

A Historian, the Securitate and the “Holy Party”. Reading the Secret Police Files of Ioan Dimitrie Suciu (1949-1982)

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Abstract: *A Historian, the Securitate and the “Holy Party”. Reading the Secret Police Files of Ioan Dimitrie Suciu (1949-1982).* The following article describes the life times and events that historian Ioan Dimitrie Suciu has experienced in Romania after 1948, under communist rule. By studying his personal Secret Police Files drawn up by the Securitate officers over a period of more than 30 years, I propose an account of his life story focused primarily upon his relationship with the communist regime. As an anti-Fascist former student of Nicolae Iorga, until 1947 I.D. Suciu has managed to become a self-made man in the capital city of interwar Romania. In 1949, he has got into a first conflict with communist authorities when he tried to flee the country. After spending over 3 years in jail, he was released in 1952, only to be soon again arrested and incarcerated for 6 years, for committing the crime of “conspiracy against the social order”. Between 1964 and 1975 I.D. Suciu has worked as a researcher at “Nicolae Iorga” History Institute in Bucharest, before being sent to jail for a third and last time (1975-1977). Never becoming a political dissident, during his last years of life, he experienced a growing discontent towards the regime and expressed abundant critiques against the Communist Party and its leaders.

Keywords: Romanian Communist Party, Securitate, Ioan D. Suciu, condemnation.

Abstract: *Un istoric, Securitatea și “Sfântul partid”. Citirea dosarelor secrete ale poliției lui Ioan Dimitrie Suciu (1949-1982).* Articolul de față descrie viața, vremurile și evenimentele pe care istoricul Ioan Dimitrie Suciu le-a trăit în România după 1948, în timpul regimului comunist. Studiind dosarele întocmite de ofițerii Securității pe numele său pe parcursul a peste 30 de ani, propun o relatare a poveștii de viață a istoricului axată în primul rând pe relația sa cu regimul comunist. Ca fost student al lui Nicolae Iorga, până în 1947 I.D. Suciu a manifestat o atitudine antifascistă și a reușit să se realizeze profesional în capitala României interbelice. În 1949 a intrat într-un prim conflict cu autoritățile

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comuniste când a încercat să fugă din țară. După ce a petrecut peste 3 ani în închisoare, a fost eliberat în 1952, pentru ca în 1958 să fie din nou arestat și încarcerat timp de 6 ani pentru comiterea infracțiunii de “conspirație împotriva ordinii sociale”. Între 1964 și 1975 I.D. Suciu a lucrat ca cercetător la Institutul de Istorie “Nicolae Iorga” din București, înainte de a fi trimis la închisoare pentru a treia și ultima oară (1975-1977). Deși nu a devenit disident politic niciodată, în ultimii săi ani de viață a manifestat o nemulțumire crescândă față de regim și a exprimat numeroase critici la adresa Partidului Comunist și a conducătorilor acestuia.

Cuvinte-cheie: Partidul Comunist Român, Securitate, Ioan D. Suciu, închisoare.

The future historian I.D. Suciu was born in the summer of 1917 in Lugoj¹, Austria-Hungary, in the heat of World War I. Unfortunately, little information is available about his early life. What we know for sure is that his mother Ofelia died in 1921 when I.D. Suciu was only 4 years old, and in 1928, when he was 11 and had already been admitted to the ‘Constantin Diaconovici Loga’ high school in Timișoara², his father, who had served as a teacher for 36 years, also died³. In 1936, thanks to the support he received from his relatives in Bucharest, mainly uncles and aunts, Suciu graduated the ‘Gheorghe Lazăr’ high school in the capital city of inter-war Romania, and in 1937 he became a student of the Faculty of Letters and Philosophy of the University of Bucharest⁴.

His first writings date from these years: as a young student in Bucharest, he industriously wrote historical articles and studies concerning the past of his native province, Banat, which he has managed to publish in newspapers, journals and magazines both in Bucharest and in the province, such as ‘Youth’, ‘Timișoara’, ‘The West’, ‘The Society of Tomorrow’ or ‘Luceafărul’⁵.

¹ “Ioan Dimitrie Suciu”, in *Enciclopedia istoriografiei românești*, (edited by Ștefan Ștefănescu), București, Ed. Științifică și enciclopedică, 1978, p. 307.

² Victor Lăzărescu, Gheorghe Luchescu, Vasile Muntean, *Spiritualitate lugojeană*, Timișoara, Ed. Mitropoliei Banatului, 1993, p. 136.

³ The National Archives of Romania – Timiș County Service (Arhivele Naționale ale României – Serviciul Județean Timiș – ANR-SJTM), Fund *I.D. Suciu Family*, File No. 11, f. 2.

⁴ Silviu Mureșan, “Istorie și politică la Ioan Dimitrie Suciu în perioada studenției (1937-1941)”, in *Restituiri Bănățene*, vol. II, Timișoara, Ed. Eurostampa, 2014, pp. 410-411.

⁵ The Archive of the National Council for the Study of the Securitate Archives (Arhiva Consiliului Național pentru Studierea Arhivelor Securității - ACNSAS), Informative Fund, File No. 533936, vol. V, ff. 90-91.

Notably, during his first year of college, I.D. Suciu translated into Romanian and published a unique poem written in the 16th century by the Wallachian voivod Petru Cercel, which attracted the attention of professor Nicolae Iorga who appreciated his initiative and encouraged him to continue his research in the field of history of Banat⁶, because the province united with Romania in 1918-1919 has not benefited, during the entire interwar period, neither of a university of a humanist profile, nor of a research institution where the history of Banat could have been properly studied.

I.D. Suciu perceived this shortcoming as a professional opportunity which he understood to take advantage of since his earliest youth: in 1939 he published a study on Emilia Lungu-Puhallo, the first Romanian woman from Banat who wrote a novel, and in the summer of 1940, Astra Publishing House printed the synthesis "The Literature in Banat from the Beginning to the Union (1582-1918)"⁷, a writing into which, for the first time in Romanian literary history, a researcher presented "the contribution brought by this province to the development of Romanian literature and culture"⁸. The work was appreciated by the academic community, benefiting from some favorable reviews, including in the prestigious "Journal of Royal Foundations". Moreover, in the summer of 1940, the young Suciu wrote a series of political articles, where he vehemently condemned the territorial cessions that Romania accepted in favor of Hungary, Bulgaria, and the Soviet Union, and in March 1941, after the Iron Guard had been forced out of Government, he wrote the first protest article against the murder of professor Nicolae Iorga.

⁶ About this episode I.D. Suciu will later recall: "At a meeting of the Universal History seminar at the beginning of the year, N. Iorga gave a lecture about Henry III and his relations with Petru Voivod Cercel. At that time, I had published in Romanian the lyrics of Petru Voivod Cercel. Speaking of the Wallachian prince's poetic work, he says that only now, a year ago a young Suciu had translated it from Italian. Involuntarily the eyes of colleagues turned to me. The professor, who noticed their movement, asks me if I am the one. From that moment started the great admiration which I will have for Iorga for all of my life. Not the fact of quoting a work of mine, but what surprised me was his exceptional bibliographic information that he had in his memory. A professor of his age, being up to date even with the smallest studies that are done in connection with his lectures. From now on I was always present at the seminar meetings, because I knew that in the two hours, I would earn more than if I would read dozens of books". v. I.D. Suciu, "Amintirile unui student", în *Tineretea*, seria a II-a, nr. 1 (1940), *apud* Silviu Mureșan, *op. cit.*, pp. 415-416.

