

# The leadership of the historiographical field in late socialist Romania. A case-study on the year 1985

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**Abstract:** *The leadership of the historiographical field in late socialist Romania. A case-study on the year 1985.* The aim of this paper is to analyse the historiographical field in late socialist Romania, by looking at those historians having high institutional positions within the field in 1985. Our goal is not to discuss the individual themselves, but rather to use this case-study in order to define and characterize the milieu of history-writing as a social and professional structure. Our theoretical and methodological apparatus is built on the works of Pierre Bourdieu, using extensively concepts such as field, capital, habitus, strategy and autonomy, while taking into account their limitations when applied to a socialist system. The research design of this paper implied creating a biographical database, consisting in information regarding the biography of each dean and director, active in their leadership position in 1985. Therefore, information was gathered about Ion Agrigoroaiei, Dumitru Berciu, Gheorghe I. Ioniță, Camil Mureșanu, Ștefan Pascu, Mircea Petrescu-Dâmbovița, Ion Popescu-Puțuri, Constantin Preda, Ștefan Ștefănescu.

**Key-words:** historiography, sociology of history writing, intellectuals in late socialism, academic careers, and institutions.

**Rezumat:** *Conducerea câmpului istoriografic în România socialistă târzie. Un studiu de caz al anului 1985.* Scopul prezentului studiu este să analizeze câmpul istoriografic din România socialismului târziu, concentrându-se asupra acelor istorici cu poziții instituționale importante în anul 1985. Obiectivul cercetării nu este de discuta în mod direct persoanele în sine, ci de a utiliza acest studiu de caz pentru a defini și caracteriza comunitatea istoricilor ca structură socială și profesională. Perspectiva teoretică și metodologică pornește de la contribuția lui Pierre Bourdieu, folosind extensiv concepte precum câmp, capital, habitus, strategie și autonomie, luând în considerare, în același timp, și limitele aplicabilității acestora pentru un regim de tip socialist. Cercetarea a presupus crearea unei baze de date cu date biografice pentru fiecare decan și director, activ în această poziție în anul 1985. Așadar, au fost incluse date despre Ion Agrigoroaiei,

Dumitru Berciu, Gheorghe I. Ioniță, Camil Mureșanu, Ștefan Pascu, Mircea Petrescu-Dâmbovița, Ion Popescu-Puțuri, Constantin Preda, Ștefan Ștefănescu.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** istoriografie, sociologia istoriografiei, intelectuali în socialismul târziu, cariere și instituții academice.

## Introduction

As Pim den Boer argued for the case of French historians during 1818-1914, historical knowledge can be understood as the complex result of dynamics between the institutional, social, and cultural framework in which professional historians do their research, on the one hand, and, their professional or personal, individual or group, options and preferences, on the other<sup>1</sup>. Research on history writing has been focused for a very long time on the epistemic and intellectual aspects of this process, integrating topics such as epistemological debates, methodological innovations, historiographical schools and tendencies etc., defining in this way historiography almost exclusively as a part of intellectual history<sup>2</sup>. In this classic definition, the historiographical analysis is understood as a judgement on the relevance and quality of historiographical products<sup>3</sup>. Recently, the historiographical analysis became much more open to other aspects of historical knowledge production, such as the institutional framework, the social context, and the reception of historical publications in particular social and cultural contexts<sup>4</sup>. Starting from the '70s, quantitative analysis has been applied to history writing, to provide a new perspective, without limiting the scope of research only to the most important authors or contributions<sup>5</sup>. Influenced by authors such as Robert

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<sup>1</sup> Pim den Boer, *History as a Profession. The Study of History in France, 1818-1914*, (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1998), p. 362.

<sup>2</sup> Étienne Anheim, "L'historiographie est-elle une forme d'histoire intellectuelle? La controverse de 1934 entre Lucien Febre et Henoï Jassemin" in *Revue d'histoire moderne & contemporaine*, no. 59-4bis, 2012, pp. 105-130.

<sup>3</sup> Carl Becker, "What is Historiography?" in Harry Elmer Barnes, *A History of Historical Writing*, (University of Oklahoma Press, 1973), pp. 20-28.

<sup>4</sup> Claude Gauvard, Jean-François Sirinelli (publié sous la direction de), *Dictionnaire de l'historien*, (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France - PUF, 2015), pp. 375-377; Nicolas Offenstadt, *L'historiographie*, (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2011).

<sup>5</sup> Jo Tollebeek, Ilaria Porciani, "Introduction. Institutions, Networks and Communities in a European Perspective" in Ilaria Porciani, Jo Tollebeek (eds.), *Setting the Standards. Institutions, Networks and Communities of National Historiography*, (Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), p. 21.

K. Merton<sup>6</sup>, Pierre Bourdieu<sup>7</sup>, or Charles-Olivier Carbonell<sup>8</sup>, historians established a greater degree of (auto)reflexivity about their own disciplinary and institutional frameworks.

The aim of this paper is to analyse the historiographical field in late socialist Romania, by looking at those historians holding high institutional positions within the field in 1985. Our goal is not to discuss the individuals themselves, but rather to use this case study to define and characterize the milieu of history writing as a social and professional structure. Our theoretical and methodological apparatus is built on the works of Pierre Bourdieu, extensively using concepts such as field, capital, habitus, strategy, and autonomy, while taking into account their limitations when applied to a socialist system.

