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## DOCUMENTATION OF THE COMMUNIST NOMENCLATURE IN THE POLISH PEOPLES REPUBLIC. AN OUTLINE OF THE PROBLEM\*

### INTRODUCTION

The communist nomenclature was an important element of one of the three precepts for communist executives in the bureaucracy of the Polish People's Republic (PRL) followed closely by terror and propaganda. However, Özlem Cihan takes somewhat a different stance by discerning five precepts such as: a political monopoly based on ideas of Marxism-Leninism, nationalisation of the economy, repressions imposed on political opponents, and finally the nomenclature and propaganda.<sup>1</sup> A communist bureaucracy as a form of administration for the authorities' instruments constituted one of the most important tools for sustaining totalitarian governance. Its omnipresence and its alleged omnipotence were supposed to deter any unwarranted acts from their citizens.

The position of the nomenclature in the bureaucratic system of the PRL was a reason behind the combination of its activities with a strictly regulated process of information circulation based on the personnel regulations of the Polish Worker's Party (PPR) and the Polish United Workers' Party (PZPR). As a result, the communist party produced vast volumes of documents related to the functioning of the afore-mentioned system. After the self-dissolution of the PZPR in 1990, such documents were found in the archives and became a great source of research materials on the communist nomenclature in Poland as well as the PZPR's personnel policies in general. This article is an attempt at a synthetic

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\* The results of the research carried out under the research theme No. 512/18/S were financed from the science grant granted by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education.

<sup>1</sup> Ö. Cihan, *Transformation of Post-communist Poland: New Political Elites and the Problems of the New Political Life*, Vienna 2012, p. 8, [https://www.academia.edu/4239931/Transformation\\_of\\_Post-Communist\\_Poland](https://www.academia.edu/4239931/Transformation_of_Post-Communist_Poland), Accessed 17 VIII 2019. Of course, there are researchers who also indicate other elements of exercising power (e.g. J. Eisler, *Czterdzieści pięć lat, które wstrząsnęły Polską* (Warsaw, 2018), p. 108).

description of this documentation which was created during the nomenclature times including the data, in the context of ideological and practical implications of communist governance in Poland.

### “CADRES DECIDE EVERYTHING”

Personnel policies were one of the main instruments of power in the USSR as well as in its satellite countries. In Poland, after the communists seized power and eliminated the opposition along with the underground movement by using terror, then casual appointments and dismissals in all state and social institutions became a great way of forcing complete obedience without having to resort to violence.<sup>2</sup>

The structure of those communist personnel policies was also defined by the fact that the rules concerning inter-party relations were supposed to be replicated in all other socio-economic aspects in the state. They were considered to be a reinforcement of the “avant-garde” role of the party and its class character as well as leading to the mature growth of activists and ensuring the selection of only the best for the job. In this way, the PZPR’s bureaucratic structure and their workers constituted the best possible role models and sources of desired behaviour for all other organisational units functioning in the country. We could divide the communist party workers into two groups: one of them holding political positions and being a part of the so-called “apparatus” and the second group made of the administrative-technical staff. Political workers were either party activists holding political positions by election (secretaries and members of the control and revision panels) or positions not requiring an election (managers of provincial committees’ departments, their deputies, instructors and specialists). They were supposed to serve the party committees by representing the interests of its members and structures. Decisions related to employment in the party apparatus were made by the Central Committee (KC) and provincial committees’ executives. The main driver behind the personnel policies carried out by the provincial committees was the budget assigned for this purpose by the Central Committee. Every year, in the employment and budgetary planning for provincial committees, the secretariat of the KC would approve a specific number of overall positions, including: a number of secretaries, managers and their deputies in the provincial committees, first secretaries of municipal, neighbourhood, municipal-communal and communal committees as well as other political workers and administrative-technical staff. This pattern would be replicated in all other personnel policies in the whole country.

