

# Surveillance and Memory



# Surveillance and Memory:

*Our Daily Lives*

By

Sanda Golopentia

Cambridge  
Scholars  
Publishing



Surveillance and Memory: Our Daily Lives

By Sanda Golopentia

This book first published 2019

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

Lady Stephenson Library, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2PA, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Copyright © 2019 by Sanda Golopentia

All rights for this book reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the copyright owner.

ISBN (10): 1-5275-3992-X

ISBN (13): 978-1-5275-3992-1

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Translator's Note .....	xvi
Author's Acknowledgments .....	xviii
List of Abbreviations and Basic Romanian Vocabulary.....	xx
List of Illustrations .....	xxii
Prologue.....	1
We Live Opaque Lives .....	1
Reversed Collaboration.....	2
129 Measured Days .....	2
A Few Short Narratives .....	3
Polyphony .....	4
The Central Institute of Statistics in Our Lives.....	5
“Shouldn't He Look for a Good Pilot for Me?”.....	7
Working with Miron Constantinescu .....	8
Chain Emigrations: Betea's Formula .....	11
“Day-to-Day Menial Tasks” .....	14
The Statisticians and the Bakers .....	15
The Great Solitude .....	16
The First Cycle of Surveillance (15 April–14 May 1948).....	17
The Changing Patterns of Surveillance.....	17
Surveillance Notes, Information Notes .....	20
The Construction of a Code .....	21
Note s. 15 April 1948.....	23
No. 7, <i>Strada Dr. Lister</i> , Cotroceni.....	23
The Central Institute of Statistics: No. 31, <i>Strada Brezoianu</i> .....	26
Note s. 16 April 1948.....	27
Pontiac and “Buikeikt” .....	27
Note s. 17 April 1948.....	28
Walking and Reading on Leave.....	28
Note s. 18 April 1948.....	30
Note s. 19 April 1948.....	31

Provisions .....	31
The Wool Blanket.....	32
Note s. 20 April 1948.....	32
Note s. 21 April 1948.....	33
Note s. 22 April 1948.....	33
Note s. 23 April 1948.....	34
St. George's Day.....	34
<i>Note i. 24 April 1948 (Car License Plates)</i> .....	35
Whirlpools in Pagination .....	35
Note s. 24 April 1948.....	36
Note s. 25 April 1948.....	36
Tram Number 14.....	37
Note s. 26 April 1948.....	37
Fluctuating Names and Addresses .....	38
Note s. 27 April 1948.....	38
Sabin Manuila's Fly-Weight Car .....	39
Note s. 28 April 1948.....	39
A Timed Life .....	39
Note s. 29 April 1948.....	40
"Because He Read the Newspaper" .....	41
Note s. 30 April 1948.....	41
Note s. 1 May 1948.....	42
Compulsory Parades and Meetings.....	42
"After He Said His Name".....	43
Note s. 2 May 1948.....	43
Our Penultimate Easter Together .....	44
Note s. 3 May 1948.....	45
The Park as It Was Before the Opera Was Built.....	46
Emma Staschek Golopenția .....	47
Note s. 4 May 1948.....	49
Mother.....	50
A Round Market .....	53
<i>Note i. 5 May 1948 (Miasnicov Igor)</i> .....	53
<i>A.G.: Igor Measnicov</i> .....	54
Note s. 5 May 1948.....	54
<i>Note i. 6 May 1948 (Mărzescu Elena)</i> .....	54
Trial and Error .....	55
Note s. 6 May 1948.....	55
<i>Trouble in Texas</i> .....	56
<i>Note i. 7 May 1948 (Vulcănescu Mircea)</i> .....	56
<i>A.G.: Margareta Vulcănescu</i> .....	58

Sandra and Măriuca .....	58
Note s. 7 May 1948.....	59
Note s. 8 May 1948.....	59
Aurora Corciovescu .....	60
“The C.A.M. Kiosk at No. 2, <i>Strada St. Elefterie</i> ” .....	60
Note s. 9 May 1948.....	61
<i>Note i. 10 May 1948 (Tănase Stan)</i> .....	61
Note s. 10 May 1948.....	62
“Suspension on Command” .....	62
<i>Note i. 11 May 1948 (Biji Mircea)</i> .....	63
A.G.: Mircea Biji .....	63
<i>Note i. 11 May 1948 (Șchiopu Bucur, Micle Gheorghe)</i> .....	63
A.G.: <i>Bucur Șchiopu</i> .....	64
[SURVEILLANCE] REPORT 14 May 1948 .....	64
In <i>Strada Popa Soare</i> .....	67
 Interlude.....	 68
Report on the Central Institute of Statistics (3 August 1948) .....	68
“A Nursery of Unhealthy Elements” .....	71
“In His Bucharest Apartment Now Lives Mr. Quaestor Roman, and in His Villa at Snagov: Mr. Minister Vasilichi” .....	72
 The Second Surveillance Cycle (5 October 1949–16 January 1950) .....	 73
Surveillance with a View to Arrest.....	73
Note s. 5 October 1949 .....	75
The Agents’ Working Methods.....	76
Note s. 6 October 1949 .....	77
Note s. 7 October 1949 .....	78
When They Left the Apartment Building .....	78
Note s. 8 October 1949 .....	79
Respite?.....	81
“He Meets by Chance”.....	81
“Without Making Contact with Anybody, Without Buying Anything” .....	82
Note s. 9 October 1949 .....	83
“They Could Only Take What Had Been Left” .....	83
Note s. 10 October 1949 .....	84
“His Child” .....	84
Note s. 11 October 1949 .....	85
“Letting Him Go to School by Himself”.....	85
Note s. 12 October 1949 .....	86

