



# The Gold Train: The Destruction of the Jews and the Looting of Hungary

*Ronald W. Zweig*

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*The riveting, never-before-told story of one of World War II's most compelling and unresolved mysteries -- the disappearance of the loot on the Hungarian Gold Train*

In 1944, with the Red Army rapidly closing in, an extraordinary group of fascist ideologues, thieves, civil servants and soldiers jumped onto the "Gold Train" in Budapest and headed west. On that train was carriage after carriage of loot -- gold, gems, cash, furs, carpets -- gleaned from one of the century's most terrible crimes.

The destruction of the Hungarian Jews happened late in the war and with a unique bureaucratic efficiency. The officials who meticulously stripped the Jews of their jewelry, gold, silver, furnishings and other possessions before their murder believed that the stolen belongings of exterminated citizens were a major Hungarian state asset and at all costs were to be protected from the advancing Allies.

The great Gold Train and the value of its cargo took on a legendary quality even as it steamed out of the station -- hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of assets were on the move, with cunning, desperate or gullible passengers trying to reach an illusory Nazi stronghold in the Alps. The fate of this property has been the subject of fantastic rumors ever since the end of the war and was the basis of a Cold War dispute between east and west. Ronald Zweig's gripping book, *The Gold Train*, illuminates what happened to the train and explores its journey, which goes on to this day, as legal battles continue over its contents.

Drawing on a decade's worth of research into American, Israeli and European archives as well as private papers, eyewitness accounts and other sources, Zweig tells the full story of the Gold Train. He reveals the large cast of players enmeshed in the drama, including corrupt Hungarian and German Nazis, American and French armies, Jewish leaders from Hungary and Palestine, French security forces and international refugee organizations. He examines the myths that have developed around it and places this incredible event within the annals of Holocaust and Cold War history, including its impact on restitution policies through the postwar years to today.

An astonishing tale of espionage, betrayal, greed, secrecy and depravity, *The Gold Train* is real history that rivals the best of John le Carré, Robert Harris and Alan Furst.

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