⁷ Ioan Dimitrie Suciu, "Literatura bănățeană de la început pînă la Unire (1582-1918)", Timișoara, Editura Regionalei Bănățene "Astra", 1940, 399 pp.

⁸ ACNSAS, Informative Fund, File No. 533936, vol. V, f. 83.

In June 1941 I.D. Suciu has passed his bachelor's degree exam at the University of Bucharest with the dissertation "The Military Role of the Transylvanian Romanians in the Hungarian State until the Battle of Mohács"⁹, for which he received the *magna cum laude* honor. He was admitted to the doctoral programme in the same autumn, and in 1942 he became the assistant of professor Constantin C. Giurescu at the Department of Romanian History¹⁰. As he wrote in 1975,

"From 1942 I started working on the vast monograph that served as a doctoral thesis in letters and philosophy: Nicolae Tincu Velia (1816-1867), His Life and Works. Tincu Velia was a professor in Vîrşeţ and a participant in the revolution of 1848. He published patriotic odes, elegies, and poems before the revolution of 1848-1849 and were among the first translators in Romanian of the German poet Fr. Schiller. However, handcuffed by the Latinist spelling and lacking in vocabulary refinement, his work remains only of documentary value"¹¹.

He successfully defended his Ph.D. dissertation in 1943 in front of a commission made up of professors Gheorghe I. Brătianu, C.C. Giurescu, Victor Papacostea and I.D. Ştefănescu¹². Immediately after the end of World War II, in 1945, he managed to print it, and the work enjoyed a largely favorable reception¹³. In addition, in 1943, starting with January 1, I.D. Suciu got hired at the Institute of National History in Bucharest where he initially obtained a research assistant position, but by December 1, he had become chief of works¹⁴ – equivalent to that of a lecturer. At the same time, starting on March 6, 1943, he also gained the position of Senior

⁹ Silviu Mureşan, *op. cit.*, p. 414.

¹⁰ ACNSAS, Informative Fund, File No. 533936, vol. V, ff. 55.

¹¹ *Ibidem*, ff. 85-86.

¹² Ioan Dimitrie Suciu, *Nicolae Tincu Velia (1816-1867). Viaţa şi opera lui*, Bucureşti, Institutul de Istorie Naţională din Bucureşti, 1945, p. 2.

¹³ Although he had some favorable reviews in historical journals, historian Dan Berindei characterized I.D. Suciu in 1965 in the following words: "In the past he was not one of the brightest historians – even in a communication in 1944-45 he became confused and interrupted his conference, going back to his chair, the only known case – also his doctoral thesis – Nicolae Tincu Vela although 'thick', it produced ironic comments given the reduced significance of the subject matter": ACNSAS, Informative Fund, File No. 3845, vol. II, f. 135.

¹⁴ ANR-SJTM, Fund I.D. Suciu Family, File No. 34, f. 1.

Inspector General¹⁵ within the General Directorate of Theatres, Operations and Performances under the subordination of the Ministry of National Culture and Cults, where the general director was the well-known novelist Liviu Rebreanu.

The timeframe during which he completed his studies and began to assert himself as a researcher had coincided, in Romanian history, with the succession of the first three of the four dictatorships under which I.D. Suciu had lived: Carlist, Legionary and Military. He was not an active member of any political party until August 23, 1944, but both through his writings and the memoirs he submitted to the authorities, he constantly displayed an anti-Fascist attitude, managing even to enter into open conflict with the legionaries from Bucharest on a few occasions.

In 1940, I.D. Suciu set up and ran for a short time a magazine named "Flamura", which he himself has characterized as

"the first magazine with a Transylvanian irredentist character after the Vienna dictatorship, which benefitted from the collaboration of Iuliu Maniu, prof. Victor. Papacostea, Sever Bocu, Prof. Dan Simonescu, Ion Clopoșel, Franz Theodor Csokor, I. Copilu-Cheatră, I. Șugariu, Coriolan Gheție, etc., were also quoted in the History of Romanians by C.C. Giurescu, vol. III, part I, p 433"¹⁶.

As most Romanian historians had done those years, Suciu's scientific research activity was duplicated by one of a militant or rather political nature: he will continue to campaign for the achievement of certain goals and to publicly support various social and cultural causes both after the collapse of the legionary regime in January 1941, and especially after August 23, 1944, among the most notable of such causes being the reformation of Romanian higher education system¹⁷, the transformation of the Huniade Castle in Timișoara into a Cultural Palace, or the establishment of a much-needed West University in the capital of Banat region¹⁸.

Given his family background – nephew of deputy Sever Bocu, a former minister in the Government of Iuliu Maniu – I.D. Suciu naturally integrated himself into the national-peasant political groups in Bucharest. However, by studying the documents produced by various intelligence services between 1944-1948, one can clearly find numerous issues which appear to be unclear, many allegations, unverified speculations, incomplete data, and dubious assessments, frequently false or simply

¹⁵ *Ibidem*, File No. 12, f. 4.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*, File No. 34, f. 9.

¹⁷ *Ibidem*, File No. 19, f. 1.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, File No. 68, ff. 2-6.

contradictory. They tend to raise more questions than they clarify: for example, during the Antonescu regime, I.D. Suciu is described as simultaneously a close collaborator of Mihai Antonescu, the Vice-President of the Council of Ministers, of the “notorious legionary” Balotă Anton, but also of Sever Bocu and Iuliu Maniu. After August 23, 1944, Suciu appears to be either as a member of the National Peasant or of the National Liberal Party¹⁹, or even of the Social Democratic Party. The most spectacular role he seemed to have played, as some rumours in the world of “journalists and actors”²⁰ tended to suggest, was in the first phase of the Antonescu dictatorship, when the historian had been commissioned by the Special Service of Information (or even by Mihai Antonescu himself, it is not clear) to collect and provide the Government with information from among the leadership of the National Peasant Party, receiving instead money and support to obtain various professional positions²¹. However, in the current state of research, such a hypothesis, however interesting, tempting, or plausible it may be, cannot be supported with certainty.

It is clear, however, that after August 23, 1944, in the new political context, I.D. Suciu – who, according to the opinions of several witnesses, was at that time a young man “very ambitious and eager to «become someone»”²² – sought to orient towards a left-wing political party, but it is not clear why he chose the Social Democratic Party instead of the much more popular National Peasant Party. The only details regarding the political choices he made during those troubled years are offered by himself in the spring of 1949, in a statement he wrote under arrest:

“In the meantime, because of the events, Mr. Giurescu had fled to Turkey. He returned in 1945. He came to me with the proposal to join with him the party of Mr. Tătărăscu. I refused. Since then, the chain of miseries began, which culminated in my joining of the Social Democratic Party when Mr. Giurescu was afraid I was going to take his place and his chair. The miseries consisted of the bad atmosphere he made among

¹⁹ A document drafted on August 6, 1948 within the Investigation Brigade Bureau of the Capital Security Inspectorate mentions that in 1945 I.D. Suciu “joined Tătărăscu’s group with the N[ational] R[esurgence] F[ront] of C.C. Giurescu, who had been his professor, in this group receiving promises to be named cultural attaché or counsellor, with the purpose of playing the game of reactionary emigrants from abroad”: ACNSAS, Informative Fund, File No. 533936, vol. V, f. 104.