Buying Petroleum .....	87
The Cobbler's at Number 12, <i>Strada Dr. Lister</i> .....	87
Russian.....	88
<i>Note i. 13 October–8.X.1949 (Blăgan Nicolae)</i> .....	88
A.G.: Nicolae Blăgan.....	89
<i>Note i. 13 October–9.X.1949 (Ruse R. Marin)</i> .....	90
Targeted, for a Moment .....	90
<i>Note s. 13 October 1949</i> .....	93
“Subjected to Identification” .....	94
<i>Note i. 14 October–8.X.1949 (Gheorghiu Grigore)</i> .....	94
Mr. Gheorghiu .....	94
<i>Note s. 14 October 1949</i> .....	95
<i>Note i. 15 October–6.X.1949 (Chinezul Ion)</i> .....	95
A.G.: Ion Chinezul .....	96
“Romanian, Orthodox” .....	96
The Taboo of Talking Politics .....	96
<i>Note s. 15 October 1949</i> .....	97
“The Younger Child, Namely Dănuț” .....	97
<i>Note s. 16 October 1949</i> .....	98
Taking the Shadows for Walks .....	99
<i>Note i. 17 October–8.X.1949 (Ionescu Margareta Manti,</i> <i>Ionescu Maria)</i> .....	99
<i>Note i. 17 October–8.X.1949 (Gugulide Mihail)</i> .....	100
Mr. Gugulide and <i>White Fang</i> .....	100
<i>Note s. 17 October 1949</i> .....	101
Bookshops and Antiquarians .....	101
A.G.: Mrs. Ionescu Ștefănescu.....	102
<i>Note s. 18 October 1949</i> .....	103
<i>Note s. 19 October 1949</i> .....	103
“Reading and Writing Totally Oblivious to What Happens Around Him” .....	104
<i>Note s. 20 October 1949</i> .....	105
Enigmatic Packages .....	107
<i>Note s. 21 October 1949</i> .....	109
<i>Note s. 22 October 1949</i> .....	110
Marginalia .....	111
Overheard .....	111
<i>Note s. 23 October 1949</i> .....	112
<i>Note s. 24 October 1949</i> .....	113
The Agents' Failures.....	114
“Being Looked for in All Antiquarian Bookshops” .....	115



Clothes and Accessories .....	115
Note s. 25 October 1949 .....	117
Shopping with Dănuț .....	118
The Universal Antiquarian Bookshop.....	118
Two Pears .....	118
<i>The Wolves' Lair</i> and Other Films from Czechoslovakia .....	119
Note i. 26 October–13.X.1949 ( <i>Zănescu Aurel</i> ).....	121
Note i. 26 October–13.X.1949 ( <i>Negru Ion</i> ).....	121
A.G.: <i>Ion Negru</i> .....	122
The Wonderful Mr. Negru of Our Grey Childhood .....	123
Meeting Mrs. Negru in Cișmigiu .....	125
“Dear Ștefania, How Have You Made Ends Meet since I Have Been Gone?” .....	126
Note i. 26 October–9.X.1949 ( <i>Stamatin Nicolae</i> ) .....	127
Mr. Stamatin .....	128
“The Ileanas and the Ioanas” .....	128
Note i. 26 October–15.X.1949 ( <i>Manoliu Dumitru, Bauh Aurel</i> ).....	129
Aurel Bauh.....	130
Note i. 26 October–15.X.1949 ( <i>Golopenția Corneliu</i> ).....	131
“I Now Tried Not to Become a Government Appointee <i>Ex-officio</i> ” ..	131
Note i. 26 October–8.X.1949 ( <i>Ostfeld Bernard, Pollak Lora etc.</i> ) ....	132
Note i. 26 October–8.X.1949 ( <i>Sârbu Petre</i> ).....	132
A.G.: <i>Petru Sârbu</i> .....	132
Note i. 26 October–13.X.1949 ( <i>Sterian E. Paul</i> ) .....	133
Paul Sterian, Courier on a Building Site, and Einstein’s Proposal.....	133
P. Roiu’s Information Notes .....	134
Note s. 26 October 1949 .....	135
Note s. 27 October 1949 .....	136
Note s. 28 October 1949 .....	137
Professor Gusti and the Rose .....	138
Dimitrie Gusti, Without His House.....	140
Note i. 28 October–22 Oct. 1949 ( <i>Jebeleanu Elisabeta</i> ) .....	141
A.G.: <i>Elisabeta Jebeleanu</i> .....	141
Note i. 28 October–20.X. 1949 ( <i>Retegan Gheorghe</i> ).....	142
A.G.: <i>George Retegan</i> .....	143
Note i. 28 October–20.X. 1949 ( <i>Georgescu Dumitrie</i> ) .....	144
A.G.: <i>Dr. D. C. Georgescu</i> .....	144
Note i. 28 October–22.X. 1949 ( <i>Comarnescu Petre,</i> <i>Atanasiu Viorica etc.</i> ).....	145
A.G.: <i>Petru Comarnescu</i> .....	145
<i>The Bucharest Chic</i> and the Agate Bracelet .....	146

Note s. 29 October 1949 .....	146
Note s. 30 October 1949 .....	147
“All the Time He <i>Made Them Various Explanations</i> ” .....	148
“Walking Normally, Without Checking” .....	148
Note s. 31 October 1949 .....	151
Tailors, Dyers, Turned-Over Coats.....	151
Note s. 1 November 1949 .....	152
Note s. 2 November 1949 .....	153
<i>Note i. 3 November–26.X.1949 (Hagigogu Toli, Păunescu</i> <i>Ana Ciumeti etc.).....</i>	154
<i>Note i. 3 November–26.X.1949 (Gusti Dumitru) .....</i>	155
Mrs. Gusti .....	155
Note s. 3 November 1949 .....	155
“He Gives a Rather Cursory Look at the Exhibits, Not Paying Them Much Interest” .....	156
Note s. 4 November 1949 .....	157
Daily Errands .....	157
Note s. 5 November 1949 .....	159
“He Helps Himself” .....	160
Vague Notations by Overwhelmed Shadows.....	160
“Armindel, Cațavilan” .....	160
Intercepted Envelopes.....	161
Note s. 6 November 1949 .....	162
Watching Post Suspended and Reinstated .....	162
Note s. 7 November 1949 .....	163
The Oak Gall .....	163
Note s. 8 November 1949 .....	164
“Alva” .....	164
Note s. 9 November 1949 .....	165
“Dear Marieta”.....	165
Our Christening in Hodac, the Hunting Satchel and “Tonputia” .....	166
Note s. 10 November 1949 .....	167
Note s. 11 November 1949 .....	168
<i>Note i. 12 November–8.X.1949 (The Cashier Office of the State</i> <i>Planning Commission) .....</i>	168
Working for the State Planning Commission .....	169
The Folders Marked with a “G” .....	171
Note s. 12 November 1949 .....	173
“Dear Mr. Judge” (13 November 1949) .....	174
Marginalia.....	175
Note s. 14 November 1949 .....	175

