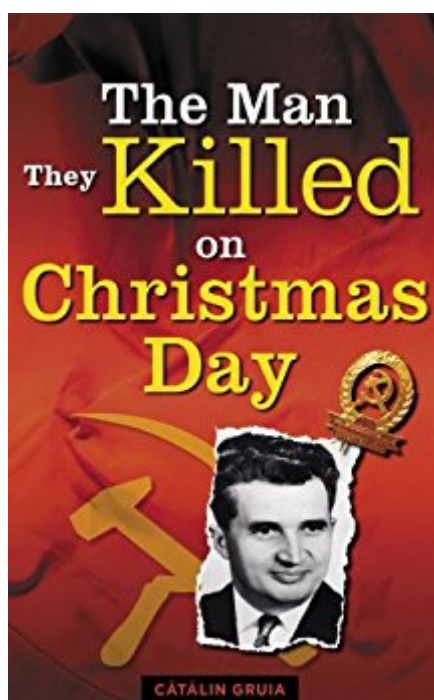


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# The Man They Killed On Christmas Day (Romania Explained To My Friends Abroad Book 1)



## Synopsis

Essential Ceausescu  
The Life of Romanian Communist Dictator Nicolae Ceausescu: Road to Hell Paved with Good Intentions  
A black dog licks at a puddle of blood in which two old people lie, executed on Christmas day in the Targoviste garrison, Romania. Following a kangaroo trial, a special tribunal sentenced them to death by shooting in December 1989 for "serious crimes against the people of Romania." He died instantly. The woman died a minute later, after the execution squad's paratroop captain furiously emptied another round in her. Thus Nicolae and Elena Ceausescu's five-decade journey together ended, after they started from the bottom, seized power, and grew old while ruling the country. Who Was That Man They Killed on Christmas Day  
Adulated for all of his 24 years in power, during which he came to personify Romania, Romanian communist dictator Nicolae Ceausescu was dethroned and replaced by some of his former barons and was turned into a scapegoat for all the evils done to Romanians. But the question remains: Between these two extremes, who was the real Nicolae Ceausescu?  
During his regime, Ceausescu's image had been painted in sparkling white. Once he was killed everything turned to pitch black. This documentary aims to paint a portrait in color, with all shades of grey included, combining the good and bad, the light and the dark extremes of the life of Nicolae Ceausescu (aka Ceaucescu). This book is a concise journalistic style account of Ceausescu's life, following his path through:  
A miserable childhood  
A boyhood in prisons  
A rising youth in the Romanian Communist Party  
The honeymoon of his beginnings as the youngest ever political leader in Europe  
Times of glory and seizing absolute power  
The rough years of decline  
A violent death  
Ceausescu  
101 Dear reader stop here for a second, please!  
You should know from the very beginning this is not an exhaustive, academic paper. Author Catalin Gruia is a veteran journalist who has written and reported for the Romanian edition of National Geographic for over 10 years. What you'll find here is a concise journalistic account of Ceausescu's life.\* For behind the scenes information about Gruia's books --><https://www.facebook.com/ByCatalinGruia>

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I did find this book interesting but as others have already mentioned, it tended to skim over the surface and we really needed more in depth details of social life, services etc. for the population at that period in time. I did note that there are Romanians now wishing they had the security they had during that period, housing, jobs food on the table and I have heard similar reports from other Eastern block countries. I also thought that it jumped about too much from different periods and would have been easier perhaps to understand this period better if the each chapter in the book had related to a period in time from his rise to power to Christmas Day. Living in Greece for 35 years has brought home to me just how closely related we in the Balkan countries are compared to Northern Europeans. I have found here that same sheep like attitude of following a leader that tells his people what they want to hear rather than the plain truth. Here in Greece it has always been the aim of the vast majority of Greeks to find a position in the public services rather than pursue a career in private enterprise or even their own venture. Is this due to history, the instability in the respective countries that citizens seek security rather than to be adventurous and work to achieve a goal in life. Of course total power does corrupt and this is exactly the problems we have here in Greece and why we are living in a bankrupt country relying on loans. When there is only one House of Parliament and the Presidency is stripped of all power then of course the leeches are there to benefit themselves. The longer in power of any totalitarian leader, the more will gather to feed from the trough. These governments hand out positions to the faithful that keep them in power. This is why Democracy is so

precious. Thanks Catalin, I do consider this book worth a read.

The description for *The Man They Killed on Christmas Day* says it is a "concise journalistic account of Ceausescu's life." What it should really say is that it is an extraordinarily brief overview that skips pretty much everything he did to the Romanian people. It mentions the abortion laws and the dramatic decline of the economy in the 80s, but it doesn't really give any indication as to why the Ceausescus were sentenced to death. It doesn't really give any indication as to why the people of Timisoara rebelled. It doesn't even really answer the question it promises to address: Who was the "real" Nicolae Ceausescu? There is just way too much missing and is not really worth the time it takes to read it (which isn't much and really barely able to be called a book).

I have lived in Ceausescu's world for only 4 years before The Revolution came. I do have vague memories about a life lived in black and white shades smoothed out by my loving family: singing songs during evenings with power cuts when no light and no TV were available, having the weekly bath when hot water was allowed into our homes for a few hours, receiving gifts at kindergarden from a disguised Santa that we called "Santa Frost", being made "hawk of the homeland" which made me a young communist in the making. Then The Revolution happened and I remember my family not knowing what was happening, being concerned for my grandfather who was then a colonel in the navy, hearing fire arms being shot in the streets and a vague joy that somebody called Ceausescu had died. We were tearing the pages that contained Ceausescu's face off every book, magazine and newspaper. It was a defiance towards something I didn't understand but something that my parents used to fear. It is not yet clear for my generation who Ceausescu was and this book helps fill in some gaps that the history books taught in schools fail to. I do fear the submissive, cowardly nature of my people that does not know how to defend democracy. I feel ashamed that my people did not judge the murderers of Ceausescu like they should have and that instead they allowed all the people behind the communist regime to survive in a masked democracy under the presidency of Iliescu and his kind. This is why today we still suffer from corruption and bad government and this is why my generation prefers to educate itself and work outside the country.

About a painful subject from the recent Romanian history. It's not revealing the secrets of December '89, but as a foreigner you might want to read it if you want to understand what stayed behind the

latest Romanian revolution. might help you better understand Romanians. what I know for sure, it will definitely not answer the question "why was this man killed on the Christmas Day?"

For me, as a child, the communist period was a time of adapting the games we played, to the everyday realities: the lack of heat in the winter time, the homework at the candle light, staying in queues for hours. As an adult you still search for answers: how this happened, why and who is to blame. Anyway, more you discover more complex the true become. We all need to understand that there is no "black and white" situation, to know and accept the real history. We have to know about our past leaders, our nation, ourselves. This way we can accept and try to do better. Catalin Gruia's book is what we need to complete the picture and the facts presented are quite interesting. This book is a "must read" for all the Romanians. And not only...

My expectations were disappointed as I wanted to know more about the last five days of the Ceausescu's life than were written

Without following the news closely it can be hard to keep abreast of all the changes that have happened in my lifetime (and maybe yours) in Eastern Europe. This story brings home the impact to the folks who live there how a dictator affects the common people, the ones who just happen to abide in an area of the world that is unstable. Not a long read, its clear and I recommend it to anyone who enjoys history from a personal perspective.

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