The reform of personnel policies in the communist party in Poland occurred after the political crisis of 1980–1981, when it was determined that the key reason for the crisis was the inadequate selection of personnel. From then on, the most important criterion for recruitment was intended to be actual competence rather than solely loyalty to the

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<sup>2</sup> A. Dudek, “Funkcjonowanie systemu nomenklatury kadr PZPR na szczeblu wojewódzkim (1948–1980). Przykład Krakowa” [in:] *Komunizm. Ideologia, system, ludzie*, ed. T. Szarota (Warsaw, 2001), p. 99.

communist party as long as the person declared their loyalty to the PRL in general.<sup>3</sup> The new way was intended to be an introduction of a unified approach on all levels and the opening up of management positions for young people in order to lower social tensions. The following regulations were implemented: a requirement for the continuous appraisal of personnel, the creation of a personnel reserve and a requirement to continually develop their employees. Henceforward, the personnel reserve was supposed to become the main source for staffing managerial positions. All instances in the communist party were obligated to create and develop reserve cadres for all managerial positions. It was meant to be an open database allowing for quantitative changes. Assignment to the list of the personnel reserve had to be an outcome of the attitude of that person, their achieved results and potential; however no specific job roles for which they were coached were mentioned. The capacity of that reserve was dependent on the number of suitable candidates showing managerial potential. An important recommendation was to select young people involved in socio-political activity, especially within youth organisations. People selected for the personnel reserve were assigned tasks which were designed to spur their growth in the direction chosen by the party and the up-skilling required. The right to sign a candidate for the personnel reserve was given to the management of government departments and companies, party organisations and instances as well as youth, socio-political and union organisations and local administration.

## THE COMMUNIST NOMENCLATURE

In the broadest sense, the nomenclature consisted of the elite, that is people holding positions requiring a special recommendation from the communist party that governed as a dictatorship regime between 1945 and 1989 (specifically the PPR and beginning from 1948, the PZPR). It became a single, monopoly-based decision centre with a complex internal hierarchy beginning with the capitol personnel through to provincial and ending with local management. This group constituted a closed, self-reproducing caste that monopolised social, political and economic power and had multiple privileges as a result of its position, but at the same time was not subject to any control.<sup>4</sup>

Formally, the nomenclature stated a list of all managerial positions in the state which involved decision-making competences at all levels of the communist party. It had Soviet origins, being a degenerated version of the exuberant tsarist bureaucracy<sup>5</sup> that was formed in three stages. The first was a creation of a de-classed caste of professional revolutionaries, the second stage was the afore-mentioned caste seizing power in Russia and third, Joseph Stalin removing old Bolsheviks and replacing them with bureaucrats loyal to him. It is Stalin who is considered to be the author of the personnel nomenclature, to which he

<sup>3</sup> J. Wasilewski, "The Patterns of Bureaucratic Elite Recruitment in Poland in the 1970s and 1980s," *Soviet Studies* 1990, vol. 42, no. 4, p. 745.

<sup>4</sup> T. Ito, "Controversy over Nomenklatura in Poland," *Journal of East and West Studies* 1982, vol. 11, no. 1, p. 62.

<sup>5</sup> R. Pipes, "Car bolszewików," *Wprost* 2005, no. 1779, <https://www.wprost.pl/tygodnik/78260/Car-bolszewikow.html>, Accessed 17 VIII 2019.

used to individually decide upon promotions and demotions of whose holding positions in the party apparatus, This incidentally also earned him a nickname of “Comrade File Cabinet” (*товарищ картотек*).<sup>6</sup>

The nomenclature system functioned until the end of the Soviet Union. The nomenclature itself became a closed caste of people concentrating within its means a totality of power. Researchers compared it to a tsarist nobility inheriting servitude,<sup>7</sup> and they defined it as a “new ruling class”<sup>8</sup> or alternatively a class of communist administrators that is a part of a parasitic bureaucracy thus forming a state within a state, that is, a state-office with its own legal system, culture and even fashion.<sup>9</sup>

