mean (T), for each period (A, B, C and D).

Subject (T) Period	Subject (T)		
	T ₁ and T ₂	T ₂ and T ₃	T ₃ and T ₁
A 5.X—7.XI and 29.III—19.IV	T ₁ > T ₂	T ₂ < T ₃	T ₃ > T ₁
B 14.XII—II.I	T ₁ = T ₂	T ₂ = T ₃	T ₃ > T ₁
C 18.I—22.III	T ₁ = T ₂	T ₂ = T ₃	T ₃ = T ₁
D 2.V—31.V	T ₁ < T ₂	—	—

But these results are influenced by the non-balanced distribution of the subjects in periods (Fig. 1).

This brief analysis showed that the public was attracted by subject 3 and made no discrimination regarding the other two subjects.

Besides the suggestions made in the above mentioned papers for the organisation of the lecture cycles, we think that a stratified taking of bearings would be useful for the following lecture cycle.

The 1973—1974 exhaustive test and 1977—1978 taking of bearings aimed at establishing the structure of the audience as concerns occupations, age, sex, and preferences (Dumitrescu, Murariu, Manoleli (op. cit.), Dumitrescu, Murariu, Găldean, Manoleli (op. cit.)).

The test we propose (Annex 1) is not essentially different from the previous ones, but on the one hand it is more analytical as for the opinions of the public about this activity and about biology in general, and on the other hand it deals with the efficiency of the public information about this activity.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors wish to thank Dr. Dan Dumitrescu for valuable discussion and for his useful criticism of the manuscript.

ANNEX 1

1. By what means had you information about the lecture? — You read the advertisement in the newspaper. / You read the Lecture Program. / You read the poster in the hall of the Museum. / Somebody invited you.
2. What is the reason for which you attend the lecture? — The title of the lecture attracted you. / You have come especially for the lecturer. / You accompany somebody interested in the lecture. / You are interested particularly in the films to be shown after the lecture. / You have come by mere curiosity
3. What is your opinion about today lecture? —
 - A. The lecture has been tiring. — Yes / No.
 - B. The subject has been of interest to you — Yes / No.
 - C. The lecture has been clearly expounded. — Yes / No.
4. What is your opinion about the slides, drawings, exhibits used by the lecturer?
 - A. They have been adequate. — Yes / No.
 - B. They have brought something new to you. — Yes / No.
5. Which are the most interesting subjects [in your opinion] included in the present lecture cycle?
6. Do you follow biological subjects? — In books. / On the T.V.. / In other information sources.
7. What is the purpose of this lecture [in your opinion]? — To present biological curiosities. / Biological novelties. / Various biological branches.
8. How many lecturers of the present cycle have you attended (the present one included)?
9. Which would be the biological subjects you would suggest for the following lecture cycle (please indicate three at the most in the order of your preference)?
10. A few personal data — Age / Sex / Occupation / Residence (locality, sector of Bucharest) / Married or unmarried.

CICLUL DE CONFERINȚE DUMINICALE DE POPULARIZARE 1980—
1981 DESFĂȘURAT LA MUZEUL DE ISTORIE NATURALĂ
«GRIGORE ANTIPA»

REZUMAT

Autorii comentează ciclul de conferințe duminicale 1980—1981. Este stabilită o ordine relativă a temelor în care sînt încadrate conferințele ciclului. De asemenea este propus un test pentru cunoașterea opiniilor publicului, relativ la această activitate a muzeului.

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