

## CADRE ROTATION

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Received: March 31, 1994

### Abstract

The communist political systems had a special and unique character: the nomenklatura system. Every party committee had a document called 'cadre jurisdictional list' containing a set of positions of different organisations from social, political, economic, cultural areas. According to these lists the party committees had right to appoint the nominees to the positions. In every 3-4 years the Central Committee accepted a resolution about these lists. The paper examines the phenomenon of the nomenklatura system based on the party resolutions.

*Keywords:* political sociology, nomenklatura, social structure, political structure.

An important constituent of the communist (bolshevik) system was the nomenklatura. As in many other cases the term nomenklatura is used by researchers of the area in different meanings.<sup>1</sup> In what follows we also give an interpretation of the term.<sup>2</sup> Instead of giving a theoretical or historical background as an introduction, we present our definition of the term: nomenklatura system is the comprehensive system of appointing (evaluating) jurisdictions of party organs on different levels. Let us see what we should know about this phenomenon!

The nomenklatura resolution includes certain jurisdictions. It defines somebody's right against somebody else, that means it defines one-way relationship between actors of a social relationship. In what follows it seems to be wise to separate analytically the different types of actors (appointer, appointee) and their relation. This is important because with time the content of the nomenklatura resolutions changed, the range of actors was broadened or narrowed.

### The Content of Cadre Jurisdiction

Let us begin with a more thorough analysis of the actors (i.e. the appointer and the appointee)! Relying on the resolution we have to make

clear what is the content of the different kinds of jurisdiction, what is the basis of their different types and what is the legitimation need behind them. Nomenklatura resolutions generally did not publish the content of cadre jurisdiction. This is true especially for the fifties. As we know, precise enumeration of these jurisdictions was first included in the 1977 and 1981 resolutions. As a point of departure let us quote the relevant passage from the 1977 resolution: 'Cadre jurisdiction includes the following personal matters:

- appointment (election), promotion, transfer, dismissal, replacement, calling back, transfer to a lower post;
- rating;
- government distinction;
- sending to high-level political or state school;
- longer official trip abroad;
- authorization of a disciplinary procedure.<sup>3</sup>

If we look at the nomenklatura resolutions more closely, we find in them other authorizations, too, in addition to those listed. An example is the fact that members of different party organs could travel abroad only with the permit of the responsible party organ. Another 'nomenklatura jurisdiction' was (even in the eighties!) the appointment to academy correspondent membership, to member of parliament, to the post of army general. It would be interesting to track down the changes through time of different administrative authorities, their weight and importance but instead we assume (by a simplifying assumption) that the most important component of cadre jurisdiction is appointment/callback. By this assumption we lose important areas of investigation but nevertheless: in what follows we reduce the analysis of jurisdiction to appointment/callback and leave out disciplining, punishing, 'travel', schooling, promotion and 'transfer'.

### The Peculiarities of the Nomenklatura System

In the world of modern politics we find everywhere phenomena similar to the nomenklatura. When filling posts in state administration, one also adheres to some jurisdiction for appointment and election laid down in the constitution. The peculiarities of the communist (bolshevik) nomenklatura system should be determined with this in mind. These peculiarities are — according to a study by Rigby — the following:

'First, the concentration of important positions in all official and 'voluntary' organisations in the nomenklatura of party committees; second, the inclusion of elective positions (and most of the important ones are elective);

and third, the comprehensiveness of the system, which omits no position of any significance in the society ...'<sup>4</sup>

In another place he uses the term mono-organisational.<sup>5</sup> A similar term will be used by us, too, nay it is in our opinion one of the most important characteristics of the system.

### Heterocephality

In the world of modern politics rational appointment into leadership posts of different organisations might be performed in two ways: either by election by those concerned (e.g. members) or by appointment 'from outside'. (Thinking it over rationally we find other possibilities, too: e.g. rotation used when selecting the president of the state in former Yugoslavia. But the fact that it is used so rarely in politics suggests the deficiencies of this method).

In democracies parliament elects its own leaders, in a presidential system citizens elect the president and, similarly, political movements and parties elect their own leaders.

If the principle of elections prevails in practice, then the given organisation is called autocephalic. In modern political systems we find several autocephalic organisations.

If within rationally-based political systems there are organisations which are autonomous and autocephalic, then election and autocephaly are dependent on one another. In modern political democracies there are several such phenomena, the most important among them being political parties. Relations between election and autocephaly, election and bureaucracy, election and rationally-based political system are very important. Considering the above we can safely declare that in modern political democracies one of the most important principles on which organisations are based is election.

Before analysing the relationship between the communist (bolshevik) nomenklatura system and the principle of election it is worth characterizing 'outside dependence' of heterocephalic organisations. It is evident that it is a different kind of dependence (heterocephaly) if only the highest-level leader of an organisation is appointed from outside as compared to the case when his deputies and other, lower-level leaders also are 'recruited from outside'. If we want to characterize the phenomenon theoretically, we have first to introduce — relying on the notion of hierarchical relationships within modern organisations — the term level of hierarchy.