²⁰ ACNSAS, Informative Fund, File No. 3845, vol. I, f. 5.

²¹ *Ibidem*, ff. 1-4.

²² This characterization dates from 1968 and it belongs to a *Securitate* informant with whom Suciu was friend since 1942; see ACNSAS, Informative Fund, File No. 3845, vol. II, f. 173.

older professors, of cutting me down from the salary list, and of launching the bad pigwash upon me, etc"²³.

In 1946, therefore, I.D. Suciu joined the Social-Democratic Party, coming soon to fulfil the job of secretary at the organization of university professors in Bucharest²⁴. He did not gain any personal benefits, on the contrary: in the autumn of the same year, he was dismissed from his office in the Ministry and remained only on the job he had at the University of Bucharest because, as he remembered in 1949, after the war the law no longer allowed the cumulation of jobs²⁵. Although in the university he worked conscientiously and tried, according to his own appreciation, to adapt to the "new Times", and in 1947 he even managed to occupy the post of deputy inspector in the Historical Monuments Commission²⁶, starting with November 1, 1948 he was dismissed from all his positions. The main cause of his dismissal he saw, in retrospect, in the conflict he had with professor Constantin C. Giurescu²⁷, who, in Suciu's opinion, was considered "omnipotent" at the time, and to whom he kept an undisguised aversion until the end of his life.

After he remained unemployed in the fall of 1948, neither his professional capacities nor his relations in the intellectual and political fields (otherwise in a full process of dissolution) could not help him to occupy any other post. As a result, in a very short period of time, I.D. Suciu got into the situation where he could no longer afford to earn a living, which is why he began to even sell his clothes. Therefore, after unsuccessfully trying to find support and shelter from his relatives, having no concrete hope for the future, he took the decision to leave the country. Having this sole purpose in mind, together with the younger brother of a former colleague from the Ministry of Culture (Radu Andronescu), Suciu developed a plan to flee abroad, most probably to France, via Hungary.

²³ ACNSAS, Penal Fund, File No. 380, vol. II, f. 63.

²⁴ Ioan Opreș, *Istoricii și Securitatea*, București, Ed. Enciclopedică, 2004, p. 413.

²⁵ Most likely I.D. Suciu was fired on the basis of Law No. 486 of October 8, 1944 (published in the *Monitorul Oficial* No. 233 from October 8, 1944), which stated that the state officials "employed in any form after February 20, 1938 [the establishment of King Carol II royal dictatorship] and until August 23, 1944 can be dismissed from work", benefiting from financial rights only those who could prove that they had a "worthy, fair and moral attitude".

²⁶ ANR-SJTM, Fund I.D. Suciu Family, Dosar nr. 68, f. 1.

²⁷ Ioan Scurtu, "De la închisoarea Sighet la Academia R.S. România. Studiu de caz: Constantin C. Giurescu", in *Arhivele Totalitarismului*, nr. 78-79 (1-2)/2013, pp. 83-92.

At the end of December 1948, Suciu went from Bucharest to Timișoara, where he was hosted by one of his aunts. In the spring of 1949, on March 5 I.D. Suciu, he left Timișoara with Andronescu and reached Pecica village, where the two were hosted and supplied by a cousin of one of Suciu's former high school colleagues. Previously, Radu Andronescu had procured two pistols which, according to the statements written by the two, they intended to use to commit suicide in the event of their capture by the border guards. On the evening of March 6, around 7 pm, Suciu and Andronescu set off from Pecica to the border, which they crossed during the night of March 6-7, 1949. In Hungary, the two fugitives were hosted by a Romanian priest in Battonya, and the following night they left by train to Szeged, a city where they were captured by Hungarian authorities in the train station immediately after their arrival. Suciu and Andronescu were arrested on March 8 and investigated by the Hungarian special services for 30 days in Szeged, after which they were taken to Budapest, where, on April 21, 1949, they were handed over to the Bihor Regional *Securitate* Directorate.

During the summer of 1949 I.D. Suciu and Radu Andronescu were investigated under arrest by the *Securitate*, and on October 18, the two were sent to court for the crimes of fraudulent crossing of the border and illegal possession of weapons²⁸, charges that they have both acknowledged in front of the court. On October 25, 1949, by sentence no. 1624, the Military Court of Timișoara sentenced them to three years of correctional imprisonment and full confiscation of their assets. Although the date for the beginning of their sentence was initially set for March 8, 1949, I.D. Suciu was released from the Aiud penitentiary with a delay of more than six months, on October 30, 1952, after being thoroughly investigated and after he signed a commitment not to disclose "to anyone those seen or heard by the *Securitate*"²⁹.

After his release from prison and until the fall of 1956, when he was employed as a history teacher, the data and information regarding the activities of I.D. Suciu are extremely poor. It is certain, however, that in November 1952 he tried to return and settle in Bucharest but failing that he eventually managed to find a job in Sinaia, as administrator of the resting houses of the Academy. He worked there for a brief period of time, before moving to the Jiu Valley. He then lived in Uricani until 1956, during which time he got hired as a worker in a hydrotechnical construction company, devoting his free time to reading and writing.

²⁸ ACNSAS, Criminal Fund, File No. 380, vol. I, f. 23.

²⁹ ACNSAS, Informative Fund, File No. 3845, vol. II, f. 49.

As it appears from a letter that I.D. Suciú was sent on August 15, 1955 to Florin Ghiurea, a former colleague from the Aiud prison with whom he had befriended, his situation after release seemed to have been even worse than before he got arrested:

"In my case, the situation was tragic when I got out: my old uncle died in the camp of the former ministers at Sighet. My aunt Mrs. Suciú also died in my absence, a cousin where I wanted to find shelter was arrested and evacuated [...] Then, until I got a domicile, I stayed in Sinaia (they did not want me to stay neither in Bucharest nor in Banat, the latter being a border area)"³⁰.

This letter is, one of the few personal documents written by I.D. Suciú in the 1950s, on the basis of which one can draw some conclusions regarding his inner state. He assures his friend that

"functions and honour do not interest me or impress me anymore. They are all vanity of vanity. One thing interests me: to be perfect myself in my profession as a historian, and to be satisfied with myself. That's why I'm glad that in my job I have free time and I able to work for myself. The ideal is to attain moral and scientific perfection; clearly, relative perfection because the absolute one is held only by God, whose judgment and deeds are not encompassed by the human mind. For the duty of our lives is to leave a trace of light behind us, adding a step forward to the work of our ancestors and parents. Whoever does not have this ideal in mind will die like any crawler without trace in the immensity of the stars"³¹.

