

How to understand each other without words?

How to perceive without the senses?

How to change something from the inside?

How to move someone remotely?

HAND ANTENNAS

When Vilém Flusser – in his book *Do universa technických obrazů* (To the Universe of Technical Images) – says that today, when the world has disintegrated into abstracted points, we do not take things in our hands but rather control them by pressing buttons and keyboards, he actually describes new manual economics and a new attitude toward the world booming with the expansion of digital technologies.¹ Hands represent a model of simple tools. They are extended by the form and function of these tools. But what if some devices are similar to hands, whether morphologically or functionally? The RUKA (Hand) antenna, whose name is an abbreviation of the names of its Czech inventors, František Kahuda and Aleš Rumler, resembles a hand not only with its name. As its creators say: “All psycho-energetic experiments prove that the head and hands–palms are parts of the human body emitting the most radiation [...]”² Under certain circumstances, “a hand with outstretched fingers acts like an antenna”.³ For “psycho-energetics” or “psychotronics”, the special relationship between the biological and the technical is symptomatic. Like Flusser’s buttons, psychotronic technologies and devices ask for a different way of dealing with things. The materialistic approach to seemingly immaterial phenomena brings unprecedented possibilities for communication and manipulation. In a way, the dreams of telepathy, telekinesis and telegnosis or clairvoyance come true in technical apparatuses available today. From the perspective of psychics, however, the current state does not mean meeting their goals, but rather a new challenge.

METHOD, DISCOURSE, INSTITUTIONS

Psychotronics is trying to establish itself as a new science and meet the methodological, discursive and institutional requirements to do so. In Czechoslovakia, the most ardent promoters of psychotronics included František Kahuda and Zdeněk Rejdák. The local parapsychological tradition adapted to new conditions, absorbing many ideas from the USSR. The very term of psychotronics ex-

presses the intention to take a “more scientific” approach to the studied phenomena. While similar phenomena were historically explored mostly by curious individuals or interest groups, new professionalism reached official institutions as well. Since the late 1960s to the early 1990s, there was a number of psychotronic institutions in Czechoslovakia, including the Coordinating Group for the Research of Psychotronics, the Psychoenergetic Laboratory (PEL) at the Technical University (ČVUT) in Prague and later at the Institute of Chemical Technology (VŠCHT) in Prague (headed by Kahuda), the Research Institution for Psychotronics and Juvenology at the same institution (headed by Rejdák), the Section for the Research of Psychotronics at the Committee of Applied Cybernetics of the Czech Science and Technology Society (ČVTS), the Department of Experimental Psychotronics at the Research Institute of Animal Production, the Commission of Psychotronics of the Gerontological Society of the Slovak Medical Society, the Commission of the Slovak Council of the Czechoslovak Scientific and Technological Society for Psychotronics, and more. Since 1973, there were also conferences of the International Society for Psychotronics. The first edition was held in Prague on 18–22 June 1973.

In Czechoslovakia, the term psychotronics is promoted by Zdeněk Rejdák who refuses the term parapsychology.⁴ According to Rejdák, psychotronics includes telepathy, telekinesis and telegnosis. Rejdák also refers to his French colleague Fernando Clerc who says: “We already have electronics, cybernetics, stereotronics – and what do we still lack? We can suggest the term psychotronics for the phenomena using the energy emitted during the thought process and the energy carrying the impulse of the human will.” According to Clerc, “every one of us has the ability of certain, though extremely weak action at a distance. It will not be long before we can focus our will, safely protected from external influences, to run relays and servo motors.” František Kahuda distinguishes between the Western *psychotronics*, which tries to explain the phenomena studied with “known forms of energy”, and

the Czechoslovak and Soviet *psychoenergetics*, which assumes the existence of a distinctive psychic or mental energy.⁵ However, Kahuda did not maintain this distinction consistently and even he later resorted to the concept of *psychotronics*. The idea of the specific nature of the Eastern concept of mental energy compared to the Western one is somewhat misleading: although the Soviet scientist N. I. Kobozev came with the theory of bio-energetic particles, the so-called *psychones*, the Soviets generally concentrated on physically explainable psychotronic phenomena (such as electrostatics and electromagnetism⁶) and explored the relationship between parapsychological phenomena and the known types of radiation.⁷ Kahuda resonates with the Leninist theory of reflection, which sees the psyche “as an image (projection) of the objective reality”, as “the supreme product of the matter organized in a special way” which is “the result of the transformation of the energy of an external stimulus into to the fact of consciousness.”⁸ Moreover, Kahuda, referring to V. M. Bechterew and P. P. Lazarev, assumes that “the interactions in the process of thinking in the human nervous system energetically manifest themselves also outside the human brain”,⁹ as attested by cases of telekinesis or telepathy. The theory of mentions is supposed to complement scientific knowledge: it describes the “third signal system” (in addition to the two signal systems defined by I. P. Pavlov), “the fifth type of interaction” (in addition to the four types of interaction – nuclear, electromagnetic, weak nuclear and gravitational – studied by physics), and “the sixth sense” (called “temp” by Kahuda). Kahuda’s belief in the material mention character of mental energy is still a subject of disputes among those who are interested in psychotronics, as can be seen chiefly in the discussion about the nature of the telepathic transmission.¹⁰