In the following, level of hierarchy of an organisation will be subset of the complete and ordered set of positions (and also the people filling these

positions) involving similar, prescribed job content and authority (dominative) jurisdiction. An organisation is called first-degree heterocephalic if people on the first hierarchic level, i.e. the leader (or if the principle of collective leadership is applied, the leaders) are appointed from outside, all the others from inside. An organisation is called second-degree heterocephalic if people on the second hierarchic level of the organisation, i.e. only the leader(s) and his (their) deputies are appointed from outside. Naturally, organisations on different levels of heterocephaly can be defined relying on the same logic and principles.

It is evident that the higher the degree of heterocephaly of an organisation the less its autonomy and vice versa .... 'Selecting' from outside is in inverse relationship with the autonomy of the organisation.

### The Comprehensive System of Appointment and the Emptying of the Principle of Collective Leadership

Relying on what had been said in the previous section one can formulate an important characteristic of the phenomenon of communist (bolshevik) nomenklatura: the nomenklatura system rules out election in the sphere of politics and in politically important organisations.

At this point an important question emerges: how to define politics. One can say that political is every action involving appointment by the holders of state power. In this sense it depends on the 'conception' of the holders of state power which organisations and appointments are political. Looking more closely at different political systems, this statement — in our opinion — has strong empirical relevance. The exclusivity of the appointing principle means, on the other hand, that previously autocephalic organisations become heterocephalic, and only heterocephalic organisations survive in social and political life. Although the ruling out of elections concerns every organisation, it is worth singling out the problem of elections within the communist party. We shall return to this problem later. Another important characteristic of the nomenklatura system is that positions important from the point of view of exerting and maintaining political power are arranged in one interconnected system.

Whatever changes have occurred in the system of nomenklatura with passing time its essence remained the same since the 'one-way' centralization of the political system remained. Only the shape, form and density of the nomenklatura net holding organisations in dependence changed but the necessity of such a net was never challenged. As we have demonstrated earlier, Rigby used for this phenomenon the term mono-organisational soci-

ety, a term we are wary to take up. We think Rigby's term is inconvenient because it suggests a too strong relationship between organisations connected by the nomenklatura — due to the widely held interpretation of the term organisation, as if the whole system would be one huge organisation. But for the description of organisations we use beyond the dimension of autocephaly-heterocephaly also the dimension of autonomy-heteronomy, and we cannot assume total heteronomy for organisations held in strong dependence. Even when despotism was the strongest, organisations had a certain autonomy.

A better term would be monohierarchy<sup>6</sup> but due to the interwovenness of hierarchy and unequivocality we do not deem it convenient either. Although the system consisted of one huge network of relations it was not unequivocal, therefore not hierarchic due to the existence of double jurisdiction. Within one particular organisation the internal system of appointment 'lived alongside' with the system of party jurisdiction, therefore a double appointing jurisdiction existed. When appointing into a dependent post according to the organisational rules, the boss had the jurisdiction but under the nomenklatura system the responsible party organ had 'jurisdiction', too.

An acceptable solution might be to introduce a new term. The treatment of the phenomenon of nomenklatura was reduced in the above to appointing events. In this respect we used several times the terms autocephalic and heterocephalic. Relying on them, monocephalic is — in our opinion — the best characterization of the nomenklatura within political organisations. Outside dependence of heterocephalic organisations was arranged into a chain and thus practically a 'centralized' appointing system developed. The nomenklatura system made the appointing principle almost exclusive. A different principle was used only at one point: namely in the case of those party bosses who operated the whole system.

In the above we did not differentiate between organisations when investigating the neglitation of election results. But here we should — even if cursorily - treat separately the problem of making formal intra-party elections. The central slogan of party life was that within the principle of democratic centralism democratism means collective decision-making. Democratism was identified with one variant of the collective principle and implemented accordingly. According to this principle — at least in a formal sense — party leaders could obtain position only through election. It would require a separate historical analysis to answer the question how leaders could make elections formal. They had to employ several methods and techniques for this aim. The most important technique was ruling out alternatives, to propose 'one candidate'.

The collective principle is not only used in dictatorships. Under the system of functionally divided branches of power we find the collective principle e.g. in parliamentary representation, in the veto of the president of the republic, in the act of signing by the prime minister. Let us also mention that making certain elections formal (i.e. without a stake, 'predetermined') occurs not only in dictatorships: it may occur in democracies too that preliminary agreement makes elections formal (e.g. parliamentary voting 'brings' the predetermined result). An important difference in this case relative to dictatorships totally neglecting elections is that at least once, when electing parliamentary representatives, such manipulation is not possible. Another form of the collective principle was realized within the nomenklatura system through the 'preliminary agreement right' and the 'right to express an opinion'. These techniques became tools of reducing the concentration of power (on lower levels, of course).

