

The Changing Significance of the 1956 Revolution in Post-Communist Hungary

ZOLTÁN CSIPKE

Abstract

This article explores the changing political uses of the memorialisation of the 1956 revolution in Hungary since 1989, in written history and in public monuments and displays. 1956 was central to the political discourse in 1989; merely 10 years later its anniversary publicly carried the significance of a bank holiday but within a few more years, and especially by the time of the 50th anniversary in 2006, the revolution had become a recurring motif in politics, as the political parties tried to stake their claim as the heirs of 1956. The article illustrates how the 1956 revolution first decreased and then increased in importance over the 20 years following the fall of communism, and how this was a direct result of the ability to use the revolution's memory for political gain.

THE EMERGENCE OF THE 1956 REVOLUTION AS A significant theme in the political discourse of post-communist Hungarian politics can be dated from events in 1988, shortly after the end of the period of János Kádár's leadership. Two months after the party conference of the *Magyar Szocialista Munkáspárt* (Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party) in May 1988, which saw Károly Grósz replace Kádár as general secretary, the party formed a committee to re-evaluate the previous 30 years and the party's role in it, under the direction of newly promoted Politburo member Imre Pozsgay, who was among the party's leading reformers (Romsics 2003, p. 77). One of the more significant milestones in the fall of communism in Hungary occurred the following January in 1989, when Pozsgay, announcing the preliminary results of the committee's findings during an interview on the *168 Óra* (168 Hours) radio programme, spoke of what the communist leadership had hitherto described as the '1956 Counterrevolution', as a 'people's uprising against an oligarchic and nation-humiliating form of rule'. Pozsgay thereby broke the official silence over 1956 and signalled a change in the decades-long official stance on the 1956 revolution within the Communist Party (Romsics 2003, p. 128).

1956 had been so much of a taboo topic within Hungarian society that it arguably fell into a memory hole in which discussion, let alone scholarship about the subject,

I would like to thank Nigel Swain for his comments and criticisms that went into shaping this article.

did not exist. Following Pozsgay's pronouncement, pressure from the increasingly organised democratic forces led to the reinterment of the remains of Imre Nagy and others from his circle from 1956 in a state burial ceremony on 16 June 1989 (Swain 2006a, p. 149). The date of 16 June was the anniversary of Nagy's execution in 1958, so the symbolism of an attempt to make amends for the past actions of the party was evident. A crowd numbering between 200,000 and 300,000 went to pay tribute at the funeral ceremony held in Heroes' Square (Romsics 1999, p. 433; Kontler 2002, p. 465).¹ Sensing the political power surrounding the figure of Imre Nagy, and by extension the events of 1956, the reformers in the leadership of the Socialist Workers' Party sought to take part in the ceremony to shore up their credentials with the population and to temper the influence of the democratic forces on it (Swain 2006a, p. 149). However, aware of how the Socialist Workers would try to use the funeral for their own benefit, the last speaker, Viktor Orbán of the liberal *Fiatal Demokraták Szövetsége* (Alliance of Young Democrats, known primarily by its acronym *Fidesz*) declared in his speech:

We young people fail to understand a lot of things about the older generation We do not understand that the very same party and government leaders who told us to learn from books falsifying the history of the revolution now vie with each other to touch these coffins as if they were lucky charms. (Ash 1999, p. 51)

Orbán's speech was notable for several reasons.² First, it marked his entry onto the national political stage, and as Ignác Romsics³ observed, all six speakers at that day's events spoke with future political considerations in mind (Romsics 2003, p. 155).⁴ Secondly, while acknowledging that Nagy was a communist, Orbán stated that Nagy and the others around him were deserving of respect because they represented the interests of the people, and refused to compromise their beliefs in the face of certain death. More generally however, Orbán was highly critical of the communist government, blaming it for his generation's failed hopes, and adding that although members of the government were now moving Hungary toward a more democratic system, they did not deserve gratitude. Lastly, foreshadowing how 1956 would be important in post-communist Hungary, Orbán claimed that the reformers' campaigning for democracy in 1989 appeared to be on the cusp of 'peacefully achieving all that 1956's revolutionaries did through bloody battles'.⁵ Thus the system change was presented as a belated realisation of the goals of 1956 which, given its multiplicity of possible outcomes as a failed revolution, provided the competing political organisations with a

¹The attendance of 200,000 is given by Romsics (1999, p. 433). Kontler's figure is 300,000 (Kontler 2002, p. 465).

²The full text of the speech is available at 'Orbán Viktor Beszéde Nagy Imre és Mártírtársai Újratemetésén', *Magyar Nemzet Online*, available at: <http://www.mno.hu/portal/643531>, accessed 22 March 2010.

³Unless otherwise noted, the individuals writing about 1956 or contemporary Hungarian political matters are historians.

⁴The speakers that day were Miklós Vásárhelyi, Sandor Rácz, Imre Mécs, Tibor Zimányi, Béla Király and Orbán. All of them except for Rácz won parliamentary seats in the elections held the following year.

⁵Orbán Viktor Beszéde Nagy Imre és Mártírtársai Újratemetésén', *Magyar Nemzet Online*, available at: <http://www.mno.hu/portal/643531>, accessed 22 March 2010.

wealth of possibilities to identify themselves with 1956's participants, or to be the party that would 'finish the revolution'.

Following free elections in the spring of 1990, and the formation of a coalition government led by the Hungarian Democratic Forum, the first act of the newly elected parliament was to pass a law that recognised the events of late October and early November in 1956 as a 'revolution and fight for freedom' (*forradalom és szabadságharc*) (Benziger 2008, p. 118). The preamble to Law XXVIII of 1990 stated 'it is the duty of the freely elected new parliament to make the October 1956 revolution and fight for freedom part of Hungarian law without delay'.⁶ The preamble continued that 'the revolution in the autumn of 1956 laid a foundation for the hope that a democratic society can be created, and that there is no such thing as dying in vain for the country's independence', adding that the newly elected parliament would be acting in 'the spirit of 1956'. The law itself stated that the memory of the 1956 revolution would become enshrined in law, and that 23 October would henceforth be a national holiday.

Thus, 1956 was central to the political discourse of the period 1988–1990. In contrast, only a decade later, it seemed to have lost much of its significance in the political discourse of the time. As the professor of aesthetics and communications Péter György observed of the revolution's memory in 2000, 'today 1956 has sunk deeper into time than at any point since the system change' (György 2000, p. 338). However, less than a further decade later, around the time of the 50th anniversary, the revolution was again central to political discourse. The question raised by this fluctuation in public interest in the revolution is how and why the revolution underwent such a transformation in its significance. This article will examine how 1956 decreased and increased in importance in the years after the system change, and will argue that it was a direct reflection of political developments in post-communist Hungary. It will also illustrate the attitudes of the various post-communist political parties towards the revolution and reveal how this influenced their celebration of 1956 or lack of it. Furthermore, it aims to shed light on how the memory of an event from the communist past is treated in the period after communism, and the difficulties that occur when part of the nation was 'on the other side' in the not so distant past. Since 1956 is part of the 'foundational myth' of contemporary Hungary, and was one of the rallying points in 1989, the realisation of how the revolution's memory could be used for political purposes is the reason for its importance to many of Hungary's contemporary political debates. As the article will illustrate, the significance accorded to the revolution is directly related to the strength of the Socialist Party and the ability of the various parties of the right to use 1956 against the socialists.

The contested memory of 1956

As has been noted by the sociologist Maurice Halbwachs: 'The various groups that compose society are capable at every moment of reconstructing their past. But, as we

⁶1990. Évi XXVIII. Törvény', available at: <http://www.complex.hu/kzldat/t9000028.htm/t9000028.htm>, accessed 6 July 2009; a database of all laws and parliamentary resolutions passed from 1990 to the present can be found at: http://www.complex.hu/kzlcim/kzl90_96.htm, last accessed 30 September 2010.

have seen, they most frequently distort that past in the act of reconstructing it' (Halbwachs 1992, p. 182). One must also bear in mind Wulf Kansteiner's observation that in the case of memory, 'it privileges the interests of the contemporary' (Kansteiner 2002, p. 180). Thus, memory is how an individual or group wishes to view the past as opposed to what actually happened. As to why post-communist memory in Hungary has focused around 1956, it may be because, as noted by Robert Moeller in discussing German history, 'trauma and suffering are among the most powerful forces capable of shaping "communities of memory"' (Moeller 2005, p. 177). From this perspective, if any period of post-war Hungarian history would be a candidate for the focus of post-communist memory, it would be 1956.

