



Political Science
PhD School

SUMMARY

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Belated modernisation of representation

Composition and modernisation of Members of the Hungarian Parliament,
1884-2006

Budapest, 2008

Institute of Political Science
Tutor: Gabriella Ilonszki assoc. prof.

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1 Previous research and justification of the topic

This dissertation aims at demonstrating the belated modernisation of the parliamentary representation in Hungary compared to Western Europe. This is presented by comparing the composition and continuity of the deputies of the parliaments in Hungary and in Western Europe through a long historical period. The analysis applies empirical methodology based mainly on quantitative data to prove the hypotheses.

The time frame of the study is the period from 1884 and the present day, overarching 4 political era and 22 elections. The selection of the time frame deserves some explanation. Although the beginning of the modern parliamentarianism in Hungary dates back to 1848, the systematic collection of the biographies of the deputies in the almanacs started only in 1886. The analyses in this study are based on a database created from the data in the almanacs. The era of state socialism is out of the scope of the research, since the selection of the deputies were determined by the state party, therefore no valid conclusions can be drawn from their composition and continuity regarding societal and political modernisation

Research on parliamentary elite had been carried out mostly in the United States and Western Europe – international comparative study had also been concentrated in these regions. The first study comparing harmonised data of several countries was released in the framework of the EURELIT project. The published results of this study have not yet included data from Hungary in the comparative analytical part – only a case study – since such data were not yet available at the time. Therefore so far, the existing comparative studies on parliamentary elite of the period covered by this thesis assess 11 Western European countries.

This dissertation analyses the modernisation of the parliamentary elite, based on its composition. The origin of the neutral notion of elite is from Pareto [1991], who by elite meant leaders in any area of life. For him, belonging to the elite is not determined by skills or characteristics; it purely means the position, not the way it was achieved. Political elite according to this definition means the group of people who are in leading positions in politics – in the government, the parties, the parliament, the public administration or in other institutions of influence. A leading position means having influence on political decisions in any way (Putnam [1976]). I define the parliamentary elite as the part of the political elite with parliamentary mandates, that is, all the deputies. Because all the members of parliament – however insignificant or unnoticeable their role might be – have an impact on the political decision making by voting in the plenary.

The evolution of the elite's composition reflects the process of societal and political mobilisation, societal integration and emergence of the rules of access to positions and resources (Rokkan [1967]). Conflicts and divides in the society reappear in the politics through the deputies. This can be explained by the mutual interaction between the transformation process of the society and the political or parliamentary elite. Societal conflicts and power structures affect political decisions on the one side, and the elite influences, guides, manages and evaluates the needs of the society on the other side (Best—Cotta [2000a]). Deputies are the primary channels for citizens to express their values, interests, needs and claims. Therefore their individual or collective characteristics at least partially reflect the structure and changes of the society. Modernisation of the society can be tracked by looking at the political and societal composition of the deputies. Studying the features of the elite provides information on the society itself.

The elite of course is not a mere reflection of the society onto politics, representation can not be interpreted as the mirroring of the characteristics or the demands of the electorate, but as the transformation of societal needs into ideologies, policies and actions. The composition of the legislation has an impact on the parliamentary work and political output, although the process is controlled by parties, parliamentary and governmental institutions and other organisational linkages. The personality of the deputies has an impact on the parliamentary work despite all these buffers.

Representation is a central element of the evolution and functioning of the modern democracies, thus the analysis of its incorporations, the deputies is essential to understand the functioning of the political system. The study of the parliamentary elite could shed light on new aspects of the evolution and transformation of the political system and the historical changes in the Hungarian society. It demonstrates whether deputies – causes and results of modernisation and democratisation – changed along with the society as a result of historical transformation, perhaps acted as catalyst or obstacles to the progress.