#### The Nomenklatura System as a Tool of Control over Society. Patron-Client Relationships

In order to operate the nomenklatura system successfully it is also necessary that every power in society important from the point of view of political activity be attached to 'nomenklatura' positions. In modern societies we find several organisations to be independent of the sphere of politics, i.e. autonomous or autocephalic. A large part of parties, social movements, economic, cultural, educational, mass communication etc. organisations are of this kind. In democracies their number cannot be reduced or can be only to a small extent. For successful management of the nomenklatura system, a 'manageable size', i.e. the smallest possible set of organisations is necessary. This particularly applies to economic organisations. Private economic organisations are contrary to the nomenklatura system by their mere existence because by their autonomy over economic resources they constitute an important source of power in the modern world. For the management of the system, this alternative source of power should be 'closed', i.e. the sphere of economy should be politically 'positioned'. In this respect, nationalization and the collectivization were important events in the history of the system. The same could be said on any other source of power. Another characteristic of the system was that different sources of power were 'nationalized', i.e. attached to certain positions, which meant that every concentration of power outside the nomenklatura was ruled out.

Thereby it became impossible to enforce power outside the system in a way transgressing the system.<sup>7</sup> An important consequence of all this was that the system could be 'abolished' only from inside. The nomenklatura

system presented above was a strikingly stable political formation. The cause is simple: a principle was given whose employment made it possible to control political (personal) relations and processes on a large scale. This was the principle of 'give him a division and rule over him' ('divisio et impera'). This principle was an 'invention' of the communist (bolshevik) system. Although the techniques of political personnel changes constitute only one factor in running political systems, personnel problems are of an overriding importance for the nomenklatura system.

Although the party did not rely on rational legitimation when requiring 'leadership role', the nomenklatura system itself proved to be a rationalistic and powerful tool. Naturally enough — like so many overcentralized systems — this too was not transparent and manageable from above. That is why a certain autonomy of local party organisations appeared within the system. Although it is true that the nomenklatura system created an all-embracing network of patron-client relationships but, on the other hand, the system of 'clienture' was structured, new and new 'patron-client' relationships appeared at every level. Later within the Kádár system lower level party organisations too acquired a kind of autonomy. To prove this let us quote from a document whose content might be generalized during further research.

'In decisions concerning cadres within the jurisdiction of ministry and national-level party committees (promotion, dismissal, distinction, etc.) higher-level party and state organs have to ask for the preliminary opinion of the responsible party organ.' 'In matters of appointment and dismissal of leaders belonging to the jurisdiction of the Central Committee:

- about appointment and dismissal of ministers, leaders of national authorities and deputy ministers, the responsible party committee should be informed before execution and publication of the act;
- in the case of appointment and dismissal of deputy leaders of national offices, their heads of department and higher posts — if promotion is from the local apparatus — the opinion of the responsible party committee should be required before the final decision'.<sup>8</sup>

### Changes in the Nomenklatura System

'We did it so that beforehand we looked at how things were done in the Soviet Union and other people's republics .... There were one or two speeches held in the Soviet Union dealing with this matter. We adhered to these principally. Relative to the relationship to the state and the mass movements' relationship to the party we could not find out anything.'<sup>9</sup> Knowing the peculiarities of the nomenklatura system we cannot avoid the question

about the origins of the system. How could come about and consolidate such a system? To answer the question of 'why' is simple. As with the whole of the communist (bolshevik) political-economic system, we can safely assert here too: since the Hungarian Communist Party owed its power to the Soviets, it implemented — relying on the Soviet example, if not directly urged by the Soviets — this power tool in Hungary, too. The 'confession' of the motto is lovely but it does not change anything in the essence. The empire introduced its own system in its provinces.

As to the question of 'how', i.e. the Hungarian specialities of the nomenklatura system we can say similar things as Rigby said on the origin of the Soviet nomenklatura.<sup>10</sup> Between early 1947 and early 1949 in political power struggles the communist party 'liquidated' all its political opponents. The first but we can safely say decisive 'slice' in this salami tactics was Béla Kovács, the first secretary of the Smallholder Party at that time, and primate Mindszenty's detention was the last. During the process the communists took over the control over repressive organisations and over political and state administration (let us mention only the struggle for the police, the borderguard, the ministry of the interior or the B-lists and the process against the ministry of agriculture). When the power struggle was over and the apparatus exchanged, par excellence political organisations were already 'prepared' for the introduction of the nomenklatura system. The next step was necessarily the reinforcement of the party's economic and administrative positions. This was done essentially with the nationalization in 1948-49 and the 'people's front' elections in Spring of 1949. Afterwards only the intraparty 'discipline' had to be strengthened so that intraparty elections become formal, too. Therefore the 'revolution had to consume its own children'. Finally: a 'suitable' organisational structure for the party had to be created. This last step was made in 1950<sup>11</sup> and since that time for forty years the communist party functioned with an unchanged organisational structure.<sup>12</sup>

### A Flexible Tool: the Nomenklatura

The problems of cadre jurisdiction were dealt with 'sincerely' on the 7. September 1949 session of the Secretariat for the first time. As the minutes testify, the nomenklatura already existed but its existence is still not documented therefore we do not know its content. Two drafts were prepared for this session as it turns out from what follows: 'University professors did not belong anywhere in the first list, while in the second one, the most important persons belonged to the PB, the less important ones to the Secretariat.'<sup>13</sup>