Rejdák describes psychotronics as an interdisciplinary discipline and puts it into the context with other sciences studying the aspects of psychotronic phenomena: physics, communication science, mathematics, cybernetics, psychology, psychiatry, medicine, neurophysiology, physiology, anthropology, geology, cosmobiology, sociology,

1. Vilém Flusser, *Do universa technických obrazů*, Prague: OSVU, 2001, pp. 27.
2. Aleš Rumler, “Přenos energie fundamentálního záření vláknovým vedením” in František Kahuda, *Fundamentální záření hmot: Závěrečná výzkumná zpráva* (Final Research Report), Prague, 1980, no pagination.
3. Ibid.
4. Karel Drbal and Zdeněk Rejdák, *Perspektivy telepatie*, Prague: Melantrich, 1970, pp. 27–31.
5. František Kahuda, *Fundamentální záření hmot: The research project of the University of Chemistry and Technology in Prague (VŠCHT) F – 2290 – 922 for 1984–1985*, 1984, p. 6.
6. *Controlled Offensive Behavior*, p. 57. <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP96-00792R000500730002-1.pdf>.
7. Wladimir Velminski, *Homo Sovieticus: Brain Waves, Mind Control, and Telepathic Destiny*, Cambridge, Massachusetts – London: The MIT Press, 2017.
8. František Kahuda, *Mentiony a fyzikální projevy myšlení (Materialistický mechanismus hmotných dějů v CNS): Research report about the end stages of the research subtask VII-3-8/2 c “Sociální zrání dětí a mládeže”*, Prague 1974, p. 16.
9. Ibid., p. 19.
10. Rejdák and Drbal, *Perspektivy telepatie*, esp. pp. 50–124. See also: Zdeněk Rejdák (ed.), *Telepatie a jasnovidnost*, Prague: Svoboda, 1970.

and bionics.¹¹ The “limit” nature of the studied phenomena asks for a certain interdisciplinary approach as the interdisciplinary dimension of research is emphasized both by Rejdák and Kahuda. Kahuda frames the discipline by the Marxist notion of “one science”, which includes physics, psychology and psychophysiology, biology and sociology.¹² Like his Soviet colleague P. K. Anochin, he believes that the research on the brain must combine the findings of neurophysiology and behaviourism. He finds the “systemic approach” particularly suitable.¹³

STR AND SHR

According to its proponents, psychoenergetics will substantially influence the ongoing scientific and technological revolution. Kahuda predicts “that the first half of the twenty first century will be the age of a new, yet unknown, though existing mental energy. Its control as the highest value of man should have the form of an active intervention into the confident shaping of mental processes to form the human for the benefit of the future society in a more rational way than ever before.”¹⁴ Scientific knowledge and rational application of this mental energy will then ensure “not only technical and economic development, but also the elevation of interpersonal relationships in the advanced socialist society to the highest attainable level. The scientific and technological revolution also and, perhaps above all, concerns the man and all workers who make it possible.”¹⁵ A different view is held by Břetislav Kafka, sculptor and hypnotist from Červený Kostelec, in his book *Člověk zítřka* (The Man of Tomorrow, 1947): “Technical sciences take the man away from the human. They confirm his notion that progress is about having more perfect machines, not about being better today than we were yesterday.”¹⁶ According to Kafka, “the aim of humanity” is “material and spiritual well-being. Industrial civilization defers this aim. Modern civilization sacrificed the sense to the matter. The man had become accustomed to his life by repeating the same movement every day, by processing one element.”¹⁷ Zdeněk Rejdák, who used to visit Kafka like many others, later speaks of the need for a “scientific and human revolution”,¹⁸ which should complement and counterbalance the ongoing scientific and technological revolution if we do not want to “flood the world in the next century with mechanical and human robots and enhance the alienation and social decay”.¹⁹ In Rejdák’s model, the man and mankind stand in opposition to the dehumanizing technology although they are complementary with it. Kahuda’s psy-

choenergetic dialectical materialism and Rejdák’s psychotronic socialist humanism are quite similar.