2 Methods used

2.1 Hypotheses

The current fully fledged liberal democracies have various paths of evolution: ranging from the Mediterranean to Scandinavia, from the organically developing England, and Netherlands to the interrupted democratisation of Portugal and Germany. Central European

(Mitteleuropa) countries including Hungary witnessed an even more specific historical path towards the development of parliamentarianism. These assumptions are based on the theories of Andrew C. Janos [1982, 2003] and Jenő Szűcs [1983], which analyse the specificities of the modernisation in the context of the historical development. Thus in this dissertation I was trying to find proofs that this specific path of development can be traced in the modernisation of the parliamentary elite.

The second serfdom, the powerful nobility and the delay in the urbanisation, combined with a top down modernisation, lead to an asymmetric, artificial westernised political structure. For the same reasons the concept of nation was identical to the nobility for a long time and even after the development in the reform era, an outdated social structure was maintained (Szűcs [1983]). All these factors influenced the evolution of the parliamentarianism, maintaining the imminent ambiguities of the historical developments, thus its modernisation followed a different path than that of the legislations of Western Europe.

“The social background and the selection criteria of the deputies, the patterns of their circulation seem to be the aspects, which connect them most clearly to the essential characteristics of the political system and provide a picture about its democracy, modernity and stability” (Ilonszki [2005a] p. 33). The composition and circulation of the parliamentary elite has direct or indirect effects on the whole of the political system, and therefore on the society. Thus conclusions drawn from the assessment of the parliamentary elite are valid for the modernisation of the whole political system and could highlight important processes in society.

Modernisation in Hungary is belated, partial and stanzaic, not consistent with organic development. Modernisation of the political and parliamentary elite was not a consequence of societal changes, but of rivalry and deals within the elite. Although the country adopts some techniques and institutions of democracy, societal mechanisms necessary to its proper functioning are missing. Thus the modernisation of the parliamentary elite does not reflect the needs of the society, but it is dependent upon the decisions of the elite or external factors. Different processes and developments are driving the parliamentarianism in Hungary and Western Europe, although they may seem similar at the first sight.

After describing the comparative research results on Western European parliaments and the development in Hungary, I attempt to prove the following hypotheses using the quantitative data of the Hungarian and the international data bases:

The modernisation of the parliamentary elite in Hungary is in constant delay

compared with Western Europe. At the beginning of modern parliamentarism, composition of deputies in Hungary was similar to the one in Western Europe, but the latter developed quicker towards the current form of liberal representational democracy, than Hungary. Therefore the Hungarian elite were different from the one in developed countries already in 1884, at the beginning of the period analysed. The gap remained and even increased afterwards. This means that the composition of parliaments in each period in Hungary is similar to the state of Western European parliamentary elite of a few decades earlier.

Each historical turning point enhanced the process of modernisation at least temporarily, whilst during the periods of continuity and stability the elite tried to maintain the *status quo*. After the great historical ruptures the Hungarian elite tried to eliminate the tension resulting from the delay of the previous era by a forced and sudden leap in modernisation. Therefore after each change the Hungarian parliamentary elite are more similar to the Western European. This is not necessarily a lasting achievement though, the possibility of a recurrence is imminent. During the periods of stability modernisation is not continuous. Generally the state achieved at the beginning of the period is conserved, while it becomes outdated in the meantime.

To analyse the hypotheses, first a clarification of the concepts and the study of the sources is necessary. The next stage is the presentation of each historical period in terms of the parliamentary elite in Western Europe and Hungary. This permits presenting the main aspects of the analysis and the questions to be answered by the research.

2.2 Methodology

The verification of the hypotheses is based on literature research and data analysis. The literature on modernisation of the political systems (primarily Janos [1982] and [2003], Best-Cotta [2000a] and [2000b], Weber [1989], Ilonszki [2000a] and [2005b]) provides insight to the modernisation process in Hungary and Western Europe. The descriptions show that the two paths of development were different in timing as well as in content. As I already noted, modernisation in Hungary was delayed, partial and fractional, not organic. A reform was not achieved by societal pressure, nor was the modernisation of the parliamentary elite, but the elite itself decided for or against modernisation. Despite similarities between parliamentarism in Western Europe and Hungary, their drivers can be completely different.

