



The Siege of Budapest: 100 Days in World War II

By Krisztian Ungvary



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In the final six months of World War II, Germany and the Soviet Union focused on Hungary: Stalin demanded victory at all costs as a key to securing his European empire; Hitler ordered an unrelenting defense of Budapest in order to prolong his grip on Vienna and preserve the route to Berlin. Consequently, the siege of Budapest was one of the longest and bloodiest battles of the entire war.

Based on formerly inaccessible documents and several hundred interviews with Hungarian and German survivors, this is the first complete and unbiased account of the siege of Budapest. Street by street, day by day, Krisztián Ungváry describes the battle and its horrors in meticulous detail. One hundred and two days passed between the appearance of the first Soviet tank and the final capture of Buda Castle. More than 80,000 Soviet troops and 38,000 German and Hungarian soldiers were killed; about 38,000 Hungarian civilian lives were lost. Civilian casualties were extraordinarily high because the city's 800,000 noncombatant residents were never evacuated. This book represents a massive effort of historical reconstruction, and a major contribution to the history of World War II.

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Editorial Review

Review

“This book provides the first acceptable assessment and analysis of the siege of Budapest, a monumental confrontation during the Second World War. Krisztián Ungváry makes use of a wealth of fresh historical evidence locked until recently in the secret archives of Russia and eastern Germany. He draws on the diaries and personal recollection of survivors, both civilian and soldiers . . . most of whom have never got over their experience. The result is excellent scholarship and gripping reading. . . . [It] deserves to be widely read.”—Thomas Land, *Times Literary Supplement*

“The Siege of Budapest is an important and exciting contribution to World War II history. The siege was a crucial event in the final year of the war. No other European capital--apart from Berlin and Warsaw--suffered a similar fate. It is a source of endless horror as well as fascination to read about how more than 800,000 civilians, including well over 100,000 Jews in a ghetto or in hiding, coped while German and Red Army soldiers engaged in hand-to-hand combat in the very buildings they inhabited.”--István Deák, Columbia University

“Excellent scholarship and [a] gripping read.”

(Thomas Ország-Land *The Jerusalem Report*)

About the Author

Krisztián Ungváry is a research fellow at the Institute for the History of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution. **Ladislaus Löb** is emeritus professor of German, University of Sussex.

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