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MALAMIR SPASOV
ALEXANDER VEZENKOV

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New Europe College

Str. Plantelor 21

023971 Bucharest

Romania

www.nec.ro; e-mail: nec@nec.ro

tel. (+40-21) 327.00.35; fax (+40-21) 327.07.74



ALEXANDER VEZENKOV

Born in 1971, in Sofia, Bulgaria

PhD in History, University of Sofia (2001)

Dissertation: *Urbanization Process and Demographic Changes in Bulgaria (1944-1989)*

Fellowship of the Center of Advanced Study, Sofia, *Roles, Identities and Hybrids* Project (2003-2004)

Fellowship of the Center of Advanced Study, Sofia and Collegium Budapest, *We, the People* Project (2005)

Participation in international conferences in Bucharest, Budapest, Istanbul

Articles on 19-20 cc. urban history, institutional history of the communist regimes, language policy

THE SYSTEM OF *NOMENKLATURA*: THE CASE OF THE BULGARIAN COMMUNIST PARTY (1944-1989)

The term *nomenklatura* is widely and somewhat imprecisely used to designate the elite that existed during the communist period. It has clearly negative connotations and is the preferred term among critics of this elite, although it was in fact borrowed from the political language used by the Communist Party itself. Used as a synonym for expressions such as “the new class” or “the red bourgeoisie”, for most people the word *nomenklatura* implies an unjustly privileged elite.

The fact that a privileged elite existed is beyond question, but the popular view of the *nomenklatura* as *elite* is in need of revision. First of all, this use of *nomenklatura* is not based on the actual meaning of the term. The word ‘nomenclature’ literally means a list of names. It is used in different domains –, e.g. in science (list of terms used in a particular scientific discipline or field) and economics (the list of the products of an enterprise). In the administrative world, it usually refers to a totality of positions whose holders are appointed, controlled, transferred or dismissed by a specific body.

The *nomenklatura* is not simply a list of privileged people, but a *control mechanism* invented by the Communist Party leaders. Cadres of the *nomenklatura* are always cadres of a certain body, and thus the denomination implies not only high rank but also subordination to an even higher leading body. It is neither by omission nor by mistake that the members of the two highest bodies of the Communist Party leadership – the Politburo and the Secretariat – are not listed among *nomenklatura* cadres. In addition, instead of being a more or less homogeneous group, the *nomenklatura* is organized in a strict hierarchy: leading party bodies at different levels had their own lists, and *nomenklatura* cadres of the Politburo were hardly comparable to those of a local committee.

Dissidents (M. Djilas)¹ and emigrants (M. Voslensky)² helped popularize this topic but also misled the general public into perceiving

the nomenklatura as a group and privileged elite. They used the Marxist theory that the state is an instrument of exploitation in the hands of the ruling class and turned it against “actually existing socialism”, pointing the finger at the “new class” or “nomenklatura.” At the time, this interpretation was of enormous political importance because it demonstrated that some of the main claims of the communist regimes were groundless – those countries were *not* ruled by the working class and socialist society was *not* egalitarian. However, this theory is of very limited use if we want to understand the way communist countries were governed. That the elite enjoyed better living standards than the rest of the people is not a unique characteristic of communist regimes. If there is something characteristic here, it is that these higher living standards were usually the result of having a higher level in the party or state hierarchy.

Still, the main purpose of the nomenklatura system for the party leadership was to achieve effective control of the country and the party as a whole. Numerous reliable sources testify that this was the initial goal of Stalin and his collaborators when they designed the nomenklatura system. Seen from this perspective, the privileges enjoyed by nomenklatura cadres appear to be a problem of secondary importance. This paper aims to present the *nomenklatura* or more precisely the *nomenklatura of cadres* as one of the key mechanisms of the political system of communist regimes: the control of the Communist Party leadership of all important appointments, promotions and dismissals.

Publications. There already exists a large range of studies dealing with the nomenklatura system. While dissidents and emigrants have criticized the privileged in “actually existing socialism”, western scientists, with their focus on the Soviet Union³ and other East European countries,⁴ have begun to examine the nomenklatura as a political mechanism of rationalization and systematization of party control of state and society. A number of publications also deal with China, where the topic continues to arouse interest.⁵ Secrecy is the main reason for the gaps in these studies and this shortage was gradually if incompletely repaired since the opening of the former communist parties’ archives after 1989. Studies already based on archival evidence were published on nomenklatura in the GDR,⁶ Poland,⁷ Czechoslovakia,⁸ Hungary,⁹ Romania,¹⁰ and the USSR,¹¹ many of which included publications of the original lists. This project is an attempt to go further in that direction by looking at an unstudied case. At the same time, many publications focus

on the social composition of the nomenklatura, regarding it as an elite and dealing mostly with the *conversion of the elites* in former communist countries after 1989.¹²

Archives and sources. The present article examines the nomenklatura system in Bulgaria based on archival material from the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party (until December 1948 officially known as the *Bulgarian Worker's Party /Communists/*). For comparative purposes, nomenklatura lists as well as other relevant documents from the archives of the central committees of the ruling parties in Romania, Hungary and the former GDR were used.

First of all, the study relies on *lists of nomenklatura cadres* for the party bodies that have the right to manage cadres (nearly all the lists concerning the nomenklatura of the Central Committee (CC) and many other lists for the lower levels were consulted). For CC nomenklatura these are lists described as nomenklatura managed by the sector (later department) Cadres of the CC from June 1945,¹³ January 1947,¹⁴ 1948,¹⁵ the instructions for compiling the nomenklatura of October and November 1949¹⁶, and a list from 1950.¹⁷ In the following years there are several lists from 1951, detailing nomenklatura cadres managed by specific departments,¹⁸ and a very short list of cadres managed by the Department for Work among Women from June 1954.¹⁹

Common lists of the CC nomenklatura cadres began to reappear and were reviewed regularly starting in the mid 1950s (an unapproved list from April 1955²⁰ with a corrected and approved version in June of the same year,²¹ an unapproved project from June 1957²² approved with amendments in March 1958,²³ and various lists from June 1961,²⁴ January 1967,²⁵ February 1970,²⁶ December 1974,²⁷ July 1978²⁸ and May 1980²⁹ with amendments from October 1987.³⁰ Meanwhile, various decisions and changes were made –, i.e. changing the level of control over certain positions, the addition of newly created positions to the lists, decisions for determining the list of nomenklatura positions managed by certain newly created departments. In most cases, the changes were not reflected until the lists were updated as a whole. Similar lists exist for the nomenklatura of the local committees. During early years they were compiled in parallel with those for the CC and were standardized. Later, however, they were prepared at a local level in keeping with the indications, and under the control, of the apparatus of higher bodies. These lists are obviously the most impressive single documents. Beside these, this study also uses the instructions for cadre selection, the

organization of apparatus work, the compilation and storage of the cadre files, reports on cadre policy (usually suggesting improvements), etc.

In order to examine how the rules were applied into practice, a large number of decisions on appointments and dismissals were also consulted. These include decisions taken by the leading party bodies and other institutions which serve only to repeat a previous decision by a party body. In some cases the documents explicitly quote the decision of the party body, others only mention the decision on the back of the document, while sometimes there is no reference at all and the preceding party decision can only be found in party archives. Another possible source is that of the *nomenklatura cadres' files*, but these have only been partially accessible and as such not very useful when examined one by one. These include formal documents, such as a short autobiography, information about the person in question describing the positions that he/she had held and the decisions taken in respect of those appointments, and other personal records, which, however, were not updated on a regular basis.³¹

Beside archival material, two main types of sources were also taken into consideration. The first of these is given by the memoirs written by leading members of the regime, which contain reliable information about appointments and dismissals and describe the body that made the decisions concerning those appointments and dismissals and the circumstances in which those decisions were taken. Only a few attempt to record the information concerning cadre policy in a systematic way.³² The second is that of official publications on "party building" from the communist period – although the *nomenklatura* was a classified topic,³³ these publications contain a number of insightful remarks, some of which are surprisingly sincere.

I. The *nomenklatura* pyramid

The *nomenklatura* system was adopted in the first years after the Communist Party takeover of September 1944 and underwent substantial changes during the first decade of its existence. From the late 1950s onwards, it took on a more stable form, which it maintained until the end of the communist regime.

First of all, we will present the *nomenklatura* system as it was during this approximately thirty-year period. This approach allows the system to be viewed in its most coherent form which is both easier to understand

and to describe. Only after this will we return to look at the process of its adoption, with all its turns and contradictions, and the important changes that took place. This will allow us to perceive the different points of conflict, which were settled in later years and became more difficult to understand. Before doing this, however, given that the nomenklatura system was organized according to the hierarchy of the leading bodies of the Communist Party, we will first present the basic features of its structure.

The highest permanent decision making body of the Communist Party was the *Politburo*, albeit in theory it was subordinated to the *Central Committee* (CC), which was in turn accountable to the party *Congress*. Although the most important decisions were submitted for approval to the CC, they had previously been adopted by the Politburo. In order to make the decision-making bodies function more effectively, an apparatus of permanent staff was assembled at the CC, a small number of whom were also members of the CC itself. The apparatus was divided into *departments* (*otdeli*), which were usually subdivided into *sectors*. The names and structure of the departments often changed but always covered the functioning of the party itself, the state apparatus (with its military, security, administrative, diplomatic, economic, social and cultural structures), ideology and propaganda, and all mass organizations. Irrespective of transformations and restructuring, it was always clear which part of the party apparatus was responsible for a given field, and no one of them remained without control. This apparatus was led and coordinated by the *secretaries* of the CC, who formed the *Secretariat* of the CC. Each of these was responsible for one or more of these departments or specific fields. Many scholars insist that, due to their control of the apparatus, the secretaries of the CC had more power over everyday affairs than the members of the Politburo (with the exception of those that were members of both bodies), including the selection of leading cadres. At a later stage this study will try to clarify the role of these two types of structures – collective leading bodies and party apparatus – in the appointment of leading cadres.

At lower levels, the network of party committees reflected the administrative division and was restructured after every administrative reform. Similar to the CC, local committees had a large collective leading body (county/district/city committee plenum) which only rarely held sessions. Each such committee had its own *bureau*, the most influential members of which being the secretaries of the respective local committee. One of these was the *first secretary* (initially the other secretaries were

known as the second secretary and, if available, third secretary, though later only the field for which the secretary was responsible was mentioned). Unlike in the CC, however, there was no separate bureau and secretariat – the secretaries being the most important members of the bureau and their authority went unquestioned. Attached to each of these committees was a party apparatus, which was similar to that at a central level though far simpler: the lower the level of the committee, the smaller and simpler the apparatus.