In the autumn of 1956, probably as a result of an intervention made by Ilie Murgulescu³², I.D., Suciú was appointed as a history teacher at the Medium Afternoon School of the Ministry of Armed Forces in Constanța. The reason he chose to settle in Constanța is unclear: to some of his acquaintances he said that he had moved there from Roder to

³⁰ ACNSAS, Informative Fund, File No. 533936, vol. I, f. 44.

³¹ *Idem*.

³² Ilie Murgulescu (January 27, 1902, Cornu, Dolj County – October 28, 1991, Bucharest). Chemist, full member (from 1952), and president (1963–1966) of the Academy of the Romanian People's Republic. He held the positions of Minister of Education in the Governments of Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej and Chivu Stoica between 1953–1956, and then of Minister of Education and Culture in the Government of Ion Gheorghe Maurer, between 1961–1963.

undergo a longer treatment against the rheumatism he was suffering from, but to others he confessed a presumptuous plan, otherwise never put into practice, to flee the country via the port, in which he saw the only possible escape gate from the socialist camp³³.

In Constanța, Suciu seems to have quickly managed to integrate himself into a new environment: some of the notes signed for the *Securitate* by his colleagues and students state that in a very short time the new teacher started to attract the admiration of his students, to whom he was addressed with the appellative “gentlemen”. One of the informers told the *Securitate* that “During the school year, I went to professor SUCIU’s history class, who taught irreproachably. He had a gift of inspiring patriotism, love for the fatherland. Whenever I left his class, I left fiery and in love for our country”³⁴. On the other hand, another colleague, who signed his *Securitate* notes under the pseudonym “Sica Ion”, appreciated that

“I.D. SUCIU was a very demanding teacher with the students, but not with his own people, because he was coming to the school and reading the lessons which he had to explain [...] without controlling the facts. He is an enemy of our regime, on various occasions showing disrespect to our party and state leaders, even to comrade GHEORGHIU DEJ”³⁵.

At the same time, I.D. Suciu quickly befriended fellow professors Ștefănescu and Paraschivescu, as well as professor Iordăchescu, the high school director. He liked to spend his evenings in restaurants or at home, where he used to invite some of the more studious students whom he sympathized. After he established contacts with fellow historians from the regional museum in Constanța, I.D., Suciu gained the conviction that “his merits are recognized by a number of university professors with whom he was a colleague [...] here in the bottom line, he will show the party what he can do in his job”³⁶.

On March 8, 1958, the Constanța Regional *Securitate* Directorate opened a verification file on I.D. Suciu’s name, starting from the suspicion that he was intending to leave again the country fraudulently, but also because both in class and in private conversations he was expressing an anti-Soviet attitude. Therefore, on April 4, 1958, officer Iliescu Ion drew up the plan³⁷ of measures to collect as much data as possible about the connections of I.D. Suciu, to establish his attitude

³³ ACNSAS, Informative Fund, File No. 3845, vol. I, f. 25.

³⁴ *Ibidem*, f. 26.

³⁵ ACNSAS, Informative Fund, File No. 3845, vol. II, f. 113.

³⁶ *Ibidem*, vol. I, f. 28.

³⁷ *Ibidem*, ff. 19-22.

towards the regime and his possible political manifestations of a hostile nature, respectively, to clarify his past. For this purpose, four agents were directed in his near proximity ("Sică Ion", "Nae Constantin", "Titus Ozon" and "Nicolae Ialomițianu"). In addition, senior officers from the Constanța Regional *Securitate* ordered the interception of Suciu's correspondence.

To identify and track him by the team of operative officers, on April 14, 1958, Major Sarchiz Jan described the signals of the "target" I.D. Suciu – whom he baptized with the conspirative name "STAN" – as follows:

"Age 39 years, medium stature, medium body conformation, oval head contour, brown face, black hair combed on the back, middle and vertical forehead, straight eyebrows, rectilinus nose towards convex, chin sharpened and outward. Medium and straight shoulders, he is slightly back, walks, slightly limping his right foot, he is dressed in a beige coat, striped blue suit, brown shoes, a flowery scarf around his neck, his head uncovered, he is wearing sunglasses and brown leather briefcase"³⁸.

Following the continuous surveillance of "STAN", a process that lasted almost two weeks, all his contacts were identified: about 35 friends, colleagues, students, and acquaintances, among them priest Gheorghe Comănici, a former detainee from Aiud, and professors Mia Popescu and Magdalena Garabenteanu, who constantly helped him with money. Because he seemed to have serious financial issues, I.D. Suciu unsuccessfully tried to sell an 18th century icon to priest Comănici³⁹. Nothing spectacular, therefore, was detected in his activities while he had been under surveillance during the spring of 1958.

On the other hand, as one can clearly see from the notes written by the informants listed above, during the 1958 I.D. Suciu had constantly expressed a hostile attitude towards the communist regime, to which he even addressed "pornographic words"⁴⁰, and repeatedly manifested his desire to leave the country in one way or another. He did not shy away from voicing his dissatisfaction to his circle of close friends, a dissatisfaction which increased especially in the fall of that year, after he was dismissed from his job at school together with several other colleagues.

³⁸ *Ibidem*, f. 70.

³⁹ *Ibidem*, f. 180.

⁴⁰ *Ibidem*, f. 31.

After losing his job under Article 20 of the Labour Code, which provided the legal basis for the employer to end the work contract in case the employee suffered a criminal conviction, I.D. Suciu unsuccessfully sought to find a job at the museum in Constanța, and then at the Popular Council's Library. With negative references given by the Regional Party Committee, Suciu had no other option to earn a living but to give private lessons in Latin and French, while he was also seeking financial support from friends. At the same time, he made continuous efforts to get reintegrated: he sent memoirs to the regional and central structures of the Romanian Workers' Party, to the trade unions, and even quarrelled loudly in a restaurant with the director of a school where he previously worked⁴¹.

Perhaps as a direct consequence, in his private conversations he intensified his manifestations of aversion towards the regime, which he did not hesitate to condemn and even to bluntly swear: as captain Iliescu Ion noted in the November 25, 1958 report, I.D. Suciu

"on all occasions manifests hostile attitudes against the regime, brings insults to communists, and is a sworn enemy of the socialist camp. On all occasions, he manifests that the communists, under the lead of U.S.S.R. will lose political power and our country will be freed from the capitalist camp"⁴².

Dissatisfied with his dismissal from time to time he manifested nervous outbursts, so intense that, according to one eye-witness, they mimicked dementia – "It's shame for the Romanian culture that Dr. I.D. SUCIU and others have no place to work"⁴³ – but at the same time he was trying to explain in rational terms the situation into which he had come:

"We were thrown on the road because I executed years of imprisonment for certain mistakes that I made. I was imprisoned for 4 years. I went underground and was trapped [...] After I was released from prison, I sought to work for the regime, although the dictatorial methods of this regime are not in my view. As a teacher, I have sought to do my duty conscientiously. At the Institute of Science and Culture dissemination I also activated. I was charged that the monograph of Constanta was not printed because of me. However, I was the first to submit three articles for this monograph. I was also expelled from the Institute. Finally,

⁴¹ *Ibidem*, f. 57.

⁴² *Ibidem*, f. 192.

