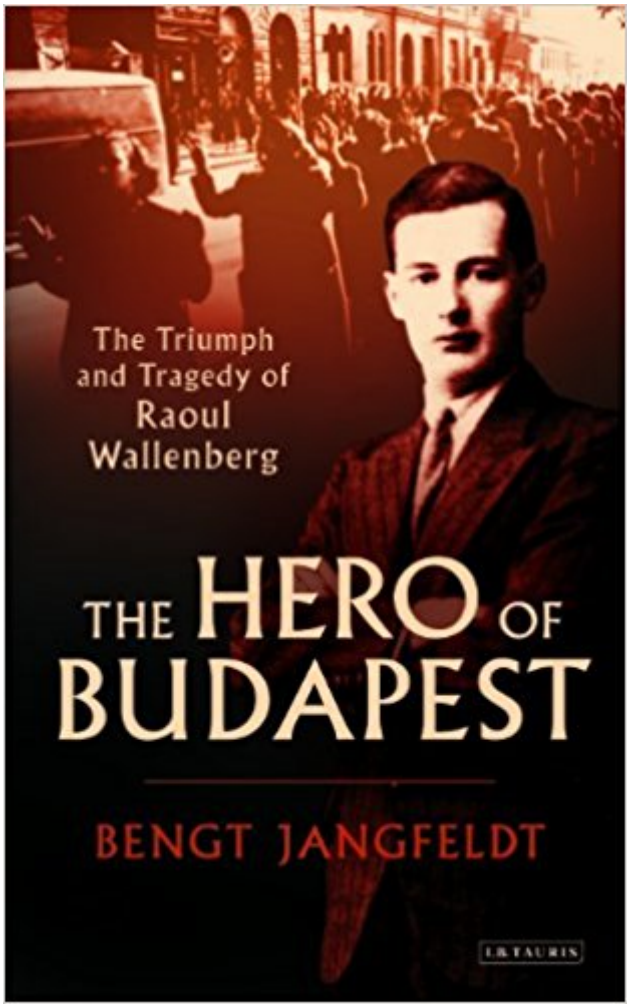
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Hero Of Budapest, The: The Triumph And Tragedy Of Raoul Wallenberg



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Synopsis

The story of Raoul Wallenberg - who, at immense personal risk, rescued many of Budapest's Jews from the Holocaust - is one of the most remarkable of World War II. Yet the complete account of his life and fate can only be told now - and for the first time in this book - following access to the Russian and Swedish archival sources, previously not used. Wallenberg was a Swedish businessman, recruited by the War Refugee Board to rescue thousands of Hungarian Jews. Once in Budapest, he created and distributed so called 'protective passports' among the Jewish population, thus managing to save up to 8,000 people. Through the 'safe houses' and clandestine networks that he established around the city, many thousands more were saved from the concentration camps. Yet, when Budapest was liberated by the Red Army in January 1945, Wallenberg was arrested, taken to Moscow and disappeared into the Soviet prison system. Using previously unseen sources, Bengt Jangfeldt has been able to reconstruct the events surrounding Wallenberg's arrest almost hour by hour and, for the first time, he is able to shed new light on why Wallenberg was arrested and what happened to him after he disappeared.

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Customer Reviews

This is my favorite book. actually made me go to visit budapest. what a hero and a great man.

I knew who Raoul Wallenberg was, but I am glad to have learned so much more about him and what he did in Hungary during WWII. He was an amazing person. This book was well written and I didn't want to put it down. Additionally, there are many photos that I found complimented the text.

A story that needs to be remembered. What he fought against, often alone, still prevails in the inertia of Governments globally to address the dark side of humanity that resorts to brutal slaughter in the name of religion or belief.

Extremely interesting little known facts about a great man.