Since the 1956 revolution was never allowed to run its course, to this day it provides for debates over which direction it would have ultimately taken, whether the interlocutors are politicians, scholars or the average citizen. As Charles Gati has succinctly summarised it:

With the rise of angry divisions in Hungarian society since 1989 ... current political considerations have come to distort popular explanations of who did what in 1956 and why the revolt failed. Reading history backward has become an integral part of a deeply polarised political scene. Today's ex-Communist socialists identify with Nagy and claim to be his heirs and of 1956 too—as if their predecessors had had nothing to do with suppressing the revolt, supporting the Soviet intervention and, in 1958 organising the juridical murder of Nagy and hundreds of revolutionaries. By contrast, today's anti-Communists—some of them political impostors and turncoats who before 1989 cooperated with the Communist regime—do not know what to make of Nagy's Communist past, disparage his associates, and passionately deny the revolution's socialist goals. (Gati 2006, p. 20)

There are essentially three variations on the theme of where 1956 ultimately would have led had the Soviet Army not intervened on the morning of 4 November. First is the reform communist projection, which is the most tenuous, since by 1 November Imre Nagy had already admitted non-communists into his government, and therefore the continued reform of the communist system seems unlikely, unless it were to continue as a variant of 'democratic socialism'. The other two (and more likely) outcomes were a form of non-communist but not necessarily anti-communist social democracy (frequently described as a variant of the somewhat vague 'third way') and a rejection of the previous decade's political system with a return to a coalition government led by the right, much as was the case following the first mostly free elections in 1945.⁷ Perhaps due to the relative lack of specificity on what exactly the 'third way' entailed, it has found popularity among most scholars, and, because it leans somewhat toward the left, it has also found favour among parties of that political persuasion. Conversely, the anti-communist prediction that sees a return to the first post-war government (thereby considering the period between it and 1956 an

⁷The electoral process itself was largely free of outside influence and irregularities but the outcome, which saw the *Magyar Kommunista Párt* (Hungarian Communist Party) shoehorned into the government despite only winning 17% of the vote and with the *Független Kisgazdapárt* (Independent Smallholders Party) winning a majority by themselves, illustrates that democracy was limited from the outset.

aberration, and by proxy the entire communist period as such) has found favour on the right and among right-leaning historians.⁸

As noted above, the Socialist Workers' Party first came around to reassessing the revolution privately in 1988 and publicly in 1989. By the time of Imre Nagy's funeral, they were gravitating towards adopting him as a figurehead, and, following the system change the rebranded *Magyar Szocialista Párt* (Hungarian Socialist Party)⁹ tried to appropriate Nagy while awkwardly remaining distant from the revolution to which he was linked. The *Szabad Demokraták Szövetsége* (Alliance of Free Democrats), arising from the democratic opposition, and including some members of Imre Nagy's former circle (and therefore with perhaps the most tenable claim to descent from Nagy), were favourable to the 'third way' or social democratic assessment. The parties of the right—the *Magyar Demokrata Fórum* (Hungarian Democratic Forum), the *Független Kisgazda Párt* (Independent Smallholders' Party) and, a few years later, *Fidesz* after their drift to the right, for obvious reasons supported the anti-communist approach.¹⁰

Since the revolution is part of the foundational myth of the contemporary third republic of Hungary (symbolically proclaimed on 23 October 1989), extolling its virtues simultaneously allows one to present the revolution in a positive light and to denigrate the communist period as an *intermezzo* on the Hungarian path toward democracy, in which 1956 was a corrective action cut short. Thus, while praising the revolution and positioning one's particular political party on the side of the revolution could be used to underpin one's own democratic values, calling into question a rival's association with 1956 would serve to question their democratic values. Therefore, 1956 is important not only in terms of the legitimacy it can provide but also that which it can take away. This, of course, is the major determining factor in deciding what the significance of the revolution is in post-communist Hungary, either as it becomes a part of post-communist memory or as it is used as a political instrument.

Remembering the past

In terms of the mainstream historiography of 1956 in contemporary Hungary, a general consensus exists over the broader issues while there are disagreements arising over the finer points. There is agreement that the Writers' Union played a significant role prior to the revolution, that the students played a leading role in the early days, that the fighters came primarily from the working class, that Imre Nagy was one of the main figures of the revolution, and that what the people wanted was an end to tyranny

⁸Csaba Békés is perhaps the sole scholar associated with a liberal institution (the 1956 Institute) to have argued for what can be considered a right-favouring interpretation, albeit from a somewhat different perspective than most. While those who support such arguments generally present the revolutionaries as being in favour of anti-communism, Békés instead argues that if elections had been held after the revolution, the countryside would have carried the Smallholders back into power, irrespective of what the active participants in 1956 wished (Békés 2006, p. 65).

⁹In the process of rebranding themselves, the Socialists also jettisoned their hardline faction, which went on to form the *Magyar Kommunista Munkáspárt* (Hungarian Communist Workers' Party).

¹⁰*Fidesz* has additionally attempted to create a subset of the anti-communist position, asserting that 1956 was a *polgári* revolution. However, irrespective of whether one takes *Fidesz*'s preferred translation of *polgári* as 'civic', or their critics' preferred translation as 'bourgeois', it is difficult to see 1956, in which the overwhelming number of active participants belonged to the working class, as *polgári*.

and Soviet occupation. Where accounts have differed however, is on the questions of the extent to which the revolution can be said to have been left-leaning or right-leaning, of whether Nagy was making decisions on his own or responding to the demands of the street, and with which form of government the people wished to replace the Stalinist system (social democracy, a return to the post-war centre-right government, or somewhere in-between). Furthermore, where this general consensus has broken down dramatically since 1989 it has been over the political meaning of the revolution for current politics. While such differences have emerged between scholarly accounts, they can be seen to an even greater degree in the public sphere.¹¹

To begin with, after 1989, there was a relative consensus in the public memorialisation of 1956. Once 1956 could be openly discussed and commemorated again, plaques in memory of the revolution began to appear around Budapest and other parts of the country. These were set up by such organisations as the *'56-os Kegyeleti Bizottság* ('56 Memorial Committee) and the *Magyar Politikai Foglyok Szövetsége* (Hungarian Political Prisoners' Association), in some cases of private individuals, and also through the support of political parties, with the centre-right Democratic Forum being the most frequent sponsor among political parties.¹² Plans to renovate Lot 301 in the Rákoskeresztúri Cemetery¹³—where Imre Nagy and others executed for their participation in the revolution were buried in the late 1950s—went forward with the cooperation of the *Incommu* artist collective (see Figure 1) (György 2000, pp. 47–49).¹⁴ In the adjacent Lot 300, a national memorial designed by György Jovánovics with the oversight of the *Történelmi Igazságtétel Bizottsága* (Historical Justice Committee) was dedicated in 1992 (György 2000, p. 40).

However, according to György, this initial public memorialising of the revolution was merely symbolic politicking (György 2000, p. 299). For the Democratic Forum, the 1956 revolution was 'too close to democratic socialism for their tastes' (György 2000, p. 314). In György's estimation, the Democratic Forum, while extolling the revolution, kept it at arm's length and used it merely as a political tool. Further evidence of the right's uneasiness with the left-leaning aspects of the revolution can be seen in the way the memory of Imre Nagy was treated. Since he went to his grave an unrepentant communist, the right had considerable difficulty in giving him a central place in its memorialisation (Gati 2006, p. 20). For example, during the discussions in parliament on Law XXVIII on the 1956 revolution the then Democratic Forum vice-chairman István Csurka and the more conservative elements in the governing coalition in 1990 succeeded in removing reference to Nagy as the revolution's symbolic head

¹¹In my doctoral thesis I examined the works of scholars accessible to the general public in libraries and works published for the 50th anniversary available in bookstores to find the agreements and disagreements over 1956 in post-communist scholarship.

¹²Of those plaques dedicated by political parties throughout the 1990s, the Democratic Forum was the most frequent sponsor, in no small part due to its being the largest party to emerge toward the end of the 1980s.

¹³The cemetery is also known as the Újköztemető (New Public Cemetery).

¹⁴*Incommu* is an artist collective that formed in the late 1970s and took a leading role in the transformation of Lots 298 and 301 into memorial sites after the fall of communism. While they do not espouse any one political ideology, they are known for being strongly anti-communist.



FIGURE 1. THE ABSTRACT MEMORIAL LOCATED IN LOT 300 OF THE RÁKOSKERESZTÚRI CEMETERY. ALL PHOTOGRAPHS ARE BY THE AUTHOR.

(Benziger 2008, p. 118).¹⁵ Consequently, Nagy was distanced from the revolution in which he played a significant leadership role.

The political scientist Heino Nyssönen has identified 1992 as ‘the year of polarisation’, when the post-communist spirit of cooperation by most political parties broke down, and with it, attempts for a single memory of the revolution (Nyssönen 1999, pp. 142–45). Writing in 1993, and also sensing a shift in attitudes toward the revolution, Péter Kende observed that ‘the place of 1956 in Hungarian collective knowledge is uncertain’ (Kende 1993, p. 8).

In the 1994 parliamentary elections the Socialists won the majority of seats and formed a coalition government with the Free Democrats, under the leadership of Gyula Horn as prime minister. In 1956 Horn had participated in the infamous quilted-coated workers’ militia (*pufajkások*), an organisation comprised of irregulars that helped the Soviet forces to crush the revolution since the Hungarian police and

¹⁵Csurka was expelled from the party in 1993 for his increasingly radical views, but the fact that he could succeed in this endeavour shows that he was able to find enough support to have his motion approved. As Benziger (2008) notes, to this day Csurka denies allegations that he collaborated with the communist regime.

military had proven politically unreliable.¹⁶ In a speech on the anniversary of the revolution in 1994, Horn ‘called for national reconciliation and shared honour for all, communist and anticommunist, victims of the revolt’ (Tókécs 1996, p. 419). This revealed that the Socialist Party’s attitude toward the revolution, and which side to take, was still ambiguous.