At the lowest level, Communist Party members were included in *primary party organizations* (PPO). The unusual feature of the PPOs was that they were not only formed on a territorial basis, as with party organizations in multiparty systems, but also in all institutions and enterprises. In fact, members of the local PPOs were mostly retired people, while the vast majority of Communist Party members were organized into PPOs at their place of work. In the big institutions and enterprises, where the number of party members was larger, bigger units were created, such as *plant* or *institutional* party committees (*zavodski* and *uchrejdenski partiini komiteti*). They, like the big PPO, also had a secretary and a bureau, but no apparatus. In institutions where centralized power was strictly preserved, party organizations were transformed into political departments (*politotdeli*) within the institutional framework.

The party committees of the territorial units had a higher rank than the corresponding state structures: the Politburo and the Secretariat of the Central Committee were ranked above the Council of Ministers and the State Council, the county/*okrąg* party committees above the executive committees of the county/*okrąg* people's council, and so on. At the same time, primary party organizations (PPO) and their derivatives, the *institutional* and *plant* party committees, were not superior to the administrative leaderships of the corresponding structures. Of course, these administrative leaderships were not short of party control. They were subordinated to party committees of the territorial hierarchy (*obshtina*, *city*, *okrąg* party committees) or the state institutions of higher rank (ministries, state committees, etc.). In turn, both ministries and local committees were subordinated, directly or through one more intermediary, to the central party leadership.

Nomenklatura cadres in the CC of the BCP. At a central level, the leading positions in the nomenklatura were defined as "nomenklatura cadres accountable to the CC of the BCP." (*Nomenklaturni kadri na otchet v TzK na BCP*). Initially, decisions were made by the party leadership

without any clear regulation. Later, however, the nomenklatura cadres in the CC of the BCP were subdivided into two, and finally three levels of decision making and control: 1) by the Politburo, 2) by the Secretariat, and 3) by the departments of the CC in the BCP.

Politburo. In the formal scheme of the nomenklatura lists, the cadres managed by the Politburo sit at the top of the pyramid. Appointments and dismissals from all the key positions in the country depended on this collective body. Its nomenklatura list is subdivided into three groups of positions: those in the party, those in the state institutions, and those in the mass organizations.³⁴

The first group includes the most important officials of the party. Within the apparatus of the CC, this meant only the heads of the departments and the few others who shared this rank. The Politburo appointed the secretaries of the county/*okrąg* party committees (including not only the first secretaries but also the other secretaries), including the secretaries of the Sofia City Committee and, since 1975, the first secretaries of the two next largest cities of Plovdiv and Varna. This included also the editors in chief of the official party newspaper *Rabotnichesko delo* and its journal *Novo vreme*, the directors of the Institute of History of the BCP and of the Institute of Modern Social Theories, the chief director of the Publishing House of the BCP, and the rector of the Academy for Social Sciences and Social Management (known by its abbreviation AONSU). It should be emphasized here that even if the secretaries of the CC were of lower rank than the Politburo members, they were *not* listed among its nomenklatura cadres.

The second part of the Politburo list contains the most important state positions. It is here that we can see how the Party ruled the state by controlling the appointments to the highest state positions. The nomenklatura cadres of the Politburo were all members of the Presidium of the National Assembly (which became the State Council in 1971): the chairman, vice-chairmen, secretary and ordinary members; the members of the Council of Ministers (its president,³⁵ deputy prime-ministers and ministers) and the deputy ministers; the chairman and the vice-chairmen of the National Assembly; and the president and the vice-presidents of the Supreme Court and the chief prosecutor. The top army officials in the Ministry of National Defense and the General Staff, as well as the Ministry of Internal Affairs and State Security, were appointed only after approval by the Politburo. The same was true for all ambassadors and plenipotentiary ministers. The Politburo appointed the presidents of other important

institutions at a central level, such as the National Bank or the Academy of Sciences. From the local administration level, the chairmen of the executive committees of the county/*okrąg* people's councils (as well as the people's council of the city of Sofia) were on the list.

In the third group of Politburo nomenklatura – that of mass organizations – included the chairman and the secretaries of the Central Council of the Bulgarian Professional Syndicates, the secretaries of the CC of the Dimitrov's Communist Youth Union, the chairman, the vice-chairmen and the secretaries of the Fatherland Front, as well as the chairmen of the other most important mass organizations, such as the Bulgarian Union for Physical Culture and Sport, the Union of the Bulgarian-Soviet Friendship Societies, the Central Committee of the Fighters against Fascism and Capitalism, the Committee of Bulgarian Women, etc. The Politburo approved the presidents of the various unions of artists (the so-called "creative unions").

The most important nominations, mainly concerning high state offices (Council of Ministers, State Council, etc.), were submitted for further approval to the CC Plenum.³⁶ These were purely matters of formality, taking no account of the discussions or in some cases even the objections of the candidates that had been "proposed" by the leadership, and were adopted unanimously, in some cases even without formal voting. Contrary to other communist parties (e.g. in the GDR after 1951, Czechoslovakia after 1952, Hungary after 1957, the Romanian list of 1968), the nomenklatura list of the CC of the BCP does not specify the positions to be "elected" by a CC Plenum (as with the members of the Politburo, Secretariat) or by the Party congress (as with the members of the CC).

The Secretariat. A characteristic feature of the nomenklatura managed by the Secretariat of the CC is its inclusion of positions ranked immediately below those listed for the Politburo. The number of positions managed by the Secretariat was much larger in number, but of less importance at the same time. This list included either the deputies and the immediate subordinates of the nomenklatura cadres in the Politburo or the heads of less important institutions. Among the party cadres, it included the deputies of the heads of the departments of the CC and the heads of sectors, etc., the members of the bureau of the *okrąg* party committees, the members of the editorial boards of the aforementioned *Rabotnichesko delo* and *Novo vreme*, and the heads of less important party institutions, such as the director of the National Museum "Gheorgi Dimitrov".

A similar situation is found for the state offices. The nomenklatura cadres in the Secretariat were the chief secretaries of the ministries (with the exception of those with the rank of deputy minister, who were nomenklatura in the Politburo). Other positions were listed according to ministries and institutions, with the number being very different. More clearly than with the Politburo list, here we can see how control mostly resides with certain key ministries such that the number is largest for the Ministry of National Defense, followed by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Secretariat lists include the rectors of the universities and the directors of most of the national cultural institutions as well as the editors-in-chief for many central newspapers (e.g. *Otechestven front*, *Stārshel*) and journals. In terms of the mass organizations, we once again find the inclusion of various positions one step down in the hierarchy from the heads of the mass organizations, which were listed in the Politburo nomenklatura, as well as the presidents of some other slightly less important organizations such as the Bulgarian Olympic Committee, the Slavic Committee, etc.

With the exception of the heads of departments, the Secretariat appointed the whole political apparatus of the CC including political workers, the so-called instructors, as well as the whole staff of the Central Party Archive, the Institute of History of the BCP, and the National Museum “Gheorgi Dimitrov”. The Secretariat exercised control over party education: it confirmed admissions as well as the appointment of those who had studied at top party educational institutions such as The High Party School and later the Academy for Social Sciences and Social Management.

It should be underlined at this stage that, contrary to the popular interpretation which sees the *whole* elite as being the nomenklatura, the members of the two highest party bodies – the Politburo and the Secretariat – of the CC of the BCP *were not* mentioned among the nomenklatura lists.³⁷ They were not in the nomenklatura; rather they were *above* the nomenklatura. At the same time, the members of these two bodies were able to control by accumulation the leading positions in the state institutions and mass organizations, which featured in the nomenklatura list of the party leadership. Obviously, the priority was given to their position in the party hierarchy.

The CC departments. At the third level there are the nomenklatura cadres of the CC departments. This is still only a “registered and controlled nomenklatura” (“*otchetno-kontrolna nomenklatura na TzK na BKP*”) in

opposition to the “basic” (*osnovna*) nomenklatura of the Politburo and the Secretariat. The basic nomenklatura consists of positions to which appointments are made directly after a decision by the respective body. The denomination “registered and controlled nomenklatura” means that the listed positions were in the *basic* nomenklatura of lower party bodies or directly dependent on the administrative leadership of a certain state institution or mass organization. The body in whose basic nomenklatura the position existed took the decisions but had to “coordinate” this with the department in whose registered nomenklatura the position featured as well as with the secretary responsible for that department.³⁸ The approval was usually easy to get with the CC apparatus intervening only in cases of alleged wrongdoing where the case was referred to the Secretariat for a final decision.³⁹ This second type of nomenklatura is indicative of the overlap of control that existed in cadre appointments and the power sharing between party bodies at different levels. It is also symptomatic of the process of further transferring power from “elected” bodies to the party apparatus.

Nomenklatura positions are listed on a department by department basis, each being subdivided according to the institutions to which the positions in question belonged – for example, within the party these could be the heads of the respective departments in the *okrąg* committees, or, within the state apparatus, the leading officials from the ministries and key officials in the respective field at *okrąg* level who were in the *okrąg* committee nomenklatura.

Nomenklatura in the local committees of the BCP. At local level, the hierarchy of the party committees reflected the logic of the administrative division. The nomenklatura list of the local committees was initially compiled by the CC apparatus, in parallel with that from the central level, and was consequently standardized. This was the county/*oblast*, later the *okrąg*, committee nomenklatura and below it came the district/*okoliya* committees of the BCP. City and *rayon* committees were put on one and the same level as the *okoliya* committees. There were several versions of lists compiled from 1945 until 1950.⁴⁰ The cadre lists of the *okrąg* and *okoliya* committees were specified for a longer period through a circular of the CC of 13 January 1950.⁴¹ In January 1958, the Politburo, while drawing up the new CC nomenklatura, decided that the *okrąg*, *okoliya*, city and *city rayon* committees should in future determine their own nomenklaturas.⁴² Later, every revision of the CC list was to be followed by the same process for the local committees. Still, where

conflict arose with other institutions the Secretariat of the CC would intervene with instructions determining the extent of the *okrąg* committee nomenklatura.⁴³ After 1958, the nomenklatura of the local committees was split into two levels: 1) the level of its bureau, i.å. there was no separate secretariat in this case, and 2) the level of the departments, which were much fewer in number than in the CC.

At the second level of committees managing nomenklatura cadres were the *okrąg* committees. The scheme of the CC committees appears in a simplified form. The bureau controlled all the important local officials sharing power with the CC apparatus for the most important ones. It also controlled the leaderships of the party committees at lower levels.⁴⁴

For almost 15 years (until 1959) *okoliya* committees were the third and the lowest level of party committee to manage nomenklatura, city and *rayon* committees being of the same rank. They controlled the lowest level of nomenklatura cadres, which beside its own apparatus included key functionaries at *okoliya* level, the secretaries of primary party organizations, village mayors, heads of militia office stations, and leaders of local mass organizations and syndicates.⁴⁵ After 1959, however, only the city committees remained functioning as a third level.