In the debate the most important problem proved to be the relationship between the center, the 'county-level committees' and the state apparatus. The problem of the repressive apparatus was also hinted at. Finally, the resolution of the Secretariat contained that: 'the Secretariat in principle agrees with the suggestion as a point of departure...It suggests to find out how this problem was solved in the Soviet Union.'<sup>14</sup>

In October-November of 1949 a delegation was sent to the Soviet Union to gain experience. Let me single out two elements from the vast activity of the party delegation: on one hand, it examined thoroughly the organisational structure of the Soviet communist (bolshevik) party. On the other hand, it tried to understand the functioning of the Soviet nomenklatura system. Returning home they naturally wrote reports and suggestions based on the experience gained 'out there'. These motions were presented to the Secretariat in the Spring of 1950.<sup>15</sup> It cannot be by chance that on two consecutive sessions on 22. and 29. of March 1950 the Secretariat adopted resolutions concerning the reform of the central party apparatus and the reorganisation of work with cadres.<sup>16</sup> The sensibility of those concerned and those making the suggestion is demonstrated by the fact that right at the top of the report of the delegation to the Soviet Union we can read a remark pinpointing the most important element of the nomenklatura system:

'The Party directs government organs first of all through communists sitting in main posts of state administration; the key positions of state administration are filled according to the decisions of leading party organs.'<sup>17</sup>

The suggested and adopted system proved to be durable. After the March 1950 resolution the nomenklatura system remained essentially intact until the disintegration of the system in 1989. Although the core of the nomenklatura system remained intact between 1950 and 1989 we can reveal certain modifications if we analyse the history of the system closely, small departures from the original pattern and the previous practice. On one hand, the 'regulation' of the system was gradually formalized, on the other, the structure of positions 'covered' continuously changed.

One of the most important elements of change within the history of the nomenklatura system was the change in the role of 'CC organs' and actors with jurisdiction. In the Rákosi era only leading party organs were given cadre jurisdiction, thus the Political Committee, the Secretariat and the Organisational Bureau (OB) — until it was abolished. The Central Committee had no separate cadre list although it interfered with cadre problems in the name of the PB, the Secretariat and the OB.

After 1956 the previous system prevailed for 6-7 years, i.e. cadre jurisdiction had the Central Committee, the Political Committee, the newly created and short-lived Organisational Bureau, later its successor the Sec-

retariat. The only change was that from that time the Central Committee had an 'own' list too.

Although the 1962 nomenklatura resolution does not show any change, in the documents of motions we find a new element. The reduction of central lists could be attained — at least partially — through transferring some positions 'for approval to the responsible secretary of the Central Committee'.<sup>18</sup> Let us stress again that this was not included in the nomenklatura resolution but this too came very soon. In the next nomenklatura resolution the own jurisdiction of CC secretaries and CC heads of department was explicitly mentioned. '... in order to speed up appointments and approvals,...(CC) has transferred ... the leaders of government organs and party organs before appointing, dismissing, transferring, honoring or letting to travel abroad to the jurisdiction of the secretaries and heads of department of the Central Committee, cadres belonging to the jurisdiction of the Central Committee have to ask the permission of the responsible secretary or head of department of the Central Committee. If divergence of opinion arises, one has to turn to the Secretariat.'<sup>19</sup>

Although the last passage of the quotation suggests that secretaries and heads of department had a jurisdiction 'shared' with the Secretariat we think that theirs was a true, classical jurisdiction. Our opinion is corroborated by the fact that in the text of the resolution positions were listed as items belonging to the jurisdiction of secretaries and heads of department, and our standpoint is further reinforced if we take into account the changes relative to the jurisdiction of secretaries and heads of department. Next time in 1967: 'Political Committee modified the jurisdiction of CC secretaries and heads of department to the extent that personnel matters of persons under their jurisdiction (appointment, transfer, dismissal) could be introduced to responsible lower-level party or mass organisation or state bodies with their preliminary consent.'<sup>20</sup> In the draft of the resolution we find a short motivation:

'Thereby one can avoid that decisions of lower-level party, mass movement or state bodies could be changed by one person.'<sup>21</sup>

In the documents we find the formulation that the preliminary consent of secretaries and heads of department is necessary in personnel matters in relation to the above mentioned posts. The cadre jurisdiction was therefore split among secretaries, heads of department and the leaders of other responsible organs and organisations. A kind of collective leadership principle was applied in this area. The fact that the 1967, the 1968 and the 1971 resolutions on cadre lists did not mention who could decide in disputed matters suggests that in final account the secretaries and the heads of department were de facto in power position. This feeling is corroborated by the further events. The Central Committee on its 28. November 1973

session abolished the cadre jurisdiction of CC secretaries and CC heads of department.<sup>22</sup> This means that the previous situation was qualified even by party documents as cadre jurisdiction. This becomes even more clear if we take into account that in 1974 this personnel jurisdiction was replaced by the right of preliminary agreement: 'Before the decision of the responsible organ one should obtain the agreement of the responsible secretary or head of department of the Central Committee acting on behalf of the CC Secretariat...'<sup>23</sup>