As Frigyes Kahler and Sándor M. Kiss noted, it never occurred to the Socialist Workers’ Party at the time of system change to apologise for 1956 (Kahler & Kiss 1997, p. 337); and thereafter, since the Socialists saw themselves as Nagy’s heirs, they argued that there was no reason to apologise. According to the former director of the 1956 Institute, György Litván, his colleague at the institute András B. Hegedűs, and Béla Pomogáts, a research fellow of the Institute of Literary Scholarship at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, asked the Socialist Party in 1995 to make a solid break with their past as the Socialist Workers’ Party and announce that they stood by the principles of 1956. This would have marked a shift away from the attitude described by Kahler and Kiss. However, Gyula Horn made no such statement and instead focused commemorations around the figure of Imre Nagy (Litván 2002, p. 262).

The 40th anniversary

As Karl P. Benziger has observed: ‘The casting off of Nagy in 1990 [by the right] provided the Socialists with the opportunity of appropriating Nagy’s symbolic status’ (Benziger 2008, p. 125). It should be no surprise then that in the year of the 40th anniversary in 1996, the Socialists focused their commemorations around Nagy. They used two different means, which due to the timing of these events in the summer, separated Nagy from the 40th anniversary of the revolution later in the year.

One way to understand memorial procedures is to consider Pierre Nora’s concept of *lieux de mémoire* (‘places of memory’), which can be the geographic locations that conjure memories or certain dates out of the year that serve the same purpose (Nora 1996, pp. 2–3). As Nora noted, *lieux de mémoire* can also be more than that, capable of being ‘material, symbolic and functional’, such that ‘a commemorative minute of silence, an extreme example of a strictly symbolic action, serves as a concentrated appeal to memory . . .’ (Nora 1996, p. 19). Similarly, the term ‘vessels and vehicles of memory’, coined by Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi—meaning essentially the same as *lieux de mémoire*, but providing a broader definition including texts and rituals that evoke memory or bring people together—may help in conceptualising how all of these different methods of remembering can coalesce to promote a certain brand of memory (Yerushalmi 1996, p. xxix).

The first commemorative gesture by the Socialists was the introduction of an Imre Nagy memorial bill. This met with hostile reactions from the other parliamentary parties, so that only the Socialists voted in favour of it, with the Free Democrats abstaining and the opposition voting against (Litván 2002, p. 262). The Free

¹⁶As recently as 2006 Horn maintained in an interview that as a member of that militia he was simply ‘maintaining order’ (Marx 2006). Stating that this interview revealed that Horn’s attitudes toward the revolution were contrary to the constitutional principles of the Hungarian Republic, President László Sólyom refused to grant Horn an award on behalf of the Republic of Hungary in 2007 (‘Sólyom László Megtagadta Horn Gyula Kitüntetését’, *Magyar Nemzet Online*, 4 July, available at: <http://mno.hu/portal/419051>, accessed 23 July 2009).

Democrats, the Socialists' coalition partners, actually led the attack against the bill, accusing the Socialists of trying to hide their own past (Benziger 2008, pp. 121–22). The opposition parties wanted the names of all of the martyrs executed after the revolution to be included in the bill (Benziger 2008, pp. 122–23): 'From the opposition's point of view, Imre Nagy was now being honoured by the party most closely associated with the authoritarian regime of János Kádár' (Benziger 2008, p. 125) and the opposition further saw the Nagy memorial bill as a Socialist attempt to shape public opinion and legitimise themselves (Benziger 2008, p. 126).

The second way through which the Socialists focused their memorialisation around Nagy, instead of focusing on the 40th anniversary, was by means of a statue in central Budapest in his memory designed by Tamás Varga, which was dedicated in the presence of Nagy's daughter Erzsébet (see Figure 2). In addition to being the 40th anniversary of the revolution, 1996 was also the centennial of Nagy's birth, and as such the majority of Socialist Party commemorations that year were held in June around Nagy's birthday. In this way, the memorial and Nagy himself were isolated from the 40th anniversary, and consequently the Socialists were able to focus their celebrations on the reform-communist tradition from which they claim to be descended, while paying less attention to the anniversary of the revolution itself. The subtle message this sent, intentional or not, was that the Socialists were as yet unwilling to wholeheartedly support the revolution, and merely no longer opposed it.



FIGURE 2. THE STATUE OF IMRE NAGY LOCATED IN MARTYRS' SQUARE NEAR THE HUNGARIAN PARLIAMENT BUILDING.

As Katherine Verdery has noted, ‘statues are dead people cast in bronze or carved in stone. They symbolize a specific famous person while in a sense also *being* the body of that person’ (Verdery 1999, p. 5, emphasis in the original). Moreover, as Verdery further observed: ‘among the most important properties of bodies, especially dead ones, is their ambiguity, multivocality, or polysemy’ (Verdery 1999, p. 28). This is illustrated by observing the difference between 1989, when Imre Nagy’s body was used as a vessel by the opposition forces through which to attack the Socialist Workers’ Party, and the situation seven years later, when the then still not so different Socialist Party was using the same figure to promote themselves, with the opposition distancing themselves from him.

For the 40th anniversary in October 1996, the opposition parties, the Democratic Forum, the *Keresztény Demokrata Néppárt* (Christian Democratic People’s Party), the Smallholders and the far-right *Magyar Élet és Igazság Pártja* (Hungarian Justice and Life Party, which had only had seats in parliament from 1998 to 2002) held a joint commemoration, with the Democratic Forum also holding one in the village of Lakitelek.¹⁷ *Fidesz*, still in transition toward the right, was not aligned with the other parties in the opposition and chose to commemorate separately in Sopron in western Hungary. The various 1956 associations (the Historical Justice Committee, the Hungarian Political Prisoners’ Association and the ‘56-os Szövetség (1956 Association)) held joint commemorations around Budapest.¹⁸

President Árpád Göncz led the government’s commemorations, while Interior Minister Gábor Kunce and Education Minister Bálint Magyar—all three of whom were Free Democrats—distributed awards on the anniversary.¹⁹ The Socialist Party announced in advance that instead of 23 October, they would hold remembrances for the martyrs of 1956 on 4 November. Their choice of words left it unclear who these martyrs were. The only Socialist presence on 23 October was provided by the government members who participated in the ceremonial flag-raising in front of parliament and then laid wreaths on the Nagy memorial which had been dedicated earlier that year.²⁰ Thus it was the Free Democrats, whose credentials *vis-à-vis* 1956 were not questioned, who conducted the most overt public celebrations on the 40th anniversary, through their involvement in the creation and dedication of a new memorial in front of parliament and by being the only governing party whose officials took part in celebrations and commemorations beyond protocol events.

Part of the reason for the Socialists’ understated attitude to the commemorations could have been Gyula Horn’s participation in the workers’ militia in 1956. Another reason however, expressed by Péter Kende in 2006 was that:

The Socialist Party, as a successor to the Socialist Workers’ Party and to a large part relying on the votes of those who still believed in the Kádár system, could not publicly state that Kádár’s rise to power was illegitimate and anti-national, nor would they have because until very recently with the rise of Ferenc Gyurcsány to prominence within the party, they still

¹⁷Lakitelek is a village in Central Hungary where the Democratic Forum formed in 1987.

¹⁸*Magyar Nemzet*, 22 October 1996.

¹⁹*Magyar Hírlap*, 22 October 1996; *Magyar Nemzet*, 24 October 1996.

²⁰*Magyar Hírlap*, 24 October 1996; *Magyar Nemzet*, 22 October 1996.

believed there was much to preserve from the Kádárist system, and therefore preferred for the past to not be discussed. (Kende 2006, pp. 226–27)²¹

Although the fact that Gyula Horn was the prime minister for the 40th anniversary in 1996 was a cause of discontent for the right, their disorganisation meant that the parliamentary debates over the Imre Nagy memorial bill were the extent of their public dissent in an official capacity.²² The 40th anniversary did not see any public disturbances.²³ In fact, this lack of open opposition to Horn's leadership during the commemorations illustrates not only that the revolution did not hold the same significance that it would 10 years later, but also that politically there was little to be gained from mounting an offensive against him, even if the fractured opposition could have managed it.

The lack of unity in the 40th anniversary commemorations of 1956 is also evident in the memorials dedicated that year in Budapest. At Martyrs' Square, located just off Kossuth Square, one can find the Imre Nagy memorial that was dedicated by President Árpád Göncz, Prime Minister Horn and Erzsébet Nagy on 6 June 1996. While government members were present, then Free Democrat-friendly *Magyar Hírlap* made no mention of participation by the opposition.²⁴ Additionally, a new memorial column was erected on a hillside park in the Tabán area of Budapest's District I (see Figure 3). This memorial is visually very similar to the 1956 memorial in Los Angeles, California. According to Tibor Hornyák, president of the 1956 Memorial Committee, the memorial's designer Gyula Bogár Julius was inspired by the memorial in Los Angeles, after the original plans for a copy were abandoned (Torkos 1996). The memorial was paid for primarily with funds from Hungarian-Americans.²⁵ The fact that most of the funds came from abroad carried the message that Hungarians abroad felt that the Hungarians in Hungary were perhaps not giving the revolution the proper respect it deserved. (It can also be interpreted as Hungarians from abroad instructing Hungarians at home.)