⁴³ *Ibidem*, f. 65.

today we are considered the "enemies of the people". I do not know whether or not we are enemies of the people, but we are certainly the enemies of those who have starved us to death on the roads"⁴⁴.

On November 25, 1958, Captain Victor Burlacu approved the report proposing the arrest, investigation and prosecution of the "target", who was eventually captured two days later. His investigation and trial did not last long, as the *Securitate* officers had already managed to gather, during the verification process, numerous "proofs" that, in their opinion, demonstrated the historian's intention to leave the country, his "hostile" manifestations, as well as the hostile character of his "position": "The evidence by which the activity of the pursued has been materialized consisted of informative materials and testimonies of witnesses who attended the hostile discussions held by the one in question on different occasions."⁴⁵

These elements were sufficient for the investigators to charge I.D. Suciu for committing the crime of "conspiracy against the social order"⁴⁶ incriminated by article 209, point 2, letter a of the Criminal Code. Following a quick trial, the Military Court in Constanța found him guilty and sentenced him on March 3, 1959, to 10 years of imprisonment. As one can easily ascertain from browsing the documents contained in his *Securitate* files, the guilt of I.D. Suciu has been previously established since March 1958, the court doing nothing else but to carry out a judicial procedure that formalized the sentence. Until the date when Decree no. 176 has entered into force in the summer of 1964, the historian spent six years behind bars, in the penitentiaries of Constanța, Botoșani and Gherla, as well as in the working colony of Salcia.

By reading the notes collected by the *Securitate* officers from the detainees who knew him and with whom he interacted during the detention period between 1958-1964 – first of all his roommates – we can now know I.D. Suciu's thoughts, how he endured the regime of punishment, what feelings animated him, what hopes for the future he nourished, and, above all, how he perceived the communist system that had sent him to prison for a second time.

⁴⁴ *Ibidem*, ff. 56-57.

⁴⁵ *Ibidem*, f. 188.

⁴⁶ *Ibidem*, f. 189.

Almost all informants who provided notes to the *Securitate* in those years seem to agree in respect of his political beliefs. According to their opinions, he was generally reserved on political issues, but, benefiting from the company of “formers”, he did not hesitate to engage in discussions with them and to declare his pro-National Peasant views. At the same time, I.D. Suciu was eagerly following the news on the domestic and international political scene, hoping for a possible American intervention against the U.R.S.S. In the reading room of the prison, he used to read and comment the press with other prisoners who shared his views. Not infrequently, he used to make even depreciative appraisals against the internal politics and the leaders of the Romanian Workers’ Party.

Indeed, I.D. Suciu manifested a strong and undisguised dislike towards the communist regime, primarily because of its repressive policies: as noted by the detainee “Ilie Ioan” on July 26, 1962, his colleague

“does not like communism and does not deny this [...] He loves his country where he was born and would not leave it for the adventure alone, because the temperament of an adventurer he is not, but has no other option. He can no longer live in a country full of prisons and these in turn are full of people who have no other fault than that of thinking about real freedom. In 17 years of communist rule, he spent 8 in prison. He wandered through many prisons and what he saw and suffered in them is just outrageous. Only here in Botoşani in this prison full of elderly people, lacking basic medical assistance, kept only in the cell all the day except a few minutes of walking, and it is well known that many of the detainees here carry out a correctional sentence in heavy conditions. Everything that happens in this prison and in the others is wide-spread”⁴⁷.

In the same manner, a month later the detainee “Pop Ioan” appreciated that I.D. Suciu is a “the fierce enemy of the current democratic regime in the Peoples’ Republic of Romania, because he hates all current achievements and makes all kinds of nonserious allusions to different democratic personalities from both the R.P.R. as well as foreign [...] He accuses all those intellectuals and scientists who collaborate with the current democratic regime in R.P.R. and foresees a black future for them if

⁴⁷ ACNSAS, Informative Fund, File No. 3845, vol. II, f. 75, f. 77.

the communists leave power"⁴⁸. Like many other intellectuals or former dignitaries imprisoned in Romania in the 50s and 60s I.D. Suciú expected and hoped that the communist regime would not last, be insufficiently consolidated internally, and would collapse within a foreseeable time horizon, which is why he frequently used to engage in discussions regarding the alleged postcommunist political future of the country.

On the other hand, in direct contradiction with the above characterizations, a detainee "Gherase Matei" has offered a detailed description of the historian's conceptions regarding the political situation at that time and his prospects for future evolution, ideas that seem to have been completely different than those described by the sources "Pop Ioan" and "Ilie Ioan".

According to the statement provided by the detainee "Gherase Matei", I.D. Suciú seemed to have realistically interpreted the state of affairs in the autumn of 1962: in his view, the communist system was on the verge of a "thaw"⁴⁹, following which both relations between the two politico-military blocks as well as those between the regime and society were to be renegotiated, so that the former political prisoners would be professionally reintegrated. According to those arrested by "Gherase Matei", Suciú was convinced of

"the idea that we are on the verge of a slow, long-term relaxation, which, according to the communist system, is slow, psychological, but that the detention takes effective form until the complete liquidation of the situation of political prisoners, easily condemned for minor facts or simple misunderstandings or crimes devised ad hoc by the security organs in order to break through a difficult political moment, when all the "inconveniences" had to disappear from the social life of the state. This "difficult political moment" has passed and the regime seeks to clear its mistakes and approach those who are wrongfully condemned or too harsh. As far as he is concerned, he only wants to resume his career, and moreover, he would be satisfied even with a job of a teacher in the countryside, only to be left alone to continue his scientific research and to finish his work already begun [...] sometimes, against the current state of affairs, he frankly

⁴⁸ *Ibidem*, f. 85.

⁴⁹ Kenneth Jowitt, "Inclusion and Mobilization in European Leninist Regimes", *World Politics*, Vol. 28, No. 1, October 1975, pp. 71-75.

acknowledges many of the communist governing measures, which he approves, comparing them with the state of indifference and slothfulness of past regimes. Thus, the work of enlightenment of masses through the establishment and reorganization of cultural centers, the re-establishment of regional theatres (abolished by previous regimes) for budgetary savings - counted as crime -), the establishment of regional and city philharmonics, the establishment of museums and libraries for the first time in villages, etc., the publication of numerous scientific and literary books, unknown until now [...] and the allocation of considerable sums for this works, for archaeological excavations, etc. and so on. Also, the organization of medical assistants in villages, unique in the history of the Romanian state, etc. [...] He hopes and believes in a close reconciliation between East and West, putting his hope in Mr. Khrushchev's ability and guilelessness, for which he shows a special sympathy, considering him a man of spirit and to whom, curiously, he never addresses Khrushchev but, out of sympathy, as he says, Nikita Sergheevici...⁵⁰.