What is the difference between the two jurisdictions (personnel and preliminary agreement) might be understood by reading the two quotations below: 'The list of functions subject to preliminary agreement does not define cadre jurisdiction:

- its character should not be that of approval but that of consultation;
- it ought to be restricted to the reporting on appointment, dismissal, replacement, other jurisdiction instances — evaluation, distinction, education — should not be subject to it ...'<sup>24</sup> 'If during checking up a difference arises between CC secretaries, heads of department and appointing organs, the personnel motion should be presented to the CC Secretariat.'<sup>25</sup> Whereas relative to personnel jurisdiction CC secretaries and CC heads of department had positive — even if restricted — rights, with the introduction of the preliminary agreement only a delaying but by no means exclusive veto right was left with secretaries and heads of department. It was not even a true right of veto since the final word was with the Secretariat. A further weakening of the power position of secretaries and heads of department (or at least the intention to weaken them) is signalled by the fact that from this time this list of posts liable to preliminary agreement became a separate list of the secretary and the head of department in contrast to the previous situation when secretaries and heads of department had separate lists. Further — and more radical — changes occurred in the second half of the eighties. In 1985 the preliminary agreement right of secretariat as a body was abolished, its 'nomenklatura' right has disappeared too. At the end of 1989 the whole system ceased to exist.

### The Number of Nomenklatura Positions

The number of positions included in individual nomenklatura lists can only be estimated but not given accurately. Data can be gained not from nomenklatura resolutions but from different motions. The reason is simple: the number of institutions and positions included in the list was not indicated.

We cannot know directly how many heads of department were in the ministry. In order to obtain exact figures we ought to perform a full 'history of institutions' analysis of the period.

But taking into account the well-known data it can be revealed that with time the number of posts included in central cadre lists decreased (from 3500-4000 in the fifties to 450 in 1988). Although the data are not conclusive we can state that on the long run the number of positions in the nomenklatura system decreased, first of all, in the eighties.

Naturally, we have even less data on the whole system of nomenklatura, the total set of positions from those in the CC cadre lists to those in primary organisation veto lists. A report of Party and Mass Movement Department from 1975 is telling in this respect.<sup>26</sup> According to it in 1971 there were 89,000 positions on the cadre lists of party committees and party leaderships and 81,000 in 1975. Within the veto right of primary organisations there were 280,000 positions overall in 1975 — after a reduction of 20%.

### Nomenklatura map (Nomenklatura network)

In the above we analysed positions on the nomenklatura according to their formal characteristics only. It would be interesting to look at the changing place of a position within the list, the changing structure of the list. For want of a computerized data base we can investigate only individual positions, their 'rows', and have to concentrate on one or two nomenklatura levels. What follows is much more an interesting anecdote than a serious analysis.

Let us look more closely at the regularities of posts belonging to the CC's jurisdiction (first party level, period 1963-1988). The first interesting finding is that in the Kádár era the number of posts in the CC list hardly changed.

The Central Committee elected (according to the party rules) the members of the PB, the CC secretaries and since the seventies the presidents of standing committees (e.g. Propaganda Committee). CC heads of department, the chief editor of *Népszabadság*, the rector of the College for Politics (previously the director of the Party College), the chief director (previously the director) of the Institute for Social Sciences, the director of the Institute for Party History, the president of the Editorial Board of *Társadalmi Szemle*, and the managing editor of *Pártélet* were all the time on the list of the CC. These were the most important party posts and their importance was best expressed by including them in the CC (i.e. the highest level) cadre list.

In the third larger bloc of CC cadres we find the first secretary of the Budapest Party Committee, the president of Parliament (P) and his deputies, the president of the Presidential Council (PC), his deputies (the latter only till 1985), the chairman of the Council of Ministers (CM), his deputies and its other members, the president of the Supreme Court (SC), the Highest Prosecutor (HP), the president of the Council of Budapest, the president and chief secretary of the National Council of Trade Unions, the first secretary of the Communist Youth League, the president and the chief secretary of the National Council of the Patriotic People's Front, the chief commander of the Workers' Militia, the representative of the Hungarian People's Republic in CMEA (only up to 1985). We can see that the central organs of state administration (CM, PC, P, SC, HP), the leaders of the most important social movements and interest asserting organs (NCTU, CYL, PPF), the leaders of the capital city (first secretary, council president) and the leader of the party's army (Workers' Militia) were included in CC cadre jurisdiction.

In 1963 the post of president of the Hungarian Academy of Arts (HAS), president of the National Council of Hungarian Women and political chief of the department of the Ministry of Defence were included in the highest party level list but from 1967 not. The Central Committee for People's Control (CCPC) was until 1981 in CC-jurisdiction ('state administration'), the president and the chief secretary of the Hungarian Sport Association (HSA), the president of National Association of Cooperatives (NAC), the president and chief secretary of the National Council of Collective Farms (NCCF) — 'interest groups of social movements' — were left out in 1974. Only for one 'term' (1971-1974) was the leadership of the HSWP representation in Parliament on the list. Its short tenure can be explained by the fact that at that time a 'constitutional' drive (separation of party and state) began. Let us also mention that on CC list only central, national organs figured, mainly the highest hierarchical level in the said organisations.