Another two memorials (commonly taken as one) were erected in Corvin Lane (Corvin Köz), one of which is a tricolour memorial (in which the tricolour as of the late 2000s does not contain a hole) and the other is a statue of a 'Pest Lad' (*Pesti Srác*, one of those teenagers who took up arms during the revolution) (see Figure 4). Although they are taken together, the statue of the Pest Lad, which is of a 13-year old boy, was—like the Tabán memorial—the product of those who felt 1956 was not being accorded the reverence it deserved, among them the conservative groups with which Gergely Pongrácz, one of the leaders of the Corvin Lane fighters, was associated

²¹Mention should be made also of the curious case of the plaque honouring the fallen ÁVH (*Allamvédelmi Hatóság*) secret police officers that was erected in the lobby of the Socialist Workers' Party's Budapest headquarters at Köztársaság Square, where several ÁVH officers were lynched in 1956. Following the system change, after which the building became the national headquarters of the Socialist Party, the plaque was intermittently covered by a curtain. When the Socialist Party sold the building in 2007, the plaque was donated to the Workers' Pantheon in the Kerepesi Cemetery (Jóó 2007).

²²For more on the parliamentary debates, see Benziger (2008, pp. 121–25).

²³*Magyar Nemzet*, 24 October 1996.

²⁴*Magyar Hírlap*, 7 June 1996.

²⁵*Magyar Nemzet*, 22 October 1996.



FIGURE 3. THE MEMORIAL COLUMN IN THE TABÁN AREA OF BUDAPEST'S DISTRICT I.

(Boros 1997, pp. 123–26). Thus the statue is further evidence of the fragmented nature of memory over 1956.

At Kossuth Square in front of the parliament building, a granite 'candle' designed by Mária Lugossy and named 'The Flame of the Revolution' was dedicated on the 40th anniversary with the backing of President Göncz and MP Imre Mécés, both of whom were Free Democrats (György 2000, p. 333). The flame was originally lit from 23 October to 4 November, although it has since become an eternal flame (see Figure 5) (Dent 2006, p. 106). Also at Kossuth Square, a marble tablet with a bronze relief designed by László Gömbös was added by the Political Prisoners' Association to the symbolic grave memorialising those who died in the Kossuth Square Massacre in 1956, which was originally designed by Imre Makovecz and dedicated in 1991 (see Figure 6). In an article published in 1997, György Litván observed that despite a sudden upswing in interest at the time of the system change, from 1991 onward interest in 1956 decreased, so that '56 is better respected abroad than in Hungary' (Litván 1997, p. 24). This was made all the more obvious by the muted commemorations for the 40th anniversary.

The return of the right

In large part due to the unpopular austerity measures implemented by the Socialist Party during its first term in office (known as the Bokros Package after former Finance



FIGURE 4. THE STATUE OF THE 'PEST LAD' IN FRONT OF THE CORVIN CINEMA.

Minister Lajos Bokros),²⁶ a revitalised right led by *Fidesz* was voted into power in 1998. *Fidesz*'s embrace of 1956 was not immediate, however. As Litván observed, in the autumn of 1998—the first time they were in power for the anniversary—Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's speech was politically neutral (Litván 2002, p. 263). The situation changed a year later when the 1956 Institute saw 90% of its funding cut in favour of the new 20th Century Institute, which was led by Mária Schmidt, a close adviser to the prime minister (Nyssönen 1999, p. 277). (Three years later Schmidt would become the director of the House of Terror museum when it opened its doors.) The 20th Century Institute espoused an interpretation of the recent past more aligned with *Fidesz*'s views than the 1956 Institute or the Political History Institute, the latter two of which have been more favourably looked upon by the Socialist–Free Democrat coalition governments.

The historian Gábor Gyáni has observed that *Fidesz*'s attempt to mould the revolution within its own image started in the late 1990s, and that the party held the 'firm belief that they alone could continue and restore the legacy of 1956, which had been neglected even after 1989' (Gyáni 2006, p. 1204). The party attempted to relabel 1956 as a *polgári* revolution, placing the emphasis on the middle class (even though, as

²⁶At the time of writing Bokros was an MEP for the Democratic Forum.



FIGURE 5. THE 'FLAME OF THE REVOLUTION' GRANITE CANDLE MEMORIAL LOCATED IN FRONT OF THE PARLIAMENT BUILDING.

mentioned earlier, it was the working class that played the largest role in 1956). Gyáni continued:

By assuming the role of the present true mouthpiece of an exclusive historical truth about 1956, the storyteller (in this case a specific political actor) [*Fidesz*] dubbed the 1956 revolution as distinctively bourgeois and turned an image of the past into a mere reflection of the future. Commemoration of this kind can easily be identified as a case of using history instrumentally, for present-day political aims. (Gyáni 2006, p. 1204)

Thus, in Gyáni's interpretation, *Fidesz*'s increased reverence for 1956 was not borne out of a desire to better understand the recent past but for the political leverage it could afford the party in the present. While one cannot say absolutely that this was the case, it certainly does appear to be so, even if reverence for the past did play some role. (However, although not immediately apparent, the significance accorded to 1956 would also increase with a rise in the popularity of the Socialist Party.)

One example of *Fidesz*'s evolving and more active patronage of the memory of the revolution was the new memorial designed by László Gömbös and unveiled in 1999 in Lot 21 of the Kerepesi Cemetery (see Figure 7).²⁷ Dedicated by Prime Minister Orbán

²⁷The Kerepesi Cemetery is also known as the Fiumei Road Cemetery.



FIGURE 6. THE SYMBOLIC GRAVE IN FRONT OF THE PARLIAMENT BUILDING WITH THE TABLET ADDED BEHIND IT. A REVOLUTIONARY TRICOLOUR AND PLAQUE WERE UNOFFICIALLY APPENDED TO THESE MEMORIALS YEARS LATER.

(György 2000, p. 53), it was much more openly patriotic than György Jovánovics's abstract memorial in Lot 300 of the Rákoskeresztúri Cemetery. This memorial did not seek to quietly recall; instead it exclaims: 'Sleeping heroes we guard your dreams and memories, as long as the nation lives'. Furthermore, the engraving on the memorial calls 4 November a Bolshevik ambush (*orvtámadás*). Not only does this memorial recall the revolution, but it also seeks to remind the viewer of what happened on 4 November, and by extension, who crushed the revolution, the message being that the past would no longer be forgotten or overlooked. This indicates a difference between remembering and calling not to forget, since remembering tends to carry a positive distinction, whereas not forgetting is used to refer to tragic events. In this case, it is not enough to remember, but rather one must not forget who perpetrated the negative, and by extension who helped (with 'Bolshevik' not referring exclusively to Russian communists).

A turn toward more visually striking memorials that would draw in a person's attention, although beginning in the mid-1990s, became quite noticeable by 1996. This change in memorialisation became further pronounced during the time that *Fidesz* was in government from 1998. More visually striking memorials, such as the chrome flag at Széna Square, were dedicated and this trend has continued to the present day (see



FIGURE 7. THE SYMBOLIC MEMORIAL THAT CAN BE FOUND IN LOT 21 OF THE KEREPESI CEMETERY.

Figure 8). Another example of how the significance of 1956 changed was the addition of a wall memorial to 1956 by the Democratic Forum at Móricz Zsigmond Circus in 2001, despite the party already erecting a tablet on the site in 1989. Above the marble plaque of the new memorial is a bronze figure of a woman reaching for the sky, or perhaps the bottom of a flag, symbolising the quest for freedom. Not only is this later memorial more visually striking, but it adds the word ‘heroic’, which the memorial from 1989 did not feature. The addition of this memorial suggests that the original was deemed insufficient, perhaps due to the party’s changing stance, or the changing nature of commemoration.

The increasingly important revolution

The debates over 1956 intensified after the *Fidesz*-led coalition of the right lost the 2002 parliamentary elections by a narrow margin (Benziger 2008, p. 158), which also resulted in societal divides in Hungary becoming increasingly rigid and entrenched. What set this electoral campaign apart from the previous ones was how bitterly divisive the negative campaigning became. *Fidesz*, after absorbing the remnants of the Smallholders’ Party, became a more conservative party than it had been in 1998 and presented the 2002 elections as a replay of the system change 12 years before (Benoit



FIGURE 8. THE CHROME FLAG MEMORIAL DESIGNED BY FERENC ÁRVAI AND DEDICATED IN 2001 AT SZÉNA SQUARE.

2002, p. 120). The Socialists in turn helped to polarise the campaign when party chairman László Kovács declared: 'The issue is whether we retain democracy, or see the possible emergence of an extreme right-wing dictatorship' (Benoit 2002, p. 120). Socialist prime ministerial candidate Péter Medgyessy's electoral manifesto pledged to end 'tyranny and despotism', implicitly labelling the four years of *Fidesz*'s rule a quasi-dictatorship (Mihályffy 2004, p. 9). This was actually restrained in comparison to the campaign led by the Free Democrats against *Fidesz*, which was the most 'vitriolic and personal', and regularly repeated claims of widespread corruption (Benoit 2002, p. 124). The Socialists and Free Democrats ran a negative campaign before the first round, switching to a more positive-toned one for the second, whereas *Fidesz* did the opposite (Mihályffy 2004, p. 21). In both cases the party that was behind in the opinion polls exhibited the sharper rhetoric. Although *Fidesz* won the second round of voting, it was insufficient to overcome the gains made by the Socialists and Free Democrats in the first round.