Two very different structures were referred to as *obshtina* party committees at different time. Before 1959, when *obshtina* corresponded with a medium sized village, there were only PPOs. During the period 1959-1979, *obshtina* committees already existed and were coordinating several PPOs in rural areas and the agrarian cooperatives (TKZS) of the respective *obshtina*. They had a list of the positions they were monitoring, but did not compile cadre files. Consequently, during this period, all important appointments in rural areas were controlled directly by the *okrąg* committees.

After 1979 and the second administrative reform that merged the previously rural communes to form larger units, a new type of *obshtina* emerged. Where the center was a city, the existing city committees were transformed into *obshtina* city committees and included the rural surroundings at the same time. In the capital city, as well as some other major cities, subdivisions continued to exist – *rayon* committees of the BCP. Following the model of the *okrąg* committee, the *obshtina* committee controlled the most important positions in the respective administrative unit, sharing control over nominations with the higher committee and its apparatus and for certain key positions, even with the CC apparatus. The

nature and length of the nomenklatura lists differed substantially depending on the importance of the center – , i.e. either an *okrąg* center, a former *okoliya* center or a bigger village assigned as an *obshtina* center, even if they were at the same level in the hierarchy. For example, in the smaller *obshtina* committee nomenklatura there were no cadres from the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the judicial system since they were not centers of the so-called *rayon* stations of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, court and prosecution that were usually located in the former *okoliya* centers. Shorter still were the lists of cadres in enterprises, social and cultural institutions.⁴⁶

Overall, despite several administrative reforms, and with some exceptions and deviations, as with most other nomenklatura systems there was a three level hierarchy: 1) the CC at the top, 2) county (*oblast/okrąg*) committees 3) district/*okoliya* = city committees, later *obshtina* committees. In this respect, the hierarchy of the nomenklatura simply reflected the organization of a modern centralized administration.

Nomenklatura in the PPOs. The nomenklatura of the PPO, plant and institutional committees appeared in the 1960s – this was not mentioned in the 1961 lists, but according to the lists of 1967 they were already in existence in some cases and had to be compiled where they did not exist. Given the fact that PPO, plant and institutional committees were positioned lower than the administrative leadership of the respective institution, and given how deep into the hierarchy the influence of the higher committees' nomenklatura reached, we can easily imagine how little remained for the PPO nomenklatura. They controlled certain positions for non-paid activists in the syndicates, in the Communist Youth and in some professional organizations where available. Their opinion on cadre policy had to be taken into account, without being mandatory for the administrative leadership. As known from other communist countries, primary party organizations had mostly consultative functions.⁴⁷ Even if the existence of party organizations at work places was one of the main features of the totalitarian model, their role in leading cadre selection was only at the lowest level. On the other hand, primary party organizations were not independent organizations – their bureau and secretary were controlled by the higher party committees. Therefore, in as far as they played any role in the selection of leading cadres, they also functioned as a parallel mechanism for transmission of cadre policy decisions from the higher party committee that controlled them. In practice, managing cadres was reserved for party committees of higher

rank. Those that had a bureau but were not big enough to have their own apparatus had only a list of nomenklatura cadres without keeping any cadres files. For instance, in 1967 under the *okrąg* level, only the city committees and the *rayon* committees in Sofia kept cadre files, while all others (city committees without bureaus, *obshchina*, *rayon* committees in provincial cities, *plant* committees, big PPOs) had only lists.⁴⁸

II. Establishing and reforming the system

The Soviet model. Organizing cadre policy according to a nomenklatura is a practical and useful solution for controlling appointments to key positions. Like the leaders in all Soviet satellites, the Bulgarian leaders did not need to invent such a system themselves; together with the Stalinist political model as a whole it was imposed from Moscow. Many of the Party leaders had the opportunity to learn about this system from the inside during their stays in the USSR. Gheorghii Dimitrov, the first leader of the regime, dealt with cadre issues during his time as secretary general of the Comintern (1935-1943).⁴⁹ As “president of the CC” and later secretary general he was directly involved in cadre issues. Another member of the Politburo, Gheorghii Damyanov, was well acquainted with the nomenklatura system. In the Comintern apparatus he first served as deputy head (1937-1938) and later as head of its Cadres Department (1938-1943). Immediately after his arrival in Bulgaria on 22 September 1944 he took on the leadership of the Military Department of the CC and began to apply his experience in conducting purges among officers, selecting the so-called deputy-commanders (*pomoshtnik-komandiri*) and training new military cadres that were faithful to the Communist Party.⁵⁰ Gheorghii Tchankov, a member of the Politburo and Secretary of the CC, who was responsible for “organizational work” and cadres policy until 1949, on two occasions stayed for almost a year in the USSR during the first half of the 1930s.⁵¹ As CC Secretary in December 1944, he had already received from Dimitrov “some materials on organizational issues of the VCP/b/” and short instructions on how to perform the selection of leaders and in particular the secretaries of the local party committees, the drawing up of cadres files, etc.⁵² In June 1945 Dimitrov called him to Moscow for almost a month to study “the Soviet experience” in party work.⁵³

These biographical details may explain why the nomenklatura system was adopted in Bulgaria earlier than in other East European communist regimes. In most other cases the first lists dated to 1949 (GDR, Poland⁵⁴) and 1950 (Hungary⁵⁵, Romania,⁵⁶). Some of these clearly represent the first attempts to work according to a nomenklatura system. For example, in the case of the GDR it was only at the end of 1948 that the leaders of the *Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands* (SED) were advised from Moscow "to organize the cadres according to a nomenklatura"⁵⁷ and in March 1949 that the first very short list was approved.⁵⁸ Everything started much earlier in Bulgaria.

First steps. Almost immediately after the communist takeover, the Communist Party leadership started to make decisions on cadre appointments and dismissals in place of the competent state institutions. Party structures led both purges of existing personnel and the filling of state apparatus vacancies with faithful cadres. During the first months this practice was still being performed in an unsystematic way and relatively few documents have been preserved in the archives. In many cases the coordination was done verbally, without consulting all of the Politburo or Secretariat members.⁵⁹

The channeling of the process of cadre selection was achieved with the creation of a new specialized structure within the party apparatus at every party committee. The process started with the decisions of the Politburo of 17 and 20 October 1944 to create a Cadres Sector within the framework of the Organizational Department of the CC.⁶⁰ Despite this, the Cadres Sector in the CC only started to function in February 1945.⁶¹ In the committees at lower levels, similar cadre sectors within the framework of the organizational departments were created or at least an assistant responsible for cadres (*pomoshtnik po kadrite*) was appointed. These started to function with delays in the *oblast*, and even more so in the *okoliya* committees.

At the same time, the drawing up of the nomenklatura lists was being envisaged. On 20 October 1944, the Politburo decided that "the range of high administrative and public positions for which the candidates should be approved by the Politburo is to be specified."⁶² This list was not compiled immediately: the first *lists of cadres* (not called nomenklatura and not formally approved) discovered so far date to June 1945. From late 1945 and early 1946 onwards, the processing of cadre nominations became more standardized and consisted of a request from the head of the institution where the appointment was to be made, verifications of

the person proposed by the Cadres Sector and a final decision of the Secretariat or the Politburo.⁶³

A major reorganization followed the October 1946 elections, as well as the formation of a government more openly dominated by the Communist Party, and the number of cadre nominations among the decisions of the Politburo and the Secretariat increased significantly. According to a decision of November 1946, the Cadres Sector of the Organizational Department of the CC became an independent department⁶⁴ just as it was in the CC in Moscow. In turn, this department was subdivided into sectors that dealt with cadres in different spheres: the party; economy; army, militia and justice (a separate sector for the army cadres was formed later); science and culture; diplomatic and consular; and syndicate cadres. There was also a separate sector where the personal files were kept. At the beginning of January 1947, the Politburo formally approved the nomenklaturas of the CC and the local committees for the first time.

As in other East European communist parties, a new wave of adopting the Soviet practice took place in late 1949 when a delegation was sent to Moscow and Minsk to study the functioning of the party apparatus. The report presented was used as a basis for the reorganization of the nomenklatura system.⁶⁵ If in other cases the result of this was the compilation of the first nomenklatura lists (especially in Romania⁶⁶), in Bulgaria it led to the rationalization of the existing lists.⁶⁷

Dissolution of the Cadres Department. The nomenklatura system underwent reorganization in December 1950, when the Cadres Department was closed and a cadres sector created in its place at every specialized department.⁶⁸ The new regulation followed the model established in the USSR in July 1948.⁶⁹ Cadres departments were also closed in certain other communist parties – e.g., in Romania (in February 1950),⁷⁰ Czechoslovakia (in October 1951)⁷¹ and Hungary (March-August 1952).⁷²

In fact, the change was not as radical as it might seem at first glance. The processing of personal proposals was simply channeled in a different way: the proposals were already being examined by the cadres sector of the specialized department instead of the specialized sector of the cadres department. Even the existing nomenklatura lists elaborated earlier during the same year remained valid. As before, the initiative belonged to the head of the institution or the unit to which the person in question was to

be appointed, and the final decision was taken by the Politburo or the Secretariat. It should be added that the existence of a centralized Cadres Sector/Department did not lead to an over-concentration of power. At the level of the CC, neither those working there nor the heads of the department (Ivan Maslarov, Gotcho Grozev, Dimo Dichev, Dimităr Dimov), nor even the CC secretary responsible for the cadres policy (Tchankov), enjoyed faster-progressing or better careers than their colleagues at the same level in other spheres of the party apparatus. On the contrary, most of them failed.

At the same time, the communist parties which preserved their Cadres Departments in end used a very similar system of cadre selection and decision-making. In the CC of the SED, a separate department for “Cadres Issues” (*Kaderfragen*) was maintained, but this dealt with party education and had mostly coordinating functions in respect of cadre policy, while cadre selection itself fell to the specialized departments. A cadre department was reestablished in the CC of the Romanians Workers Party in 1955. It was responsible for verifying the political past of the cadres that had already been proposed for nomination and also had some coordinating functions.⁷³ The Polish case was similar to this.⁷⁴ The Department “Cadres Policy” (*Kadrova Politika*) that existed in the CC of BCP during the years 1984-1989 dealt with education and by no means with nomenklatura cadres as a whole.

The Politburo-Secretariat division. The first list included all nomenklatura cadres of the CC without specifying which body should take the decision. At the same time, more attention was paid to the question of which department or sector should process the nomination before submitting it for approval. In 1948 a decision was taken only the most important cases to be discussed by the Politburo and the rest to be submitted to the *Orgburo*.⁷⁵ This contradicted Soviet practice in which the *Orgburo* did not deal with cadre appointments, and a year later the communist leadership in Sofia adopted the standard solution that less important cadre decisions should be submitted to the Secretariat.⁷⁶ Generally speaking, proposals were sent to the Secretariat, where the decisions were made with only the most important nominations being transmitted to the Politburo for confirmation.