The historical literature (first of all Boros-Szabó [1999], Földes-Hubai [1999], Ilonszki [2000a], Janos [2003], Jónás [1990], Kozári [2005], Mackie-Rose [1982], Pesti [2002], Püski

[2006], Romsics [2000], Szabó-Gyarmati [2002]) was used to research the historical background in Western Europe and – in more details – in Hungary. This literature was also crucial in the collection of the information necessary for the analysis of the quantitative data.

Examining the party system provides information on how and when different types of parties developed in the different regions. Their ideological background is also to be considered, also in relation to the social and political divides. The delay in expanding the suffrage and the abuse of the electoral system, the frauds all serve as proofs of the hypothesis. The role of parties in appointing the government and the governing parties' influence on the deputy selection also sheds light on the peculiar development in Hungary. The thorough comparison of the types of politicians between Hungary and the West can also serve as a proof of the delayed, partial and non organic modernisation of the parliamentary elite. It is worth examining whether the typical professions and societal positions have the same content in Hungary as e.g. in the Netherlands.

The analysis of these theories is based on the study of the literature, as mostly qualitative research is needed in this part. To a lesser extent the research of quantitative data is needed to support the conclusions drawn from the analysis of the literature. The controversies regarding the electoral system can be supported by the data on the unanimous electoral constituencies. The sudden change in the characteristics of deputies after a change in the government can also back up these theories. The substantial differences between Hungary and Western Europe in the composition of the specific party families may also refer to the peculiar path of modernisation. Yet another supporting element may be the difference in the content of certain professions. For example, the lawyers are independent in the West, while mostly working for estates, corporations or families in Hungary. The development of the civil servant from among the intellectuals was due to the multiplication of the tasks of the state, whilst in Hungary the impoverished nobility created the strong, centralised state to make a living out of it (the high number of deputies being both civil servants and landowners supports this statement).

After the literature research the hypotheses are proven through empirical analysis. One of the reasons for that is that at the time when the main sources (Best—Cotta [2000], and within it Ilonszki [2000a]) were published, the Hungarian Parliamentary Database was not available yet. Thus the conclusions in that volume are mainly based on historical works and earlier research (e.g. Lakatos [1942], Rudai [1936], and Toth [1973]).

The research is primarily based on the evaluation of secondary qualitative data, using statistical methods to prove the hypotheses. The two source databases are: the Hungarian

Parliamentary Database prepared in the OTKA (Hungarian Scientific Research Fund) programme and the Cube database prepared in the framework of the international EURELIT research project. To interpret the data after the analysis additional political and historical sources are needed. The two databases are significantly different in their variables and also in units of measurement, but there is a significant overlap in the data. Nearly all variables of the Cube database exist in the Hungarian database or can be calculated from the available data. The units of evaluation are completely different: the Cube database uses party families within each parliamentary cycle as a unit, while the Hungarian Parliamentary Database is based on the individual deputies.

The data regarding Hungary in the Cube database are calculated on the basis of the content of the Hungarian Parliamentary Database. Therefore I use the Hungarian database for the non comparative parts of the analysis, since its data is more detailed. For international comparison it was necessary to use the Cube database for Hungarian data, as well, because its indicators and variables are not in all cases identical and comparable to the ones in the Hungarian database. In the comparison of the key variables of modernisation, where the methodology of the two databases is different, I also extract the Hungarian data from the Cube database.

For international comparison mainly aggregated averages of all parliamentary terms in a county or for the whole of Western Europe were used. In some cases data of individual countries and terms were also used. Due to different election dates in the analysed countries yearly averages were not possible to create, decade averages were used instead. Hungarian data were also examined by decades to enable the comparison, except where historical factors required a different periodicity.

Hungarian data were compared with international trends for each period for the comparative analysis of modernisation. Regarding Western Europe the four main periods are defined based on the phasing created by Best and Cotta [2000b]: from the beginning of modern parliamentarianism until the 1880s, from the 1880s until the 1920s, from the 1920s until the 1960s and the period after the '60s. Since the starting point of the research is Hungary the periods examined separately in this study are the main phases of the Hungarian history: the era of Austria-Hungary, the inter-war period, the short democratic period after the second world war and the democracy after the systemic change in 1990. The third phase in Western Europe (1920-1960) covers two completely different eras in Hungary. The 1920 parliamentary term – due to its uniqueness – deserves a separate chapter in comparison with earlier and later parliaments.