A further reason for the reinclusion of 1956 into the popular discourse lay in how it could be used negatively against the Socialist Party. The link the right wished to make was that the newly elected government was simply a reincarnation of the former communists. Thus, in contrast to their approach in the 1990s, after the turn of the century the *Fidesz*-led government held large public commemorations in memory of

the revolution, and made an even bigger show of them following their fall from power. *Fidesz* had two things to gain from bringing the revolution back into public attention: it would help burnish their conservative credentials as the party grew from the urban-based centre-right party of 1998 to a more or less catchall party of the right by 2002; and it would also allow them to regularly repeat the claim that today's Socialists were yesterday's communists. In *Fidesz*'s official interpretation of 1956, the revolution was one of 'civic' forces attempting to overthrow communism, and since *Fidesz* label themselves as contemporary Hungary's civic political party, the analogy would not be missed.

In 2004, both Hungarian Prime Minister Péter Medgyessy and Socialist Party Chairman László Kovács stepped down (for strikingly different reasons) and were replaced by Ferenc Gyurcsány and István Hiller respectively, with Gyurcsány holding considerable influence within the party.²⁸ This change was not only generational, but it also marked a change within the Socialist Party leadership's public attitude toward the recent past. Further evidence of this change was the decision to give up the singing of the *Internationale* in favour of the overtly patriotic *Szózat* following Hiller's ascension as party chairman.²⁹ The change signified a preference for the national over the international and was a hint of the changes to come *vis-à-vis* the party leadership's position on 1956 and its memorialisation.

In 2004, then Prime Minister Péter Medgyessy convened a 1956 Memorial Committee to supervise and coordinate commemorative events in 2006 as well as to launch a competition for a new central memorial to 1956. The historian and former Hungarian Academy of Sciences president Domokos Kosáry became the chair of the committee. Other members of the committee included former Prime Minister Péter Boross (who succeeded József Antall after his death in 1993), Imre Nagy's granddaughter Katalin Jánosi, György Jovánovics and former National Guard commander and military historian Béla Király, among others.³⁰ The committee's responsibilities were to plan the programmes for the 50th anniversary by collecting ideas and opinions, and to communicate with the national and local governments to ensure that the commemorative programmes ran smoothly.³¹ The committee also liaised with various 1956 organisations in advance of the anniversary.³² From the perspective of remembering the past, the intent was to create a cohesive if not necessarily singular official position on 1956 and how it should be memorialised

²⁸Kovács became the European Union's Commissioner for Taxation and Customs Union, whereas Medgyessy was forced out after a planned cabinet reshuffle resulted in the Free Democrats threatening to pull out of the governing coalition.

²⁹'Az MSZP Már Nem Éneklé az Internacionálét', *Index*, 19 March 2009, available at: http://index.hu/belfold/2009/03/19/mszp_se_internacionale_se_koton/, accessed 29 June 2009.

³⁰'Háttéranyag az 1956-os Magyar Forradalom és Szabadságharc Központi Emlékművének Pályázati Kiírásáról', *Miniszterelnöki Hivatal*, 25 February 2005, available at: http://www.meh.hu/tevekenyseg/hatteranyagok/56_20050225.html, accessed 28 August 2009.

³¹'Az 1956-os Emlékévet Előkészítő Emlékbizottság Tagjai', available at: <http://web.archive.org/web/20070606204804/www.19562006.hu/kalendarium/index.php?id=18>, accessed 28 August 2009; the website is no longer available at its original location but can be accessed via the internet archive located at: <http://web.archive.org>, accessed 30 September 2010.

³²'Az Emlékévbén Együttműködő '56-os Szervezetek és Vezetőik', available at: <http://web.archive.org/web/20070606203606/www.19562006.hu/kalendarium/index.php?id=20>, accessed 28 August 2009.

through the various commemorative events, thus illustrating the significance that the 50th anniversary commemorations were accorded.

With the Socialist's electoral mandate set to expire in 2006, much was made of the fact of whether a Socialist or *Fidesz*-led government would lead the official government commemorations of the revolution on the 50th anniversary. Fiftieth anniversaries carry the additional stress that for those who participated, it is likely to be their last anniversary that has such weight placed upon it, as the participants and witnesses are now closer to the ends of their lives. Given how the majority of participants in the revolution were young, between the ages of 15 and 30 (Hegedűs 1996, pp. 303–5),³³ it should come as no surprise that the 50th anniversary commemorations of the 1956 revolution featured unprecedented planning and were intended to be a grand spectacle, although no one could have planned for the 50th anniversary to end quite the way it did.

Brigid Fowler has noted that 'in recent Central and East European history in particular, anniversaries have consistently been occasions on which rival elites advance alternative identity claims and stake competing claims to legitimacy' (Fowler 2004, p. 63). With the revolution in mind, Gábor Gyáni has further elaborated:

Since members of each of the rival remembering communities strive for canonising their own version of the historical account, there is no real chance left for compromise, or even peaceful coexistence among the diverse images of history. Consequently, an anniversary soon and necessarily results in sharp conflicts among the various memories appearing before the public. (Gyáni 2006, p. 1202)

The re-election of the Socialist–Free Democrat coalition in the spring of 2006 guaranteed that people belonging to the right would take issue with the way the commemorations would be held. While it is an oversimplification to declare that János Kádár's direct successors would be leading the commemorations, for many on the right, that was what they saw.

Public differences and the 'lies speech'

In the interest of having a more neutral person speak at one of the main commemorative events on the 50th anniversary, Prime Minister Gyurcsány asked President László Sólyom to be the government official to speak at the memorial ceremony held at the state opera building.³⁴ This gesture was in recognition of how politically charged the atmosphere surrounding 1956 had become, in stark contrast to 1996. Although elected with *Fidesz* support in 2005, President Sólyom—who did not have a party affiliation and was originally nominated by the environmental non-governmental organisation *Védegylet*—showed himself remarkably independent of party politics, much to the chagrin of both the government and the opposition.

³³This can be extrapolated from the data provided for the age of those wounded and dead, which skewed heavily toward a younger age bracket.

³⁴Gyurcsány Gesztusa Sólyomnak', *Népszabadság Online*, 17 August 2006, available at: <http://nol.hu/archivum/archiv-414185>, accessed 2 June 2009.

Toward the end of the summer, however, the possibility of having united commemorations was looking increasingly unrealistic, as dissenting opinions became increasingly public.

The first official to speak openly against a joint commemoration involving all political parties was *Fidesz* MP Mária Wittner. Wittner, a member of the conservative wing of the party, had been condemned to death for her part in the revolution but later amnestied (albeit after the general amnesty of 1963). On 8 August, she publicly declared that she would not participate in the government-led commemorations, citing a conflict of conscience.³⁵ At this time, *Fidesz* chairman Viktor Orbán was still scheduled to attend the commemorations (Gréczy 2006a), and thus it would logically follow that *Fidesz* would too. However, on 17 August, numerous 1956 organisations announced that they would not take part in the official commemorations. A statement signed by Wittner along with László Balás-Piri and László Regéczy-Nagy, vice president and president respectively of the Historical Justice Committee stated:

The American President George Bush visited on the occasion of the revolution's 50th anniversary [in June] and gave a speech on Gellért Hill to pay his respects. If the state did not feel the presence of freedom fighters to be desirable on that occasion, it should not consider our presence to be desirable on 23 October. The victims [of the post-revolution repression] do not wish to participate with the murderers' successors in any commemorations, nor do we ask for any honours. Please make note of our position on the matter. (Gréczy 2006b)

On 8 September *Fidesz*-supporting daily *Magyar Nemzet* published an interview with László Regéczy-Nagy, who said that for many '56ers, jointly commemorating 1956 with the Socialist-led government would be akin to a condemned man's family accepting the executioner as the new patriarch and 'forgetting that our father's blood is drying on his hands' (Jóó 2006).

These statements of opposition to a Socialist-led anniversary were heightened with the release of the 'lies speech' in which Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsány admitted to lying about Hungary's dismal financial situation during the election campaign in order to secure re-election. The release of the speech prompted peaceful protests on the first night, which was followed by a radical element rioting over the next three nights. Trying to associate their protests with the revolution, a group of protestors took their demands to the Hungarian Television Station, in an obvious attempt to mimic the attempt in 1956 by the protestors to have their 16 points read on the radio. The differences, however, far outweighed the superficial similarities. In 1956, the protestors were fired upon by the secret police and a pitched fire-fight ensued with much bloodshed, while in 2006, after demands by the increasingly radical crowd to read their grievances were turned down, the crowd attacked the television station (which by that point was off the air) and ransacked parts of the building once the riot police trainees fled the scene.³⁶ Some even used the occasion to vandalise the post-war memorial

³⁵'56-Ról, Ismét Megosztva?', *Népszabadság Online*, 8 August 2006, available at: <http://nol.hu/archivum/archiv-413189>, accessed 29 June 2009.

³⁶'Tüntetések, Tévéfoglalások Percről Percre', *Index*, 19 September 2006, available at: <http://index.hu/politika/belfold/tuntet0917/>, accessed 29 June 2009; 'A Hibás Rendőri Taktika Miatt Esett El

dedicated to the ‘friendship’ between Hungary and the Soviet Union opposite the television building on Szabadság (Liberty) Square. The aim of the far-right elements, attempting to connect 2006 with 1956 (thus revealing that 1956 was once again a strong symbol), was to use the revolution’s memory to force the resignation of the government, perhaps believing that they enjoyed the tacit support of *Fidesz*.