For Bourdieu, the *field* is an autonomous social structure, not only defining strictly relations between individuals, but a true social universe, with specific rules, history, and specific transformations. The phenomena happening outside the field are not transferred inside directly, but are filtered in accordance to some internal rules, a process called Bourdieu *refraction*<sup>9</sup>. This internal mechanism of the field defines what is possible and what is accepted as legitimate in that particular social milieu<sup>10</sup>. Larissa Buchholz has identified three main characteristics of autonomous fields: an ideology (the author understands by ideology a set of generally accepted ideas that governs the activity of the field; for historians that idea is the acceptance of history writing as an objective and scientific discipline), rules for constructing hierarchies, and a specific set of formal and informal institutions<sup>11</sup>. Moreover, an autonomous field can be described as having specific roles for agents, sets of procedures and institutions that create a legitimate hierarchy, and an internal symbolic market, in which agents compete for resources<sup>12</sup>. The degree of autonomy

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<sup>6</sup> Robert K. Merton, *The Sociology of Science. Theoretical and Empirical Investigations*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1973).

<sup>7</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *Homo Academicus*, (Stanford University Press, 1988).

<sup>8</sup> Charles-Olivier Carbonell, *Histoire et historiens: une mutation idéologique des historiens français, 1865-1885*, (Toulouse: Privat, 1976).

<sup>9</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production. Essays on Art and Literature*, (Columbia University Press), 1993, pp. 163-164.

<sup>10</sup> James Albright, Deborah Hartman, "Introduction: On Doing Field Analysis" in James Albright, Deborah Hartman, Jacqueline Widin, *Bourdieu's Field Theory and the Social Sciences*, (Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), p. 8

<sup>11</sup> Larissa Buchholz, "What is a global field? Theorizing fields beyond the nation-state" in *The Sociological Review Monographs*, vol. 62, no. 2, pp. 31-60.

<sup>12</sup> Jean-Louis Fabiani, *Pierre Bourdieu. Un structuralisme héroïque*, (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 2016), pp. 27-64.

can vary quite significantly from one field to another, or from one historical context to another. Even in dictatorial or totalitarian regimes, the intellectual field keeps a small degree of autonomy in relation to the political one, as Gisèle Sapiro has shown for the case of French writers during the Vichy regime<sup>13</sup>.

*Capital* can be defined as a “a collection of goods and skills of knowledge and acknowledgments belonging to an individual or a group that he or she can mobilize to develop influence, gain power, or bargain with other elements of this collection”<sup>14</sup>. The capital can be divided in four main categories: social, economic, cultural, and symbolic. The first three are converted by actors in the fourth form of capital. Symbolic capital is, in a way, a “super capital”<sup>15</sup>, the form acquired by all other capitals when used and accepted as legitimate in a social context. Apart from these main four types, Bourdieu and other authors have defined other forms of specific capital. For our research, the political capital, a derivative of the social capital, is essential<sup>16</sup>, as it describes the relations existing between historians and the political field.

*Habitus* defines a system of social predispositions, created in a collective manner, as principles that create and adapt social representations and social practices. In this context, the agents develop *the practical sense*, the result of interactions between the field and the habitus<sup>17</sup>. The practical sense can be understood as a sort of “feel for the game”, partially, rational partially intuitive a product of the habitus and all particularities of a given field. Is the capacity of agents to practically anticipate, having a prospective dimension<sup>18</sup>, creating various “communities of practice”<sup>19</sup>.

Without a doubt, this theoretical approach received criticism for its structure-based perspective. Recently, Jean-Louis Fabiani tried to argue in favour of Bourdieu’s apparatus, showing that the three main concepts: field<sup>20</sup>, habitus<sup>21</sup>, and capital<sup>22</sup>, can only be used as a set, as part

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<sup>13</sup> Gisèle Sapiro, *La guerre des écrivains, 1940-1953*, (Fayard, 1999).

<sup>14</sup> Evrik Neveu, “Bourdieu’s Capital(s): Sociologizing and Economic Concept” in Thomas Medvetz, Jeffrey J. Sallaz (edit.), *The Oxford Handbook of Pierre Bourdieu*, (Oxford University Press, 2018), p. 347.

<sup>15</sup> Jean-Louis Fabiani, *Pierre Bourdieu...*, p. 115.

<sup>16</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *Practical Reason. On the Theory of Action*, (Stanford University Press, 1998), p. 33.

<sup>17</sup> Idem, *The Logic of Practice*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), pp. 52-67.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 66-67.

<sup>19</sup> Etienne Wenger, *Communities of practice. Learning, meaning and identity*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

<sup>20</sup> Jean-Louis Fabiani, *Pierre Bourdieu...*, pp. 27-64

<sup>21</sup> For his analysis of the concept of field see: *Ibidem*, pp. 65-98.

of a coherent approach<sup>23</sup>. Discussing the criticism of reduction and determinism<sup>24</sup>, Fabiani shows that, for Bourdieu, any field is in a constant process of transformation, while the structure of any given field in a given timeframe is the result of all relations between agents and social institutions<sup>25</sup>. Regarding the criticism of determinism, Fabiani argues that the concept of *strategy*, by bringing back the active agent in the theoretical framework of Bourdieu, balances the tendency of understating in a determinist and rigid manner the actions of agents and limiting therefore their agency<sup>26</sup>.

