“Manea’s style offers a masterful rendition of the suffering and irony that I have come to associate with Eastern European literature. The author is consumed with introspection; the grotesque is never too far off; the spaces and figures depicted therein barely mask the barren land of absurdity… The Hooligan’s Return is a brave and stimulating book, ingeniously chiseled and filled with subtle literary allusions to Shakespeare, Ovid, Kafka, Proust and Cioran, among others.”

*Svenska Dagbladet*

“Although it does not contain fictional elements, The Hooligan’s Return is a novel in the strongest sense of the term. Manea aims not to render memories and events, but to find a literary form and a language capable of conveying the complex nature of those experiences that weigh on him: the traumatic times of his childhood, in the deportation camps; his young adulthood falsified by the adherence to the pioneer’s red tie and the betrayal of friends who become enemies of the party; his adulthood, spent in an increasingly corrupt society and language and followed by his attempt to begin anew in a new country. All these experiences are eventually thrown into his face when he returns to his country of origin. ‘Complex’ is too pale a word to describe the lived experience that Manea seeks to transform into a novel. (…) Over the years, Manea was the recipient of several distinctions and honors as a writer; nevertheless, we continue to find in his writing the same suffering and void that Daniel Libeskind rendered so poignantly in the Garden of Exile at the Jewish Museum in Berlin.”

*Aftonbladet*

“The intellectual, elegiac tonality of the writing is fitting to the subject undertaken by Manea; what comes as a surprise is its rich form, the fact that the feeling of void peers through so many words, through complex sentences and a collage of stylistic registers. Manea’s memoir received many awards in several countries and the author’s name tends to come up time and again in discussions concerning the Nobel Prize. I can fully understand this tendency given the fact that Manea writes as though he would want to shield us from history’s false promises.”

*Dagens Nyheter*

“Certain authors seem to embody an entire century of historical turmoil. Such is the case with the Jewish writer Paul Celan (who wrote in German), Imre Kertész, Elie Wiesel or Nelly Sachs. Each of them described the manner in which 20th-century history crushed their worlds. Norman Manea is now among these writers. As a Jew, he found himself in the midst of the storm that swept through Central Europe in the 40s: he lived through deportations, concentration camps and years of communist dictatorship. His work now appears in Swedish: The Hooligan’s Return, an autobiographical narrative with a complex literary structure is out in a richly nuanced translation by Dan Shafran and Lars-Inge Nilsson.”

*Sydsvenskan*
"Manea made his debut in 1969 and, like other writers from Eastern Europe, such as Milan Kundera or György Konrád he polished his style in accordance with what he knew he would or would not be allowed to write. His meandering syntactical constructions are rich in images and allusions that the censors would be unable to decipher, filled with striking associations accessible only to the initiates. Although at the moment he writes in the context of a free society, Manea appears to have made an art of the former constraint and turned it into his signature style. If his native tongue is his only motherland, his style is his identity card."

Expressen

"Norman Manea is a writer who will be much talked about in Sweden. Through The Hooligan’s Return, his memoir in novelistic form, his chances of receiving the Nobel Prize in Literature from His Royal Highness have increased exponentially. Overall, his depiction of Romanian society and its absurdities, as well as the description of his own ambivalence are of the highest level, a fact which can only give us joy."

Tidningen Kulturen

"The Hooligan’s Return is in many ways a nuanced and profound masterpiece. It speaks to us about Romania and a form of nationalism that is incomprehensible to us as Swedes; it speaks of tragic destinies, politics, literature, writers and philosophy. But, above all, it speaks of the importance of language for the survival of the individual."

Nerikes Allehanda

“It seems at the very least strange that Norman Manea has not been translated into Swedish up until now, when his memoir The Hooligan’s Return came out. He is the most translated among the authors writing in Romanian today, his works rank among the most vivid depictions of life under dictatorships and exile, and his name often comes up in discussions surrounding the Nobel Prize for Literature. Now he is, at last, here, thanks to his voluminous memoir available in a painstakingly crafted translation by Lars-Inge Nilsson and Dan Shafran."

Borås Tidning

"Manea moves with great talent between external and internal phenomena, in passages which seem at times dreamlike, and, at other times, realistic. Ambivalence, the feeling of belonging nowhere, the impossible effort to adopt a religious credo or a strict political allegiance, in fact, all this puzzlement which is the immigrant’s eternal companion is rendered in a sharp and emotionally exigent manner."

Norrköpings Tidningar

“It is natural to extract for oneself, from time to time, the sap from Romanian literature. (…) My new acquaintance is Norman Manea, whose novel, The Hooligan’s Return is published by 2244, in Lars-Inge Nilsson and Dan Shafran’s translation. It is rare to happen upon such a deep well of words, dreams, nightmares and memories, feverishly narrated with seemingly explosive force. I have never read anything quite like it."

Thomas Nydahl, personal blog

“The novel is filled with painful passages, beautiful and irrevocable moments, and the tortuous pains of consciousness. Manea’s merit is to show us that evil is constantly changing form. As people, we have a tendency to fixate it in time, perhaps in order to better resist it.” (…) “a brilliant style”

Göteborgs-Posten