Viktor Orbán was on his way to Brussels when the speech leaked, and after returning early and addressing the matter two days later (the night after the siege of the television station), he declared his support for the peaceful protestors while simultaneously denouncing violence.³⁷ Democratic Forum Chairwoman Ibolya Dávid and Free Democrat Chairman Gábor Kuncze both accused Orbán of doublespeak with his declaration and of secretly supporting the more radical protestors.³⁸ According to Dávid and Kuncze, *Fidesz* and Orbán in particular hoped that the appearance of radical elements would be such an embarrassment that it would force the government to resign. The siege of the television station occurred less than two weeks before local elections were scheduled for 1 October. In these elections, the *Fidesz*-led coalition took 18 of the 19 county councils, only failing to take Heves County, and won a majority of the councils in the cities with ‘county rights’, although failing to take Budapest.³⁹ Unlike in 2002 when the government made gains in the local elections compared to the parliamentary elections, in 2006 the opposition won majorities in most local government councils, thus suggesting that the majority of the population no longer had confidence in the government.⁴⁰ This sudden drop in support also undermined the government’s ‘legitimacy’ in leading the commemorations.

The 50th anniversary

As opposed to 1996 when the Socialists focused their commemorations around the figure of Imre Nagy, in 2006 the entirety of the revolution was celebrated. Through government sponsored programmes which began on 21 October,⁴¹ the Socialist-led government attempted to ‘out-right the right’ in singing the revolution’s praises. This was not only a reflection of their evolving relationship with the past but also a way to

a Tévészékház’, *Magyar Hírlap Online*, 11 November 2006, available at: <http://www.magyarhirlap.hu/cikk.php?cikk=111717>, accessed 29 June 2009.

³⁷Orbán: Gyurcsánynak Magával Kell Vinnie a Csomagját’, *Index*, 19 September 2006, available at: <http://index.hu/belfold/orban4769/>, accessed 29 June 2009.

³⁸Dávid Ibolya: Orbán További Feszültséget Szít’, *Index*, 19 September 2006, available at: http://index.hu/belfold/tuntet0917/david_ibolya_orban_tovabbi_feszultseget_szit/, accessed 29 June 2009; ‘Kuncze Szerint a Fidesz Folytatja a Kettős Beszédet’, *Index*, 19 September 2006, available at: http://index.hu/belfold/tuntet0917/kuncze_szerint_a_fidesz_folytatja_a_kettos_beszedet/, accessed 29 June 2009.

³⁹Demszky Nyert—Vidéken Ellenzéki Fölény’, *Népszabadság Online*, 2 October 2006, available at: <http://nol.hu/archivum/archiv-419282>, accessed 29 June 2009.

⁴⁰There is perhaps some truth to Dávid and Kuncze’s claims that Orbán was hoping to destabilise the government through street protests to force new elections since, following the local elections, *Fidesz* convened rallies in front of parliament every afternoon, suspending them only for the 50th anniversary, after which they were unable to return because the building was then surrounded by a security cordon. There was, however, a difference in tone between the *Fidesz*-led protests and those organised by the radical elements that set up camp outside of parliament.

⁴¹Since 23 October fell on a Monday, the preceding weekend was incorporated into the festivities.

undercut potential accusations from the right that they were still communists in socialist clothing. Some 47 foreign delegations (most of them led by heads of state) visited Budapest to mark the occasion and participated in the official commemorative events of 22 and 23 October.⁴² Events were advertised in newspapers as well as in government publications.

Many of Budapest's major museums held temporary exhibitions on the occasion of the 50th anniversary. The House of Terror and the Museum of Military History favoured the traditional narrative approach, while the Palace of Art (Múcsarnok) and Museum of Applied Arts used art to convey a wide variety of messages about 1956 (with the way communism stifled artistic creativity being a recurring theme), and the National Museum launched a nationwide call for artefacts from the revolution to present how the revolution affected individuals. In addition to the temporary museum exhibits, there were several open air exhibitions, most of which featured civilian and military vehicles contemporary to the time period, including one on Andrásy Avenue in the heart of the city, which also featured living statues dressed in clothes contemporary to 1956. Most of these exhibits also contained information kiosks that distributed 'Revolutionary Guidebooks' that provided a brief history of the revolution, which in the manner of public or popular history provided answers rather than raising questions or finding a nuanced understanding. Additionally, a billboard exhibition that invited people to submit large posters of what 1956 meant to them revealed different interpretations of the revolution, with most using humour to glorify the revolution, some commenting on how it was being used as a political tool, and others expressing a lingering bitterness over how the revolution ended and its consequences on subsequent decades.⁴³

In addition to the Hungarian flags suspended between buildings, one could see posters bearing the words: '*Köszönet a Szabadság Hőseinek*'—'Thank You to the Heroes of Freedom'. The statement itself, beyond saying that the revolutionaries should be thanked and that therefore the revolution was a positive development, was notable for the absence of politics or controversy. The posters featuring this sentence were displayed across Budapest in places with high traffic or some historical tie to the revolution, while giant versions hung between buildings in the inner city over busy

⁴²*Magyar Nemzet*, 24 October 2006.

⁴³This exhibition is examined in detail in my doctoral thesis. Surprisingly it only featured one billboard that so much as alluded to a connection between yesterday's Socialist Workers and today's Socialists. The exhibition was sponsored by @[®] magazine, which annually organises billboard exhibits during late summer, and which has been regularly accused by the right of favouring Hungary's parties of the left. Following the Socialist–Free Democrat coalition government's win at the polls, and with the 2002 electoral campaign increasingly a memory, in 2003 the organisers of the billboard exhibition toned down the political nature of the exhibits, which for years had been notable for their criticisms aimed at the *Fidesz* government (Földes 2003). An opinion piece in *Magyar Nemzet* argued that the depoliticisation of the exhibition was an example of the organisers telling people not to criticise the (new) government (Haklik 2003). As a response to some of the posters exhibited in 2004 (available at: <http://www.mno.hu/portal/234263>), *Magyar Nemzet* created its own 'anti-exhibition' which in turn was critical of the left. See 'Hátra @[®]!', *Magyar Nemzet Online*, 12 August 2004, available at: <http://www.mno.hu/portal/234261>, accessed 14 November 2009. As recently as 2008, a reporter for *Magyar Nemzet* sarcastically lamented that a poster making fun of the newspaper 'only' received a second place prize (Tölgyesi 2008). Having visited many of these exhibitions over the years, I would agree that the billboards touching on politics are of a left-leaning nature.

roads. These banners showed a crowd in black and white, with a young man holding the revolutionary tricolour, the only coloured portion of the image. Beneath it were the years 1956 and 2006 on top of each other, the '5' shaded red, and the second '0' shaded green.

Furthermore, along with other films and documentaries timed to coincide with the anniversary, a partially government-sponsored film on the revolution *Szabadság, Szerelem* (known in English as *Children of Glory*) was produced with a touch of Hollywood added by screenwriter Joe Eszterhas and producer Andrew G. Vajna, both of whom are Hungarian-Americans.⁴⁴ In addition to the smaller memorials dedicated by various groups, the government sponsored the creation of two new memorials. The first, at the Technical University, where the student demonstrators in 1956 first organised on 22 October, was a more traditional monument that the government paid for as something of a 'safety valve' to appease the various '56er groups (see Figure 9) (Gréczy 2006c). The second was an abstract memorial built on the former site of the Stalin statue topped at Felvonulás Square on 23 October 1956. This abstract memorial, frequently maligned as *a vaskefe* (the iron comb) in right-leaning publications, was dedicated at 19:56 on the anniversary, and at the same time the square was renamed Ötvenhatosok ('56ers') Square (see Figure 10).⁴⁵ If the 40th anniversary can be characterised for its understatement, the opposite was true of the 50th.

What ultimately undermined this effort was that the anniversary became so politicised. On an already tense morning of 23 October, a non-violent crowd wishing to take part in the ceremonial flag-raising at Kossuth Square in front of parliament where the foreign delegations were present was turned away by riot police.⁴⁶ Although the police managed to force the crowd away without resorting to violence, the crowd then marched around central Budapest and was joined by far-right elements later in the day (eventually being overtaken by them), and in the late afternoon clashed with police while trying to make their way back to the parliament building. Approximately at the same time as the crowd and riot police encountered one another, *Fidesz* opened its 50th anniversary celebration-cum-rally at a different location in central Budapest.⁴⁷

⁴⁴Vajna had left Hungary immediately after the revolution.

⁴⁵The fact that an explanatory granite tablet was added near the memorial at the last minute strongly suggests that those in positions of power seriously questioned whether visitors would understand its role as a memorial to 1956 (Dent 2009, p. 309).

⁴⁶Police searched the protestor camp the evening before and claimed they found weapons of varying degree, including socks stuffed with charcoal and tubs containing gasoline ('Kések, Vasgolyók, Zokniba Csomagolt Faszén, Glicerín', *Index*, 23 October 2006, available at: <http://index.hu/belfold/elkurtuk2/?p=52>, accessed 7 March 2009). Arguments have persisted as to whether these were legitimate camping supplies, if there was a plan for an attack, or if the government planted agents among the protestors.