It was only in the CC nomenklatura of 1955 that the decision-making spheres of these two bodies were clearly separated. The initial confusion and the consequent clarification could be explained through the changing role of the secretary general in the work of the Secretariat. Initially, he

directly participated and chaired its sessions. All nominations of cadres were submitted to the Secretariat where the secretary general predetermined the most important cadre decisions before their submission to the Politburo. They were simply accompanied with a note "to be submitted to the Politburo for approval". The change took place when the party leader Vălko Tchervenkov ceased to participate regularly in the work of the Secretariat, in the period 1952-1953, and especially after he stepped down from the position of secretary general, in January 1954. According to a decision of October 1953, any matters of principle in the future should not be decided by the Secretariat.⁷⁷ The same practice was introduced for cadre decisions, the most important of which were already being submitted directly to the Politburo. An almost identical separate Politburo list was drawn up in the CC of the Romanian Workers Party in April 1954,⁷⁸ when Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej temporarily passed the position of first secretary to Gheorghe Apostol. By way of contrast, a clear distinction had already been introduced in the first lists of 1949 in the GDR, where the co-presidents of the SED, Wilhelm Pieck and Otto Grotewohl, were not members of the Secretariat.

The introduction of controlled and registered nomenklatura 1955-1957. Following the practice of the CPSU,⁷⁹ a system of control and registration first appeared in the project for nomenklatura cadres at the CC of April 1955. It was initially rejected by the Politburo but then adopted with the project for the next CC nomenklatura of June 1957 and definitively approved in March 1958. This was in part a way of searching for reserve cadres, i.e. potential heirs for the current holders of the posts in the basic nomenklatura of the respective committee, but mostly a way of controlling the cadre policy of lower party bodies, state institutions and mass organizations. Registered and controlled nomenklatura was a compromise between two contradictory aims – that of reducing the length of the nomenklatura lists and that of keeping control over the cadre policy of the lower party bodies and state institutions.

The lists from other communist parties show which other solutions were possible. In the first instance, several communist parties also created *the nomenklatura of a secretary of the CC* below the nomenklatura of the Secretariat (Czechoslovakia 1954-1957 and 1969-1988,⁸⁰ Romania after 1966,⁸¹ Hungary 1963-1985,⁸² Poland⁸³). In some cases, there was also the *nomenklatura of the heads of departments* of the CC (Poland, Hungary). The Bulgarian leaders, just like their GDR counterparts, remained faithful to the principle of "collective decisions." A specific body existed in the

SED Cadres Commission (*Ėaderkommission*) that appointed the ordinary political collaborators of the CC apparatus. Given the relatively larger apparatus of the CC in the SED, its Secretariat appointed a 5-member commission in order to reduce part of its own workload.

Later modifications. As in all other cases, the nomenklatura system in Bulgaria began to take on a stable shape after the mid 1950s.⁸⁴ Later modifications of the nomenklatura lists mostly dealt with routine matters connected with economic and administrative reforms and changed nothing essential in the system. There was a considerable increase in the number of positions in the economic field controlled by the Politburo. Since the rankings in the lists were also an indicator of the importance attributed to the institution, the changing importance of an institution would give rise to a corresponding change in the nomenklatura ranking of its head. For example, in 1976, following the strengthening of nationalism in the official ideology, the director of the National Historical Museum was transferred from the registered and controlled nomenklatura of the Art and Culture Department to the CC Secretariat.⁸⁵ A change in the 1960s was the creation of nomenklatura at lower levels, i.e. at the level of plant and institutional party committees, large PPOs, etc. Despite the compilation of nomenklatura lists, the initial role of the PPOs was mainly reduced to “controlling from below” the execution of the decisions of the higher bodies and did not change significantly. At the same time, the system was flexible enough to permit changes in cadre policy. As we can see from the example of other communist regimes, depending on the style preferred by the leader this either implied conservation (as in the USSR under Brezhnev and in the GDR under Honecker) or a faster rotation of cadres (as in the USSR under Khrushchev and in Romania under Ceaușescu).

III. Analyzing the lists

“How many nomenklatura cadres existed?” This question inevitably appears in every study on the nomenklatura, most of which prefer to show the number of privileged to be as large as possible. The question itself is rather misleading, especially if we think of the nomenklatura as a control mechanism. As we have seen, nomenklatura cadres formed a strict hierarchy, but even at one and the same level there were important differences in matters of decision-making power. For example,

nomenklatura cadres in the Politburo were at the same time the ministers of Internal Affairs and National Defense, marginalized party veterans presiding over mass organizations, as well as the losers of inner party power struggles that were sent to be ambassadors to Third World countries.

The numerical dimension of the nomenklatura was still very important, but in a different way – it had to be a manageable number. The nomenklatura was supposed to deal with the important positions, and power relations at the lowest levels are not taken into account. As a result, the total number of positions in the nomenklatura lists is much lower than the number of members of the Communist Party. Its power was not in compiling long nomenklatura lists, but in selecting key positions.

Cadres on CC lists usually number several thousand. At the highest level, in the Politburo, there were a few hundred and this was mainly due to the inclusion of the secretaries of County Committees of the BCP, ambassadors, members of the government and, in particular, the deputy ministers. The increase in the number of positions in these categories led to an increase in Politburo nomenklatura numbers, even if the controlled level remained unchanged. In the Bulgarian case, for example, the number of positions managed by the Politburo was larger than in most other communist parties. The Secretariat controlled many more positions due to the specificity of the decision-making process there – decisions were usually presented by one of the secretaries responsible for the respective sphere and then only formally approved by the Secretariat as collective body. Larger still was the number of “registered and controlled nomenklatura of the CC departments” – more than half of the entire lists but distributed between departments (with great differences between them). Within departments the work was further distributed among sectors and individual instructors.

The number of CC nomenklatura dealing with cadres abroad was proportionally very large – more than one third of the whole list. In the early 1970s and 1980s this numbered around 2000 permanent positions, including not only diplomatic and commercial representatives but also lecturers in the Bulgarian language and culture and even some students abroad.⁸⁶ This large number was the result of a technical issue whereby being abroad meant they could not be included in any other party nomenklatura except the CC list. The inclusion of such low ranking positions in the CC nomenklatura shows there were no key cadres

controlled only by the leadership of the state institutions – they were also on party account.

Reducing the nomenklatura. Popular perception sees over-concentration as a typical trait of the Stalinist period, followed by relative decentralization in the following years. It is true that in 1947-1948 the Cadres Department of the CC dealt with improper activities and intervened in appointments and purges reaching far beyond the CC nomenklatura, even in selecting and purging students.⁸⁷ In the first years we find decisions of the Politburo for the hiring of typists or workers in the CC cantina.⁸⁸ However, the reduction of the number of nomenklatura positions on the list started very early, and the first decision for this purpose dates from May 1948.⁸⁹ The following year, after studying the practice in the USSR, a project in October and a decision in November 1949 effectively reduced their number.⁹⁰ Obviously, the shortening of nomenklatura lists was not a liberal innovation, but an inherent aspiration of the system in its 'Stalinist' version. The process continued in the mid-1950s: according to the 1955 nomenklatura, the Politburo appointed not only the heads of departments in the CC, but also the deputy heads and the heads of sectors; not only the secretaries of the *okrąg* committees, but also the members of their bureaus, etc. These positions were transferred to lower bodies from 1957 onwards.

Later there was also a constant preoccupation with reducing the length of nomenklatura lists and transferring as many positions as reasonable to lower bodies. The reports accompanying the proposals for modifications of the nomenklatura lists usually mention to what extent this task had been achieved.⁹¹ Higher bodies needed to control a limited number of key functionaries who in turn were responsible for cadre selection at lower levels. Reducing the length of nomenklatura lists did away with the formal and meaningless countersigning of decisions made at a much lower level.⁹² The intention was to allow the party leadership to concentrate on the most important cadre decisions. The shortening of the nomenklatura lists therefore had nothing to do with decreasing of party control.⁹³ Leaving aside the reduction in the nomenklatura of the CC of the Czechoslovak Communist Party during the Prague Spring⁹⁴ as well as the extremely short CC list of the Hungarian Workers Party of 1988,⁹⁵ there is no correlation between liberalization and shorter nomenklatura lists.

Nomenklatura: leading cadres or cadres of the Communist Party? Initially, cadres were regarded as the most reliable and experienced

members of the Communist Party. They represented the human resources of the party, and each “comrade” was to be appointed to the job “he was most suited to”.⁹⁶ “Correct distribution of the cadres, correct distribution of our forces”⁹⁷ was one of the slogans of the time. The decisions on cadre policy of the first CC Plenum after the communist takeover reflected the same sentiment.⁹⁸ During the first the years, only the party members were considered to be nomenklatura cadres of the party committees – indeed the instructions up until the mid-1950s meant that the party nomenklatura could deal only with communists, and some lists even omitted leading positions if they were occupied at that moment by non-communists.⁹⁹

Initially, the subordination of the party cadres in state institutions or mass organizations to party decisions was the result of the principle of party discipline. Every communist in a state or any other office, independent of his or her rank, was obliged to fulfill the assignments and the orders of the party. The basis of the nomenklatura system was the centralism in the Communist Party and the unconditional subordination of its members to party decisions. To occupy a position was seen and in many cases effectively resulted from a party assignment. Having started by controlling communists in key positions, the nomenklatura system ended by controlling all persons in key positions. In most communist parties this assimilation of non-party members into the party nomenklatura took place in the mid-1950s. After practically all the leading positions had been attributed to communists, they finished by applying the rule for all leading cadres. Non-communists were included in the party nomenklatura, because positions, not persons, were considered first.

List of positions or list of cadres. The usual title of the nomenklatura lists “nomenklatura of the cadres” can be misleading: with very few exceptions these lists include positions, not persons. As a consequence one person could occupy two or three nomenklatura positions, be in the nomenklatura of two different bodies at the same time, or be appointed to a position in the nomenklatura of the party body of which he or she was a member. Even the “lists of reserve cadres”, were compiled according to the nomenklatura hierarchy. Instead of representing a pool of cadres, as some scholars are tempted to describe them, they list potential heirs (usually one or two) to specific places, almost always from among the current deputies or close collaborators.¹⁰⁰ Only certain privileges were attributed to party veterans on a case-by-case basis.