In the summer of 1964, on August 3, I.D. Suciú was released from the Gherla penitentiary and, after a brief halt in Bucharest, where he searched for employment opportunities at the Institute of History of the R.P.R. Academy, he settled temporarily in Constanța and lived with his former colleague, professor Maria Popescu. Here too, he tried to find a job in education, but without success. He met his old acquaintances, rested and followed a medical cure after which, in October, he went again to Bucharest, where he was hosted by an old friend. Sometime in early November 1964, he was employed at the Institute of History of the R.P.R. Academy. After employment, I.D. Suciú seems to have tempered to a certain extent his hostile attitude towards the regime: as the agent "Gherase" pointed out, in the autumn of 1964, the former detainee was convinced that

"something essential has occurred in the domestic and foreign policy of the Romanian state, and as a consequence he is determined to work and to demonstrate in this way his gratitude and attachment to the leadership of the state, if of

⁵⁰ *Ibidem*, ff. 82-84.

course the same attitude of impartiality and relaxation will continue in the future. Otherwise, he will be forced to take attitude. He has twice passed through communist prisons and is no longer afraid of death"⁵¹.

Once hired, I.D. Suciú seems to have abandoned any concerns and even political discussions. In the company of an old acquaintance, he made the following reflection aloud: "we have nothing to do. Let us be honest. Having a job is the only solution. If something happens, it will come over our heads. No action can influence the course of international events"⁵². On the other hand, being impulsive, Suciú did not avoid to insult the communists in his conversations⁵³ from time to time; still, however, his attitude was much more moderated and reserved during this period, very close to submission⁵⁴.

After his employment, he dedicated all his force to his profession, being very pleased that he can finally study, write, and publish. In December 1964 he wrote to his friend Maria Popescu, the teacher of Constanța, the following lines:

"I am very happy with the work I received at the Academy, and now I work with all my power to research and write as many specialized publications as possible about my homeland, which I love so much. In the short time I have to live, I want to leave a glimmer of light and that is why I have to work hard. Who does not want to understand this is my personal enemy"⁵⁵.

⁵¹ *Ibidem*, f. 116.

⁵² *Ibidem*, f. 123.

⁵³ For example, sometime in mid-November 1964, I.D. Suciú met an acquaintance on a street in Bucharest. To his astonishment that the historian was hired, Suciú burst forth: "God and their mother's cross (allusion to the current political leadership) even if we are persecuted, there are still to be found those who give us hugs": ACNSAS, Informative Fund, File No. 3845, vol. II, f. 122.

⁵⁴ As he confessed to a former prison colleague he met in Bucharest in December 1964 and who asked him if he intends to involve into politics in the future, Suciú replied categorically that he did not, because "He was tired for what he did, 2 times in prison – he said laughing – and he has no teeth in his mouth (in fact he is almost completely edentulous). He wants to deal only with history, he will devote himself to the greatest projects and hopes to make his name known again as a historian": ACNSAS, Informative Fund, File No. 3845, vol. II, f. 102.

⁵⁵ ACNSAS, Informative Fund, File No. 3845, vol. II, f. 118.

Persevering, ambitious and eager to affirm on professional grounds – this is the image that is drawn by almost all his acquaintances, older or newer, in the informative notes they submitted to the *Securitate* during the years of so-called “liberalization” of the communist regime (1965-1971).

Having managed to obtain an identity card in Bucharest, I.D. Suciu started to make constant efforts not only to get back his Ph.D. title gained in 1943, but also to study in archives and libraries to publish paid scientific works, to complete his salary of about 2, 000 lei. In this regard, he expressed his constant gratitude for the material conditions that the state provides to historians and intellectuals in general, gaining the conviction that in socialist Romania one can live very well only and only from the scientific research work⁵⁶. He envied Professor C.C. Giurescu for the fact that, once professionally reintegrated after his release from the Sighet penitentiary in 1955, he had received a salary of almost 7,000 lei a month, he afforded to buy a personal car, and he also wrote regularly columns in the “The Voice of the Fatherland” magazine, where “even his mug has appeared”⁵⁷.

Concerning his inner state, the ideas he had and the feelings that animated him after his release and employment, illustrative is the following description that one of his acquaintances has made in November 1965:

“[I.D. Suciu] is really concerned about professional scientific issues. He showed the source (with great pride, but justified if it is true) how many works he has about what he writes, the fact he is very busy, that he goes around the country to search for documents in libraries in support of his works. At no point in the conversation [...] SUCIU did address any political problem.”

The source insisted only once when Prof. SUCIU said he had written and submitted for printing works which worth 100,000 lei, repeating the number with a childlike surprise and joy.

⁵⁶ In October 1965, being asked by a colleague from the Institute of History what he thinks “about the current situation”, SUCIU replied: “What opinion can I have? The one I should have had from the beginning and today I would have been a happy man. Due to my mistakes, I moved away from the regime and I was two times in prison. Now that I have found a new scientific job, I only want to be left alone, so I can work and publish”: ACNSAS, Informative Fund, File No. 3845, vol. II, f. 129.

⁵⁷ ACNSAS, Informative Fund, File No. 3845, vol. II, f. 132.

The source asked him what he would do with so much money and then what about politics, if he were only occupied with texts, manuscripts, and history only? To which SUCIU said that he gives to [...] politics, that politics caused him to waste precious time in his life and that he suffered quite a lot because of it. He said that our socialist state pays well and rewards intellectual work very well, that it is very good [...] and that it is not worth pursuing anything other than your job. Because if you have a head and you know how to write, you earn well.

He told the source with enthusiasm that only one printing page, that means 16 pages of a book, is being paid today (of course according to the value of the name of the person who writes it) 2000-2500 lei, which means of a book of regular size 20-25000 lei, plus copyright.

He then told the source, laughing, that he had what to do with the money, he had to make clothes, to get furniture and arrange an apartment like all normal people (he really sits in a small, modest room, with a lady whose husband died soon) and then, of course, he gets a car"⁵⁸.

Between 1965 and 1970, I.D. Suciú has published a number of 17 studies in scientific journals, a book⁵⁹, very well received in academic circles⁶⁰, as well as a comprehensive edition of Eftimie Murgu's writings⁶¹. During the same period, he managed to buy a studio apartment in a newly built block in Bucharest, which he managed to arrange on his own. These achievements, in addition to the recognition of his Ph.D. title and his promotion at the History Institute, have contributed to a significant improvement of his morale. Moreover, according to his own words, the secretary of the party organization in the History Institute proposed him to join the Communist Party, but the historian refused, motivating his option as follows: "they (colleagues, friends, acquaintances) will say that the SUCIU toady joined the Communists for the bowl, and the leadership of the party will criticize the party secretary for having inserted such a toady into the party"⁶². Subsequently, the issue of his adherence to the Communist Party was never raised.

⁵⁸ *Ibidem*, ff. 133-134.

⁵⁹ I.D. Suciú, *Revoluția de la 1848-1849 în Banat*, București, Ed. Academiei Republicii Socialiste România, 1968, 275 p.

⁶⁰ The National Archives of Romania - National Central History Archives, Fund "Academia de Științe Sociale și Politice - Secția Istorie-Arheologie", File No. 39/1970, f. 16.

⁶¹ Eftimie Murgu, *Scrieri*, ediție îngrijită cu o introducere și note de I.D. Suciú, București, Ed. pentru literatură, 1969, 632 p.

⁶² ACNSAS, Informative Fund, File No. 533936, vol. I, ff. 75-76.