Regarding knowledge production, Bourdieu's framework does imply important links between the political and intellectual fields<sup>27</sup>, while the boundaries of the of the intellectual field are very hard to map precisely<sup>28</sup>. Still, this approach has rarely been used in the field of historiography, because historians tend to point out that they have a distinct habitus compared to other disciplines, while historiography, as a research topic, as already argued previously, has been defined for a long time as a part of intellectual history or just used the classic biographical approach<sup>29</sup>.

Applying this model of Bourdieu's sociology to the field of history writing in Romania does have some epistemic difficulties and limitations. Broadly speaking, research on social sciences in Eastern Europe during the Cold War is still lacking<sup>30</sup>. The argument of Cyril Lemieux, that some researchers inspired by Bourdieu's theory do not fully comprehend its epistemic "limitations" is very relevant for this paper. Lemieux has argued that the theoretical system created by Bourdieu is not as coherent as some would like, and it has its own evolutions and development, and even some contradictions. The author observed that there are concepts of

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<sup>22</sup> For his analysis of the concept of habitus see: *Ibidem*, pp. 99-103.

<sup>23</sup> For his analysis of the concept of capital see: *Ibidem*, pp. 13-14.

<sup>24</sup> François Dosse, *La marche des idées. Histoire des intellectuels, histoire intellectuelle*, (Paris: Éditions la Découverte, 2003), pp. 112-115.

<sup>25</sup> Jean-Louis Fabiani, *Pierre Bourdieu...*, p. 40.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 90.

<sup>27</sup> Christophe Charle, "The Transdisciplinary Contribution of Pierre Bourdieu to the Study of the Academic Field and Intellectuals" in Thomas Medvetz, Jeffrey J. Sallaz (edit.), *The Oxford Handbook of Pierre Bourdieu*, pp. 327-346.

<sup>28</sup> Thomas Medvetz, "Bourdieu and the Sociology of Intellectual Life" in Thomas Medvetz, Jeffrey J. Sallaz (edit.), *The Oxford Handbook of Pierre Bourdieu*, pp. 454-480.

<sup>29</sup> Christophe Charle, *Homo historicus. Réflexions sur l'histoire, les historiens et les sciences sociales*, (Paris: Armand Colin, 2013), pp. 25-26.

<sup>30</sup> Adela Hîncu, "Introduction: "Peripheral Observations" and Their Observers" in Adela Hîncu, Victor Karady (edits.), *Social Sciences in the Other Europe since 1945*, Pasts. Inc., (Budapest: Central European University, 2018), pp. 1-25.

Bourdieu`s (habitus, capital) that are universally applicable, while others (field) are linked to the modern capitalist society. For this reason, concludes Lemieux, there must be other forms of organizing cultural production<sup>31</sup>. While not reflecting on this topic in particular, the argument of Lemieux raises some important questions regarding how the framework of Bourdieu`s sociology can be used for the socialist and post-socialist regimes. In such a specific context, the non-capitalist socialist regimes and capitalist postsocialism<sup>32</sup>, there are indeed limits for such approaches and contextual alterations.

This very difficult question of how cultural and intellectual activities function in a socialist regime has been tackled by Katherine Verdery, showing how the lack of a cultural market and the centralized distribution of resources in socialist Romania changed the rules and the structure of the intellectual field. As socialism works by different rules, compared to capitalism, cultural activity can be understood only by taking into the particular context. The cultural space is defined by two coordinates: political status and cultural authority. While the first is easily defined as having formal institutional power, the second is acknowledged only by other cultural actors in that particular field of cultural production. In socialism, there is a tendency of intellectuals to convert cultural capital to political status, and then of the later, by having better access to resources, to accumulate even more cultural capital<sup>33</sup>. The perspective is close to what Robert K. Merton called the “the Matthew effect”: intellectuals possessing the most cultural capital tend in return because of their privileged position to attract and concentrate increasingly cultural capital<sup>34</sup>.

Taking these broader theoretical aspects into consideration, our research will try to use the case study of historians with formal institutional power in 1985 to empirically ground institutes for Historical Research some of these various perspectives. By looking at how the agents were at the top of the intellectual field, what kind of socio-professional characteristics they possess, and what where their connections with, on the first hand, their

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<sup>31</sup> Cyril Lemieux, “The Twilight of fields: Limitations of a concept or disappearance of a historical reality?” in *Journal of Classical Sociology*, vol. 14 (4), 2014, pp. 382-402.

<sup>32</sup> Stephen Fortescue, *The Communist Party and the Soviet Science*, (MacMillan Press, 1986); Jeffrey L. Roberg, *Soviet Science under Control. The Struggle for Influence*, (MacMillan Press, 1998).

<sup>33</sup> Katherine Verdery, *Compromis și rezistență. Cultura română sub Ceaușescu* [National Ideology Under Socialism: Identity and Cultural Politics in Ceaușescu's Romania], (București, Humanitas, 1994), pp. 47-71.