PSYCHOTRONICS, INFORMATION SCIENCE AND CYBERNETICS

Most generally speaking, psychotronics deals with unusual or unexplained types of information transmission. According to Valdemar Grešík, the last director of the Psychoenergetic Laboratory (PEL), closed in 1991, psychotronics “is based on the assumption that man is able to acquire and transmit information in other, so far unknown ways or paths. [...] To a great extent, diagnosing and looking for various objects and healing, all represent kinds of information transmission – in an energetic form, of course.”²⁰ In this context, Kahuda speaks of “mental information science” which “lies in decoding the information encoded in substances. Such use of mental energy emitted by a psychic as a subject of an information process, when the energy has a similar role like the quanta of electromagnetic energy broadcast by an antenna in short wavelengths (radio microwaves) to the target subject, from which the wave is reflected and received in intermittent broadcast by an image tube which then receives the information about the observed object [...]. In this process, the quanta of mental energy function as a mental radar while the emitted clusters of mental energy are qualitatively directed to the object of the process, i.e. contain the required information in the form of instruction and query on the way to the target, and in the form of feedback response on the way back to the source (brain). The detection of the target during the mental reflection is not only about a mere physical reflection, but also about finding the qualitative characteristics of the detected object.”²¹ Moreover, according to Kahuda, the mentions – unlike the known particles – can penetrate any obstacle, which makes them suitable for the “action at a distance”. Before Kahuda, the striking parallelism of telepathy and radiocommunications was mentioned also by Upton Sinclair in *Mental Radio* (1930) and B.B. Kazinskij in *Biological Radio communications* (1962). The effort to clarify the physical nature of parapsychological phenomena and the recurrent recognition of similarities between these phenomena and technological apparatuses is also noteworthy.

Kahuda says that “the use of a variety of devices for contactless communication with both the living and nonliving matter, using a psychophysical method, will certainly be very important one day.”²² According to Kahuda, the role of mentions is to transfer “quality-oriented informa-

tion in various types of nonverbal mention communication”,²³ including communication with animals and plants. Mental energy is supposed to be useful “especially in the area of communication, control, management, influencing various events”.²⁴ This statement is strikingly reminiscent of the definition of cybernetics by Norbert Wiener as a science of control and communication in living organisms and machines. Besides the contemporary fascination with cybernetics (developed in the Easter Bloc since the late 1950s), there is also a certain structural similarity attracting the psychics. If hands in the eyes of psychics resemble antennas, the second key part of the human body, the head – and namely the brain, is obviously associated with computers. This comparison often occurs in the texts. Kahuda concludes that “man is not [unlike computers] only a ‘product’ of the social environment, a passive object of the internalized (interiorized) effects of the external environment, but uses its own self-regulatory system to create and change the external stimuli, to exteriorize them with ideas and work, thus actively influencing the world and acting as an active creature”.²⁵ At the First International Conference of Psychotronics, Rejdák presented his paper “Psychotronics reveals new possibilities for cybernetics”²⁶ which concluded that psychotronics “can help cybernetics solve one of the most difficult tasks – to help teach machines to create”.²⁷

The context of psychotronics and cybernetics can be detected at multiple levels, as shown by American researchers Lynn Schroeder and Sheila Ostrander who described the state of Czechoslovak psychotronics in the late 1960s in *Psychic Discoveries behind the Iron Curtain*, describing the Czech experiment whose executors decided to “think of telepathy as a channel with such a high degree of noise that it almost drowns the entire message. Information theory knows the means to overcome the problem of noise, such as calculations indicating, among other things, how many repetitions of one bit of information is necessary for proper reception. The Czechs used these calculations when they asked two people to try to telepathically send messages in a binary code back and forth while the computer found the necessary formula according to information theory.”²⁸ In the experiment, telepathy reportedly proved to be more reliable than a field radio.