In the summer of 1968, he followed with great interest and commented in private conversations the events in Czechoslovakia. In one of these discussions, which he had on July 29 with "Miron Costin", a former colleague in detention, I.D. Suciu detailed his "personal" views that he held at the time:

"1) The fact that he lost 10 years in prison (1948-1952 and 1958-1964) plus another 6 years of professional inactivity (in the period between imprisonment, 1952-1958) means, in retrospect, a great void in his life. One is the labour power at 30, and another at the present age (he is 48).

2) As for his social situation, he managed to become exactly what he would have been without these lost years: he is a doctor, a scientific researcher with works published in the country and abroad, having full professional satisfaction. "Maybe if I didn't waste this huge time (16 years), I would have become a university professor [...] However, this does not tempt me today. I feel very tired (as a biological potential) and I only want to devote myself to intellectual work. Normally (that is, if things had not happened as they did), I would have given up the university chair anyway, to be able to reach deeper into scientific research"⁶³.

Although until that summer I.D. Suciu had been "a robust and lively man, active, energetic, and up to date with all the professional researches"⁶⁴, in August 1968 he was diagnosed with diabetes, which seems to have scared him quite a lot and caused him a genuine mental shock. However, he recovered quick enough and successfully managed to adapt to the new "old and sick" hypostasis, but also to strictly adhere to a diet. As a result, he was able to continue working on the same zeal, but from now on he attended the institute less often, choosing to work mostly at home. As noted by "Alexandrescu" on May 27, 1969, at that time the historian was "in a permanent turmoil. He is to be found in perpetual scientific activity"⁶⁵.

Sometimes in 1970 or 1971 I.D. Suciu began to change again his perception about the communist system, although until then it has generally been as favourable as possible, given his professional

⁶³ ACNSAS, Informative Fund, File No. 3845, vol. II, f. 173.

⁶⁴ *Ibidem*, f. 155.

⁶⁵ *Ibidem*, f. 175.

achievements and material fulfilment. However, it was precisely that he considered too modest in relation to his intellectual potential, and often "regretted what he was and what he could have been"⁶⁶. Although in relation to his colleagues at the institute he displayed a kindness in the protocol, without making any friends – with some of them he rightly suspected to be *Securitate's* people." – I.D. Suciu did not hesitate to express his dislike of the most important historians of the moment (C.C. Giurescu, Constantin Daicoviciu, Ștefan Pascu), personalities who have succeeded to adapt to the new times and have gained significant positions in the professional, administrative and political hierarchies. However, what seems to have displeased him to the highest degree were the institutional⁶⁷ and legislative⁶⁸ reorganizations since the early 1970s, after which the Institute of History in Bucharest became indirectly subordinated to the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party. As a result of this reorganization and the new editorial regulations, the manuscripts completed and which were ready for printing were considered service obligations, so that they could no longer be paid. I.D. Suciu felt deprived of some of the rights he considered justified, so he began to express his discontent increasingly frequently, first in discussions with close acquaintances, often, "even obsessive", using ironic expressions such as: "if the party and the government wants it"⁶⁹, "the party, in its great kindness, sheltered me from the anger of the people"⁷⁰, or "when the party wants it, it makes you whatever you want, academician, writer, poet, if the party wants it, it also gives you money, no doubt"⁷¹.

Until March 1973, when he was arrested for the third and last time, I.D. Suciu continued to work, to write and to publish, to hold lectures in the country, to attend cultural events and to give radio presentations. Traveling quite frequently in Banat, especially in Timișoara, where he studied in the archives of the Banat Metropolitan Church, he befriended Metropolitan Nicolae Corneanu, who would later support him, even financially, until his death.

⁶⁶ ACNSAS, Informative Fund, File No. 533936, vol. I, f. 68.

⁶⁷ Ștefan Bosomitu, *Miron Constantinescu. O biografie*, București, Ed. Humanitas, 2014, pp. 320-323.

⁶⁸ Cosmin Popa, "Intelectualii în capcana ceaușismului, sau înființarea Academiei de Științe Sociale și Politice", in *Revista Română de Sociologie*, New Series, Year XXVIII (2017), No. 1-2, p. 23.

⁶⁹ ACNSAS, Informative Fund, File No. 3845, vol. II, f. 162.

⁷⁰ ACNSAS, Informative Fund, File No. 533936, vol. I, f. 68.

⁷¹ ACNSAS, Informative Fund, File No. 3845, vol. II, f. 132.

On September 27, 1972, the *Securitate* Inspectorate in Bucharest opened another surveillance file on Suciu's name, given that he was repeatedly signalled as having "hostile manifestations at present and with the intention of fleeing to the West where he will carry out hostile activity against our country"⁷². Until February 23, 1973, when the *Securitate* officers completed the historian's file, they were able to collect a number of eight notes regarding his activities, behaviour, and attitudes. At the same time, furthermore, the Bucharest *Securitate* and *Miliția* officers have conducted at least one clandestine searching at the home of I.D. Suciu, they intercepted his personal correspondence and set up "operative techniques" (microphones) in his home to record the discussions he had with various guests. In this way, they were able to detect his sexual orientation illegal at that time, and they could arrest him sometime in the first days of March 1973.

On the basis of the famous article No. 200 of the Penal Code, on June 18, 1973, through sentence No. 529 issued by the court of Sector 3 of the Capital, I.D. Suciu was condemned to a sentence of 2 years and 6 months of imprisonment for homosexuality. During the trial he "tried to show that this process is due to the *Securitate* organs and that he accepted this one in order to avoid a more serious one for hostile activity against our regime"⁷³. Although the homosexuality for which he was convicted was a real, constituted a crime, and was punished as such, what appears from the *Securitate* documents is that the basis of this last conviction was not primarily his sexual orientation, used in court rather as a pretext, but a political one: as in the first two cases, the third time again his hostility towards the regime has sent him behind bars. He has served his sentence in the Văcărești and Poarta Albă penitentiaries, being released in January 1975. Throughout the detention I.D. Suciu was placed under close surveillance.

According to his own assessment, he received very good treatment and conditions in prison, having managed to read hundreds of books. He maintained and continued to express his critical views against the Communist Party in discussions with other detainees, openly insulting both the party and "some party and state leaders" (the euphemism used in their reports by the *Securitate* officers to replace the names of Nicolae and Elena Ceaușescu). As one can clearly see from the *Securitate* documents elaborated in this period, the historian has not changed his critical views regarding the socialist order, but on the contrary, he radicalized, starting to consider the Romanian state as a police state, and to equal the policies

⁷² ACNSAS, Informative Fund, File No. 533936, vol. I, f. 99.

⁷³ *Ibidem*, f. 98.

of the Ceaușescu dictatorship with the national socialist ones promoted by Adolf Hitler⁷⁴. Moreover, during his last detention, he decided that, after his release, he would try to flee to the West by any means. After a discussion with the warden of the Poarta Albă penitentiary, which occurred on August 22, 1974, I.D. Suciu seems to have become more reserved in making political appraisals during the execution of the rest of his sentence.