From the moment that elements of governance subject to Moscow in 1944 were established, the communists began to dominate all aspects of life. The formal rule that a nomination for a specific role needs to be preceded by an approval of an appropriate part of the communist party started at first only in the security apparatus,<sup>10</sup> but then after the creation of PZPR it became the rule in all other parts of the state. In the beginning of 1949, the first issue of the *Central Committee's Cadres Nomenclature* was published. It included a list of a few hundred positions, nominations for which required party approval.<sup>11</sup> Not long after, a similar document was endorsed concerning appointments in the provincial and regional committees. Casual personnel changes in all spheres in the country were quickly recognised and encouraged on all levels of the party apparatus as an unlimited source for creating reality. What could be observed very soon after that is a phenomenon of covering as many positions with the nomenclature as possible at all levels of the party.<sup>12</sup>

The same situation resulted in a need for top-down created regulations for the functioning of the personnel nomenclature that occurred in 1972 and 1977 by providing guidelines (*wytyczne*) concerning the afore-mentioned nomenclature with a detailed list of specific positions it covers.<sup>13</sup> The right to decide about specific appointments was given to the Central Committee, provincial committees, municipal committees, neighbourhood committees, communal and workplace committees.<sup>14</sup> Party bodies at each level were authorised to make personnel decisions within their scope, however higher-level bodies had the privilege of recommending individuals for positions covered by the nomenclature of the lower instances as well as blocking decisions they deemed unacceptable.<sup>15</sup> Positions at one institution could be covered only by a nomenclature of one party body with the

<sup>6</sup> M. Wosleński, *Nomenklatura. Uprzywilejowani w ZSRR* (Warsaw, 1983), p. 30.

<sup>7</sup> R. Pipes, “Car bolszewików”.

<sup>8</sup> M. Dżilas, *Nowa klasa wyzyskiwaczy. Analiza systemu komunistycznego* (Paris, 1957).

<sup>9</sup> M. Wosleński, *Nomenklatura*, pp. 15–16, 42–43, 104–106, 168–171.

<sup>10</sup> A. Paczkowski, “System nomenklatury kadr w Polsce (1950–1970)”, *Czasy Nowożytne* 2000, vol. 8 (9), p. 16.

<sup>11</sup> A. Garlicki, *Z tajnych archiwów* (Warsaw, 1993), pp. 109–114.

<sup>12</sup> A. Dudek, “Funkcjonowanie systemu nomenklatury kadr PZPR na szczęblu wojewódzkim”, pp. 100–101. The lowest-level PZPR committees (1954–1972) and basic party organisations did not have their staff nomenclature.

<sup>13</sup> *Wytyczne Biura Politycznego w sprawie nomenklatury kadr instancji partyjnych wraz z wykazem stanowisk objętych nomenklaturą KC, KW, KM, KD, KMG, KG, KZ* (Warsaw, 1977).

<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 3–4.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 4.

exclusion of communist party workers, state administration panels and employees of the Citizen's militia, courts, prosecutor's office and universities. In those institutions, decisions regarding appointments for specific positions were made by higher bodies of the party after consulting with the management of an appropriate party body.

Theoretically, it was supposed to be a rational system for the efficient headhunting of the most prominent professionals in each aspect of society, ready to move wherever the party needed.<sup>16</sup> In practice, it was not the professional aspect that shaped the whole system, but actually the reality of each of the local party organisations that eventually formed the character of the nomenclature.<sup>17</sup>

The mention of the "managerial role of the PZPR" in Poland in the Polish People's Republic constitution in 1976 was meant to legitimise the nomenclature. One of the main forms of materialising this objective was through personnel policies.<sup>18</sup>

Party bodies that had the right to take personnel decisions were obligated to monitor the state of the system of personnel changes on regular basis; this was in addition to checking the control functions for management representatives in both administration and economic aspects. In order to ensure the functioning of the country's personnel policy, there was a recommendation of a periodical appraisal of cadres in all party bodies and all managerial positions.