Data of individual Western European countries were also compared with Hungary besides the averages in order to identify eventual similarities between the developments of these countries with Hungary. In this part the question is whether the variables of a specific country show the same deviance from the European average as Hungary. Especially if there is a country that shows similarity with Hungary in a number of variables within a period or even throughout several period.

Besides individual periods analysed in the separate chapters, the variables were compared for the entire time interval in order to assess whether there were similarities of development for several variables with the same country. In this comparison the Hungarian data was compared to that of each country's decade averages regarding each variable separately using the method of correlation.

To complement the database, data published by Rezső Rudai [1936] and Ernő Lakatos [1942] were used – since their analysis was carried out within a shorter period of time from the dualism and the Horthy-era, thus they could have a better overview of the actual working of these political systems. However, these sources had to be taken with caution that regards their comparability, due to uncertainties concerning their methodology and basis.

3 Findings of the thesis

3.1 Literature research

The modernisation process with regards to the political system leads to demanding larger involvement and influence of the society, to the specialisation of political leadership and secularisation of the legitimation of power. The prerequisite of such process is the increase of human influence over nature, a phenomenon that took place as a result of industrial revolution in Western Europe. Industrial development and the resulting social changes started in the North Western region of Europe (England, the Netherlands) and expanded gradually to the South and East, arriving to Hungary with over a century of delay at the beginning of the 19th century, in the “reform age”. By the 1880's three economic regions could be distinguished in Europe: the centre of North West, the surrounding semi-periphery bordered by the Elba, Loire and Po rivers and the periphery outside this zone (Janos [2003]).

The reason behind modernisation in the countries of the centre was coping with the successful technological development. In the countries of the periphery, on the contrary, the goal was to avoid the social and economic consequences of backwardness. Economical

development in the centre enhanced political changes towards democratisation, whilst in the periphery the development was driven by the strong and autocratic state. This means that in the centre the strengthening of the state was a result of the reinforced middle classes demand to enlarge and stabilise the markets, but on the periphery the strong state was developed as the only source of income for the anti-capitalist, traditional middle class (Janos [2003]).

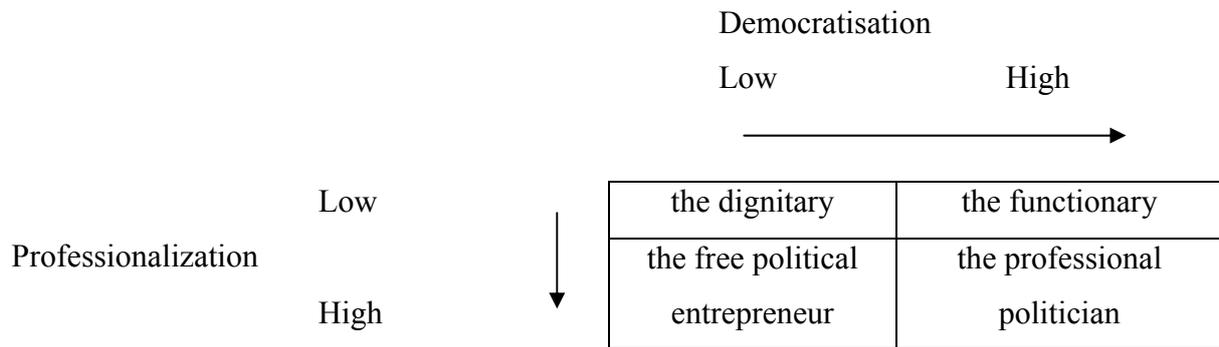
According to Huntington [1971] the first phase of modernisation consists of the replacement of the traditional provincial elite by urban middle classes, the second phase is the extension of active and passive voting right, elimination of the property census, and introduction of women's suffrage. The third phase is the evolution of a centralised and functionally separated authority structure along with the development of the professional politicians. The fourth phase implies changes in the source of power, providing legitimacy a rational/legal basis.