Note s. 15 November 1949 .....	176
“One Being New” .....	177
Note s. 16 November 1949 .....	177
Note s. 17 November 1949 .....	178
Note s. 18 November 1949 .....	179
Note s. 19 November 1949 .....	180
Note s. 20 November 1949 .....	181
<i>Note i. 21 November 1949 (Mălinaş Iuliu)</i> .....	182
Iuliu Mălinaş .....	182
Note s. 21 November 1949 .....	183
Note s. 22 November 1949 .....	184
Ion Chibulcuteanu’s Funeral .....	185
Note s. 23 November 1949 .....	186
Note s. 24 November 1949 .....	187
<i>Note i. 25 November–14.XI.1949 (Todiraşcu Ştefan)</i> .....	187
A.G.: <i>Şt. Todiraşcu</i> .....	188
Note s. 25 November 1949 .....	188
Note s. 26 November 1949 .....	189
Note s. 27 November 1949 .....	189
<i>Note i. 28 November–21.XI.1949 (Chibulcuteanu Ioan)</i> .....	190
<i>Note i. 28 November–21.XI.1949 (Făcănaru Iordache)</i> .....	191
A.G.: <i>Iordache Făcăoaru</i> .....	192
Note s. 28 November 1949 .....	192
Letter Sent to Professor Ilie Ardelean .....	193
Note s. 29 November 1949 .....	194
Note s. 30 November 1949 .....	195
“He Goes and Buys His Bread” .....	196
Note s. 1 December 1949 .....	197
Note s. 2 December 1949 .....	199
“They Both Help Themselves” .....	200
Note s. 3 December 1949 .....	201
Not to Scala, but to <i>Şcoală</i> (School) .....	201
Note s. 4 December 1949 .....	202
At Străuleşti, Dămăroaia, Căţelu, at Băneasa and Fundeni .....	202
Note s. 5 December 1949 .....	203
Note s. 6 December 1949 .....	204
Note s. 6 December 1949 (“MARIAN”) .....	205
“Marian” is Mr. Iuliu Mălinaş .....	206
Note s. 7 December 1949 .....	206
Note s. 8 December 1949 .....	207
Note s. 9 December 1949 .....	207

Note s. 10 December 1949 .....	208
Note s. 11 December 1949 .....	209
Note s. 12 December 1949 .....	209
Note s. 13 December 1949 .....	210
Note s. 14 December 1949 .....	211
<i>Note i. 15 December–6.XII.1949 (Răducanu Mihai,</i> <i>Butoi Mihai etc.).....</i>	211
Note s. 15 December 1949 .....	212
<i>Note i. 16 December–13.XII.1949 (Banu I. Gheorghe) .....</i>	213
Note s. 16 December 1949 .....	214
Mr. Vasile and the Rat .....	214
Note s. 17 December 1949 .....	215
Note s. 18 December 1949 .....	215
<i>Note i. 19 December–9.XII.1949 (Millea Aurel).....</i>	216
<i>Note i. 19 December–12.XII.1949 (Bocheș Maria, Săndulescu</i> <i>Corneliu etc.).....</i>	216
A.G.: <i>Corneliu Săndulescu</i> .....	217
Note s. 19 December 1949 .....	217
“Storm Clouds Are Gathering” .....	219
Note s. 20 December 1949 .....	220
Note s. 21 December 1949 .....	221
Note s. 22 December 1949 .....	221
<i>Note i. 23 December–19.XII.1949 (Dragomirescu Constantin,</i> <i>Derussi Constantin etc.).....</i>	222
<i>Note i. 23 December–19.XII.1949 (Economu Nicolae) .....</i>	222
Nicolae Economu.....	222
<i>Note i. 23 December–15.XII.1949 (Costăchel Octav) .....</i>	224
A.G.: <i>Dr. Octav Costăchel</i> .....	224
“Exempt from Control” .....	224
Note s. 23 December 1949 .....	225
Note s. 24 December 1949 .....	226
Note s. 25 December 1949 .....	226
Our Last Christmas Together .....	227
Note s. 26 December 1949 .....	227
Note s. 27 December 1949 .....	228
My Mother’s Name Day .....	228
Note s. 28 December 1949 .....	229
The Simu Museum, the Antipa Museum .....	230
Note s. 29 December 1949 .....	230
Note s. 30 December 1949 .....	232
Note s. 31 December 1949 .....	232