As a result of that, in 1982, the system of communist nomenclature in Poland consisted of four main elements:

- a review of personnel, almost a casting of sorts for people useful to the communist governance (each review involved a possibility to include new people on the list or remove those not showing enough potential);

- a personnel reserve, as a database and shadow cabinet of the managerial cadre;

- a periodic appraisal of cadres as an instrument of self-discipline for employees of all ranks;

- regular education sessions offered by the party, so to shape the personnel to the needs of the party.<sup>19</sup>

Especially in the cadres of the Citizen's Militia, security services, prosecution, judiciaries, foreign affairs, mass media, academia as well as education, culture, state administration and control bodies, the selection of personnel was a matter of great focus.<sup>20</sup> The scale of this phenomenon and its influence on society is proved by the fact that by the end of the communist reign (1988), there was about 273,200 nomenclature positions.<sup>21</sup> In the Central Committee itself there were 4643 of them.<sup>22</sup> Just for comparison,

<sup>16</sup> T. Ito, *Controversy over Nomenklatura in Poland*, p. 59.

<sup>17</sup> G. Eyal, E. Townsley, "The Social Composition of the Communist Nomenklatura: A Comparison of Russia, Poland and Hungary", *Theory and Society* 1995, vol. 24, p. 727.

<sup>18</sup> D. Magier, "System nomenklaturowy partii komunistycznej" [in:] *Dzieje biurokracji na ziemiach polskich*, vol. 3, ed. A. Górak, K. Latawiec, D. Magier (Lublin-Siedlce, 2010), pp. 677–678.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 681–682.

<sup>20</sup> *Wytyczne Biura Politycznego*, p. 6.

<sup>21</sup> A. Paczkowski, "System nomenklatury kadr w Polsce", pp. 30–39.

<sup>22</sup> M. Tymiński, *PZPR i przedsiębiorstwo. Nadzór partyjny nad zakładami przemysłowymi 1956–1970* (Warsaw, 2001), p. 84.

in the small Białskopodlaski province, in the 1980s, there were around 3000 managerial positions in all PZPR bodies including all industrial plants, state institutions, local offices and administration bodies as well as other work places. The nomenclature of cadres was extended further and adapted accordingly to the state of its organisational units. The entirety formed an efficient sieve making it impossible to appoint a person without a confident backing from the communist party.<sup>23</sup>

The nomenclature system in Poland became one of the main tools for exercising power, rewards and punishments, as well as forcing loyalty within the party ranks. The aim of its existence was to enable promotions for people who guaranteed loyalty and sustained the status quo of the regime. The nomenclature was an exact copy of the Soviet model that rationed all goods, practically unavailable to an average citizen, and then provided a new incentive to work for this sustainability. As a result, the bureaucratic structure of PZPR and its employees became main role models for all individuals in the state.

## DOCUMENTING THE WORK OF THE NOMENCLATURE

Documenting the process of the nomenclature's creation adhered to regulations concerning handling personal acts and more specifically about dealing with file and card catalogues. In Poland, in the structures of the communist party, they were based on the regulations by the Central Committee of the PZPR. The entirety of the personnel evidence was conducted by file-keepers, record instructors, then by personnel inspectors, and in the municipal and commune committees their first secretaries who supervised documentation sets that consisted of: personal files, personal index cards and index cards of positions covered by the nomenclature as well as the files for the communist movement veterans.<sup>24</sup> Personnel records were secret, internal documentation and could be handed over only through a personnel inspector in a conduct mandated by the Central Committee of the PZPR.

The nomenclature included positions filled by the process of election, appointment or nomination. The candidates for electable positions in the party were recommended by an appropriate party body. It was also relevant for managerial positions in the local administration, workers union, youth organisations, self-governance cooperatives and other social organisations. Confirmation of each of the candidates could occur based on a request made by a manager of a higher body, however an initiative for an appointment or dismissal could also be made by the communist party.<sup>25</sup>

The process for acquiring approvals regarding personnel requests depended on each of the party structures. In the Central Committee, organisational units would consult personnel changes with appropriate departments, and then place a request including full documentation to the Cadres Department. In this department, there was a registry

<sup>23</sup> D. Magier, *System biurowy Polskiej Zjednoczonej Partii Robotniczej w województwie białskopodlaskim w latach 1975–1990* (Siedlce, 2012), pp. 89–90.

<sup>24</sup> T. Czarnota, "Kartotekarze i kartoteki w komitetach powiatowych PZPR województwa lubelskiego", *Wschodni Rocznik Humanistyczny* 2018, vol. 15, no. 3, pp. 106–108, 119 *passim*.