Societal changes result in the continuous rivalry the different social elite groups and the consequent circulation of the elites. Incumbent elites insist on defending their privileges, and become incapable of change. The energetic new elites emerging from lower classes organise their mass movements and approach issues based on new ideologies, values and interests. This way they are able to gain initiative and come to power. These new elites emerge under the changed circumstances, therefore are more able to react on actual problems of the times.

The role of continuity in the parliament is to create elite that has an oversight of the processes of legislation and functioning of the political system, therefore can cope in an appropriate way with tasks that require specific expertise. Deputies holding mandates for a long period of time are able to see politics as a profession. Such a professional (or professionalising) deputy can plan his own career and activity with a long-term approach and thus is able to design his political approach beyond one parliamentary term. He also has the ability and tools to provide support to newcomers helping their integration into the organisation.

Professionalization can be regarded at the same time as a symptom and a tool of modernisation in which gradual replacement of the political elite follows and generates societal change at the same time. The evolving political class replaces the traditional political elite that significantly overlap with the societal elite. After this the archetypes of the political entrepreneur and the party politician become typical of the legislatures. The following new, professional elite will then be able to open the doors for further social groups to participate in politics (see figure 1).

figure 1: Classification of deputies



Source: Best—Cotta 2000b, p. 524

Max Weber ([1989] pp. 16-17) defines politicians as persons living off politics or living for politics – this being their profession or vocation. He classifies as politicians those working in politics full time – regardless whether it is their career or hobby. According to Ilonszki ([2005b] p. 174) characteristics of modern politicians are strongly linked to the modern features of the political system and the peculiarities of the structure and institutions of the society, and the professionalism of a politician means a set of political qualities and skills. In this dissertation I follow the definition of Giovanni Sartori ([1991] p. 408), according to which a politician needs to be professional in functional, representative, personality and economic aspect. Meaning he has to have the necessary skills, be detached from his social origins, have the personal characteristics and live off politics. Politic is the main profession of such deputies, they abandoned their original profession or job for politics’ sake. They live off their salaries as deputies, ministers, state secretaries or other political functionaries (e.g. trade union officials). Professional politicians often start their career in political parties, interest organisations or local politics to gather experience, enhance their knowledge and skills.

With the appearance of the professional politician, the importance of social origins and status was reduced regarding the recruitment. This development gave way to formerly disadvantaged societal groups. In the meantime, the role of interest representation organisations increased in the selection process.

The process of professionalization may be contradictory to democracy, since the elite can limit the possibilities of access to the parliamentary mandate. This can be achieved by controlling recruitment through the means of determining the legal status, the remuneration, the eligibility criteria, and career paths for politicians. This can be contrary to democracy,

which should broaden the participation and guarantee career possibilities in politics for each societal group.

3.2 1848-1918: the starting point

1848 was the beginning of the modern parliamentarianism in Hungary when the April laws came into force creating the National Assembly with regular sessions in Pest that had the power to scrutinise the government. Thus transforming the parliament based on estates to a representative legislature. The new parliament elected according to the April laws had its first session in July 1848 in a composition based on the votes of approximately 600 thousand electors. Although the almanacs date back only to 1884, the starting point has to be studied in this research of comparing the Hungarian and Western European parliaments.

The deputies of the 1884 term serving also in the 1860s and 1870s do not show significant differences from the parliamentary elite of 1884 and later terms concerning the basic variables (status, education and profession). Based on this we can state that the modernisation that separates the periods before and after 1880 in Western Europe, did not take place in Hungary. This statement is also supported by the literature (Ilonszki [2000a] and Boros—Szabó [1999]).