On January 9, 1975, I.D. Suciu was released from prison and returned to his home in Bucharest, being advised to retire. After resuming relations with some of his old colleagues, he began asking questions about the impression that his arrest had produced in the Institute, about the reputation he had, as well as of the possibility of printing his unfinished manuscripts. Because he needed another five months of seniority in the field of work to be able to retire, he started the procedures to obtain an illness pension. He finally managed to retire after he obtained the recognition of membership of the Literary Fund, thanks to the intervention of a number of writers such as Laurențiu Tulea, Ștefan Augustin Doinaș, Lucian Dumitrescu or Anghel Dumbrăveanu. He also managed to publish his works: in July 1976 he printed the monograph of the Banat Orthodox Metropolis, which was printed the following year, and later he worked with Radu Constantinescu on the edition of documents related to its history⁷⁵.

Surely, I.D. Suciu's surveillance continued even after his release,

"because after being released from detention in the second part of 1975, he continued to have hostile manifestations and bring insults to the *Securitate* organs"⁷⁶.

Therefore, on March 15, 1976, the *Securitate* officers elaborated a first plan of measures to be taken to determine if the target code named "Suru",

"still maintains his intention to leave the country and what is he doing in this regard, as well as to find out what his hostile activity consists of and the nature of the connections he currently maintains"⁷⁷.

⁷⁴ *Ibidem*, f. 152.

⁷⁵ I.D. Suciu, R. Constantinescu, *Documente privitoare la istoria Mitropoliei Banatului*, 2 vol., Timișoara, Ed. Mitropoliei Banatului, 1980.

⁷⁶ *Ibidem*, f. 110.

⁷⁷ *Ibidem*, f. 113.

In addition, during April, May, and June 1976, I.D. Suciú's telephone was intercepted by the *Securitate*, in order to identify "the hostile comments that he makes about the regime in our country and in the presence of connections with foreign citizens and discussions with them, the connections among Romanian citizens and their nature"⁷⁸. Furthermore, the historian was suspected of having written and secretly kept in his home the manuscripts of works that were "hostile" to the socialist order, which he intended to publish in the West, entitled "The Romanian Night Traveler", "Mătrăguna" and "The Contemporary History of Romania". For this reason, on March 21, 1976, Lieutenant Ciucă Ion carried out a new secret search at Suciú's home, but without success, as the officer failed to identify the alleged compromising writings. On the other hand, the exploitation of the other operative measures was more successful, because it resulted in finding "data from which it turns out that the person, in various circumstances, is hostile to the social-political order in our country, asserting that he lives in a regime of dictatorship, without freedom where a man is forced to do what he is commanded, etc."⁷⁹.

Since I.D. Suciú's attitude remained "hostile" towards the communist regime, on August 27, 1976, the *Securitate* officers dealing with his case organized a meeting with him, during which they warned and asked him to sign a declaration in which he promises that "such facts will not be repeated in the future"⁸⁰. Additionally, the same officers informed the *Miliția* that the historian was practicing homosexuality, providing it the list of persons with whom I.D. Suciú was keeping contacts, mainly young foreign students (throughout the 70s and 80s, the *Securitate* preferred to work undercover, providing the *Militia*, compromising information regarding those individuals and deeds that could be included into the category of common law crimes⁸¹).

The informative notes collected starting with the autumn of 1976 by sources "Mihnea", "Pascu Iuliu" and "Alexandreaanu", suggest that after signing the aforementioned declaration, I.D. Suciú tempered his comments - "as if someone had cut him off his teeth"⁸² - preferring to avoid any political discussions with those close to him and even asserting

⁷⁸ ACNSAS, Informative Fund, File No. 533936, vol. V, f. 98.

⁷⁹ ACNSAS, Informative Fund, File No. 533936, vol. I, f. 104.

⁸⁰ *Ibidem*, vol. V, f. 80.

⁸¹ Florian Banu, Liviu Țăranu (editors), *Securitatea 1948-1989*, vol. 1, Târgoviște, Ed. Cetatea de Scaun, 2016, p. 228.

⁸² ACNSAS, Informative Fund, File No. 533936, vol. V, f. 77.

that he had "reconciled with the party"⁸³. As a result, after becoming assured that "from the warning until now SUCIU ID has not had any hostile manifestations"⁸⁴, on January 28, 1977, the *Securitate* officers closed his secret police file which they opened the same year in March.

However, the historian's surveillance process continued indirectly, as the informants reporting on him were instructed to "maintain the connection with I.D. Suciú to know his present conception and the evolution of his attitude"⁸⁵. Thus, during 1977, 1978, and 1979, the *Securitate* found out that the historian returned to his old habit of criticizing the regime, this time even more vehemently⁸⁶, because now he started to manifest a special interest in the dissidents' movement in Czechoslovakia and, more alarming, in the cases of Paul Goma and Vlad Georgescu⁸⁷.

These years are the most troubling period in I.D. Suciú's life, given the fact that, on January 17, 1977, he agreed to become an informant and to provide the *Securitate* written notes about his acquaintances - mainly former political detainees - and in exchange he received insurance that he would be approved to leave the country. Paradoxically, during this period he seems to have definitively established his firm belief that his only chance to escape the "Holy Party"⁸⁸, as he frequently used to name it, was to leave Romania forever. In this respect, he obtained a call from a relative in France, and at the end of 1977 he sent a request for a 30-day temporary travel permission to the commander of the Passport Service in Bucharest, which was not approved "as there were indications that he will not return back to the country"⁸⁹. This refusal seems to have radicalized the petitioner even more, since, as it is apparent both from the post-verification notes and from a report dated November 18, 1980, so far, Suciú did not stop declaring himself openly against the communist

⁸³ *Ibidem*, vol. I, f. 125.

⁸⁴ *Ibidem*, vol. I, f. 103.

⁸⁵ ACNSAS, Informative Fund, File No. 533936, vol. V, f. 67.

⁸⁶ For example, in the fall of 1979 he told an acquaintance the following: "To be clear. I have no regard for the Party and I deliberately declare myself openly against it because I do not want others to say abroad that I have become a CONFORMIST and that I have been bought with a bribe, in order to raise praises to the Party (to the "Holy Party" - according to his words). He lives on the accounts of the church and the holy Metropolitan NICOLAE, which provides him with 60% of a year's house and meals": ACNSAS, Informative Fund, File No. 533936, vol. V, ff. 43-44.

⁸⁷ For a detailed analysis of the Vlad Georgescu case, see Felician Velimirovici, *Istorie și istorici în România comunistă (1948-1989)*, Cluj-Napoca, Ed. Mega, 2015, pp. 269-304.

⁸⁸ ACNSAS, Informative Fund, File No. 533936, vol. V, f. 45.

⁸⁹ *Ibidem*, f. 1.

regime, beginning to assert and reiterate – including in front of many people – that he hated it with all his heart⁹⁰.

In February 1980, he informed the officer with whom he was in contact that he wished to discontinue both the collaboration with the *Securitate* and any other discussion with the “organs” of this institution, so that on October 30, 1980 he was removed from the record of the informants’ the network and placed again under surveillance in the problem file of the former convicted politicians.

I.D. Suciu was removed from the records of this problem file on April 23, 1982, because, on March 3, he died.

⁹⁰ *Ibidem*, ff. 1-2.