<sup>25</sup> *Wytyczne Biura Politycznego*, p. 6.

of all personnel requests submitted to the Central Committee. After a review, a decision would be made, of which the requester was later informed.<sup>26</sup>

In provincial committees, personnel changes had to be consulted with appropriate departments, depending on the subject followed by filing a request which was submitted with full documentation to the Cadres Department. They also kept a registry, similar to the one of the Central Committee, keeping track of all personnel requests. A requestor would be informed of the decision later on.<sup>27</sup>

In municipal or neighbourhood committees, requests made by managers of appropriate superior units would be submitted to the first secretary who, in turn, would present them to the executives for approval and then informed the requestors of the final decision.

In municipal, communal or workplace committees, personnel related decisions were made by executives based on personnel records submitted by requestors. After a decision was taken, this documentation would be returned. Committees would retain only the approved request based on which they would create or add details to the index card of that position. The first secretary would inform the requester of the decision.<sup>28</sup>

Those making personnel decisions within their nomenclature would bear the responsibility of conducting interviews with candidates for promotion or dismissal.<sup>29</sup> The Central Committee's secretariat members would interview secretaries of provincial committees, provincial governors, ministers and their deputies as well as people parallel in the hierarchy. The remaining part of management covered by the nomenclature would be interviewed by department managers or their deputies. Provincial, municipal, neighbourhood, communal and workplace committees had their separate ways of locally interviewing for managerial positions.<sup>30</sup>

The nomenclature would cover all managerial positions (often deputies as well) for organisational units regardless if the position needed to be filled by election, nomination or appointment.

A personnel file for each person's career in the communist nomenclature consisted of several or several dozen documents including all personal information. They were standardised nationwide and the following analysis was based on the personnel files of nomenclature members of PZPR's Provincial Committee in Siedlce, which may be the most complete set in Poland and is stored in the State Archives in Siedlce.

The first document was a "personnel questionnaire" which was a 4-page long form including information such as: first and last name, father's name, ID number as well as membership card number. Next, it would be the date and place of birth, nationality, social upbringing (rural, working class or *inteligentnia*), marital status and education. The other notes related to foreign languages competencies, military status and its course, any foreign trips, record of offences (including the ones against the party), family details, work records, remuneration, memberships in social organisations, career highlights, and finally all assets

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<sup>26</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 7.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 7–8.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 8.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 8–9.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 9.



with a clear division of production means ownership and property. There would also be a field dedicated to an address and phone number. On the first page of the questionnaire there would be a place for a passport-size photograph of that person (sometimes it was missing but that was more likely a result of an inconsistency in procedure rather than a forceful removal). Such questionnaires would be filled out by the candidates themselves, its correctness and truthfulness would be then verified and confirmed by two communist party members.

This questionnaire would have to be supplemented by a curriculum vitae written by hand as well as all educational diplomas from various paths, political as well (such as an Evening School of Marxism-Leninism), a criminal records' statement issued by the Ministry of Justice based on the Central Registry of Convicts as well as feedback from the structures to which the candidates belonged. In case of PZPR members, it was a Primary Party Organisation as each member, regardless of their position in the hierarchy, had to be affiliated with this smallest cell in the party structures. Further documents in that set would be an assessment from a previous employer and a medical opinion including any reasons a particular candidate would not be considered fit for the position.

After collecting all required documents, an official request for confirmation could be submitted to the appropriate party body. That request would be placed by a hiring manager or the person nominating. Such requests would include personal information as well as various predispositions and the history of the candidate related to their previous employment, political or social activity. It would also include a statement of support for the candidate from a specific communist party body. A complete request would move to a party authority which would either approve it or not, and add appropriate notes. In case of approvals (there were only rare cases of rejections which suggests that candidates put forward for the positions were given a "green light" beforehand, making it a mere formality), in the afore-mentioned document set we could find minutes from the meeting of the approving panel which would be sent in the form of a cover letter by the party committee along with the decision.