Leading cadres of important cadres. In the nomenklatura certain positions were listed whose holders could hardly be considered leading (*răkovodni*) cadres, but which were still considered important. For example, the correspondents of the Bulgarian Telegraph Agency and of the Committee for Television and Radio abroad which was accountable to the Secretariat. Lecturers of the Bulgarian language and culture abroad and even students in certain disciplines abroad (International Relations, International Economic Relations) were included in the registered nomenklatura of the CC. The latter were considered as future cadres for key positions, most probably also abroad. A similar case was that of those teaching in universities. The attribution of the title of professor was coordinated with the Science and Education Department of the CC of the BCP, of the associated professors with the *okrăg* committees or the Sofia city committee, for doctoral students, researchers, assistant professors and lecturers with the party committees of the high schools or scientific institutes.¹⁰¹

Members of non-permanent working bodies. Not all leading bodies were permanently working and the larger ones would hold only a limited number of sessions per year. This was the case for the party (the CC and the local committees of the BCP), the state institutions (the National Assembly and the people's councils), and the mass organizations, which, theoretically at least, were led by large collective bodies. Initially, all the members of these bodies were included among other leading cadres in the lists: members and candidates of the CC as well as members of the National Assembly were in the CC nomenklatura.¹⁰²

From the mid-1950s onwards, nomenklatura lists included only cadres in permanent positions. But even if the members of the non-permanently working bodies were no longer included in the lists, their election continued to be systematically controlled by the respective party leadership. Selecting the members of the CC did not present a problem to the party leadership: they were elected *en bloc* by the party congress according to a list "proposed" by the Politburo. Between congresses, members were dismissed and new ones elected by the CC plenum following a proposal of the Politburo. The candidates for the National Assembly were also approved – by the Politburo for those "from the center", and by *okrăg* committees for the rest.¹⁰³ The same non-codified control was exercised over honorific positions and titles, such as the members (regular and correspondent members) of the Academy of Science. Their election needed the approval of the party leadership – initially of the

Politburo,¹⁰⁴ later the Secretariat of CC of the BCP.¹⁰⁵ The proposal was sent by the president of the Bulgarian Academy of Science (a nomenklatura cadre of the Politburo himself) to the CC department that monitored the Academy and, through the secretary responsible for ideology, was submitted to the Politburo/Secretariat. During the early years, the party apparatus introduced certain corrections; later on, however, this procedure seems to have taken place before submitting the formal proposal. Only after this pre-selection and approval did the “election” take place for the new members of the Academy, with one candidate per place. The manipulated elections in the political arena corresponded with the manipulated “competitions” in universities and academia.

Members of these bodies usually also had a permanent position in the nomenklatura. They were treated according to their permanent posts and independently of their membership of any prestigious non-permanent bodies. For example, the evaluation of CC members had to be performed by the CC apparatus and the Secretariat only for those working at central level, while for those at provincial level this was done by the bureaus of the respective *okrąg* committee.¹⁰⁶

“Party” and “State” Nomenklatura. Some studies insist on the existence of a “state nomenklatura” along side the “party nomenklatura”. In the USSR, state institutions had their own nomenklaturas which were coordinated with the CC apparatus.¹⁰⁷ In the GDR, beside that of the CC, there was a nomenklatura of the Council of Ministers, with a separate nomenklatura of the National Defense Council added for the army, the police and the secret services, below which there were nomenklaturas for specific ministries and central institutions.¹⁰⁸

As in the USSR, in Bulgaria there were instructions to create these institutional nomenklaturas from the late 1947, as well as cadre departments in the ministries and institutions.¹⁰⁹ Unfortunately, access to the state archives from the communist period in Bulgaria is still more restricted than to the archive of the former Communist Party, and to date the documents of the state institutions regarding cadres is still not accessible for research. On the other hand, studies on the GDR case show that this information might not change substantially the picture of party control. The fact that a leading body had a “nomenklatura” must not be perceived as something exceptional. It is only natural that every leader or leading body knows to which positions it was able to appoint and dismiss office holders. If this phenomenon is of special interest for the communist system, it is because here control over *all* leading positions

was concentrated in the hands of the Communist Party. All of the most important positions in the country were in the end controlled by *one* nomenklatura: the nomenklatura of the Communist Party leadership. The perception of the “state nomenklatura” as independent or opposed to the party nomenklatura is wrong – every nomenklatura was under the ultimate control of the party structures.

Leading positions not included in the nomenklatura lists. It was stated at the beginning of this study that the nomenklatura of the CC of the Communist Party included *all* the leading positions. At least at first glance there are two exceptions: 1) the leadership of the allied party – the Agrarian union (known through the abbreviation BZNS),¹¹⁰ and 2) the religious hierarchs.¹¹¹ In practice, without featuring in the lists, these were subjected to a very similar form of party control. First, they could be appointed to different positions in state institutions and mass organizations, included in the nomenklatura lists, only after approval of a party body, which was identical to other cases; second, at least in some cases, their election within the hierarchy of their own institution took place after a formal decision of a party body.

Appointments of representatives of the Agrarian Union to positions in the state administration and the mass organizations were approved by the party leadership, as in all other cases according to their nomenklatura rank, after a proposal of the Agrarian Union. It seems the hierarchy of the Union itself enjoyed significant influence over the selection of the appointed persons.¹¹² This “autonomy” was counterbalanced by only giving the “agrarians” positions without any real power. They did not qualify for positions as military officers or in the Ministry of Interior. In State Security they served as agents, collaborators and informers, but never as regular officers. There were several “agrarian” ministers, but all the deputy ministers responsible for cadres were communists. At the same time, the Communist Party leadership kept an eye on key appointments within the Agrarian union. In October 1974, the Politburo approved the decision that Petăr Tanchev should replace the by then very old and sick Gheorghi Traykov, not only as first vice chairman of the State Council (which was a normal nomenklatura procedure) but also as secretary of the BZNS.¹¹³

The same was true for the Orthodox Church. Both patriarchs, Kiril and Maxim, were appointed among the vice-presidents of the National Peace Preserving Committee – positions included in the ‘registered and controlled nomenklatura’ of the CC. Some bishops were members of the *okrăg*

leaderships of this committee as well as of other mass organizations in their respective eparchy centers. The Vatican strictly forbade its own clergy to get involved in similar activities.¹¹⁴ Moreover, the party leadership made the most important “cadres decisions” concerning the Church. For example, the demission of Exarch Stephan (September 1948) was “accepted” by the Politburo before the formal act of the Council of Ministers, as legally required.¹¹⁵ This case is very insightful: even if the government was completely dominated by the communists and more than the half of the Politburo members were at the same time members of the Council of Ministers, the general rule that the most important decisions should be made in the Politburo was respected. In March 1971, the Politburo formally approved a decision to support the Bishop of Lovech Maxim as candidate for patriarch and he was consequently elected.¹¹⁶

The Moslem clergy was even more affected by interventions. A decision by the CC Secretariat of June 1988 envisaged “the strengthening from a cadres point of view (*da se ukrepi kadrovo*) of the office of the chief *mufti* in Sofia,” “to replace the unfitting *muftis*” specifying that “the replacement of the imams staff (*na imamskija sastav*) ... should take place gradually.”¹¹⁷ The phraseology used itself implies that the clergy was seen in terms of cadres.

Nomenklatura and privileges. In parallel with the lists of the cadre nomenklatura, within the CC apparatus a whole range of lists of positions, whose holders were entitled to specific privileges, were drawn up and approved, in some cases by the Politburo but usually by the Secretariat. These lists contained the names of those who had access to the Government Polyclinic¹¹⁸ and, later, to the Hospital for Governmental Officials.¹¹⁹ They also detailed “the leading posts and individuals served with personal office cars”,¹²⁰ “the cadres served by the VIP-services” and “to whom the Ministry of International Affairs issues diplomatic passports”,¹²¹ “the persons who possess the right to acquire housing with a surface area greater than 120 m²”,¹²² and the positions included in the government telephone exchange “*Petolachka*”,¹²³ etc. For the organization of public manifestations and the way they should be reported in the media the party apparatus drew up and regularly updated an “Order of Seniority” listing all the important political posts, starting with the secretary general of the CC of the BCP.¹²⁴ In all these lists, the leaders of the Agrarian Union, as well as spiritual leaders, were included on a regular basis. According to the documents quoted above, the secretary of the BZNS was put on the same footing as the members of Politburo. The patriarch

and the bishops of the Orthodox Church, as well as the chief *mufti*, were served by the VIP-services, but in terms of personal office cars, where privileges were attributed less generously, the patriarch was treated like the ministers – i.å. he was ranked below the Politburo members, but was provided with a better car than the chief *mufti*.

All these lists describe positions in party, state or mass organization hierarchies. Without explicitly referring to the lists of nomenklatura cadres, they indirectly reflect their hierarchy. Most are even not called nomenklatura, with the exception of the “nomenklatura of positions allowed to subscribe for the classified news bulletins of the Bulgaria Telegraph Agency”,¹²⁵ “the nomenklatura of leading cadres entitled to use hotel “Rila” in Sofia”,¹²⁶ “the nomenklatura of the cadres, who should study in the Academy for Social Sciences and Social Management”,¹²⁷ “the nomenklatura for decorating with the jubilee medal ‘1300 Years Bulgaria’”¹²⁸ and certain others. These lists allow us to see the problem of the *privileges* of the nomenklatura cadres as secondary – in almost all cases, access to special hospitals, better stocked shops, personal cars, bigger houses, diplomatic passports and more information resulting from the position occupied, even where it was no longer occupied due to retirement, transfer to another position, etc.

IV. The decision making process

Decisions of collective bodies? Compared with constitutions, legislation and party statutes, nomenklatura lists bring us much closer to the real power relations existing in the communist regimes. Still, we need to take one step further and try to examine how the system functioned in practice. In theory, with very few exceptions, decisions had to be made by collective bodies, and the question arises as to who made them and how they were made. First, in most important cases, the leader of the collective body made the decisions personally. The decisive role of the first secretary/secretary general in the Politburo is well known. At lower levels, cadre decisions were formally taken by the bureau, but in cases of failure in cadre policy, mostly (and in some cases only) the first secretary was held responsible.¹²⁹ Of course, first secretaries of local committees had to take into account the indications coming from above, just as the party leader had to consider pressures from the Kremlin.

Second, an important role was played by the secretary responsible for the respective field. In some cases only his signature was needed but this category remained limited compared with other parties.¹³⁰ He was responsible for checking the proposals before submitting them to the Secretariat or the Politburo. In this way, secretaries played a decisive role in cadre policy in the fields they were responsible for, even in cases where the decisions were made by the Politburo. For that very reason, in other communist parties those appointed by the secretary responsible for the respective field were included as a third level in the CC nomenklatura.

An important role was played by the head of the institution or unit where the appointment was to be made. Once in such a position, he or she was responsible for the cadre policy in the respective institutions and in most cases his or her proposal was not a mere formality. Ministers and heads of state institutions had an important word to say in cadre policy in their field.¹³¹ Still, their personal influence depended very much on their status within the party: for example, the minister members of the Agrarian Union had to follow the cadre selection of the party. A person leaving a key position was asked to make one or more suggestions for an eventual heir, and he or she usually suggested the appointment of some of the current deputies. Every leading cadre was supposed to “raise” potential heirs.