<sup>34</sup> Robert K. Merton, “The Matthew Effect” in *Science in Science*, vol. 159, no. 3810, January 1968, pp. 56-63.

own colleagues, and, on the other, with the party, some of the *specific rules* of cultural/historiographical production in late socialism can be defined more precisely.

### Deans and directors in 1985

In 1985 there were seven Institutes for historical research, five in Bucharest<sup>35</sup>, one in Cluj-Napoca<sup>36</sup> and one in Iași<sup>37</sup>, and three Faculties of history-philosophy<sup>38</sup>, each with one department of History<sup>39</sup>. Each institute was led by a director and each faculty by a dean, as described by **Table 1**. The research design of this paper implied creating a biographical database, consisting in information regarding the biography of each dean and director, active in their leadership position in 1985. Therefore, information was gathered about Ion Agrigoroaie<sup>40</sup>, Dumitru Berciu<sup>41</sup>, Gheorghe I. Ioniță<sup>42</sup>, Camil Mureșanu<sup>43</sup>, Ștefan Pascu<sup>44</sup>, Mircea Petrescu-

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<sup>35</sup> “Nicolae Iorga” Institute of History, the Institute of Archaeology, the Institute of South-East European studies, the Centre for Studies and Research on Military History and Theory and the Institute of historical and socio-political studies. The last was the former Party History Institute, coordinated by the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party. Organised within the Institute of Archaeology, the Institute of Thracology had a director as well (Dumitru Berciu).

<sup>36</sup> The Institute of History and Archaeology of Cluj-Napoca.

<sup>37</sup> “A. D. Xenopol” Institute of History and Archaeology of Iași.

<sup>38</sup> In the Romanian academic system, a University is divided into Faculties, while each Faculty is made of several departments.

<sup>39</sup> See: Valentin Maier, *Învățământul superior istoric în comunism-structuri și statistici în NIȚU*, Florentina, MÜLLER, Florin, NICĂ, Remus (coord.), *Istorie și istorici la Universitatea din București, dimensiuni instituționale-proiecte intelectuale*, [History and historians at the University of Bucharest, institutional dimensions - intellectual projects], (București: Editura Universității din București, 2016), pp. 63-69.

<sup>40</sup> \*\*\*, *Manifestații științifice în “Universitatea “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” Iași”*, ianuarie-iunie 1985, p. 66, Ștefan Ștefănescu (coord.), *Enciclopedia istoriografiei românești*, [The Encyclopedia of Romanian historiography], (București: Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1978), p. 31.

<sup>41</sup> Mihai Irimia, *Din activitatea Institutului de Tracologie în anul 1985 în “Thraco-Dacica”*, tomul VII, nr. 1-2, 1986, p. 174; Ștefan Ștefănescu (coord.), *Enciclopedia istoriografiei românești*, pp. 54-55; Adina Berciu-Drăghicescu, *Dumitru Berciu. O viață închinată arheologiei românești*, [Dumitru Berciu. A life dedicated to Romanian archaeology], (București: Editura Universității din București, 2011).

<sup>42</sup> National Archives of Romania, Anneli Ute Gabanyi Collection, dossier no. 211, f. 111; National Archives of Romania, AgitProp fund, dossier no. 79/1988, f. 79, v.; *O viață, un destin. Istorii știute și neștiute*, [A life, a destiny. Known and unknown histories], (București: Cartea Universitară, 2007).

<sup>43</sup> “Babeș-Bolyai” University Archives, Personnel fund. 1985-1986; Ștefan Ștefănescu (coord.), *Enciclopedia istoriografiei românești*, pp. 228-229; National Archives of Romania, AgitProp fund, dossier no. 80/1988, f. 45.

Dâmbovița<sup>45</sup>, Ion Popescu-Puțuri<sup>46</sup>, Constantin Preda<sup>47</sup>, Ștefan Ștefănescu<sup>48</sup>. We excluded from our research Gheorghe Tudor, who was the head of the Centre for Studies and Research on Military History and Theory, because there was not enough data regarding his biography.

We divided the database into the following categories: institutional position in 1985, educational background, professional career, previously held academic positions, non-academic positions, and level of internationalization. The structure of this paper reflects more or less these categories.

**Table 1. Directors and Deans in 1985**

| <b>Institution</b>  | <b>Director/Dean</b>            | <b>Specialisation</b>                   |
|---|---------------------------------|---|
| Faculty of History-Philosophy, University of Bucharest                  | Gheorghe I. Ioniță<br>(b. 1937) | History of the Romanian Communist Party |
| Faculty of History-Philosophy, "Babeș-Bolyai" University of Cluj-Napoca | Camil Mureșanu<br>(b. 1927)     | Modern history                          |
| Faculty of History-Philosophy, "A. I. Cuza" University of Iași          | Ion Agrigoroaiei<br>(b. 1936)   | Contemporary history of Romania         |
| "Nicolae Iorga" Institute of History                                    | Ștefan Ștefănescu<br>(b. 1929)  | Medieval history                        |
| Institute of Archaeology  | Constantin Preda<br>(b. 1925)   | Ancient history                         |

<sup>44</sup> Ștefan Ștefănescu (coord.), *Enciclopedia istoriografiei românești*, pp. 253-254; "Babeș-Bolyai" University Archives, Personnel fund. 1985-1986.; National Archives of Romania, AgitProp fund, dossier no. 80/1988, f. 45.