Note s. 1 January 1949.....	233
Note s. 2 January 1949.....	234
Note s. 3 January 1949.....	234
<i>Note i. 4 January –29.XII.1949 (Duțescu Dan)</i> .....	235
What Had Happened to Dan Duțescu in 1947 .....	235
Nicholas Georgescu-Roegen’s Version of the Story.....	238
A Thought for Taina Duțescu .....	239
Note s. 4 January 1950.....	239
Note s. 5 January 1950.....	240
<i>Note i. 6 January 1950–29.XII.1949 (Ferentz Arpad Tiberiu)</i> .....	241
Note s. 6 January 1950.....	241
Valer Butură Sent Us Apples.....	242
Note s. 7 January 1950.....	243
Note s. 8 January 1950.....	243
Note s. 9 January 1950.....	244
Note s. 10 January 1950.....	245
Note s. 11 January 1950.....	245
Note s. 12 January 1950.....	246
Note s. 13 January 1950.....	246
Note s. 14 January 1950.....	247
“The Year That Has Just Started Will Be Harder than the Ones Before” .....	248
Note s. 15 January 1950.....	249
Note s. 16 January 1950.....	249
“Handed Over” .....	250
Ștefania Golopenția: <i>The Day of the Arrest</i> .....	250
Recorded Telephone Conversations	
(20 October 1949–19 January 1950) .....	252
Our Telephone: 4.01.36 .....	252
Recorded Intervals, Transcripts of Conversations .....	252
Transcription Errors and Their Corrections .....	255
“I Can’t Say It Over the Phone” .....	256
“Troubled I Am at Times, But.... I Try to Forget” .....	258
“I Am Given No Union Task, Nothing” .....	260
“Should I Die, I Won’t Even Have Money for My Funeral” .....	262
Telephone Conversations on the Day of 20 [and 22–26]	
October 1949 .....	263
Telephone Conversations on the Day of 26 [and 27–31]	
October 1949 .....	269

Telephone Conversations on the Day of 1 [and 2]	
November 1949 .....	272
A.G.: <i>Dr. Petrescu</i> .....	277
Telephone Conversations on the Day of 5 [and 6]	
November 1949 .....	277
Telephone Conversations on the Day of 8 [and 9–10]	
November 1949 .....	280
Telephone Conversations on the Day of 11 [and 12–15]	
November 1949 .....	283
Telephone Conversations on the Day of 15 [and 16–20]	
November 1949 .....	288
Telephone Conversations on 20 [and 21–27] November 1949 .....	291
Telephone Conversations on the Day of 27	
November[–2 December] 1949 .....	294
Telephone Conversations on the Day of 3 [and 4–7]	
December 1949 .....	296
Telephone Conversations on the Day of 8 [and 9–12]	
December 1949 .....	297
Telephone Conversations [on the Days of 13–19 December 1949]...	298
“The Matter” .....	304
Telephone Conversations on the Day of 20 [and 21–28]	
December 1949 .....	304
Telephone Conversations on the Day of 1 [and 2–9] January 1950.	306
A.G.: <i>Laurențiu Bran</i> .....	310
Telephone Conversations on the Day of 10 [and 11–19]	
January 1950 .....	311
Epilogue .....	314
The Chests .....	314
The Woodcutter in the Basement .....	315
“They Don’t Take Pity on Children Either” .....	317
Our Father’s Undelivered Letters .....	318
“Sanda My Beloved” .....	320
The Bed .....	322
My Father’s Death .....	323
Anton Golopenția at the Danube–Black Sea Canal .....	325
Going Up .....	327
A Knot in My Throat .....	327
Our Pale Childhoods .....	328
A Doctorate in Silence .....	329
Is My Reading Too Serious? .....	330

Appendix A .....	332
Anton Golopenția's Work for the State Planning Commission (1948–1949)—Some Examples	
Note Concerning the Division of the Country's Territory into Four Economic Regions .....	332
Note Concerning the Socio-Economic Investigation of the Region Adjacent to the Projected Danube–Black Sea Canal .....	335
Note Regarding the Documentation Required to Plan for the Development of Impoverished and Underdeveloped Regions .....	337
Note on Preparing the Statistical Documentation for Planning in Matters of Reducing Illiteracy and Introducing Compulsory Elementary Education .....	339
Note on Preparing the Documentation for the Planning of Public Health Policies and Education.....	340
Note on Research Required to Revise and Expand the List of Urban Settlements .....	343
Appendix B.....	346
People, Places, and Events Mentioned in the Text	
Bibliography .....	357
Illustrations .....	360

## TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

Translating a book like “Surveillance and Memory” is a complex endeavor. The juxtaposition of documents from secret police archives with the author’s keen memories poses challenges at once amplified and served by the fact that the translator herself belongs to two worlds: the one in which she was born and raised, Romania, and the English-speaking one in which she has lived more than half of her life.

The translator has carried through with her conscious choice to closely follow the various styles of Romanian present in the book and render them as faithfully as possible into English. Readers of the Romanian version are confronted with a wide range of styles, from the simple, often awkward and mechanically repetitive idiom of surveillance agents to the nuanced, sophisticated language of highly educated intellectuals, from the wooden language of bureaucracy to the literary recreation of a world in which beauty still had a place. This range, carefully examined by the author in the chapter “Polyphony”, is what makes the book unique. The attempt to render it into English, even at the risk of sounding outlandish, is a feature of this translation.

Explanations of terms and concepts particular to the political upheavals of the 40’s and 50’s in Romania, as well as clarifications concerning personalities, districts and streets of Bucharest unfamiliar to the Western reader are provided in the Appendix B entitled *People, Places, and Events Mentioned in the Text*.

A List of abbreviations helps shed light on the various institutions that shape the destinies of the people portrayed in the book.

The translator’s footnotes are kept to a minimum. Italics signal at times awkward English constructs that are meant to serve as equivalents for the awkward Romanian idiom of the *Securitate* agents.

Differences in the usage of proper names closely follow the original documents. The *Securitate* agents resort to the official order last name–first name. When questioned, A. Golopentia always uses the order first name–last name. Also, the names as given in the surveillance notes are not always correct. Some spelling errors occur in first names, such as: *Petre* instead of *Petru* for Sârbu (26 Oct. 1949) and Comarnescu (28 Oct. 1949), *Gheorghe* instead of *George* for Retegan (28 Oct. 1949). At other times, the last name is not given its due form: the agents write *Miasnicov* instead



of Measnicov (5 May 1948), *Făcănaru* instead of *Făcăoaru* (28 November 1928). Finally, the signature of the person surveyed is not respected: the agents refer to *Georgescu Dimitrie*, while he always signed Dr. D. C. Georgescu. Quietly, A. Golopenția reestablishes the normality of the correct forms. In the case of sociologist Gusti, whose first name was *Dimitrie*, and not *Dumitru* (as given in the Note of 3 November 1949), the author used the correct form in a text (*Dimitrie Gusti, Without His House*) positioned after November 28, 1949.