On the second level (PB jurisdiction) positions are similar in structure to those of the CC list. Generalizing somewhat one can say that on PB list we find the second level of the central party hierarchy (CC apparatus, party press, party institutions), the second hierarchic level of 'outside organisations' figuring already on the CC list, and first hierarchic level of some up to then 'freelance' organisations. Examples of the former are: deputy presidents and secretaries of NCTU, second men of ministries (sometimes first deputies of the minister, state secretaries) etc.

Examples of the latter are: the leadership of HAS, leaders of national organs, county level party and state leaders (county level first secretaries, local council presidents). It is no wonder that foreign affairs and defence

have a special position in this system. One of its signs is that the third hierarchic level of these areas is also included in the PB list: political commissars of repressive organisations (political heads of department of the ministry of interior and the national army), generals, ambassadors. With positions on the third (Secretariat) level the principles are the same as presented above. Further ties downwards where ties on higher levels already exist and new ties where they did not exist previously. Third level of ties with ministries (jurisdiction over deputy ministers), a further tie with the army (deputies of political heads of department, army commanders etc.) but instead of enumerating further examples let us formulate a statement on the Kádár era. Although central nomenklatura are central in the sense that they define the cadre jurisdiction of the highest party organs, the 'centralization principle' has another meaning too: central nomenklatura include only positions of national central organs (in the Kádár era).

It is worth pondering somewhat about this statement! In the Kádár era it might happen even with high priority cities that the level of city party committees was tied too, but with other organisations and positions there was a limited, peculiar regional decentralization: county level leadership was dependent in its appointment on the central nomenklatura but otherwise it was free in its personnel policy within the county. This was not so in the Rákosi era! In central nomenklatury of the fifties we find many county-level posts which were later transferred to the jurisdiction of the county-level (e.g. secretaries of district-level party committees, county-level secretaries of NCTU, full-time secretaries of cities, county-level secretaries of NCC, members of the executive committee of county councils etc.). The positions included in county leadership changed in the Kádár-era too, but the set was not too large even at the beginning (first secretary, secretaries, council presidents, chief editors of county papers, county-level police superintendent, county-level highest prosecutor, county-level chief judge) and changes during the eighties pointed towards decentralisation. Naturally, the leading posts of large firms, large cooperatives and state farms were more centralized (they were not entirely in the hands of county-level leadership) but counties still had enough posts in their jurisdiction. We cannot make a large mistake saying that vertical (regional) sharing of power had an important role in reinforcing the party-county system.

### Changes in Tying of Institutions

Previously we assumed that the overall number of positions included in the nomenklatura system had diminished. We can also safely assume that by 'shortening' of the central lists, the jurisdiction of lower level party or-

gans partly increased (through the decentralization of jurisdiction of higher organs) and partly decreased (by further decentralization and by the 'reduction' of the whole system). Decentralization cannot be understood as if lower (regional) party organs would obtain jurisdiction over positions left out from the central list. This certainly might happen, e.g. when the center 'passed' a regional position to lower-level party organs (e.g. the position of the secretary of the executive committee of the county council was 'given' by CC to the county-level party committee). We shall call this phenomenon regional decentralization. Another form of decentralization might be when the center gave some central (national) positions to a national organisation that previously had only formal jurisdiction over it (functional decentralization). Such events did not touch the life and jurisdiction of regional party organs.

We cannot go into the details of this problem since we do not know anything concrete for want of documents on nomenklatura rights of lower level party organs. Of course, we can formulate some statements and hypotheses relying on existing data. For the level of primary organisations we can assume that both in the Rákosi and in the early Kádár era primary organisations could not have true cadre jurisdiction (beyond the right of expressing an opinion). If our assumption is right, we can state that the introduction of the right of expressing opinion — probably in the sixties — weakened the nomenklatura network on the level of primary organisations.

Relying on the term introduced above we can divide the history of central cadre lists into subperiods. First there was the 'nomenklatura jungle' characterized by high-level heterocephaly of organisations or, to put it otherwise, a dense 'party network' around political, social, economic and cultural life. This period too had its regularities: the intention was discernible that an organisation (e.g. a ministry) was 'controlled by the party' through inclusion of the minister in the cadre list of the CC, the secretary of state in the list of PB, the deputy minister in the list of the Secretariat, in the list of the head of department, secretary of CC, etc. (Departing from this one could investigate whether this pattern was general, i.e. whether different hierarchical levels of an institution were put on cadre lists of different party organs).

The first type of change within this system was that nomenklatura rights were pushed downwards (regional decentralization). This might be the case when a ministry head of department was transferred from the CC list to the list of the Budapest party committee. (For want of documents we have to use the conditional. We have already hinted at the methodological problem that we do not have regional lists).