Coordination between leading party bodies and heads of the controlled institutions was crucial. Nomenklatura lists were secret, but party leadership made them well known to cadre workers. For instance brochures containing the CC nomenklatura were addressed not only to the staff of the CC apparatus that processed the decisions but also to those who had to submit them for approval –, i.e. ministers and heads of central institutions, their deputies responsible for cadres, party and state leadership at *okrąg* level.¹³² During the decade of 1948-1957, special cadre departments existed in the ministries, in other central institutions and in the “people’s councils”. They were headed by communists and were in contact with the Cadres Department of the CC.¹³³ Later, in every ministry there was one deputy minister responsible for cadres who was in charge of coordinating all appointments part of the CC nomenklatura with the respective party body.¹³⁴ Only in the first years do we find proposals that were rejected. In the following decades, the issue was previously discussed and only after agreement was reached was a formal proposal submitted, which explains why they were always “accepted.”

The role of the departments. As already mentioned, through their “controlled and registered nomenklatura,” the departments monitored the cadre policy of the lower bodies and, in cases of disagreement or failure, would refer the matter to the Secretariat (in fact, the secretary responsible for the field). Obviously departments were not collective bodies and decisions were made by their respective leaderships – the head, probably in some cases the deputy responsible for the specific field. It is symptomatic in this respect that in the nomenklatura of the SED until 1953 the category corresponding to the later *Kontrolnomenklatur* were described as nominations “to be approved by the head of the department of the CC.”¹³⁵

Still, the most important part of the cadre work of the departments is that they processed all proposals submitted to the Secretariat and the Politburo (in practice the most important ones were excluded). All lists up until 1955, as well as some notes to the 1955 CC nomenklatura, show how it was specified which department would process each position in the Politburo and the Secretariat list.¹³⁶ Later decisions on the department’s nomenklatura also list which positions of the Politburo and the Secretariat nomenklatura were monitored by the respective department.¹³⁷ In some cases the department had to coordinate the proposal with another department, and supplementary notes to the CC nomenklaturas specify these cases. The department had to take position on the proposal, before submitting it for a final decision.¹³⁸ This division of work was very important, and in the case of the SED in the GDR, the lists were organized first by departments, and only after that, as subdivisions, by level of approval, the Politburo, the Secretariat, the Cadres Commission, and the controlled nomenklatura. In a separate column it was specified whether the nomination in question had to be coordinated with another department or in some cases with a local party committee.

Interventions from above. In extraordinary circumstances higher party bodies would decide on appointments or dismissals beyond their nomenklatura. For example, the Politburo ordered the dismissal of cadres of much lower nomenklatura level in cases of alleged wrongdoing.¹³⁹ This was considered a normal practice when serious problems needed to be solved.¹⁴⁰ Such decisions also took place in exceptional cases not envisaged in the lists: for example, in March 1978 the Politburo nominally approved the “candidates for spacemen”.¹⁴¹ On a case-by-case basis, higher ranked party officials would intervene individually. For instance the party leader T. Jivkov was consulted on important appointments to

the Secretariat nomenklatura, even if he did not normally participate in its work. This happened regularly with appointments to the army and the Ministry of Internal Affairs,¹⁴² but also in other cases.¹⁴³ Party veterans, intellectuals or artists often directly addressed the party leader or other members of the top party leadership in cases concerning relatively minor positions.

Influence from below. In many cases appointments were made by the authorized party body *pro forma*, while simply confirming a decision arranged by their subordinates and the apparatus. For instance, the selection of reserve cadres was made by the party apparatus without the participation of the body in whose nomenklatura the respective positions were included. The Secretariat approved the reserve cadres for first secretaries of the *okrąg* committees and the presidents of the *okrąg* peoples' councils that were all in the nomenklatura of the Politburo. The Secretary of CC responsible for the party apparatus and the head of the Organizational Department, and the current first secretaries of the *okrąg* committees took part in drawing up the list.¹⁴⁴ In the Czechoslovak Communist Party some lists of local committees contain positions that the respective committee submits for approval to higher party bodies.¹⁴⁵

In some cases, party bodies had to consider any possible opposition. This was sometimes the case with elections in academia or in so-called creative unions and also in PPOs where the people knew each other and were eager to discuss and even oppose candidatures. In such cases, most often during the first years after 1944, as well as during the *Perestroika* period, party organs considered several possible candidates. For example, in early March 1989, the Politburo approved between 2 and 4 (usually 3) candidates as presidents of the so-called "creative unions": those of the filmmakers, journalists, actors, writers, translators and painters.¹⁴⁶

It would be misleading to see the communist system as perfectly centralized, where the center controlled everything. Obviously there were contradictions and the question that arises is that of how were they channeled. It seems that bargaining took place not within the collective body, but between two or three persons in key positions: the first secretary of the respective committee, the secretary responsible for the field, the head of the institution where the appointments was made, in many cases the deputy head responsible for cadres.

Criteria and sources of information. The criteria used in cadre selection were never clearly specified and the so-called "model instructions" contain

mostly empty phrases like: "in the selection, promotion and distribution of the leading cadres to take always into account the interests of the people."¹⁴⁷ Obviously there were large opportunities for subjective choice. Professional qualification, social background and political liability were evaluated subjectively by the selecting body or, more precisely, by the key figures dominating this body. Selection from above generated clientelism and paternalism. Corruption should also be considered.¹⁴⁸

Sources of information are stated explicitly only in the earlier documents, in the text of the proposal or in margin notes. Besides the candidate's CV (autobiography) and the evaluations from the party and/or syndicate leadership of the place where he or she had previously worked, any information about the candidate was collected by important and reliable party members as well as the State Security.¹⁴⁹ The cadre workers had to know and follow personally those cadres already selected under their supervision.

Verification by the secret services was important before appointing the person in question for the first time to a nomenklatura position at the "entrance" of the system.¹⁵⁰ But they had only to collect and deliver information, not to make the decision. In parallel, party activists would perform a separate inquiry. The party leadership was determined to reduce by as much as possible the influence of the State Security in the decision-making process itself. For this reason they were not allowed to recruit nomenklatura cadres as collaborators. Even if a number of the positions in all the institutions, especially those abroad, were reserved for cadres or collaborators with the State Security, these were not head positions of those respective institutions.¹⁵¹

Education of the nomenklatura cadres. Education is a central issue for every modern administration and the communist leaders paid special attention to this. This was closely related to the perception that cadres were "built up", "raised" and even "forged". Education of cadres had two dimensions: regular studies and party schools. In principle, and especially in the later decades, "party education" was not considered a substitute for "civil education," but as a necessary complement. In this respect, the restrictions on admissions to universities for political reasons (until the early 1960s and in individual cases even later) and the quotas for admissions to universities for children of participants in the communist movement before 1944 (up to 1987 inclusively) were not only "discrimination" and "privileges" but also a measure taken to create educated cadres loyal to the regime. Courses in party education were set

up for cadres at a specific level, in many cases for potential heirs. The regulations concerning the selection of students for the party schools and courses explicitly referred to the cadres nomenklatura.¹⁵²

The composition of the nomenklatura. Not only the selection of individuals, but also the composition of cadres occupying nomenklatura positions as a whole was a matter of constant concern for the party leadership and apparatus. This was regularly monitored according to a number of criteria and detailed statistical data were collected from 1945 onwards. What is revealing is not so much the data collected (this was very much an exercise in “how to lie with statistics”), but the very perception of the nomenklatura cadres as human material, as a resource that could be managed. The often quoted saying by Stalin that the “cadres decide everything” does not mean that the cadres would make the final decisions. On the contrary, this is symptomatic of the fact that the party leadership regarded even the leading cadres as human material to be used to achieve the party’s goals. Leading cadres were, or at least were supposed to be subjected, to centralized planning.

The ambition was to have a “balanced” and “representative” leadership according to a number of criteria – age, sex, education, social background, nationality and party affiliation. The party leadership’s instructions constantly called for increasing the proportion of women, young people and industrial workers in leading positions – the older male administrators would get there anyway. Non-party members, members of the BZNS, also had to be present in the leading bodies, if not in key positions. Minorities also had their quotas, even during the 1970s and the 1980s, when minority issues gradually became a taboo. Even after the forced renaming of the Turks with Bulgarian names (December 1984-February 1985) the apparatus continued to count separately “the people with restored names” (*s vǎzstanoveni imena*).¹⁵³ The striving for “representativeness” was clearer in the selection of the members of non-permanent bodies like the CC and the National Assembly, where manual workers, party veterans and young women sat alongside the party functionaries. Still, the same tendency was visible in appointing the members of the permanently working bodies – for instance, in the composition of the secretaries of the local committees of the BCP.

Almost all publications insist that once included in the nomenklatura, a cadre would have a high chance of remaining there irrespective of any bad performances or failures. There is a large amount of anecdotal evidence available to sustain this statement. During reorganizations, even when

they aimed to reduce the bureaucratic apparatus, it was always insisted that “no one would remain without work, not even with a lower wage”, regardless of what position they were transferred to.¹⁵⁴ This is usually considered a handicap that caused inertia and sclerosis in communist societies. Still, as a power mechanism, the nomenklatura system was very flexible, allowing for the removal of undesired people from key positions and depriving them completely of power but without expelling them from the elite.

* * *

The system of nomenklatura shows how, contrary to many other clichés, “the leading role of the party” in communist countries was not an empty phrase. Appointments to and dismissals from all leading positions in the state, as well the so-called mass organizations, were under the ultimate control of the ruling party. It demonstrates how, in the framework of the party itself, the leadership closely controlled the lower levels. Through the right to appoint and dismiss leading cadres, control over the whole of society was concentrated in the hands of those who were leading the Communist Party.

The system of nomenklatura also reveals the importance of the party apparatus in ruling the state and society. In this way it helps us understand the distribution of power at the very top of the party hierarchy. Behind the formally empowered collective bodies we can see the decisive role of those who were “assigned” to lead and control the party apparatus – the first secretary/secretary general, the secretaries of the CC, and below them the heads of the departments responsible for the respective fields.

The nomenklatura system clearly shows what things are important in order to understand the communist regimes – the party and its apparatus. It is misleading to center studies on state institutions, even if when talking about the State Security. Any analysis of the system should start from the decision-making and control center, i.e. the party leadership.