<sup>45</sup> Ștefan Ștefănescu (coord.), *Enciclopedia istoriografiei românești*, p. 261; Victor Spinei, Nicolae Ursulescu, Vasile Cotiugă (edit.), *Orbis Praehistoriae. Mircea Petrescu-Dîmbovița-in memoriam*, Editura Universității "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" Iași, 2015.

<sup>46</sup> National Archives of Romania, Cabinet Fund. Annexes, dossier no. 164/1960, ff. 21-23; Idem, Party Household fund, dossier no. 5/1985, f. 27; Idem, Popescu-Puțuri collection, dossier no. 1, ff. 10-12.

<sup>47</sup> Ștefan Ștefănescu (coord.), *Enciclopedia istoriografiei românești*, pp. 273-274; Constantin Preda, available at: [http://www.humboldt-club.infim.ro/public\\_html/MEMBERS/PAGE\\_S/preda.htm](http://www.humboldt-club.infim.ro/public_html/MEMBERS/PAGE_S/preda.htm).

<sup>48</sup> Ștefan Ștefănescu (coord.), *Enciclopedia istoriografiei românești*, pp. 317-318; National Archives of Romania, Cadres fund, dossier Ș/182, ff. 1-2; University of Bucharest Archives, Personnel fund, dossier 305/1985.



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|--|--|---|
| Institute of Thracology                                      | Dumitru Berciu<br>(b. 1907)                              | Ancient history                         |
| Institute of south-east European studies                     | Gheorghe I. Ioniță<br>( <i>ad interim</i> )<br>(b. 1937) | History of the Romanian Communist Party |
| Institute of historical and socio-political studies          | Ion Popescu-Puțuri<br>(b. 1906)                          | History of the Romanian Communist Party |
| Institute of History and Archaeology of Cluj-Napoca          | Ștefan Pascu<br>(b. 1914)                                | Medieval history                        |
| “A. D. Xenopol” Institute of History and Archaeology of Iași | Mircea Petrescu-Dâmbovița<br>(b. 1915)                   | Ancient history                         |

There are interesting links between institutions and the specialization of deans and directors. Of all nine directors and deans (there were ten positions occupied by nine historians, as Gheorghe I. Ioniță was both a dean and a director), most of them were ancient historians/archaeologists, followed by specialists in medieval history and the history of the Romanian Communist Party. As we will discuss further, this situation was very strongly connected to a number of phenomena from within and outside the Romanian historiographical field.

**Table 2. Number of deans and directors by specialisation in 1985**

| <b>Specialisation</b>                   | <b>Number of deans and directors</b> |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| Ancient history/Archaeology             | 3                                    |
| Medieval history                        | 2                                    |
| Modern history                          | 1                                    |
| Contemporary history                    | 1                                    |
| History of the Romanian Communist Party | 2                                    |
| <b>Total</b>                            | <b>9</b>                             |

As it has been already argued by previous researchers, entering the historiographical field in the last decade of socialism in Romania was a very difficult task<sup>49</sup>. Moreover, because some of those with leadership positions within the field had the tendency to keep their position for as

<sup>49</sup> See Valentin Maier, *Învățămintul istoric...*

long as possible, the age brackets for our analysed group are quite high. There were 2 deans/directors aged between 41 and 50 years old, 3 aged between 51 and 60 years old, no one aged between 61 and 70 years old, and 4 older than 70 years old. The oldest was Ion Popescu-Puțuri (79 years old in 1985) and the youngest was Gheorghe I. Ioniță (48 years old in 1985), closely followed by Ion Agrigoroaiei (49 years old in 1985). A correlation between specialisation and age brackets can be observed. Those historians working on contemporary Romanian history were younger, while archaeologists were the oldest. The exception to this pattern was Popescu-Puțuri, but his appointment as director of the Party History Institute followed different rules.

**Table 3. Age brackets<sup>50</sup> and specialisations**

| <b>Dean/Director</b>      | <b>Age</b> | <b>Specialization</b>                   |
|---------------------------|------------|---|
| Ion Agrigoroaiei          | 49         | Contemporary history                    |
| Dumitru Berciu            | 78         | Ancient history/ Archaeology            |
| Gheorghe I. Ioniță        | 48         | History of the Romanian Communist Party |
| Camil Mureșanu            | 58         | Modern history                          |
| Ștefan Pascu              | 71         | Medieval history                        |
| Mircea Petrescu-Dâmbovița | 71         | Ancient history/ Archaeology            |
| Ion Popescu-Puțuri        | 79         | History of the Romanian Communist Party |
| Constantin Preda          | 60         | Ancient history/ Archaeology            |
| Ștefan Ștefănescu         | 56         | Medieval history                        |