The other type of changes was the reduction of 'party ties' of given organisations. Such an instance is the disappearance of ministry heads of departments from all (!) the lists.

The last phase — still belonging to the nomenklatura system — of this series of changes is naturally first degree party heterocephaly, i.e. primal party ties. Concerning individual organisations (and not the whole system) the most radical change was the abolition of every 'party tie'. This could happen by:

- a) giving back the right of appointment to the organisation (if it was 'originally' heterocephalic): e.g. the leader of a large firm or a national daily with nationwide circulation;
- b) the right of election was given back (if 'originally' the institution was autocephalic): e.g. the president of the Association of Writers.

To avoid any misunderstanding let us stress that in this phase several organisations remained under party's jurisdiction, only individual (less important) institutions were exempted. The disintegration of the nomenklatura system occurred when the nomenklatura right over the most important organisations — the longest held on the nomenklatura lists — was abandoned. At that time everything was for sale. To sum up we can say that there was a movement in the system toward organisations with a lower level of heterocephaly.

### The Inclusion of Norm Constraints

If we look at the history of the nomenklatura, we can say that the arbitrariness, the pressure of the system have eased with time even if its essence remained unchanged. It would not be convenient to call this process liberalization of the system and it could not be called democratization either. More appropriate would be to rely on Bibó's term despotic concentration of power<sup>27</sup> and designate the process as limitation of the despotic concentration of power. We mentioned already that the communist (bolshevik) system had relied essentially on the traditional legitimacy of party bosses. At the inception of the communist-bolshevik rule, a traditional despotism prevailed (everything was allowed for leaders, there was no normative constraint, the concentration of power was high). In the 'true' Kádár era (beginning with 1962-1963) this concentration of power and traditional despotism were reduced somewhat. This restriction is not due to the appearance of some alternative countervailing political power, much more to normative restrictions against persons and groups in power emerging from intra-party fights. The process began in small steps in 1963 and accelerated in the seventies and eighties:

1. Laying down the content of cadre jurisdiction
2. Giving formal autonomy
3. Reduction of individual despotism
4. The appearance of procedural rules
5. Cycle prescription
6. The request of written motions
7. Prescriptions concerning review of lists
8. Publicity of nomenklatura resolutions

### *Notes*

<sup>1</sup> We refer to only two authors who dealt with the nomenklatura system. Bohdan HARASYMIW was the first who mentioned the term of nomenklatura and in our opinion T. H. RIGBY dealt with it most deeply.

HARASYMIW, B.: *The Soviet Political Elite and How It Is Chosen, Political Elite Recruitment in the Soviet Union*, MacMillan, 1984, pp. 153-186;

HARASYMIW, B.: *Nomenklatura: The Soviet Communist Party's Leadership Recruitment System*, in: *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, Vol. II., No.4., (December 1969), pp. 493-512;

RIGBY, T. H.: Introduction, RIGBY, T. H. – HARASYMIW, B. (eds.), *Leadership Selection and Patron-Client Relations in the USSR and Yugoslavia*, London, George Allen & Unwin, 1983, pp. 4-10;

RIGBY, T. H., Introduction: *Political Legitimacy, Weber and Communist Mono-organizational Systems*, in: Rigby, T.H. & Fehér, F. (eds.), *Political Legitimation in Communist States*, London and Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1982, pp. 1-26;

RIGBY, T. H.: *Staffing USSR Incorporated: the Origins of the Nomenklatura System*, in: *Soviet Studies*, Vol. XL, No. 4, (October 1988), pp. 523-537.

<sup>2</sup> The present study is the shortened and essay-style version of a longer manuscript. On cadre jurisdictional lists (nomenklatury) see:

T. VARGA, Gy. – SZAKADÁT, I.: *Íme, a nomenklaturák!* (Look at the nomenklatury) in: *Társadalmi Szemle*, 1992, No. 3. pp. 73-95.

<sup>3</sup> A Központi Bizottság 1977. október 18-i hatásköri listája (Nomenklatura of the Central Committee of 18. October 1977.)

<sup>4</sup> RIGBY, T. H.: *Staffing USSR Incorporated: the Origins of the Nomenklatura System* in: *Soviet Studies*, Vol. XL. No. 4. (October 1988), p. 524.

<sup>5</sup> RIGBY, T. H.: Introduction: *Political Legitimacy, Weber and Communist Mono-organizational Systems* in: Rigby, T.H. & Fehér, F. (ed): *Political Legitimation in Communist States*, London and Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1982, pp. 1-26.

<sup>6</sup> A similar 'suggestion' is made by Mihály Bihari when he speaks about overlapping of hierarchies and the existence of the hierarchic principle. See:

BIHARI, M.: *Politikai rendszer és szocialista demokrácia (Political System and Socialist Democracy)* ELTE ÁJK, 1985, p. 115.