A similar procedure would take place in cases of dismissals from positions covered by the nomenclature as these also required official approval from the communist party. An employer would submit a request to dismiss a person from their post justifying the need. Only after approval was granted and forwarded in a form of a written statement along with the meeting minutes of the granting committee, a person could be dismissed, released from duty or transferred. This occurred even in cases where the requestors applied on their own behalf.

## A "LIFE AFTER LIFE" FOR THE NOMENCLATURE DOCUMENTS

Personnel files from the offices or state archives of the PZPR concerning the nomenclature members in the communist era were not supposed to be stored indefinitely but rather, similarly to all other personnel documentation in Poland, it was of a "B50" category which meant that after 50 years from its creation they should be marked for disposal. As a result of the sudden self-dissolution of the communist party in 1990, by the laws of



archiving, all PZPR documentation should have been moved to state archives. In most cases, this was exactly what happened based on territorial jurisdiction. Thus provincial committees' documentation including also all documents gathered from the lower instances of communist party structures would be handled by the appropriate provincial state archives based on their territorial jurisdiction. Following this logic, documentation from the Central Archives of PZPR, functioning previously for the Central Committee, was transferred to the Central Archives of Modern Records (AAN) in Warsaw. Apart from the documentation meant to be stored indefinitely, items with temporary storage status including a vast number of personnel records, constitute almost 90% of all PZPR documentation sets from each province (as it is the case of State Archives of Lublin). From the moment they were added to the state archives, they were assigned an "A" category, meaning they are to be stored indefinitely.<sup>31</sup> As per Polish law, currently the access to this type of documentation (personnel records) in the state archives is permitted only after 50 years from the time of its creation.<sup>32</sup>

An exemption to what I have described are some documents from the era of the PZPR which were transferred to its subsequent party, the Social Democracy of the Republic of Poland. In the moment of dissolution of that party in 1999, some of the documentation related to personnel and remuneration of 11,000 records was deposited in the "Ład", the Rotation Archive of the Polish Archivists Association in Łubna, near Warsaw.<sup>33</sup> Among others, a considerable proportion is dedicated to the personnel files of the nomenclature. However, access to those documents is unfortunately limited and dependent upon the approval of the deposit's owner.

Personnel files were moved to state archives mostly in a random order along with their organisational documentation. Apart from the nomenclature files, there were the personnel files of communist party members and candidates as well as members reviewed under the party surveillance commission, the communist movement's activists during 1918–1948, their memoirs, information regarding related widows or orphans and party apparatus' employees, and finally the participants of the communist party schools and the Evening School of Marxism-Leninism. In the archival evidence, they constitute a separate set of files and even despite having been processed, they have descriptions allowing for a file identification by names, positions, locations, dates and so on.

## CONCLUSION

Due to the significance of the communist party in the political system of Poland after the World War II (1945–1989), the archival remains need to be treated on the same level as the documents concerning the state structures. The regime established on behalf of

<sup>31</sup> D. Magier, "Dokumentacja personalna PZPR w praktyce metodycznej archiwów państwowych (exemplum Archiwum Państwowego w Lublinie)" [in:] *Dzieje. Wojsko. Edukacja*, ed. M. Bednarak-Libera, J. Gmitruk (Warsaw–Siedlce, 2010), pp. 288–290.

<sup>32</sup> Dz.U. 2018, poz. 217, art. 16b, pkt 2, ust. 6.

<sup>33</sup> R. Jarosz, "Ukryty skarb. Akta osobowo-płacowe PZPR/SdRP w Archiwum Rotacyjnym «Ład» w Łubnej" [in:] *Dzieje biurokracji*, vol. 4, Part 2, ed. A. Górak, K. Latawiec, D. Magier (Lublin–Siedlce 2011), pp. 802–803.

