



# The Hole in the Flag: A Romanian Exile's Story of Return and Revolution

*By Andrei Codrescu*

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## **The Hole in the Flag: A Romanian Exile's Story of Return and Revolution** By Andrei Codrescu **Bibliography**

- Rank: #1375541 in Books
- Brand: Brand: William Morrow n Co
- Published on: 1991-05
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.60" h x 6.40" w x 1.10" l,
- Binding: Hardcover
- 249 pages

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### **Editorial Review**

From Publishers Weekly

Poet and National Public Radio commentator Codrescu ( *Belligerence* ) was born in Romania, left as a teenager and returned to observe the shocks and joys of revolution from December 1989 to January 1991. This report of his homecoming, jubilation and disenchantment makes an excellent companion volume to Codrescu's early memoir, *The Life and Times of an Involuntary Genius* . The first book was a lyric portrait of the artist as a raffish would-be poet in rural Transylvania; the one in hand is an equally sly but more worldly meditation on politics and personal history. The author opens on a note of sobriety, recounting the apparent end of despotism. The remainder of the book bears a more individual imprint, as Codrescu revisits scenes from his past, tries to look up old friends and offers thoughts on "cultural genocide." His outlook is summed up with the words, "I have never been able to abide either authority or bureaucrats. That is why I'm a poet." And thus, he finds enough still to rail against in Romania, questioning the veracity of the revolution itself as a series of "staged media events" possibly brought about by an elite conspiracy.

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From Library Journal

Codrescu has succeeded at a disconcerting task: writing a delightful book about a harrowing subject. After leaving Romania in his late teens and pursuing careers in the United States in poetry, academia, and journalism, Codrescu, with an assignment from National Public Radio, hurried back to revolutionary Romania at Christmas 1989. In this limpid and lively account that both chronicles the changes that have taken place and recollects his own past, Codrescu brings a fine attentiveness to the common folk he encounters: travelers on the train, hotel porters and cabbies, students and policemen. He describes with skepticism the "game of mirrors" played by the revolutionaries (the apparent new good guys) and the terrorists (ostensibly the old bad guys). Wit and irony color nicely his observations on political society and, by extension, human nature. For an immediate and personal experience of the recent Romanian turmoil, this is a real tour de force. Recommended for public libraries.

- *James B. Street, Santa Cruz P.L., Cal.*

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From Kirkus Reviews

A passionate, poetic view of Romania in the days immediately after the fall of the Ceausescus by poet, essayist, and NPR commentator Codrescu (*The Disappearance of the Outside*, 1990, etc.), who returned to his homeland after living in exile for 25 years. Brought to Bucharest on assignment for NPR and ABC, Codrescu chronicles his journey and the events precipitating it, as well as his first jubilant reactions while standing in bloodstained, ice-covered University Square on New Year's Day 1990. Sobered by subsequent experiences on the streets and in the corridors of power, he records encounters with people from all walks of life living their first winter of freedom in 45 years in a city ravaged by recent fighting and decades of inadequate food and supplies. A journey to his birthplace in Transylvania summons a surge of memories, enhanced when he renews contact with high-school friends, and he vows to return for their reunion in the summer. When he does, in the wake of a renewed struggle against the National Salvation Front with its Communist leadership, and a dubious national election, he finds that the heady spirit of a few months before has already vanished, replaced by a reactionary mood and assertions that the revolution had been betrayed from the start. A final blow occurs at the reunion, as he sees that his school buddies profited immensely under tyranny, and the aftermath has fostered in them a vigorous nationalism and racism not seen publicly since the Nazi days. Intensely personal and keenly perceptive: a poignant study of a troubled homecoming,

and a lively resource for anyone who would understand Romania today. -- *Copyright ©1991, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.*

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Janette Collins:**

This The Hole in the Flag: A Romanian Exile's Story of Return and Revolution book is absolutely not ordinary book, you have after that it the world is in your hands. The benefit you will get by reading this book will be information inside this reserve incredible fresh, you will get facts which is getting deeper anyone read a lot of information you will get. This The Hole in the Flag: A Romanian Exile's Story of Return and Revolution without we realize teach the one who reading it become critical in thinking and analyzing. Don't always be worry The Hole in the Flag: A Romanian Exile's Story of Return and Revolution can bring once you are and not make your bag space or bookshelves' become full because you can have it inside your lovely laptop even mobile phone. This The Hole in the Flag: A Romanian Exile's Story of Return and Revolution having good arrangement in word and also layout, so you will not truly feel uninterested in reading.

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#### **Catherine Hudson:**

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