There are different reasons for this correlation. First of all, one should look at the broader phenomena characterizing history writing during the communist period. The Romanian communist regime changed its official ideology from pro-Soviet to a nationalistic discourse. In this context, history was (re)defined and new interpretations imposed. As the contemporary history of Romania and of the Romanian Communist Party were very strongly linked, according to the official discourse, it meant that former pro-Soviet historians had to be replaced. This does not mean that other periods of history were not under the ideological pressure of the Party apparatus. Comparatively, they still had the advantage of requiring deeper professional training, such as technical skills in archaeology or medieval palaeography. There were two consequences of

<sup>50</sup> The age is calculated for the 31<sup>st</sup> of December 1985.

this phenomenon. Starting from late 1950 to early 1960 (and to a certain degree up until early 1980), career advancement was faster for historians working on the history of contemporary Romania. On the other hand, their careers were much more dependent on the Party, as contemporary history was under strong ideological supervision of the Agitprop. The second part of the explanation is linked to the design of our study. It is important to point out that there were essential differences between the mandates` lengths for our group, as calculated for 1985. Gheorghe I. Ioniță and Ion Agrigoroaiei were in their first year as deans, being elected in 1985, while others had already in leadership positions for several years. This could explain as well some differences in age and specialisation.

**Table 4. Year of appointment in the leadership positions held in 1985**

| <b>Dean/Director</b>      | <b>The year of appointment in their leadership position</b> |
|---------------------------|---|
| Ion Agrigoroaiei          | 1985  |
| Dumitru Berciu            | 1979  |
| Gheorghe I. Ioniță        | 1985  |
| Camil Mureșanu            | 1968  |
| Ștefan Pascu              | 1973  |
| Mircea Petrescu-Dîmbovița | 1968  |
| Ion Popescu-Puțuri        | 1961  |
| Constantin Preda          | 1981  |
| Ștefan Ștefănescu         | 1970  |

Therefore, it is very difficult to argue that the regime had the ability to coordinate in such some coherent manner appointments at the top of the historiographical field. The number of institutions, actors, and interested parties was very high, making a coherent approach from the Party`s perspective very difficult to manage. It is much more feasible to understand the differences in age brackets and specialization as a consequence of broader internal phenomena in the historiographical field that happened across different generations, as it will be argued further.

### **Educational background**

The high level of diversity within the analysed group can be observed in relation to their education as well. Dumitru Berciu, Ștefan Pascu, and Mircea Petru-Dâmbovița graduated before the end of the Second World War, the first two obtaining their PhD before 1945, while the latter obtaining it in 1947. Younger historians, such as Ștefan

Ștefănescu and Gheorghe I. Ioniță finished their doctorates in the 1960s, while Ion Agrigoroaiei, Camil Mureșanu and Constantin Preda did it in the 1970s. Only Ion Popescu-Puțuri had no formal historical education.

The level of academic mobility in Romanian historiography was rather low, as local institutional networks were key in career development. Only Mircea Petrescu-Dâmbovița worked in a different academic centre (Iași) than the one where he graduated (Bucharest). This particular case was linked to a biographical event, rather than a structural phenomenon<sup>51</sup>. If national academic mobility was low, international mobility was no different. Those who managed to do international academic research mobility did so before 1948 (Ștefan Pascu) or in Moscow afterwards (Ștefan Ștefănescu). The exception was Constantin Preda, who did a research mobility in Germany between 1968-1970, a period of quasi liberalisation by the Romanian communist regime. Broader evolution of the regime, generational trends, and opportunities were interlinked in this regard as well, as it was the hardest to do an international mobility in the 1950s than in the 1960s or 1970s.

### **Patterns of entering the historiographical field**

Patterns are very difficult to describe when considering how each historian from our group entered the historiographical field. Some of them entered in the late 1950s or early 1960s (Ion Agrigoroaiei became a lecturer in 1959 and Gheorghe Ioniță became researcher at the Party History Institute in 1960), while others were part of the field for a long time (Dumitru Berciu was a full professor already in 1945, while Ștefan Ștefănescu became a researcher in 1951).

Career advancement worked quite differently as well. Within the analysed group, only Ion Popescu-Puțuri had no academic rank or position. The others, except for Ion Agrigoroaiei, were full professors in 1985. Gheorghe I. Ioniță had the fastest career progress, managing in just 21 years to advance from a researcher at the Party History Institute to a full professor at the University of Bucharest. He was, as well, the one that, in 1985, held this academic title for least only four years.

Correlations between these aspects are difficult to point out. Without being strong, definite conclusion, we can argue that the biggest difference seems to be between contemporary history and archaeology. As previously stated, explaining this pattern as a consequence of party involvement is insufficient. A nuanced explanation must be linked to generational structures within the Romanian historiographical field. As

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<sup>51</sup> Victor Spinei, Nicolae Ursulescu, Vasile Cotiugă (edit.), *Orbis Praehistoriae...*, p. 6.

older historians working on modern and contemporary history (such as in Bucharest, Dumitru, Almaş, Vasile Maciu, or Aron Petric) retired from activity, there were more opportunities for younger historians to enter the field or to be promoted. The situation was very different for archaeologists, as they kept their leadership positions even after being officially retired (Dumitru Berciu and Mircea Petrescu-Dâmboviţa were older than the official retirement age in 1985).