PYRAMIDS AND GENERATORS

Although psychics announce the immense impact of their discoveries in the near future, the practical application of the research is limited

11. Drbal a Rejdák, *Perspektivy telepatie*, pp. 27–28.
12. Kahuda, *Mentiony a fyzikální projevy myšlení*, pp. 3–4.
13. *Ibid.*, pp. 10–15.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 228.
15. *Ibid.*, pp. 227–228.
16. Kafka, *Člověk zítřka: Kultura rozumu a vůle*, Červený Kostelec: self-published, 1947, p. 13.
17. *Ibid.*, pp. 23–30.
18. Drbal a Rejdák, *Perspektivy telepatie*, p. 9.
19. Zdeněk Rejdák, “Psychotronics: The State of Art”, *Impact of Science on Society*, XXIV, 4, December 1974, p. 288–289.
20. Šimon Krbec and Jiří Kuchař, “Léčitelství je umění: Rozhovor s Valdemarem Grešíkem”, *Regenerace*, 2, 2003, p. 14.
21. František Kahuda, *Fundamentální záření hmot. Závěrečná výzkumná zpráva k výzkumnému úkolu ČVUT-R-004 “Mentální energie a její využití v praxi”*, Prague: 1980, pp. 12–13.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 54.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 57.
24. *Ibid.*, 1980, p. 43.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 31.
26. Zdeněk Rejdák, *I. konference o výzkumu psychotroniky: Sborník referátů*, Prague: Dům techniky ČVTS, 1973, volume II, pp. 226–229.
27. *Ibid.*, p. 229. Rejdák’s paper was refused by Tomáš Radil-advised in *Odhaluje psychotronika nové možnosti pro kybernetiku?*, *Kybernetika*, X, 4, p. 368–369.
28. Sheila Ostrander and Lynn Schroeder, *Psychic Discoveries behind the Iron Curtain*, Englewood Cliffs : Prentice-Hall, 1970, p. 316.

to relatively marginal cases. In 1959, one of the most important representatives of Czech psychotronics, radio engineer Karel Drbal won a patent for the “method for maintaining shaving knives and razors sharp” using small pyramids, made from for example, cardboard or plastic. To achieve the desired effect, it was necessary to orient the pyramids of certain shapes with respect to the Earth’s magnetic field. Drbal’s repeatedly applied for the patent which was allegedly granted to him only after the sceptical director of the Patent Office successfully used the invention himself.

The present results exceed the expectations and concern. The most attention is raised by the possibility to use mental energy for military purposes.²⁹ Psychotronics seems to be a very strategic weapon for the cold war. A CIA report says that psychotronic weapons would mean a “serious threat to the military, diplomatic and security functions of the enemy. Transmitted energy would be quiet and hardly detectable by electronics (although the Soviets claim to have developed efficient sensors of biological energy) and the only needed source of energy would be a human operator.”³⁰ Given the scarcity of available information, the US agents took the East European psychotronic research very seriously.

In this regard, CIA reports and the StB (Czech state police) were considerably interested in the so-called psychotronic generators produced by Robert Pavlita in his workshop in Lázně Bělohrad since the 1940s. These are mostly metal objects of various sizes and shapes that can be charged with biological energy under certain conditions. The efficiency of the generator depends on the form and material. Pavlita sees his generators as a kind of bioenergetic batteries that can be effectively controlled and regulated thanks to this technical extension. Using the generators, he can, for example, magnetize wood in a scientifically inexplicable way. Pavlita, who works as a textile technician, suggests that the generators can be used to purify water heavily polluted, among other things, during the production of textiles. Pavlita and his daughter Jana demonstrated the generators at the First International Conference of Psychotronics in Prague in 1973 as part of the lecture titled “The inductive effect on the human body mass”.

DOWSING RODS AND COAL

In 1991, physicists Luděk Pekárek and Milan Rojko published an article where they wrote: “In the past few years, the promotion of dowzers on TV and the radio, in daily press and entertainment and popular magazines in our country has caused that

the national committees issue trade licences even to dowzers. Recently, geopathic zones on land and in flats are marked not only by individuals but also cooperatives and private companies. During the First Republic, dowsing was not even listed as a recognized craft by the Trade Chamber.”³¹ Since the late 1970s and 1980s, The Psychoenergetic Laboratory (PEL) conducted research on the possible use of dowzers in coalfields, and carried out projects like “Research of non-traditional methods of searching of anomalies in the mining front and quarry foothills and non-traditional forms of care for people in the North Bohemian brown coalfield” (for the North Bohemian brown coal mine in Most) or “Research on the protection of people in difficult mining conditions using mental energy” (for the Research Institute in Ostrava-Radvanice). These projects reportedly belong to the most successful PEL projects. Based on one of Kahuda’s suggestions to “implement the psychoenergetic research in the 8th Five-Year Plan”, a “scientific and production telesthesic association Ostrava Most, with a joint scientific council and specialized workplaces in the Research Institute in Ostrava-Radvanice (VVUÚ) and the Research Institute of Brown Coal in Most (VÚHU)”, was supposed to be established.³² The attitude of psychics to dowsing is still far from clear and depends on its application, as evidenced by Zdeněk Rejdák who joined the discussion in the Education Club of the Revolutionary Trade Union Movement (ROH) on physics and modernized superstition, held on 16 February 1989 by the Prague branch of the Union of Czechoslovak Mathematicians and Physicists. He said that marking “pathogenic zones in flats and prefabricated houses is for absolutely ‘untrustworthy and nonsensical’ and he thought that such activities should not be allowed and one should against protest against their authorization.”³³