Moscow by the PPR and PZPR led to placing the party above the state administration and so the communist offices became a completely new, unprecedented creation. In the post-war reality of a totalitarian state, party committees became quasi-governing. They not only needed to manage correspondence and serve petitioners but also focus on creating documentation related to the activity required for a "state creation". One of the elements constituting the political system at that time was the nomenclature. This system in practice became one of the main tools for exercising power, rewards and punishments, as well as forcing loyalty within the party ranks. The aim of its existence was to enable promotions for people who guaranteed loyalty and sustained the status quo of the regime. The nomenclature was an exact copy of the soviet model that rationed all goods, practically unavailable to an average citizen, and provided a new incentive to work for this sustainability. As a result, the bureaucratic structure of the PZPR and its employees became the main role models for all individuals in the state. Members of the nomenclature were highly privileged compared to other citizens. They had a well-paid job accompanied by an easier access to material goods that were difficult to attain (such as a car, passport). Regardless of whether they belonged to the communist party, they constituted the elite of that communist country.<sup>34</sup>

As a consequence, the personnel files of nomenclature members is a very valuable resource due to the richness of their contents. Records of the nomenclature form a great and reliable source of data which could be very useful, for example, to analyse the career paths of certain individuals in the circles of the communist authorities elite as well as inform genealogy studies and contemporary history in its broadest possible sense.

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<sup>34</sup> M. Żukowski, "Wybrane aspekty dotyczące PZPR w latach 1948–1990 (liczebność, skład społeczny, dewizowe składki członkowskie i nomenklatura kadr)", *Komunizm: system – ludzie – dokumentacja* 2013, no. 2, p. 137.

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## Documentation of the Communist Nomenclature in the Polish Peoples Republic. An Outline of the Problem

Personnel policies were one of the main instruments of power employed by the communist authorities. One of its most prominent elements was the nomenclature established exactly as in the Soviet model. Formally, it was an index of managerial positions in the state decided by appropriate levels of the communist party. In practice, the result was a communist elite – a closed, self-reproducing caste which established a monopoly of social, political and economic power. They would not be subject to

scrutiny from any lower body and would enjoy multiple benefits as a result of their place in the hierarchy. The nomenclature was combined with a highly-regulated process of information circulation. Therefore, the communist party produced multitudes of documents related to the nomenclature system. After 1990, they were stored in the state archives and became a great source for studies of the communist's personnel policies, especially those of the communist nomenclature. The article is an attempt at a synthetic study of the documentation and information included there that are direct results of the nomenclature's existence in the context of both the ideological as well as the realistic implications for the communist system in Poland.

#### KEYWORDS

archives, documentation, communism, nomenclature, communist party, Poland

### **Dokumentacja komunistycznej nomenklatury w Polskiej Rzeczypospolitej Ludowej. Zarys problematyki**

Polityka kadrowa była jednym z głównych instrumentów sprawowania władzy przez rządy komunistyczne. Najbardziej wyrazistym jej elementem była nomenklatura zbudowana ściśle według sowieckiego wzorca. Formalnie stanowiła wykaz stanowisk kierowniczych w państwie, pozostających w kompetencji decyzyjnej poszczególnych szczebli partii komunistycznej. W rzeczywistości efektem istnienia nomenklatury było stworzenie komunistycznej elity – zamkniętej, reprodukującej się kasty, która monopolizowała władzę społeczno-polityczno-ekonomiczną, nie podlegała oddolnej kontroli i posiadała liczne przywileje, które wynikały z jej pozycji w strukturze systemu. Jej funkcjonowaniu towarzyszył ściśle unormowany przepisami kancelaryjnymi proces zapisu obiegu informacji. Dzięki temu partia komunistyczna wyprodukowała bardzo duże ilości dokumentów dotyczących funkcjonowania systemu nomenklaturowego. Po 1990 r. znalazły się one w archiwach państwowych stanowiąc dziś doskonałe źródło do badań nad polityką kadrową komunistów, a w szczególności komunistyczną nomenklaturą. Artykuł jest próbą syntetycznego opisanie dokumentacji i informacji, które ona zawiera, powstałej w trakcie funkcjonowania nomenklatury na tle ideologicznych i praktycznych wyznaczników ustroju komunistycznego w Polsce.

#### SŁOWA KLUCZOWE

archiwa, dokumentacja, komunizm, nomenklatura, partia komunistyczna, Polska

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