In the second phase of the modernisation process, the Hungarian parliament delivered mixed results. Although there are limited data available on the initial elite, sources show that it did not differ significantly from the one after 1884 (see Boros—Szabó [1999], Szabó—Gyarmati [2000], Ilonszki [2000a]). Although the representation of aristocracy was lower and the qualification level was higher than in Western Europe, most characteristics were similar. These differences became more significant starting from the 1880's due to the changes in Western Europe and the stagnation in Hungary. Although there variation also in the Western countries, none of them shows similarity to Hungary in the majority of the variables. There were similarities between Hungary and the Mediterranean in the high proportion of lawyers and deputies with higher education, and also in the low rate of basic education, but the Mediterranean was not characterized by the dominance of civil servants and landowners in the parliaments. The analysis of trends shows that whilst democratisation and modernisation has started in Western Europe, there was no change in Hungary over these 35 years.

Analysing the short period of coalition government it becomes clear that the reason for the lack of modernisation in the parliamentary elite during the dualism was not only the dominance of the Liberal Party (Szabadelvű Párt), as the composition of the parliamentary

elite did not change in the 1905-1910 period either. Still it is obvious that it was mainly the governing party of the times that acted against extending voting rights (there was no new ruling on the voting rights even in during the coalition). The issues of ethnical minorities and land ownership remained unresolved, thus it was the self-defence mechanism of the whole elite to try to keep the „people” away from political power.

3.3 The temporary change of systems, 1920-1922

The first major change in the modern parliamentarianism in Hungary in 1920 is assessed in this chapter by comparing deputy data of the last parliament of the dualist era (1910-1918) and the first two national assemblies after the first world war (1920-22 and 1922-27). My aim is to prove that the developments after the first world war can be interpreted as a systemic change, and also that a catching-up in modernisation took place in this period as a result of the systemic change.

After the first world war a new type of parliamentary elite appeared and took over political leadership in Hungary. This can be proven from several aspects by the analysis of the data available. The change was examined by analysing the composition of deputies regarding their age, religion, place and type of education, profession and political socialisation, and all variables supported the theory of a radical leap towards modernisation of the parliamentary elite. This process is undoubtedly a sign of a move towards a Western European type of modernisation. The trends regarding most of the analysed variables pointed in the direction of Western Europe, the averages got significantly closer to each other.

After the radical change of the 1920-22 parliamentary term, a consolidation of the new regime can be observed at the 1922-26 term. This is rather clear as almost all the variables show a radical change after the first elections (1920) and a slighter backdrop after the second (1922). This phenomenon does not mean that the political system and elite of the Austro-Hungarian times returned, the systemic change is undisputable. The weak personal continuity with the former regime was manifested in the return of some back bencher deputies, but continuity in the social background is clearly visible. Despite all signs of continuity the complete change in the political system and most of all in the mainstream ideology paved the way to a substantially different regime.

At the beginning of the consolidation of the Horthy regime there was a clear regression in the modernisation process, and the National Assembly of the inter-war period not at all more comparable to Western Europe's legislations than the parliaments of the dualism to their counterparts in the West.

3.4 The Horthy regime, consolidation and imbalance

In 1920 new recruitment paths were opened up due to the restructured party system and the new electoral legislation. These paths then partly disappeared in 1922 when the dominant party system was installed, voting rights were limited and open vote came into practice again. The transformation of the Smallholders party from a mass party into an election party contributed to this change. When the governing party functioning on a patronage basis was created, the opposition had no choice but to acknowledge that they had no chance to come to power again due to the elimination of the possibility of political alternation. The electoral system was managed by the state officials and local dignitaries made it pointless to spend significant human and financial resources on party organisation.

To some extent the consolidation under Prime Minister Bethlen can be blamed for the stalling of the modernisation process. When many deputies were replaced at the elections in 1935, the composition of the parliamentary elite did not change significantly – this is also due to the influence of Bethlen and his network. The death of Gömbös contributed to the interruption in the process of creating a totalitarian party and the return to the authoritarian system. Governor Horthy also played an important role in the process, supporting Bethlen in most of the cases.