The extermination of one of the largest Jewish communities in Europe was that of Hungary. Dry statistics figures show that all in all, 570000 of Hungary's 825000 Jews fell victim in the Holocaust, 437000 of them in the course of less than two months in the spring of 1944.Winston Churchill wrote that thet persecution of Jews in Hungary and their expulsion is "probably the greatest and most horrible crime ever committed in the history of the world.`Enter Raoul Wallenberg. He grew up in a wealthy banking family and his father died of cancer before he even saw his son. Raoul was raised by his mother, but the main figure who was responsible for his upbringing was his paternal grandfather, Gustav Wallenberg. According to Professor Jangfeldt, Gustav adviced his grandson to carry out the duty "of those who have the talent to carry out the great tasks to rise above their contemporaries". Thus Raoul was sent to study architecture at the University of Michigan. After graduating, Raoul took some jobs both in South Africa and in Palestine- to be precise: in Haifa, and after some months he chose to work for a Hungarian Jew who had an import-export business in Stockholm. The name of Raoul's boss was Kolman Lauer and he would be the turning point in Raoul's life, since Lauer, backed by the Americans, was engaged in an effort to save the Hungarian Jews.Raoul arrived in Budapest in July 1944. after being appointed secretary to the delegation and representative of the War Refugee Board. From this point onwards, Raoul would implement his granfather's wish. He worked incessantly in order to save as many Jews as possible by doing several things. He issued provisional passports called "protective passports ("Schutzpass)" to Jews who had some connection to Sweden. He found thirty-two safe houses where Jews would be housed. He provided food for the Ghetto inhabitants and also began a Swedish hospital in his

private flat. Ten specialist doctors worked full-time in the hospitala nd it opened on 2 December, after only five days' preparation. He managed to save the lives of some 8000 Jews in addition to housing tens of thousands of them in those abobe-mentioned safe houses.These are just a few examples taken from this fascinating and extremely well and deeply- researched new biography by Professor Jangfeldt.However, the last one hundred pages of this important volume are much more interesting, since they deal with Raoul's arrest and fate. Why he was arrested remains an enigma. It is here where the original part of the book starts, because there are many new sources which were discovered by the author on this point. The warrant for Raoul's arrest was signed by Deputy Defence Commisar Bulganin and addressed to Marshal Malinovsky with a copy to the head of SMERSH, Victor Abakumov. It said that Raoul " shall be arrested and brought to Moscow" . This happened in January 1945. According to the author, Raoul's possessions contained documents pertaining to the activities of the Swedish delegation in Budapest; his plans for the reconstruction of Hungary after the war; photographs of atrocities committed by the Nazis and the Arrow Cross party. "We also know that he had with him money in various currencies as well as gold and valuables". The Soviets knew about those valuables through a spy in Wallenberg's intimate circle and there is no record of what happened to them and the gold. In all probability, they were stolen by soldiers and officers on the spot.Raoul was sent to the Lubianka prison and the given profession on the arrest card was "diplomatic overseer or observer". Raoul arrived here from another prison, Lefortovo. He shared his cell with the German Gustav Richter, also known as Romania's Eichmann-with the difference that Richter's plan was never implemented. It was Richter who, in 1955, supplied information about the three weeks in which he shared his cell with Wallenberg, who was accused of being a spy in favour of the Germans.The author includes some new photostats of testimonies given by other citizens who saw Wallenberg. The fact that some papers found proved that Wallenberg had connections with various Nazi officials-Kurt Becher and Himmler-worked against him. The Soviets kept Wallenberg in jail for two and a half years without being interrogated more than five times. According to Jangfeldt, Wallenberg was suspected of collaboration with the American and British intelligence sservices-a suspicion which fueled Stalin's paranoia.Raoul died as a result of a heart attack on 17 July 1947. This official report is also raising some questions because there are some testimonies written by some Russian officers and found by the author which deny that Raoul was suffering from a heart condition.The last part of the book asks why the Swedish authorities did very little for their citizen and maybe there were some economic factors or interests which were responsible for this behaviour. As he concludes, Professor Jangfeldt writes that "much greater resources could no doubt have been mobilized, considering the Wallenberg family's position

and influence".This book, which is based on original research, includes tens of never-before-published new photos and is a must for all those who would like to know more about one of the most intelligent and noble persons who was ever alive and has justly deserved the title of" one of the righteous" during those horrible days in the annals of humanity. Highly recommended.

Would you help another man at incredible risk to yourself. How about doing this every day, three times a day, with each time the risk that those who murdered thousands as one drinks coffee could kill you.This is a superbly documented book of award-winning quality, reflecting the author's examination of thousands of documents in various languages and literature about Wallenberg. That Wallenberg saved thousands is known, how he did it, the use of his organizational skills, the use of diplomatic passports and visas- and his incredible fortitude, that is the subject of this book.

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