Double dates are used in two major ways in the notes of *The Second Surveillance Cycle*. When the second date is preceded by an Exit number and follows the first date chronologically, it shows the amount of time elapsed between the preparation of the handwritten surveillance note and the time it was sent (typewritten) to the agents' superiors. When the second date (at times prefixed by *Galop*) chronologically precedes the first date, it refers to the surveillance note that an information note is meant to complement.

I am highly indebted to Marguerite Dorian, Barbara Galleriu, Christine Kurjan, Henry Majewski, Irina Marin, Lara Mosdal, Eleanor Nannini, Laura Tabert, Jon Thiem, Eric Wimmers, Inge Wimmers, Bryan Zandberg, and, last but not least, Guy Bradley. This translation has profited from their precious suggestions and insights.

April 2018  
Lidia Bradley

## AUTHOR'S ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First of all, I would like to thank my dear friend Lidia Bradley who undertook with rare dedication the challenging task of translating from Romanian into English a multi-voiced book that required, as the reader will see, sudden shifts of style and vocabulary as well as imaginative ways of rendering different writers' profiles.

I am also most grateful to those—colleagues and friends of Lidia's and mine from Providence, England, Germany or France—who read the translation and offered us not only their reactions with respect to the minutiae of the text, but also their perplexities as readers from another country and culture, at another moment in time. They called to our attention details that we had taken for granted and which required clarification and thus often determined our choices for notes and our conception of the section *People, Places, and Events Mentioned in the Text*. I therefore take the liberty of mentioning them once more, with utmost appreciation: Marguerite Dorian, Barbara Galleriu, Christine Kurjan, Henry Majewski, Irina Marin, Lara Mosdal, Eleanor Nannini, Laura Tabert, Jon Thiem, Eric Wimmers, Inge Wimmers, Bryan Zandberg, and, of course, Guy Bradley.

For the permission to translate the book in its entirety I express my thanks to the publishing house Curtea Veche in Bucharest (which published the book in 2009 in Romanian) and to Doina Jela, who took care of the publication details then. The publishing house Editura Enciclopedică in Bucharest graciously gave us permission to translate excerpts reproduced in translated form from Anton Golopenția, *Ultima carte* (The Last Book) and *Rapsodia epistolară* (The Epistolary Rhapsody) and I would like to especially thank its director Marcel Popa.

I remember with gratitude the efficient help I received in 1987 from the personnel of the Romanian Service of Information (S.R.I.) Archives when I consulted and had copies made from documents of the former Securitate that are here translated.

Last, but not least, I extend a heartfelt thank-you to Dr. Adam Rummens, Commissioning Editor at Cambridge Scholars Publishing, who was always available when I had a question or needed supplementary information, to Senior Commissioning Editor Victoria Carruthers, Commissioning Editor Helen Edwards, Designer Sophie Edminson, Sean

Howley as well as the Editorial Team, who all intervened in so many ways in the work leading to the publication of *Surveillance and Memory*.

Providence, R.I.  
October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2018

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND BASIC ROMANIAN VOCABULARY

A.G.: Anton Golopenția

*Aprolacta*: chain of stores offering dairy products

A.R.L.U.S.: see *People, Places and Events*

*Calea*: Road, Street

C.A.M.: see *People, Places and Events*

C.F.: Surveillance Corps (Rom. *Corpul de Filaj*)

C.F.R.: Romanian Railways (Rom. *Căile Ferate Române*)

C.G.M.: see *People, Places and Events*

C.I.: rental agreement (Rom. *contract de închiriere*)

C.I.S.: Central Institute of Statistics (Rom. *Institutul Central de Statistică*,  
I.C.S.) see *People, Places and Events*

CP: Sanda Golopenția, *Cartea plecării* (see *Bibliography*)

Hungarian P. R.: Hungarian People's Republic

*com.* = commune ; larger village (Rom. *comuna*)

*c.y.* = current year (corresponding to Romanian *anul curent, a.c.*)

D.D.T.: see *People, Places and Events*

I.C.S.: see C.I.S.

I.T.B.: the Bucharest Transportation Company (Rom. *Intreprinderea de  
Transport București*)

*Leu, lei*: Romanian currency.

Liberty Park: Rom. *Parcul Libertății*

*Librăria Noastră*: see "Our Bookshop" in *People, Places and Events*

M.A.I.: Ministry of Internal Affairs (Rom. *Ministerul Afacerilor Interne*)

M.A.T.: Alcohol and Tobacco Monopoly (Rom. *Monopolul Alcoolului și  
Tutunului*)

North Station (Rom. *Gara de Nord*)

*Parcul Libertății*: the Liberty Park

*Parcul Național*: the National Park

*Patria*: the Motherland; name of Bucharest cinema

*Părintele*: Father (relig.)