### **Previously held leadership positions**

Another aspect of great importance is what leadership positions, if any, were held by the historians we analysed in our research before 1985. With the exceptions of Ion Agrigoroaiei, Gheorghe Ioniţă and Constantin Preda, all others held other leadership positions previously. The number of former deans was particularly high (Dumitru Berciu, Camil Mureşanu, Ştefan Pascu, Mircea Petrescu-Dâmboviţa, Ştefan Ştefănescu). Ştefan Pascu was the only one that held, before 1985, an even higher position within academia, being rector of “Babeş-Bolyai” University of Cluj-Napoca. It is important to note here the exception of Ion Popescu-Puţuri, for whom the position of director of the former Party History Institute was actually rather unimportant position, comparatively with those held before, as he was in the 1950s vice-president of the State Planning Committee and ambassador to Hungary.

It can be said, therefore, that there were two different categories within the analysed group. For some, the position they held in 1985 was their first leadership position (Gheorghe I. Ioniţă, Ion Agrigoroaiei, Constantin Preda), while for others their positions in 1985 were of lesser formal institutional influence than the others they had held previously (Ştefan Pascu, Dumitru Berciu).

Another aspect to consider is mobility of leadership positions within a very small select group. It was widespread that the positions of dean of Faculty and director of the department had to be changed between two historians. For example, in 1984 Ion Agrigoroaiei (the director of the Department of History) became dean, while the former dean, Vasile Cristian, became director of the same department<sup>52</sup>. In Cluj-Napoca, leadership positions were occupied by Camil Mureşanu, Nicolae Edroiu, and Ştefan Pascu. In Bucharest, Ştefan Ştefănescu (former dean)

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<sup>52</sup> See: <http://150.uaic.ro/personalitati/istorie/vasile-cristian/>

was replaced by Gheorghe Ioniță, becoming director of the Department of Romanian History<sup>53</sup>.

A different situation was at the level of historical research institutes. In these cases, as the mandates were not limited, directors had the tendency to keep their positions as directors for many years. Ștefan Ștefănescu led the “Nicolae Iorga” Institute of History for 20 years (1970-1990), Mircea Petrescu-Dâmbovița led the “A. D. Xenopol” Institute of history and archaeology for 22 years (1968-1990) and Ion Popescu-Puțuri led the Party History Institute/Institute of historical and socio-political studies for 29 years (1961-1990). It is noteworthy that all three of them were changed from their leadership positions only after the fall of communism in 1990.

There are as well cases of holding more than one single leadership position at the same time. In 1985, Gheorghe I. Ioniță was both the dean of the Faculty of history philosophy in Bucharest and the director of the Institute of South-East European Studies, Ștefan Ștefănescu was leading both the “Nicolae Iorga” Institute of History and the Department of History within the Faculty, and Ștefan Pascu was director of the Institute of history and archaeology and the head of the Department of History in Cluj-Napoca. Two historians from the analysed group had, before 1985, at the same time two top-level leadership positions. Ștefan Ștefănescu was the dean of the Faculty while being director of the institute, while Ștefan Pascu held the position of rector while being the director of the history institute of Cluj-Napoca.

This was a direct consequence of two main phenomena. First of all, it is important to point out that in all academic systems, there is a strong connection between symbolic capital and holding an institutional position<sup>54</sup>. Because of this interlink, most of those who acceded to institutional power had, at the same time, a strong symbolic position within the field, which is expressed, in most cases, by being, at least, a full professor. Symbolic capital and institutional formal position are therefore very strongly interconnected. Secondly, the particular case of socialist Romania in the 1980s had a direct impact on this internal logic of the field. As the number of full professors was rapidly declining in the Romanian

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<sup>53</sup> In March 1985 the two Departments of History at the University of Bucharest (Romanian History and Universal History) were unified into one single department of History.

<sup>54</sup> Katherine Verdery, *Compromis și rezistență...*, pp. 47-71. Pierre Bourdieu, *Homo Academicus*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988). Françoise Waquet, *Respublica academica. Rituels universitaires et genres du savoir (XVII-XXI<sup>e</sup> siècles)*, (Paris: Presses de l'Université Paris-Sorbonne, 2010).

historiographical field, especially starting from 1980, strategies for acquiring enough symbolic capital were decreasing in number, making it very difficult for replacements at the top of the field. Because of these two phenomena, those historians that had strong symbolic capital already could move easily from one top position to another. There was another important particularity, as well. Having strong connections with the Romanian Communist Party was of great help, as it was the case of Gheorghe I. Ioniță.

### **Internationalisation**

Analysing the degree of internationalisation is very hard, especially in the very complex context of socialist Romania. Data regarding this aspect is particularly difficult to operationalize. Still, the general context was one of a very low level of internationalisation, as the socialist regime gradually reduced all opportunities for intellectuals to engage in international academic exchanges of any sort. It is important to point out two different perspectives regarding internationalisation. First of all, there was a certain generational difference between those historians who managed to acquire connections outside socialist Romania during the 1960s-1970s, when the regime was in its quasi-liberal period, and those who had to develop their careers after 1971/1974, when it was getting progressively harder to participate in the international epistemic community. Secondly, being part of the international epistemic community had a role in acquiring symbolic capital for the national field. Because the historiographical field was structurally dependent on the resources allocated by the socialist state, it can be argued that being part of an international academic community of peers became more important.