3.5 The opportunity of democracy, 1944-1949

The same time when the "arrow-cross" parliament (National Association of Legislators), reduced in size and power, fled to Sopron from the Red Army in the end of 1944, in the eastern part of Hungary members of the Temporary National Assembly were already being elected based on the programme of the Hungarian National Independence Front (Hubai [1991] p. 226). As the Soviet army advanced to new territories, democratic parties started to reorganise while the emigrant communist politicians were returning to Hungary together with the Red Army. Although the reorganising Hungarian parties wanted to convoke the constitutional assembly, due to the soviet pressure parliamentary elections were held already in December 1944 in the liberated/occupied territories of the country.

After the Second World War there was a total change in the composition of the members of parliament. The social background and the characteristics of the new parliaments were completely different from those of the Horthy era.

After the First World War the change in the first term was followed by a significant restructuring and therefore the parliamentary elite of the Horthy era resembled the one of the

dualism. It was a different case after the Second World War: the delegates of the Temporary National Assembly, the fully democratically elected members of the National Assembly of 1945-47 and the deputies in the 1947-49 parliament that were elected according to democratic principles but with some electoral fraud are very similar. They all demonstrate a radical change in the parliamentary elite's composition compared to the previous regime. There was no restructuring after the first or the second term, this was also ensured by denying the voting rights of the members of the political organisations playing important roles in the previous regime. The Allied Control Commission supporting the communist takeover also contributed to the discontinuity. There was only little continuity in parties – namely in the two main opposition parties of the Horthy regime: the Independent Smallholders' Party and the Social Democratic Party. Personal continuity between the eras can also be linked to these two parties.

This period can be regarded as a major step towards the Western type of modernisation, even though the most important variables of the Hungarian parliamentary elite did not get closer to those of the deputies of the Western European parliaments. The Hungarian democratisation process overtook the Western one, and so did the de-etatisation and participation. The lagging behind suddenly turned into overachieving during the radical change in the system. The significant proportion of mandates of the formerly illegal communist party also played a role in this drastic change. The communist had such great role in the parliaments of Europe only in Italy, France and Finland. The civic parties were practically missing from the first two legislatures of the post-war period in Hungary, unlike in Western Europe. One of the causes of the modernisation leap could be that these were the first really democratic elections, thus the parties representing lower strata of the society were given the chance of fair competition for the first time.

The communist takeover backed by the Soviet forces led to the end of the democratic parliamentarianism in 1949, and robbed Hungary – among other things – of the chance to consolidate the modernisation process. Thus we can not tell how the modernisation of the Hungarian parliamentary elite would have continued in the following four decades: would the radical change have been followed by a consolidation that could have integrated Hungary into the Western European democratic pattern.

3.6 The systemic change

During the four decades of the one party system the National Assembly did still exist,

but could not fulfil its real functions. Legislation was mostly done by the Presidential Council in the form of Statutory Rules. The deputies appointed by the Party were not able or willing to exercise the function of scrutiny of the government. They did not even have time for that as the house was only in session for 6 to 10 days a year (Hankiss [1989]). The selection of the deputies was not done by the public either, as until 1985 all candidates had to be approved by the Party. Thus the composition of the parliament solely reflected the choice of the selectors and reflected political and ideological preferences. Having more than one candidate in each constituency became compulsory only in 1985, but even this way only a few independent candidates could be elected.

As a consequence of the peaceful negotiated transition the first free and democratic elections took place in the spring of 1990. Contrary to most of the other transition countries in Hungary the first election was not a choice between the united opposition movement and the successor of the communist party, but a real multi-party election with a range of ideologically based parties. Due to this phenomenon a Western type party system instantaneously developed and has stabilised since.

The consolidation of the parliamentary elite has finished by 2002 the latest. The rising re-election figures (particularly those of re-election in the same district), the prolongation of the average time served, the decrease in the number of deputies changing parties or resigning during the parliamentary terms all support the notion of consolidation. So does the disappearance of the deputies serving also before the systemic change, and also the appearance of a core group within the parliamentary elite. Parts of this core group are the *founding fathers*, who have influence on practically all major political decisions. The members of this core group occupy most of the positions in the parties, the parliament, the committees and the government. This means that the group of the most influential politicians has been practically unchanged since the beginning of the democratic regime.