*Piața*: Place, Square

P.M.R.: Romanian Workers' Party (Rom. *Partidul Muncitoresc Român*)

*Podul*: Bridge / the Bridge

P.T.T.: Post, Telegraph and Telephone Office (Rom. *Poștă, Telegraf, Telefon*)

RE: Anton Golopenția, *Rapsodia epistolară*, see *Bibliography*

R.P.R.: Romanian People's Republic (Rom., *Republica Populară Română*)

*Securitate*: see *People, Places and Events*

S.G.: Sanda Golopenția

S.N.I.C.: National Society for Horse Protection (Rom. *Societatea Națională pentru Incurajarea Calului*)

SOE: The Special Operations Executive (British WWII organisation)

S.P.C.: State Planning Commission (Rom., *Comisia de Stat a Planificării, C.S.P.*)

S.R.I.: Romanian Information Agency (Rom. *Serviciul Român de Informații*)

S.T.B.: Bucharest Transportation Society (Rom. *Societatea de Transport București*)

Sf., Sft.: Saint (Rom. *Sfântul–masc., Sfânta–fem.*)

Str.: *Strada* (Street)

*Șosea/ua*: Highway / the Highway

UC: Anton Golopenția, *Ultima carte* (The Last Book), see *Bibliography*

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

1. Anton Golopenția in 1946
2. Anton Golopenția in 1932–1933
3. Ștefania Golopenția in 1950 (first row, second left).
4. Ștefania Cristescu(-Golopenția) in 1933–1934
5. Emma Staschek-Golopenția in 1920
6. Sanda Golopenția in 1949
7. Dan Golopenția in 1949
8. Surveillance Note of 15.IV.1948
9. Surveillance Note of 28.X.1949
10. Information Note of 28.X.1949 referring to the Surveillance Note of 20.X.1949

## PROLOGUE

### We Live Opaque Lives

Our daily lives are unknown to us. We wake up, eat, work, talk to friends or strangers, we write, read, walk, go shopping; everything is jumbled, an amorphous multitude of gestures; not even the difference between leisure and work manages to give it structure. We live opaque lives.

From time to time, as years go by, a gesture, a scent, a sound, chance encounters or photographs bring to mind a fragment of what used to be. We stop for a moment, revisit the episode, vaguely embellishing the time gone by and then return to our soon-to-be-forgotten present.

But lo and behold, in my case—and I am far from being the only one—a state institution, the *Securitate*, recorded with robot-like meticulousness the outer appearance of our lives—movements, purchases, chance meetings, phone calls, dialogues at a restaurant, or in the street. The target was my father, Anton Golopenția, who worked at the Central Institute of Statistics in Bucharest. As they followed his daily life step by step during several months between 1948 and 1951, the surveillance agents came to report as well on the lives of my mother, Ștefania Golopenția, my grandmother Emma (who had changed back to her maiden name, Staschek, after her divorce), my brother Dan, and my own. Thus our family had its uninvited chroniclers. Hurried, jotting down all they managed to observe in penciled surveillance notes with hardly a comma, the shadowers and the driver who fumbled with our lives seem to have been young and fast. Their car was stationed somewhere in front of number 7, *Strada Dr. Lister*, where we lived, in the back building at the end of the courtyard, on the third floor, to the right. Once he left the house, by himself or in our company, A.G. became the object of their attention. If he took the tram, someone would poke and prod whatever he was carrying. If he mailed a letter, the postbox would be opened and the letter extracted. If he went to the cinema, the shadower on duty would sit down close to him, ready to report on his reactions. They knew where he had his hair cut, who dyed his coat or turned his vest inside out so that he could use it for longer in those after-war years, who mended his shoes, whom he met in

the street, where he went shopping for food and what he bought, how long he would be willing to stand in line for a lemon.

## Reversed Collaboration

For years now we have been mortified to discover that X or Y, or even Z, collaborated with the *Securitate*. In what follows, the situation is reversed: the *Securitate* agents are brought to collaborate with us, as we recollect the times directly after the war, when Romania was forcefully bolshevized. Their reports are the metronome that sets the rhythm of this text; they are the canvas on which memories arrange themselves. Often the reports trigger the very act of remembering. While no one in his right mind would ever note down step by step where he went, at what time and for how long, and do so every single day for the duration of several months, the agents did it because they were paid for it. Because of them, we can now scrutinize a period of time otherwise impossible to separate from the indistinct run of days between 1948 and 1951.

In his book *Je me souviens*<sup>1</sup>, Georges Perec collected 480 scraps of text that begin with the words *I remember*, each rediscovering a minute fact of life. The memories float in the void, detached from time. With an effort, some of them can be placed before others, or after. But they survived precisely by breaking away from days and years, by rubbing against each other and getting polished in unspoken thought, till they turned into small pebbles with smooth contours, like the ones that Beckett's distracted characters carry in their pockets or sift through their fingers.

In my case, surveillance notes and the information reports ensure the correct placing in time of memories I had long ago become unable to date. Through obscure analogies, the strings that tie them to other facts I had forgotten I knew, come together, weaving a web that catches in it the fine dust of daily minutiae.

## 129 Measured Days

The following pages present the readers with reports about 129 days in which, while shadowing Anton Golopenția, the agents meticulously noted down all his movements through the city, by car, by tram or on foot, and, in the latter case, all his gestures and encounters. My father walks silent, and when he talks to somebody, one can only overhear meaningless bits of conversation.

---

<sup>1</sup> Georges Perec, *Je me souviens*, Paris: Hachette, 1978.



Since his gestures did not provide enough information, because what was caught from conversations in the street was too little, and, of course, for the sake of a job well done, our home telephone was likewise put under surveillance. At times the tape would record half a day, at other times the entire day. The sparse transcript of our conversations, which included “stage directions” that define the listeners rather than those listened to, manage nevertheless to give voice to the ghosts that moved around under the vigilant eyes of the pursuers. While working on this book, I listened to our voices as transmitted by the indifferent or regimented appointees of destruction. They were all that was left in terms of brute facts. I do not always recognize what my relatives say, and simply pass on to you what I found in the archives; our childhood and our lives were not private, our own, in fact they could hardly be said to have taken place normally. In my memory, the dialogues have long since melted into a fluid continuum and the words said by one or the other, my mother or my father, have faded, only their resonance still awakens the pain we learned to call longing.

### A Few Short Narratives

Many notes about acquaintances, colleagues and friends of A.G. were added to the surveillance reports using information gathered from the ubiquitous apartment building registers of the time, from archives or other *Securitate* agents. When reading those concerning people I did not know personally, or whom I only saw with the naïve eyes of a child and did not meet again later, I felt the need to include a few short narratives that appear in declarations my father gave later on, while under investigation (as published in Anton Golopenția, *Ultima carte* [*The Last Book*],<sup>2</sup> here abbreviated *UC*).