⁴⁷The police and violent protestors first clashed at the corner of Alkotmány Street and Bajcsy-Zsilinszky Road shortly before the start of the *Fidesz* rally at Astoria, located over a kilometre and a half away. Whether or not the police pushed the rioters to the rally or if the rioters pulled the police became a significant talking point in the days following the anniversary. Of Hungary's print media, right-leaning sources argued that the police pushed the rioters, while in the left-leaning media the assessments were mixed. For examples, see László (2006); Rádi (2006); Bodis (2006); 'Gyurcsány Szerint Terrorizálják a Várost', *Origo* 23 October 2006, available at: <http://www.origo.hu/itthon/20061023fideszmszp.html>, accessed 29 November 2006; and 'Megdől a Magyar Könnygázrekord', *Index*, 24 October 2006, available at: <http://index.hu/politika/belfold/summ061024/>, accessed 7 March 2009.



FIGURE 9. ONE OF TWO OFFICIAL MEMORIALS DEDICATED FOR THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY. IT WAS SCULPTED BY RÓBERT CSÍKSZENTMIHÁLYI AND IS LOCATED ON THE SITE OF A DISUSED GATE AT THE TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY FACING TOWARDS THE DANUBE.

Fidesz, while calling for the government's resignation during their celebration, announced a political programme to collect signatures to launch a referendum on the government's announced austerity programme. At the end of this rally the riot police did not take measures to keep the far-right protestors separate from people wishing to make their way home, with the end result that in addition to the rioters, many innocent bystanders found themselves under attack by the police.⁴⁸ Later in the evening, while Prime Minister Gyurcsány took part in the dedication of the new memorial on the former site of the Stalin statue, with occasional interruptions by a small crowd of protestors, teargas spread around central Budapest as the police and

⁴⁸Police behaviour (in addition to that mentioned in the previous footnote) became an issue of great debate in Hungary following the 50th anniversary, with the left defending the actions of the police and the right condemning them. In what can be considered an admission that the right was correct to denounce police brutality on the 50th anniversary, in his 51st anniversary speech on 23 October 2007, then Free Democrat Chairman János Kóka spoke of his regret that his party did not speak out against violence perpetrated by the police on that day ('Főhajtás a 301-es Párcellánál', *Népszabadság Online*, 24 October 2007, available at: <http://nol.hu/archivum/archiv-468939>, accessed 29 June 2009).



FIGURE 10. THE OTHER OFFICIAL MEMORIAL DEDICATED FOR THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY, DESIGNED BY THE I-YPSZILON GROUP. IT IS LOCATED AT WHAT IS TODAY KNOWN AS ÖTVENHATOSOK ('56ERS') SQUARE.

rioters continued a pitched battle into the early hours of 24 October. On the 50th anniversary, Budapest witnessed the largest disturbances since the revolution itself.⁴⁹ 1956 was certainly central to the political discourse once more, but in many ways, contemporary politics had hijacked its memory.

The violence that occurred on 23 October 2006 was not a consequence of the 50th anniversary, but happened on that day because it was the first national anniversary to occur after the leaking of the lies speech and subsequent nights of rioting. Had the first national holiday to follow the speech been 15 March or perhaps even 20 August (or ironically 1 May) then today people would speak of the riots on that day, not 23 October. The 50th anniversary merely fell into this unfortunate coincidence. Despite the various positions taken on what 1956 meant for the present, the interlocutors of these debates were not those who took to the streets that day but extremists

⁴⁹The Taxi Blockade of 25–28 October 1990, which was a protest against increased petrol prices, was certainly larger in terms of scale as it was nationwide. Unlike in 2006, however, in 1990 the police did not intervene and a compromise between the protestors and the government was arrived at. Consequently, there were no clashes between rioters and police or destruction of property (Romsics 2003, pp. 287–93).

looking for trouble. Although the right of the political spectrum, and in some cases even the left, strongly disapproved of Gyurcsány, the riots were the result of extremists and hooligans wishing to make their presence known. While the image of the former university communist youth leader as prime minister was no doubt appealing for those seeking to symbolically connect the occasion with 1956 in their calls to force the government from power, it is entirely conceivable that had the first holiday been 15 March, then the parallels would have been drawn with the 1848 Revolution. Competing interpretations of 1956 therefore had nothing to do with the violence seen on the 50th anniversary. In the mainstream media following the anniversary, disgust at the day's events was equally apparent on both political sides, which described what happened as shameful, even if the issues focused on were different.⁵⁰

Since the 50th anniversary

The 51st anniversary can, in many ways, be seen as a test to see whether or not the events of the 50th anniversary were tied more to 1956 or to contemporary grievances. On 23 October 2007, *Fidesz* held another large rally on the same site as their 2006 rally, with MP Mária Wittner claiming that the 51st anniversary would be used to remember the revolution more honourably than the 50th anniversary. This time there was no violence. Bad weather drew a smaller crowd, and *Fidesz*'s own security was on high alert to ensure that no provocateurs would disrupt the event. Furthermore, two of the leading instigators of the far-right in 2006 were unavailable since both were under arrest. In 2008 the commemorations were even quieter as distance from the 50th anniversary increased.

For the 50th anniversary year of Imre Nagy's execution in 2008, the Socialist government headed by Ferenc Gyurcsány made funds available for a general overhaul and modernisation of the Imre Nagy Memorial House, thus emphasising his party's continued ties to the martyred prime minister. The date of Nagy's execution, 16 June, was declared a '56er Martyr Memorial Day, with small commemorative events held around Budapest. A website chronicling the day's events (redirecting to the government spokesperson's website) was put online.⁵¹ The 20th anniversary of Nagy's reburial in 2009 was also celebrated with a special exhibition opened at the Palace of Art, the building which had served as the stage for Nagy's funeral in 1989. A memorial concert for the martyrs of 1956, as well as the events of 1989, was held in the evening. The Socialist government continued its more recently discovered public appreciation for 1956, in this case remembering the system change, diametrically reversing its position from 10 years prior when it was the sole mainstream party to refrain from celebrating it.

⁵⁰The left-leaning media generally focused on the rioters ruining the holiday with the right-leaning media focusing on police brutality.

⁵¹The website in question is <http://www.magyarorszag.hu/56>, and formerly featured (as of April 2010) a schedule for 2009's events as well as photographs from that year and the previous one. It is no longer available online.

The 53rd anniversary in 2009 was even less of an event than the 52nd anniversary. The *Fidesz* rally was quite small by their standards and was combined with the dedication ceremony of an *országzászló* flag memorial in District XXII in the southwestern outskirts of Budapest, ostensibly because both this flag memorial and the revolution represent the unity of the Hungarian nation.⁵² Citing the global recession, Prime Minister Gordon Bajnai (who succeeded Gyurcsány in April 2009 when the latter resigned) declared that the government would only participate in protocol events and would limit expenses to three installations at heavily trafficked transport junctions, along with lighting the parliament building in the colours of the tricolour (Király 2009). Since Bajnai sought to maintain the image of a ‘government of experts’ above party politics, he was far less controversial than his predecessor and his announcements did not result in the uproar that probably would have resulted had it been Gyurcsány who announced a scaling back of the commemorations. Also favouring a calmer atmosphere was the decision by *Fidesz* to abandon calls for early elections and to focus their energies instead on the elections scheduled for the spring of 2010. (They went on to win these elections with an unprecedented landslide, gaining a two-thirds majority of the seats in parliament.) Of the other political parties, only the far-right *Jobbik Magyarországért Mozgalom* (Movement for a Better Hungary, or *Jobbik* for short) held a rally in central Budapest, attracting a few thousand supporters.⁵³ Kossuth Square, however, was cordoned off from the public for the entire day as it was in previous years.

In fact, as all the anniversaries since the 50th have revealed, all of the problems of disorder and violence have involved the far-right. Moreover, Orbán’s refusal to step outside the boundaries of parliamentary democracy (after his attempt to have it both ways with respect to the original riots) prevented the government from casting him as a threat to democracy. Ironically this was also recognised by Bajnai who, prior to the elections, emphasised that *Fidesz* and Orbán were democrats, in stark contrast to allegations made by the Socialist–Free Democrat coalition in 2002.⁵⁴

It can also be noted how the fluctuating significance of the 1956 revolution has generally corresponded to the performance of the Socialist Party in post-communist politics. The question of 1956 was of course important in 1989 when it could be used against the recently renamed Socialist Workers’ Party, but as that party appeared to

⁵²Most Csak a Jobbik Megy Budapest Közepére’, *Index*, 19 October 2009, available at: http://index.hu/belfold/2009/10/19/most_csak_a_jobbik_megy/kozepere, accessed 11 November 2009. The spread of *országzászlók* or ‘country flags’ began in the 1920s as a form of protest against the Treaty of Trianon (1920) and in remembrance of the territories lost by the treaty. On an *országzászló* the flag is always flown at half-mast (Dóra 2009). The explanation for the flag’s dedication date was because it was originally dedicated on 23 October 1932 before being destroyed in 1948. Thus, the District XXII government used this coincidence to combine both the dedication of the new flag along with its commemoration of 1956, using the previously mentioned argument that both the flag and 1956 represented Hungarian unity (‘Országzászló’, available at: <http://www.bp22.hu/orszagzaszlo/>, accessed 26 November 2009).

⁵³A Jobbik a Fidesz és az MSZP Ellen is Harcol’, *Index*, 23 October 2009, available at: <http://index.hu/belfold/2009/10/23/jobbik/>, accessed 11 November 2009.

