

Ten days that fooled the world (Independent Dec 1994)

Five years ago this week, the world rejoiced as Romania rose to overthrow its dictator. JOHN SIMPSON, who was there for the BBC, went back and has discovered startling evidence that the revolution was not as it seemed.

It was the defining revolution of our time, a darkly satisfying affair that opened with the dictator's moment of comic stupefaction when the crowd presumed to boo him, reached its height as the wild-eyed, newly liberated crowds stormed the Central Committee building, waving flags with holes where the Communist insignia had been and chanting songs about Nicolae Ceausescu being no more, and closed with the spectacle of the tyrant and his Lady Macbeth wife lying dead in the snow at Tirgoviste. No velvet revolution here: this sprang from an ancient, autochthonous affinity for violence. From the first confrontation in Timisoara on 16 December to the executions on Christmas Day, these were 10 days which sated the world's appetite for drama and revenge.



Rumania's Communist dictator from 1965 - 1989, Nicolae Ceausescu, and his wife and second-in-command Elena, were prosecuted by the National Salvation Front in a secret trial, held on a military base near Tirgoviste, Rumania, on Christmas Day, December 25th 1989.

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