<sup>7</sup> SZAKADÁT, I.: *A nomenklatura — avagy az 'oszd be és uralkodj' elve (Nomenklatura or the Principle of 'Give him a Division and Rule over Him'* in: *A nomenklatura csúcsán, A BME Szociológia Tanszék kiadványai 1*, Budapest, 1991, pp. 5-8.

<sup>8</sup> A PB határozata a minisztériumok és országos főhatóságok pártszervezeteinek feladatairól, hatásköréről, irányításának egységes rendszeréről, 1972. július 25. (PB

- Resolution on the Tasks, Jurisdiction and Unified Direction of Party Organs in Ministries and Central Administrative Organs, 25. July 1972).
- <sup>9</sup> Hatásköri lista vitája a Titkárság 1949. szeptember 7-i ülésén, Rákosi Máttyás és Földes László hozzászólása (The Debate over the Nomenklatura on the 7. September 1949 Session of the Secretariat. The Contribution of Máttyás Rákosi and László Földes).
- <sup>10</sup> RIGBY, T.H.: Staffing USSR Incorporated ..., p. 524.
- <sup>11</sup> T. VARGA, Gy.: Pártapparátus Magyarországon 1948 után (Party Apparatus in Hungary after 1948), *História*, Vol. X, (1988), No. 1, pp. 28-31.
- <sup>12</sup> Segédkönyv a Politikai Bizottság tanulmányozásához, Melléklet: A központi pártapparátus (1944-1989) (Reference Book for Study of the Politburo. Supplement: The Central Party Apparatus in 1944-1989).
- <sup>13</sup> A hatásköri lista vitája a Titkárság 1949. szeptember 7-i ülésén. (Debate of the Nomenklatura on Meeting of the Secretariat, 7, IX, 1949) Contribution of Ernő Gerő.
- <sup>14</sup> A Titkárság 1949. szeptember 7-i határozata (The Resolution of the Secretariat of 7. September 1949).
- <sup>15</sup> A Titkárság 1950. március 29-i határozata (The Resolution of the Secretariat, 29. March 1950).
- <sup>16</sup> T. VARGA, Gy.: Pártapparátus Magyarországon 1948 után, pp. 29-30.
- <sup>17</sup> Javaslat a központi pártvezetés munkájának megjavítására és a Központi Vezetőség apparátusának átszervezésére (A Suggestion for the Improvement of the Work of Central Party Leadership and Reorganisation of the Apparatus of Central Committee) (The Report of the Party Delegation to the Soviet Union, March 1950).
- <sup>18</sup> Javaslat a Politikai Bizottsághoz az MSZMP Központi Bizottsága, Politikai Bizottsága és Titkársága hatásköri listájára (A Draft for the Nomenklatura of the Central Committee, Political Committee and Secretariat of the HSWP, 18. July 1962).
- <sup>19</sup> A Központi Bizottság 1967. február 5-i hatásköri listája (Nomenklatura of the Central Committee of 5. February 1963).
- <sup>20</sup> A Központi Bizottság és szerveinek 1967. május 9-i hatásköri listája (Nomenklatura of the Central Committee and its Organs of 9. May 1967).
- <sup>21</sup> Feljegyzés a Központi Bizottság és szerveinek hatásköri listájában javasolt változásokról, 1967. április 29 (A Note on the Changes in the Nomenklatura of the Central Committee and its Organs, 29. April 1967).
- <sup>22</sup> Javaslat a Politikai Bizottságnak a Központi Bizottság hatásköri listájának módosítására (Suggestion to the Political Committee to Change the Nomenklatura of the Central Committee) (Department of Party and Mass Movement, 26. April 1974) and Jelentés a Politikai Bizottságnak a káderhatáskör rendezésének tapasztalatairól: javaslat a KB hatásköri listájának részleges módosítására (Report to the Political Committee on the Experience with the Redistribution of Cadre Jurisdictions; Suggestion on Partial Modification of the Nomenklatura of the CC) (Department of Party and Mass Movement, 4. November 1975).
- <sup>23</sup> A Központi Bizottság 1974. május 21-i hatásköri listája (Nomenklatura of the CC of 21. May 1974).
- <sup>24</sup> Javaslat a Politikai Bizottságnak a Központi Bizottság hatásköri listájának módosítására, 1974. április 26 (Suggestion to the Political Committee to Change the Nomenklatura of the Central Committee, Department of Party and Mass Movement from 26. April 1976)
- <sup>25</sup> A Központi Bizottság 1974. május 21-i hatásköri listája (Nomenklatura of the Central Committee of 21. May 1974).

- <sup>26</sup> Jelentés a Politikai Bizottságnak a káderhatáskör rendezésének tapasztalatairól: javaslat a KB hatásköri listájának részleges módosítására, 1975. november 4. (Report to the Political Committee on the Experience with the Redistribution of Cadre Jurisdictions; Suggestion on Partial Modification of the Nomenklatura of the CC, 4. November 1975).
- <sup>27</sup> BIBÓ, I.: Az európai társadalomfejlődés értelme (The Meaning of European Social Development) in: Válogatott tanulmányok — Vol. III. Budapest, Magvető, 1986, pp. 5-124.