As we could see the consolidation of the political and parliamentary elite has two sides. On the one hand it stabilises the democracy, which is a feature highly appreciated in this region. On the other hand it can lead to a democratic deficit, making the political class resistant to change, blocking the way of new ideas, view and people to power. This deficit is enlarged by the weak communication between the political elite and the citizens, which leads to distrust.

By the 2006 elections the stabilisation might have reached the level that it becomes an obstacle to political change and alienates the electorate from politics. The great dissatisfaction towards politics and politicians that can be experienced in Hungary may be connected the fact

that the political elite in control of the major decisions has hardly changed since the systemic change. These phenomena may lead to the development of a closed elite group within the elite, which can block the organic development of the parliamentary elite and thus become an obstacle to democracy.

Despite these dangers there is an explicit public demand for a professional parliament that enhances democracy. One that produces high quality legislation which is applicable and does not need to be constantly modified, and one that efficiently controls the government. Such a legislature can only work with a significant number of experienced members.

By 1998 the two opposing ideological blocks that control the politics were created in Hungary. These blocks are closed and the parties have no possibility to change their position or even to form coalitions outside these blocks. Such a stabilisation and consolidation of the party system was practically unprecedented in the transition countries, this segment of politics was much more turbulent in other new democracies.

The composition of the Hungarian parliament was analysed according to the important variables of the last period of Western European modernisation, which are the proportion of professional politicians and women. Concerning the professionalization Hungary is ahead of the 11 Western European countries analysed. The participation of women in politics the situation is just the opposite, the Hungarian numbers are significantly below the European average. The first finding can be explained by the aforementioned consolidation of the party system and the parties' strong role in recruitment. The later facts may have historical and social causes, as well. The artificially high proportion of women in the communist parliaments, the gender proportions in the transitional opposition groups may have contributed to this phenomenon. Also the patriarchal society and the aggressive style of politics may have a role in the situation.

Analysing other variables we can see that contrary to the previous historical periods, the Hungarian parliamentary elite is not significantly different from its counterparts in Western Europe. Some differences can be noticed in the educational or professional composition of the elites but these differences are *ad hoc*. We can not see a clear similarity in comparison to any of the analysed countries; Hungarian data are similar to different countries in regards to the different variables.

3.7 Modernisation of the Hungarian parliamentary elite 1884-2006

According to the result of the comparative analysis of the parliamentary elites the first hypothesis is partially proven. The belated modernisation of Hungary can be clearly proven

until the end of the Second World War. The belatedness is visible concerning the vast majority of the variables and it can be measured in decades. The second half of the 1940s brought a sudden and radical change to this trend, the pace of the modernisation of the Hungarian parliamentary elite overtook that of the Western European one. The parliaments of the current democratic regime not only copied the constitutional system of the developed democracies but with it also the recruitment mechanisms and the resulting patterns of the modern parliamentary elite. The new elite might be different from the sample in some of its characteristics, but these differences stay within the range that can be explained with the relative young age of the political system and the national specificities.

The second hypothesis was also proven by the literature and data analysis. The continuity of both people and characteristics of the parliamentary elite was very strong in all continuous historical periods. The historical ruptures brought major changes in both senses. During the analysis of the first hypothesis and also in the chapters on the historical periods we could observe that the parliamentary elite after the historical ruptures is closer to the modernisation pattern of Western Europe than the one before. The elite also becomes more democratic after the ruptures and opens up to include deputies from social groups previously excluded from political power. The part of the hypothesis claiming that the proportion of deputies with previous political experience would be lower in the new elite was not supported by the data. This is only true with regards to the previous parliamentary experience, but not for positions in other fields of politics, where these deputies have more experience than their counterparts serving in continuous periods.

As a synthesis of the findings of the research of the two hypotheses it can be stated that the modernisation process in Hungary was belated, partial, staccato, and it is not a part of an organic development.

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