AUTOGRAPHY AND ELECTROPHOTOGRAPHY

The techniques deployed in psychotronic research also include photography. Attention is also paid to various forms of autography and electrography that makes invisible forms of radiation visible. In the Czech society, there were some prerequisites for such an interest, as evidenced by references to the pioneer of autography, Bartoloměj Navrátil, who discovered the “New kind of electrical patterns” (published in *Časopis pro pěstování matematiky a fyziky* in 1889).³⁴ A special place belongs to Kirlian photography, which was the subject of lectures of many speakers at the First International Conference of Psychotronic in

Prague in 1973, including the Kirlians themselves. According to Kahuda, to explain the Kirlian effect, though proven in many experiments, one needs the “materialistic mention theory of fundamental material radiation”.³⁵ Kahuda’s materialism, however, still pays attention to the social dimension, stating that the intensity and colouring of pictures of human organs depend on the mental state of man and vary “particularly according to the function of the man in nature and the society”.³⁶

One of the PEL research groups attempts to capture the mysterious radiation from Pavlita’s bio-generators on photosensitive material and experimentally prove the existence of mentions. These experiments are inspired by the research led by psychiatrist Jule Eisenbud in the Colorado Psychiatric Hospital in Denver in the 1960s. Eisenbud worked with psychic Ted Serios who used his psychic powers to create “thoughtography” on Polaroid film.³⁷ Milan Smrž describes a series of experiments trying to capture mental energy on photosensitive paper in his research report for the project entitled “Physical chemical detection of mental energy” carried out by the PEL in 1980. On some photographic materials, there were strange spots, including “characteristic colons”.³⁸ Although the report, written by Milan Smrž, mentions a number of inconclusive tests and does not provide a definite conclusion about the origin of the mysterious patterns, Kahuda summarizes the experiment in the darkroom in the following way: “To avoid doubt that it is the interaction of aura, existing in the space around the head of the psychic, with the film emulsion, and not a direct contact of the emulsion with the head surface, a film strip was inserted into a ‘crown’ made of stiff/drawing paper and deposited in the emulsion to the outside circumference of the crown, so that the fundamental primary mention radiation first passed through a strong paper barrier, then ionized the air in the gaps before the film emulsion, and continuously exposed the film emulsion with the resulting secondary photon radiation. This action took place simultaneously in the space around the head of the emitter. Different colours in different places of the film strip indicate various actions and functions of the human brain tissue at the time of exposure under the psychological and medical condition of the emitter. This function of the human aura could also be used in practice to distinguish between different kinds of the brain activity, similarly to the AG and EG [...]”³⁹

29. Martin Ebon, *Psychic Warfare: Threat or Illusion?*, New York : McGraw-Hill, 1983. Ernst Meckelburg, *PSI-Agenten: Die Manipulation unseres Bewußtseins*, München: Langen-Müller, 1994.
30. *Controlled Offensive Behaviour – USSR*, s. 34, available at <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP96-00792R000500730002-1.pdf>.
31. Luděk Pekárek and Milan Rojko, *Geopatogenní zóny a fyzika, Pokroky matematiky, fyziky a astronomie*, Vol. 36 (1991), No. 1, 24–37, pp. 24–25.
32. Kahuda, *Fundamentální záření hmot*, p. 41. Cf. Jindřich Forejt, „Teletéžické experimenty a jejich využití v národním hospodářství“, *ibid.*, no pagination.
33. Pekárek and Rojko, *Geopatogenní zóny a fyzika*, p. 31–32.
34. Kahuda, *Fundamentální záření hmot*, p. 35. Zdeněk Rejdák, “Bioplasma and Kirlian Photography”, in Stanley Krippner and Daniel Rubin (eds.), *The Kirlian Aura: Photographing the Galaxies of Life*, New York: Anchor Press, p. 178–180.
35. Kahuda, *Fundamentální záření hmot*, p. 36.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 37.
37. Jule Eisenbud, *The World of Ted Serios: “Thoughtographic” Studies of an Extraordinary Mind*, New York: Morrow, 1967.
38. Milan Smrž, “Fyzikálně chemická detekce mentální energie”, in Kahuda, *Fundamentální záření hmot*, no pagination.
39. Kahuda, *Fundamentální záření hmot*, pp. 44–45.

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