NOTES

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- 14 CSA, 1-b/6/172, f. 13-16: Protocol B 4 of the Politburo / 4 January 1947.
- 15 CSA, 1-b/23/78, f. 2-17. Draft without exact date.
- 16 CSA, 1-b/8/595, f. 20: Protocol 388a of the Secretariat / 25 October 1949;
- 17 CSA, 1-b/23/458, f. 1-7.
- 18 The two last pages (of 6) of the list with the nomenklatura cadres of the Administrative Department, beginning of 1951. Includes 582 positions: CSA, 1-b/24/11, f. 1-2.; *List of the nomenklatura cadres controlled by the Sector "Ministry of National Defense,"* 16 May 1951, including 219 positions: CSA, 1-b/24/26, f. 1-4; Agricultural department from December: CSA, 1-b/6/1504, f. 4-5: Decision 315 of the Politburo / 26 December 1951.
- 19 CSA, 1-b/6/2214, f. 11, 102: Protocol 232 of the Politburo / 17 June 1954.
- 20 CSA, 1-b/6/2514, f. 4: Protocol 93 of the Politburo / 7 April 1955.
- 21 CSA, 1-b/6/2574, f. 1-21: Decision 153 of the Politburo / 7 June 1955.
- 22 CSA, 1-b/6/3305, f. 47-55: Decision 178 of the Politburo / 27 June 1957.
- 23 The list from 20 March 1958 was not found in CSA, but the next CC nomenklatura refer to it.
- 24 CSA, 1-b/6/4474, f. 1-23; Decision 125 of the Politburo / 1 June 1961.
- 25 CSA, 1-b/6/6526, f. 4, 183-204; Protocol 28 of the Politburo / 17 January 1967; brochure of 8 February 1967 (f. 205).
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- 27 CSA, 1-b/35/5098, f. 3, 63-68: Protocol 573 of the Politburo / 10 December 1974; brochure of 3 March 1975 (f. 63).
- 28 CSA, 1-b/66/1323, f. 3, 56-64: Protocol 280 of the Politburo / 11 July 1978; brochure (f. 65).
- 29 CSA, 1-b/66/2376, f. 1, 2-49: Decision 256 of the Politburo / 30 May 1980; brochure of May 1980 (f. 85).
- 30 CSA, 1-b/68/3266, f. 1-2; Decision 734 of the Politburo / 19 October 1987.

- 31 CSA, 1-b/38/148, f. 1-8: report of the Organizational Department, 1966.
- 32 E.g.: IAHIEL, N., *Tedor Jivkov i lichnata vlast*. M-8-M, Sofia, 1997, p. 397-398; SOLAKOV, A., *Predsedateliat na KDS razkazva ... Spomeni*. Teksimreklama, Sofia, 1993, p. 87-88, 90.
- 33 In 1932 this topic became classified in the USSR: KORJIHINA, T., FIGATNER, Y., "Sovetskaya nomenklatura...", p. 31; In Bulgaria nomenklatura lists were explicitly listed among "the state secrets": CSA, 1-b/70/678-1984, f. 162a: Decision 293 of the Secretariat / 31 March 1984.
- 34 This subdivision remained unchanged from 1961 onwards. In the 1955 nomenklatura, the second and the third section were in reverse order, while in the 1957 version there was no subdivision.
- 35 The president of the Council of Ministers started to be listed separately in the list only in the 1970s – after the first secretary of the CC definitely ceased to accumulate the position of prime minister as well.
- 36 It was only during the so-called Stalinist period that a larger number of cadre decisions, including less important ones, were confirmed by the CC plenum: TZVETANSKI, S. *Organizacionno razvitiie na BCP, 1944-1986*. Institut po Istorija na BCP, Sofia, 1988, 108.
- 37 In the nomenklatura lists of the communist parties of the GDR after 1951, Czechoslovakia after 1952 and Hungary after 1957 the members of Politburo and the Secretariat were defined as cadres elected by and in some cases even as nomenklatura cadres of the CC. In Bulgaria there is no such perfidious formula. To the contrary, the first lists (up to 1950, valid until 1955) list the members of the Central Committee among the nomenklatura cadres followed by the Cadres Department of CC. The same in the first CC nomenklatura in Hungary: Magyar Országos Levéltár (MOL) M-KS 276. f. 90/142 ö.e., f. 274, 289 (in the drafts) and f. 320 (in the final version).
- 38 CSA, 1-b/6/4474, f. 10; Decision 125 of the Politburo/1 June 1961.
- 39 CSA, f. 1-b, op. 36, a.e. 4725, f. 208-209: Protocol 724 of the Secretariat / 29 July 1975.
- 40 Following the above quoted CC nomenklatura lists of June 1945, January 1947 and 1950. Slightly different versions: CSA, 1-b/23/458, f. 1-6; CSA 1-b/23/483, f. 1-2.
- 41 CSA, 1-b/6/3508, f. 96: Protocol 23 of the Politburo/9 January 1958.
- 42 Ibid., f. 4-5.
- 43 CSA, 1-b/36/270, f. 10: from Protocol 513 of the Secretariat/7 October 1968.
- 44 State Archive (SA)-Sliven, 1-b/8/25, f. 1-7: Nomenklatura of the Sliven *okraž*g committee, brochure of 1970; SA-Sliven, f. 1-b/8/26, f. 1-11: the same of 1981.
- 45 CSA, 1-b/12/22, f. 6: instruction of the Cadres Sector of 1945.
- 46 SA-Sliven, 1-b/8/25, f. 46-58: Nomenklatura of the Nova Zagora *obshtina* committee. Ibid., f. 164-161: Nomenklatura of the Sliven *obshtina* committee, august 1986. Ibid., f. 185-187: Nomenklatura of the Tvărditza *obshtina* committee.

- 47 HARASYMIW, B., "Die sowjetische Nomenklatur...", 1977, 589; LOWIT, T., "Y a-t-il des Etats...", 1979, 454; SZAKADÁT, I. "Káderfo(r)gő...", 1992, 99; HRADECKÁ, V., KOUDELKA, F., *Kádrowa politika...*, 1998, 98.
- 48 CSA, 1-b/6/6526, f. 205: Protocol 28 of the Politburo / 17 January 1967.
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- 50 CSA, 1-b/22/2, f. 1-4: report of the Head of the Military Department Damyanov of late 1944.
- 51 TCHANKOV, G. *Ravnosmetkata*. Hristo Botev, Sofia, 2000, pp. 16-25, 613-615.
- 52 CSA, 1-b/12/10, f. 1-2: letter of Dimitrov to Tchankov / 1 December 1944.
- 53 TCHANKOV, G. *Ravnosmetkata...*, 2000, 248.
- 54 GARLICKI, A., *Z tajnych archiwów*. BGW, Warszawa, 1993, p. 108-114; DUDEK, A. *Mechanizmy...*, p. 4.
- 55 VARGA, G., SZAKADÁT, I. "Íme a nómenklatúrák....", 1992, 77; Projects existed already in 1949: MOL M-KS 276. f. 90/59 ö.e.
- 56 Arhivele Naționale Istorice Centrale (ANIC), fond C.C. al P.C.R. – Cancelarie, dosar 36/1950, f. 4. Proces verbal Biroului Organizatoric / 8 mai 1950; IONESCU-GURĂ, N. "Reorganizarea P.M.R.-ului...", 2001, 228-233.
- 57 AMOS, H. *Politik und Organisation...*, 2003, 87.
- 58 Stiftung Archiv Der Parteien Und Massenorganisationen Der DDR im Bundesarchiv (SAPMO-BArch) DY / 30 / J IV 2/3/9, f. 2-4: Protokoll des Sitzung des Kleinen Sekretariats / 1 March 1949.
- 59 CSA, 146-b/5/476, f. 5-6; CSA, 1-b/7/804, f. 1-2: letters of the regent Todor Pavlov.
- 60 Protocol 11 of the Politburo / 17 October 1944 and Protocol 12 [of the Politburo] / 20 October 1944, quoted according to: CSA, 146-b/5/191, f. 1, 3.
- 61 CSA, 1-b/12/182, f. 5: report of the head of the Cadres Sector of 1945.
- 62 Protocol 12 [of the Politburo], of 20 October 1944. Quoted in: CSA, 146-b/5/191, f. 6.
- 63 E.g.: CSA, 1-b/8/35, f. 1-2; CSA, 1-b/8/71, f. 1, etc.
- 64 CSA, 1-b/6/142, f. 1 sqq: Decision 57 of the Politburo / 16 November 1946.
- 65 CSA, 1-b/23/271, f. 1-7: "Note regarding the work with the cadres of V.C.P./b/" by N. Stefanov of 1949.
- 66 ANIC, fond C.C. al P.C.R. – Cancelarie, dosar 66/1949, f. 3. Protocol 17 Biroului Politic / 18 iulie 1949; IONESCU-GURĂ, N. "Reorganizarea P.M.R.-ului...", 2001, 217-218.
- 67 Also in the GDR: SAPMO-BArch DY / 30 / J IV 2/3/81, f.7; Protokoll der Sitzung des Sekretariats / 30 January 1950.
- 68 CSA, 1-b/6/1172: Decision 455 of the Politburo / 18 December 1950.
- 69 CSA, 1-b/23/271, f. 1-2.
- 70 ANIC, fond C.C. al P.C.R. – Cancelarie, dosar 117/1950, f. 30. Still, a separate Sector for Verifying the Cadres was preserved.

- 71 KAPLAN, K. *Kádrosa nomenklatura...*, 1992, 70-71.
- 72 MOL M-KS 276. f. 53/95 ö.e., f. 20-21: Protocol of the Politburo / 20 March 1952.
- 73 ANIC, fond C.C. al P.C.R. – Cancelarie, dosar 14 / 1955, f. 3, 7. Protocol 8 Secretariatului / 7 februarie 1955.
- 74 LOWIT, T., “Y a-t-il des Etats...”, 1979, 453.
- 75 Among the preserved documents of the Orgburo (CSA, 1-b/9/1 to 71) there are almost no cadres decisions. However, there are some proposals addressing the Orgburo following which decisions were made by the Secretariat or the Politburo.
- Temporarily in Hungary the Orgburo (Szervező Bizottság) was the third level of decision making after the Politburo and the Secretariat (in 1950 and 1951 lists): VARGA, G., SZAKADÁT, I., “Íme a nómenklatúrák!..., 1992, 3, 75; the same in Romania according to the 1950 nomenklatura: ANIC, fond C.C. al P.C.R. – Cancelarie, dosar 36/1950, f. 4, 57.
- 76 CSA, 1-b/8/595, f. 20: Protocol 388a of the Secretariat / 25 October 1949.
- 77 CSA, 1-b/6/1916, f. 4: Protocol 185 of the Politburo / 17 October 1953.
- 78 ANIC, fond C.C. al P.C.R. – Cancelarie, dosar 40/1954, f. 6.
- 79 In USSR it existed since 1951: HARASYMIW, B. “*Nomenklatura:...*”, 1969, 496.
- 80 HRADECKÁ, V., KOUDELKA, F., *Kádrosa politika...*, 1998, 93.
- 81 ANIC, fond C.C. al P.C.R. – Cancelarie, dosar 14/1966, f. 2, 51; *Ibid.*, dosar 259/1968.
- 82 VARGA, G., SZAKADÁT, I. “Íme a nómenklatúrák!..., 1992, 3, 86-88 and MOL M-KS 288. f. 5/291 ö.e.: the list of February 1963; *Ibid.*, 5/424 ö.e.: the list of May 1967; *Ibid.*, 5/444 ö.e.: the list of January 1968; *Ibid.*, 5/556 ö.e.: the list of June 1971. After 1975 transformed into nomenklatura of a secretary of the CC *and* the head or the respective department of the CC: MOL M-KS 288. f. 5/676 ö.e.: the list of November 1975; *Ibid.*, 5/729 ö.e.: the list of Oktober 1977; *Ibid.*, 5/826 ö.e.: the list of Mai 1981; *Ibid.*, 5/896 ö.e.: the list of November 1983.
- 83 LOWIT, T. “Y a-t-il des Etats ...”, 1979, 450 sqq (the list of Okotber 1972).
- 84 The same, not only in other East-European communist regimes, but also in China: BURNS, J.P. *The Chinese...*, 1989, p. xvi.
- 85 CSA, 1-b/66/151, f. 1: Decision 151 of the Politburo / 6 May 1976.
- 86 CSA, 1-b/67/1446, f. 5: note to Decision 697 of the Politburo / 19 October 1982.
- 87 CSA, 1-b/6/493, f. 8-9: report of the Cadres Department to Protocol 104 of the Politburo / 20 May 1948.
- 88 E.g.: CSA, 1-b/6/175, f. 1: Protocol 7 of the Politburo / 9 January 1947.
- 89 CSA, 1-b/6/493, f. 2: Protocol 104 of the Politburo / 20 May 1948.
- 90 Respectively: CSA, 1-b/8/595, f. 9-10: Protocol 388^a of the Secretariat / 25 October 1949 and CSA, 1-b/6/679, f. 55: Protocol 106 of the Politburo / 3

