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Velvet Totalitarianism: Post-Stalinist Romania

By Claudia Moscovici



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This book introduces students and the general public to the post-Stalinist phase of totalitarianism, focusing on Romania under the Ceausescu dictatorship, through the dual optic of scholarship and fiction, in a story about a family surviving difficult times under a totalitarian regime due to the strength of their love.



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Editorial Review

Review

A deeply felt, deftly rendered novel of the utmost importance to any reader interested in understanding totalitarianism and its terrible human cost. Urgent, evocative, and utterly convincing, *Velvet Totalitarianism* is a book to treasure, and Claudia Moscovici is indeed a writer to watch, now and into the future. --Travis Holland, author of *The Archivist's Story*

Claudia Moscovici's *Velvet Totalitarianism* triumphs on several levels: as a taut political thriller, as a meditation on totalitarianism, as an expose of the Ceausescu regime, and as a moving fictionalized memoir of one family's quest for freedom.

--Ken Kalfus, author of the novel *A Disorder Peculiar to the Country*

With style and wit, Claudia Moscovici tells a story of resilience and hope. *Velvet Totalitarianism* is a novel well worth reading, both for its compelling narrative and for its important message. Michael Kort, Professor of Social Science

Claudia Moscovici offers her readers a multifaceted book--*Velvet Totalitarianism*--that is at once a love story, a political novel and a mystery. --Sanda Golopentia, Professor of French, Brown University

Velvet Totalitarianism is a book well worth reading. The novel is a page-turner, witty and well written.

--Nicolae Klepper, author of *Romania: An Illustrated History*.

Moving between extraordinary and ordinary lives, between Romania and the United States, velvet totalitarianism and relative freedom, dire need and consumerism, evoking her Romanian experience in the seventies, the emigration to the U.S. of her family in the eighties, and the 1989 uprising in Timisoara and Bucharest that marked the end of Ceausescu's regime, Claudia Moscovici offers her readers a multifaceted book - *Velvet Totalitarianism* - that is at once a love story, a political novel, and a mystery. (Sanda Golopentia, professor of French, Brown University)

This vivid novel by Claudia Moscovici, historian of ideas and wide-ranging literary critic, traces a family of Romanian refugees from the stifling communist dictatorship of their homeland through their settling in the United States during the 1980s. This fascinating and compelling story is at home historically accurate, exciting, sexy, and a real page-turner. (Edward K. Kaplan, professor in the Humanities at Brandeis University)

Claudia Moscovici's first novel, *Velvet Totalitarianism*, triumphs on several levels: as a taut political thriller, as a meditation on totalitarianism, as an expose of the Ceausescu regime, and as a moving fictionalized memoir of one family's quest for freedom. (Ken Kalfus, author of the novel *A Disorder Peculiar to the Country*)

A deeply felt, deftly rendered novel of the utmost importance to any reader interested in understanding totalitarianism and its terrible human cost. Urgent, evocative, and utterly convincing, *Velvet Totalitarianism* is a book to treasure, and Claudia Moscovici is indeed a writer to watch, now and into the future. (Travis

Holland, author of *The Archivist's Story*)

In *Velvet Totalitarianism*, Claudia Moscovici makes her readers viscerally feel the corrosive psychological demoralization and numbing fear totalitarian regimes impose on those who live under them. At the same time, with style and wit, and informed by her experiences as a child in communist Romania and then as an immigrant in the United States, she tells a story of resilience and hope. *Velvet Totalitarianism* is a novel well worth reading, both for its compelling narrative and for its important message. (Michael Kort, professor of social science at Boston University, author of *The Soviet Colossus: History and Aftermath*)

The author experienced totalitarianism personally while living in Romania with her family during the Nicolae Ceausescu regime. And many of her own experiences find their way into her historically rich piece of fiction. (*Heritage Newspapers*, October 8, 2009)

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