One argument can be derived by analysing how historians described their own biographies. With few exceptions, it can be easily seen that it was almost a pattern to underline the strong connections with the international historical profession. The reason we hypothesize is linked to how symbolic capital and the intellectual field work in a socialist regime. As the role of the Party was increasingly becoming more important, these international connections were a strategy for historians of proving that their position within the national historiographical field were validated by an external, theoretically objective, structure. It was, in a way, a strategy of external legitimation. On the other hand, being active internationally was a way used by some historians to promote themselves as “professional historians”, in comparison with “Party historians”.

We can conclude therefore, that internationalisation structures the field in two different ways. First of all, it divides between those inside the

classical academic field (academic research institutes and universities) and those closer to the Party apparatus. Secondly, it creates a hierarchical structure, which became, in this context, even more monopolised by a small number of historians.

There are two other aspects to consider in this regard. First of all, to acquire institutional power, having a high degree of internationalisation was not a definite requirement. As it can be easily seen, especially for historians working on the history of the Romanian Communist Party, other strategies were much more viable. Secondly, holding a strong institutional position did not mean always becoming more visible on the international epistemic stage. For the same historians as mentioned previously, their position within the national field did not transcend directly to being considered by historians from other countries as legitimate intellectual partners.

### **Memory and intellectual lineage**

How these historians were perceived in the memory of the field is important for two reasons: how the intellectual lineages are working in the Romanian historiography across generations and how did they vary, and what is the relation between mentorship, lineage, epistemic innovations and “historiographical schools”. As this is a very broad topic, and it is not the aim of this study to describe it in detail, we will focus more on what kind of memory the members of our analysed group had/have, within the Romanian historiographical field, and what does that tell us about the field and its structural characteristics and evolutions.

There are three main sources relevant for this kind of memory. First of all, there is the institutional memory, most of the times signed by those from the same institution as the presented historian. As it is very often the case, these materialise in anniversary publications<sup>55</sup>. This type of memory is, generally speaking trans-generational. Secondly, there is the generational memory. It is a custom for historians from the same generation to present the achievements of another. The third case is as well trans-generational, and it includes the memory presented by the disciples of a given historian.

In our research, we can point out that the level of variation is very high. There are still conclusions that can be relevant, such as the very big difference between very present historians in all types of memory, such as Mircea, Petrescu-Dâmbovița, and those almost absent, such as Gheorghe

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<sup>55</sup> Françoise Waquet, “Les <<Mélanges>>: Honneur et gratitude dans l’université contemporaine” in *Revue d’histoire moderne & contemporaine*, no. 53-3, 2006, pp. 100-121.



I. Ioniță. If Ștefan Pascu, Ștefan Ștefănescu<sup>56</sup>, Ion Agrigoroaiei<sup>57</sup>, Mircea Petrescu-Dâmbovița, Dumitru Berciu, and Constantin Preda<sup>58</sup> are well present in the memory of the field, Gheorghe I. Ioniță<sup>59</sup> and Ion Popescu-Puțuri are not present. This is most certainly linked to how contemporary history in general was perceived by other members of the historiographical field, in the 1980s and after the fall of communism.

## Conclusions

The present paper's objective was to analyse the historiographical field in late socialist Romania, by looking as a case study, at the historians with formal institutional power in 1985. Conclusions point out that, in the specific context of Romanian intellectual and historiographical milieu, the top of the field was getting increasingly less numerous, as a consequence of both keeping positions of power for longer or changing one position of influence to another, and as well because of the decreasing size of the field itself. Still, as this paper argued, explaining the characteristics of the analysed group as a consequence of political intrusion is not sufficient, and other factors must be considered as well, such as: generational and trans-generational trends, the structure and rules particular to the field, broader evolution of the intellectual and political field in communist Romania.

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<sup>56</sup> Tudor Teoteoi, Bogdan Murgescu, Șarolta Solcan (edit.), *Fațetele istoriei. Existențe, identități, dinamici. Omagiu academicianului Ștefan Ștefănescu*, [Faces of history. Existences, identities and dynamics. Hommage to Ștefan Ștefănescu], (București: Editura Universității din București, 2000); Luca Cristian, Ionel Cândea, *Studia Varia in Honorem Professoris Ștefan Ștefănescu Octogenarii*, (București, Brăila: Editura Academiei Române & Editura Istros, 2009).

<sup>57</sup> Cătălin Turliuc, Gavriil Preda, Ilie Manole (coord.), *Clipe de viață. Prof. univ. dr. Ion Agrigoroaiei la 75 de ani*, [Moments of life. Professor doctor Ion Agrigoroaiei at 75], (Ploiești: Editura Karta-Graphic, 2011).

<sup>58</sup> Alexandru Suceveanu, *Constantin Preda* in "Dacia", XL-XLII, 1996-1998, pp. 485-396. Alexandru Barnea, *Constantin Preda (1 noiembrie 1925-28 martie 2008)* in "Studii și cercetări de istorie veche și arheologie", tomul 59-60, 2008-2009, pp. 273-288.

<sup>59</sup> With the exception of several articles published in: Gheorghe Ioniță, *O viață, un destin...*