Therefore, besides the surveillance reports that were all extracted from file 40002 of the *Pătrășcanu Trial*,<sup>3</sup> and for which I have indicated in the text only the page numbers where the reports are filed, the readers will also find passages headed by “A.G.:”. These contain facts my father evoked during the 18 months of investigation, thus inscribing them in the great collective novel of disaster written by so many of those who were thrown into Romanian-Soviet prisons during the forties and the fifties.

---

<sup>2</sup> București: Editura Enciclopedică–Univers Enciclopedic, 2001.

<sup>3</sup> *Procesul Pătrășcanu* (The Pătrășcanu Trial), Arhivele S.R.I., Dosar 40002, vol. 112.

## Polyphony

The voices in this volume are numerous and not always distinct. There are many agents assigned to tail us, working in teams, and we can only conjecture that the first signatory of a report is its *de facto* author. When reading, certain peculiarities of language and style allow one to distinguish between several personality types among the scribes. Other language peculiarities, on the contrary, give access only to the general code used by the shadowers, to their technical, professional jargon.

The attentive reader can reflect on the difference between the narrative texts authored by the agents, the corroborative texts written by those who gathered information to add to the results of the surveillance, and the conclusive texts of the reports that mark the various stages leading up to the arrest of A.G. The staff producing them seems to have been variously specialized. We will examine at length the teams and individuals involved later on.

Next to the agents' voices, one hears in the book the voice of Anton Golopenția. This voice is filtered by what the unwelcome listeners are able to hear and understand, or through the agony of the endless interrogation that tried to transform him, firstly, into a pawn of Lucrețiu Pătrășcanu's liquidation, and subsequently, into an enemy of the people, who should not leave prison alive. But it manages to say, under impossible circumstances, at least part of what he did not want to leave untold.

This voice, which speaks calmly in unfavourable conditions, was the voice of my father from childhood on. It was the voice with which he spoke to his estranged father, Simion, about the suffering and deprivation in which his mother, his two brothers and he himself lived, trying to make him understand that his help, as a relatively prosperous, remarried lawyer, could not be endlessly delayed without putting them at serious risk. The voice with which he spoke to Professor Dimitrie Gusti, refusing to accept the rift in their relationship caused by the disappointment the Professor felt at not having been asked to conduct A.G.'s doctoral thesis (A.G. had been awarded a Rockefeller scholarship and had taken his doctoral degree in Germany with Professor Hans Freyer). The voice with which, countering the suspicion, at times fed by others, that the Professor felt towards his too innovative disciple, my father would point out the devotion and respect behind his initiatives. The voice that tried to bring back to his former openness Miron Constantinescu, 'enfant terrible' and self-proclaimed genius of Romanian-Soviet communism, despite the suffering he and his wife Sulamita had known in pre-communist prisons (where their child was born), and his later position as head of the State Planning Commission and

of the National Commission for Statistics. What the lawyer Simion Golopenția, the Sociology Professor Dimitrie Gusti and, for a time, the disciple-turned-boss Miron Constantinescu had in common was that, deep inside, they knew whom they were dealing with, were fond of and respected A.G., who, aware of this, could overcome the difficult moments. My father believed until late in the investigation that by answering the interrogators' questions calmly and simply, he could reach their humanity. In his declarations he used the free and trusting voice he used in his correspondence. Readers will be able to recognise it after reading passages repeated here from the letter exchanges collected in A. Golopenția, *The Epistolary Rhapsody*, vol. 1,<sup>4</sup> here abbreviated *RE*) or from the confiscated correspondence reproduced in *The Last Book*.

In the end, my own voice, in which the inflections of different ages alternate, tries to say what I saw and thought I understood, what I have been told by others, what my mother, brother and grandmother lived through at the time, mentioned, as they were, only briefly and indirectly in the reports. This is the voice that fills gaps, multiplies perspectives and brings into dialogue the unfulfilled productive maturity of my parents, my grandmother's old age, and the childhood my brother and I shared. It is also the voice that constructs the baroque architecture of this story about life in Romania between 1947 and 1951. Sometimes, though not often, when I could not find new words for events too much pondered over to bear narrative variations, I reproduced short texts from Sanda Golopenția, *The Book of Departing*<sup>5</sup> (here abbreviated *CP*) or texts published in *UC*.

## The Central Institute of Statistics in Our Lives

After the Social Service was shut down, in 1939, the employees of the Social Institute were left jobless. My father remained unemployed for six months, from October 1939 to the 1<sup>st</sup> of April 1940, when he was hired as Inspector at the Central Institute of Statistics (C.I.S.). This Institute, which was run by the physician Sabin Manuila, a technocrat educated in the United States, had offered solid support, for years, to initiatives of Dimitrie Gusti's Social Institute. Sabin Manuila, Dumitru C. Georgescu, Vania Measnicov and other employees from C.I.S. had participated in Gusti's monographic studies and were regular contributors to the journals

---

<sup>4</sup> Anton Golopenția, *Rapsodia epistolară*, Bucharest: Editura Albatros, 2004; abbreviated *RE*.

<sup>5</sup> Sanda Golopenția, *Cartea plecării*, Bucharest, Univers, 1995; abbreviated *CP*.

of the Bucharest School of Sociology. In his turn, Gusti had been the President of the 1930 Census, thus closely collaborating with Manuila.

The Institute of Statistics played an important role in the life of our family. The first to work for it was my mother, Ștefania Cristescu, who supported herself by taking a job there and processing the data gathered by the 1930 Census. In 1932, Anton Golopenția, then Dimitrie Gusti's young chief of staff at the Ministry of Education, Religion and the Arts, would regularly send letters by courier to my mother at the Institute of Statistics. My father started working for the Institute of Statistics one month after I was born. My mother often thought that, had he not feared leaving his family not provided for, father would likely have waited for a position more attuned to his scientific vocation, and not taken a job in an institution that required exhausting administrative work.