- November 1949; *Statii po izuchavaneto, podbora, razpredelenieto i vāzpitaniето na kadrite*. SGK na BCP, Sofia, 1949, 11-12.
- 91 CSA, 1-b/6/6526, f. 214; CSA, 1-b/35/5098, f. 3, 65.
- 92 MOL, M-KS 288. f. 5/676 ö.e., f. 98: Protocol of the Politburo / 4 November 1975.
- 93 Also because it was only down to the party leadership to shorten or to enlarge the nomenklatura lists: HARASYMIW, B. "*Nomenklatura: ...*, 1969, 512.
- 94 HRADECKÁ, V., KOUDELKA, F., *Kādrova politika...*, 1998, pp. 10, 88 sqq.
- 95 VARGA, G., SZAKADÁT, I., "Íme a nómenklatúrák!...", 1992, 3, 91-93.
- 96 CSA, 1-b/12/6, f. 1.
- 97 CSA, 1-b/12/52, f. 2.
- 98 The VIII plenum, 27 February – 1 March 1945, quoted after: CSA, 146-6/5/21, f. 44.
- 99 For example the nomenklatura controlled by the Administrative department (1951) omitted the Minister of Justice, a position occupied by a member of the Agrarian Union: CSA, 1-b/24/11, f. 1.
- 100 CSA, 1-b/36/1331, f. 1-61: Decision 128 of the Secretariat / 5 March 1971; The same according to Romanian sources: ANIC, fond C.C. al P.C.R. – Cancelarie, dosar 125/1955, f. 17.
- 101 CSA, 1-b/36/2767, f. 1 sqq: Decision 283 of the Secretariat / 21 March 1973.
- 102 In communist parties where members of non-permanent bodies continued to be listed in the nomenklatura lists, as for instance in the GDR and Czechoslovakia this was still within general lists.
- 103 E.g. CSA, 1-b/67/173, f. 8-40.
- 104 E.g. CSA, 1-b/6/1253, f. 2-3; CSA, 1-b/6/3508, f. 8.
- 105 E.g. CSA, 1-b/36/3232, f. 1-2; CSA, 1-b/69/3669, f. 1.
- 106 CSA, 1-b/36/4725, f. 5: Protocol 724 of the Secretariat / 29 July 1975.
- 107 KORJIHINA, T., FIGATNER, Y., "*Sovetskaya nomenklatura...*", 1993, 27.
- 108 WAGNER, M. *Ab Morgen...*, 1998, pp. 74 sqq, 211-223, 236-238.
- 109 CSA, f. 1-b, op. 23, a.e. 16, f. 2: instruction of the Cadres Department of 1947.
- 110 The same in Poland and Czechoslovakia: HRADECKÁ, V., KOUDELKA, F., *Kādrova politika...*, 1998, 134-135; In the GDR they were included in the lists from the 1950s, dropped starting from 1960 and once again included from the June 1977 CC list onwards. WAGNER, M. *Ab Morgen...*, 1998, 84.
- 111 The same in GDR, CSSR, Poland, USSR, Hungary, Romania.
- 112 CSA, 1-b/5/495, f. 95-96: CC plenum / 14-15 March 1962; also CSA, 1-b/6/3508, f. 18, 26.
- 113 CSA, 1-b/35/5025, f. 1: Protocol 500 of the Politburo / 29 October 1974.
- 114 CSA, 1-b/71/305-88, f. 83-84: note to Protocol 305 of the Secretariat / 22 June 1988.

- 115 CSA, 1-b/6/539, f. 1: Decision 152 of the Politburo / 10 September 1948.
 116 CSA, 1-b/35/2040, f. 1: Decision 145 of the Politburo / 8 March 1971.
 117 CSA, 1-b/71/305-88, f. 55-56: Protocol 305 of the Secretariat / 22 June
 1988.
 118 CSA, 1-b/6/1295, f. 1-4: Decision 102 of the Politburo / 20 April 1950.
 119 CSA, 1-b/36/24, 95, 140 and many other complementing decisions of the
 Secretariat.
 120 CSA, 1-b/68/3555, f. 4 sqq: Decision 202 of the Politburo/ 27 December
 1988.
 121 CSA, 1-b/71/220-87, f. 19-30: Protocol 220 of the Secretariat / 11 March
 1987. Two separate lists.
 122 CSA, 136/84/193, f. 2-4: Decision 480 of the Council of Ministers / 6 August
 1973.
 123 CSA, 1-b/71/90-87, f. 27-39: Protocol 90 of the Secretariat / 28 January
 1987. Two separate lists.
 124 Ibid., f. 3-14; The same in GDR: WAGNER, M. *Ab Morgen....*, 1998, 73.
 125 CSA, 1-b/71/330-88, f. 1-5: Order 330 of the Secretariat / 5 July 1988. There
 are three separate lists for the different bulletins; for the main list there are
 three levels of confidentiality.
 126 CSA, 1-b/71/285-88, f. 1: Order 285 of the Secretariat / 7 June 1988.
 127 CSA, 1-b/36/916, f. 14-22: Protocol 300 of the Secretariat / 21 April 1970.
 128 CSA, 1-b/67/530, f. 13-15: Decision 530 of the Politburo / 9 November
 1981.
 129 CSA, 1-b/66/68, f. 2-4 and 6-9: Protocol 68 of the Politburo / 20 February
 1976; CSA, 1-b/66/745, f. 33-36: Protocol 223 of the Politburo / 23 May
 1977.
 130 The technical collaborators with the CC that were appointed by the decision
 of one single secretary. The 1957 CC nomenklatura includes a few more
 posts whose holders had to be appointed by only one secretary: CSA, 1-b/
 6/3305, f. 55.
 131 SOLAKOV, A., *Predsedateliat...*, 1993, p. 90.
 132 CSA, 1-b/66/1323, f. 54-56: amendment to Protocol 280 of the Politburo /
 11 July 1978; In the GDR, only the respective part of the nomenklatura was
 made known to the subordinated bodies: WAGNER, M. *Ab Morgen....*,
 1998, 76.
 133 In Mai 1957 most were dismantled: CSA, 1-b/6/3249, f. 1-3: Protocol 126 of
 the Politburo / 9 May 1957; The same happened in Czechoslovakia in
 1958: HRADECKÁ, V., KOUDELKA, F., *Kádřova politika...*, 1998, 10.
 134 CSA, 1-b/66/1323, f. 57-61: Note to Protocol 280 Politburo / 11 July 1978.
 135 WAGNER, M. *Ab Morgen....*, 1998, 43-44.
 136 CSA, 1-b/67/2514, f. 35: information to the Decision 93 of the Politburo / 7
 April 1955.

- 137 CSA, 1-b/36/2867, f. 6, 29-30: Protocol 469 of the Secretariat / 26 April
1973: approves the nomenklatura of cadres who will be overseen by the
Department "Cadres, Party Organizations and Official trips abroad."
- 138 CSA, 1-b/5/157, f. 18: Minutes from the meeting of the party leadership with
the CC apparatus in November 1954.
- 139 E.g.CSA, 1-b/68/1546, f. 1-2: Decision 290 of the Politburo / 14 March
1986.
- 140 *Statii po izuchavaneto...*, 1949, 11-12.
- 141 CSA, 1-b/66/1166: Decision 123 of the Politburo / 11 March 1978.
- 142 CSA, 1-b/71/448-1988: Decision of the Secretariat 448 / 12 December 1988.
143 E.g. the election of the new rector of the University of Sofia in 1979: CSA,
1-b/69/905-79.
- 144 CSA, 1-b/36/1331, f. 1 sqq: Decision 128 of the Secretariat / 5 March 1971.
145 HRADECKÁ, V., KOUDELKA, F., *Kádřova politika...*, 1998, đđ. 190-193,
219-221.
- 146 CSA, 1-b/68/3610 to 3616 and 3618: Decisions 45 to 51 and 53 of the
Politburo / March 1989.
- 147 CSA, 1-b/36/4725, f. 197-210. Protocol 724 of the Secretariat / 29 July
1975.
- 148 LEWIN, M. *Nomenklatura...*, 1997, 77-78.
- 149 CSA, 1-b/23/398, f. 4: report of the Cadres Department of 1949.
- 150 WAGNER, M., *Ab Morgen...*, 1998, 109.
- 151 There is evidence from the GDR that the Stasi supported candidates for
certain positions: VOLLHALS, C., "Nomenklatur und Kaderpolitik.
Staatssicherheit und die Sicherung der DDR-Justiz." In: *Deutschland Archiv*,
1998, 2, pp. 230, 234-235.
- 152 CSA, 1-b/36/1231, f. 1: Decision 888 of the Secretariat / 1 December 1970.
153 In reports concerning the composition of the *okrăg/oblast* secretaries: CSA,
1-b/68/801-86, f. 61; CSA, 1-b/68/3180, f. 10.
- 154 E.g.: CSA, 1-b/66/1480a, f. 50-51; CSA, 1-b/70/339-1984, f. 99.