I grew up in a home in which the punch cards of the Central Institute of Statistics were familiar to my brother and me from kindergarten years. We would write and draw on them, just as, in the years immediately following the war, we would dip in water and eat with gusto in my father's office dry military biscuits left from his field research aimed at identifying the Romanians living to the East of the river Bug, in Ukraine.

Between 1940–1947, my father worked as a Statistics Inspector and Director of the Office for Studies at the C.I.S., for which he hired promising young researchers, recruited from among his former students at the Sociology Seminar, which he taught at the Bucharest University (Nicolae Betea, Constantin Pavel, Mihail Levente), from the villages where he had done field research (Gheorghe Retegan), or from among war refugees from Cluj who were looking for work in Bucharest (Mircea Biji, Bucur Șchiopu, Cornel Mănescu, Roman Moldovan). Like himself, these young men had left-wing inclinations. Some of them were, or would later become, members of the Communist Party. The one who foresaw the danger that the new recruits would soon pose to the institute was its general deputy director D. C. Georgescu. Father did not perceive it and defended his "team."

In 1947, Sabin Manuila was forced to resign. This was the start of the third, and fatal episode in which the Central Institute of Statistics intervened in A.G.'s and, consequently, in our lives. Sabin Manuila had participated in the preparation of the 23 August [1944] act, when the Romanian army ceased fire against the Allies and the pro-Axis premier, Marshal Ion Antonescu, was dismissed. He had been, from October 1944, sub-secretary of state as a representative of the National Peasant Party, taking unpaid leave from C.I.S. After the historical parties were barred from politics on 6 March 1945, Manuila returned to the institute and fully

tasted the bitterness of the fight with the C.I.S. communist and trade union organisations. In short succession, he was to be dismissed from the position of president of the ARLUS sociological section, from the delegation to the Paris Peace Conference, and, finally, in August 1947, from the C.I.S. A.G.'s declarations help us get an idea of the mind-set of the C.I.S. Director General in those dark years. Here is, for instance, a vignette from 1945:

On 6 March, when I brought him the 4<sup>th</sup> issue of *Statistic Communications*, he was standing in his office in the Presidency building on Calea Victoriei, looking dispiritedly through the window at a Soviet tank passing by. (UC, p. 121)

On 10 August 1947, my father was named acting Director General of the Institute. In a declaration, referring to Manuila, he wrote:

In our last conversation at the Institute, I explained to him that I had not tried to oust him nor intended to replace him. He told me that he never thought I had, that he was pleased to know that the Institute had been left under the control of one of the old employees, who knew and cherished it, and hadn't fallen into the hands of a stranger. He encouraged me not to lose patience, urged me not to blunder, and to hold on to my position for as long as possible. (UC, p.187)

One year later, my father in turn was forced to resign and became unemployed.

### **“Shouldn't He look for a Good Pilot for Me?”**

A.G.: “One day in the summer of 1947, Betea accompanied me on my way home from the office at noon. It was before I was delegated to run the Institute, therefore before 10 August. He told me about his relations with aviators, various pilots he was cultivating, in the hope that they might be able to help him. He would not mention names. He described the strain this preoccupation put on him, the difficulty of adapting to the personalities and mentality of those with whom he tried to maintain relations.

We were walking on the boulevard towards the Cotroceni district. As I recall, after crossing *Strada Schitu Măgureanu*, and passing the Lazăr High School, he asked me if I was not thinking of leaving the country and if he shouldn't look for a good pilot for me. I answered that I was not thinking of leaving. Betea neither objected nor insisted.

We went on talking about other things. I do not remember what we talked about, but it was not about pilots or leaving.” (UC, p. 84)

## Working with Miron Constantinescu

My father was given the task of running the C.I.S. at the suggestion of Miron Constantinescu, who had learned to do field research from him as a young member of the “Golopenția team.” M.C. had published two studies in volumes IV and V of A.G. and D.C. Georgescu’s series “*60 Romanian Villages*.”<sup>6</sup> A.G. had then taken him in the team that went to Dâmbovnic and again, as a result, Miron Constantinescu published a study in M. Pop and A.G.’s volume *Dâmbovnic, a District in the South of the Argeș County*.<sup>7</sup> In 1948, their positions were reversed: Miron Constantinescu was head of the National Commission of Statistics and of the State Planning Commission, to which the Central Institute for Statistics was subordinated.

In a draft of a letter to Miron Constantinescu from 14 September 1947, A.G. addressed the problem of his interim role. He had by then fully understood the real situation, and could foresee with lucidity the inevitability of his removal, were he to become Director General (as opposed to acting Director General, his position at the time):

I think it better if my appointment as head of the Institute were considered transitory and the position were to be finally conferred upon an experienced member of the Communist Party. There is still at least one person in the Institute who satisfies this condition and who could manage the Department as well as I do. The difference between what I could do and what someone else could do in the area of general statistics documentation is not so important at this time. In exchange, he could not feel and be embarrassed, as I am, by the pressure of various political and parapolitical committees and organs.

---

<sup>6</sup> Anton Golopenția and D. C. Georgescu, *60 sate românești* (60 Romanian Villages), vol. IV. *Contribuții la tipologia satelor românești. Sate agricole, sate pastorale* (Contributions to a Typology of Romanian Villages. Agricultural Villages, Pastoral Villages); vol. V. *Contribuții la tipologia satelor românești. Sate cu ocupații anexe* (Contributions to a Typology of Romanian Villages. Villages with Auxiliary Occupations), București: Institutul de Științe Sociale al României, 1942.

<sup>7</sup> Mihai Pop and Anton Golopenția, *Dâmbovnicul, o plasă din sudul județului Argeș* (Dâmbovnic, A District in the South of the Argeș County), București: Institutul de Științe Sociale al României, 1942.