⁵⁴PM Urges Socialists, Fidesz to Jointly Combat Extremism’, *Politics.hu*, 23 February 2010, available at: <http://www.politics.hu/20100223/pm-urges-socialists-fidesz-to-jointly-combat-extremism>, accessed 11 April 2010.

no longer be a political force in the immediate postcommunist period, its importance waned. Although the Socialists came back into power in 1994 with a majority in parliament, the right was in disarray at the time, made all the more apparent by a formerly liberal party, *Fidesz*, becoming the dominant party of the right. Following the *Fidesz* victory in 1998, 1956 gradually received more attention, especially around the time of the millennial celebrations, and increased in importance from 2002 onward, when it became clear that the Socialists would be the dominant party of the left, and that 1956 could be used against them. Thus, there is every reason to speculate that if the Socialist Party had not rebounded in 1994, the importance of 1956 would have continued to wane. Ironically enough, the inability to defeat the ‘communists’ permanently through the electoral process is what resurrected the significance of 1956.

Furthermore it can be seen that the significance of 1956 is tied to how well the Socialist Party has performed in the subsequent anniversaries after the 50th. Although *Fidesz* held a large commemoration on the 51st anniversary when it still advocated early elections, the 52nd anniversary commemoration was a notably smaller event, since by that time the party had resigned itself to elections being held on schedule in 2010. For the 53rd anniversary in 2009, with elections early the following year, there was not even an official commemoration, merely a local ceremony attended by Viktor Orbán and other *Fidesz* politicians. It is understandable that the 50th anniversary would be the most significant, but to witness such a quick decline was unexpected, until it is recognised that it correlated with the collapse of support for the Socialist Party. Weakened by the time of the 50th anniversary due to the unexpected austerity programme and the lies speech, support for the Socialists continued to erode over the subsequent years. By 2008, following a *Fidesz*-sponsored referendum on parts of Gyurcsány’s austerity programme that delivered an overwhelming rebuke to the prime minister, it was obvious that the Socialists had lost most of their political capital, and the smaller scale of the commemorations should be seen in this context.

Following Gyurcsány’s resignation in 2009 and replacement by Gordon Bajnai, who unlike his predecessor made an effort to avoid controversy and party politics, the 2009 commemorations were even more understated. With *Fidesz* all but guaranteed to win the 2010 elections and with Gyurcsány having resigned from his post, there was nothing to be gained by stoking the flames of memory over the revolution, and the significance of 1956 declined once again. The revolution is clearly significant so long as competing political forces use it to gain legitimacy for themselves while trying to take that same legitimacy away from their opponents. This is why 1956 once again became a central issue in contemporary Hungarian politics in the 2000s after becoming peripheral in the 1990s. To what extent this newfound importance imparts a memory of the revolution to the general population (or what kind of memory it imparts) is another matter. With the significance of the 1956 revolution in post-communist Hungary appearing to be directly tied to how well the Socialist Party performs, the question this raises is that if the Socialists never recover from their current lack of popularity, will 1956 remain significant, or like in the mid-1990s, will it fade away again?

References

- Ash, T. G. (1999) *The Magic Lantern: The Revolution of '89 Witnessed in Warsaw, Budapest, Berlin and Prague* (New York, Vintage).
- Békés, C. (2006) *Az 1956-os Magyar Forradalom a Világpolitikában* (Budapest, 1956-os Intézet).
- Benoit, K. (2002) 'Like Déjà Vu All Over Again: The Hungarian Parliamentary Elections of 2002', *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics*, 18, 4.
- Benziger, K. P. (2008) *Imre Nagy, Martyr of the Nation: Contested History, Legitimacy, and Popular Memory in Hungary* (Plymouth, Lexington Books).
- Bodis, A. (2006) 'A Szabadság Vihara', *Heti Válasz*, 26 October.
- Boros, G. (1997) *Emlékművek '56-nak* (Budapest, 1956-os Intézet).
- Dent, B. (2006) *Budapest 1956: Locations of Drama* (Budapest, Európa Könyvkiadó).
- Dent, B. (2009) *Every Statue Tells a Story: Public Monuments in Budapest* (Budapest, Európa Könyvkiadó).
- Dóra, L. (2009) 'Rehabilitálják az Országzászlókat', *Heti Válasz Online*, 26 March, available at: <http://www.hetivalasz.hu/cikk/0903/21782>, accessed 24 November 2009.
- Földes, A. (2003) 'Disznózsír és Dinnye', *Index*, 29 August 2003, available at: <http://index.hu/kultur/media/arc2003/>, accessed 14 November 2009.
- Fowler, B. (2004) 'Nation, State, Europe and National Revival in Hungarian Party Politics: The Case of the Millennial Commemorations', *Europe-Asia Studies*, 56, 1.
- Gati, C. (2006) *Failed Illusions: Moscow, Washington, Budapest and the 1956 Hungarian Revolt* (Stanford, CA, Stanford University Press).
- Gréczy, Z. (2006a) 'Megoszthatja a Fideszt is '56 Közös Megünneplése', *Népszabadság Online*, 9 August, available at: <http://nol.hu/archivum/archiv-413303>, accessed 29 June 2009.
- Gréczy, Z. (2006b) 'Ujabb '56-osok Tiltakoznak', *Népszabadság Online*, 17 August, available at: <http://nol.hu/archivum/archiv-414186>, accessed 23 July 2009.
- Gréczy, Z. (2006c) 'A Műegyetemnél Lesz az "Alternatív" '56-os Emlékmű', *Népszabadság*, 21 July 2006, available at: <http://www.nol.hu/archivum/archiv-411356>, accessed 14 September 2009.
- Gyáni, G. (2001) '1956 Elfejtésének Régi-Új Mítosza', *Elet és Irodalom*, 45, 6.
- Gyáni, G. (2006) 'Memory and Discourse on the 1956 Hungarian Revolution', *Europe-Asia Studies*, 58, 8.
- György, P. (2000) *Néma Hagomány: Kollektív Felejtés és a Kései Múltértelmezés, 1956 1989-ben (A Régmúlttól az Örökségig)* (Budapest, Magvető).
- Haklik, N. (2003) 'Egy Náci Plakátkiállítás', *Magyar Nemzet Online*, 1 September, available at: <http://www.mn.mno.hu/portal/168355>, accessed 14 November 2009.
- Halbwachs, M. (1992) *On Collective Memory*, translated by L. A. Coser (London, University of Chicago Press).
- Hegedűs, A. B. (ed.) (1996) *1956 Kézikönyve: Megtorlás és Emlékezés* (Budapest, 1956-os Intézet).
- Joó, I. (2006) 'Az Ötvenhatosok Nem Akarnak Hazudni', *Magyar Nemzet*, 8 September.
- Joó, I. (2007) 'MSZP-s Adomány a Munkásmozgalmi Panteonnak', *Magyar Nemzet Online*, 10 November, available at: <http://mno.hu/portal/526728>, accessed 12 February 2010.
- Kahler, F. & Kiss, S. M. (1997) *Kinek a Forradalma?* (Budapest, Püski-Kortárs).
- Kansteiner, W. (2002) 'Finding Meaning in Memory: A Methodological Critique of Collective Memory Studies', *History and Theory*, 41, 2, May.
- Kende, P. (1993) 'Megmarad-e 1956 Nemzeti Hagományának?', in Bak, J., Hegedűs, A. B., Litván, G. & Varga, K. S. (eds) (1993) *Évkönyv 1993* (Budapest, 1956-os Intézet).
- Kende, P. (2006) *Eltékoztolt Forradalom?* (Budapest, Új Mandátum Könyvkiadó).
- Király, A. (2009) 'Bíznak Benne, Hogy Idén Nem Lopnak Tankot', *Index*, 20 October, available at: http://index.hu/belfold/2009/10/20/biznak_benne_hogy_iden_nem_lopnak_tankot/, accessed 11 November 2009.
- Kontler, L. (2002) *A History of Hungary: Millennium in Central Europe* (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan).
- László, F. M. (2006) 'Fogd a Tömeget És Fuss!', *Magyar Narancs*, 26 October.
- Litván, G. (ed.) (1996) *The Hungarian Revolution of 1956: Reform, Revolt and Repression 1953–1963*, edited and translated by J. M. Bak & L. H. Legters (London & New York, Longman).
- Litván, G. (1997) '1956-os Kutatások és Viták a Mai Magyarországon', in Hegedűs, A. B., Kende, P. G., Kozák, G., Litván, G. & Rainer, J. M. (eds) (1997) *Évkönyv V* (Budapest, 1956-os Intézet).
- Litván, G. (2001) 'Az Elnémult Hagomány', *Elet és Irodalom*, 45, 15.
- Litván, G. (2002) 'Politikai Beszéd 1956-ról 1989 Után', in Rainer, J. M. & Standeisky, E. (eds) (2002) *Évkönyv X* (Budapest, 1956-os Intézet).

- Marx, I. (2006) 'Die Deutschen Sollten Komplexe Ablegen', *Die Welt Online*, 21 October, available at: http://www.welt.de/print-welt/article88857/Die_Deutschen_sollten_Komplexe_ablegen.html, accessed 20 July 2009.
- Mihályffy, Z. (2004) 'Campaign and Turnout in Hungary (2002)', in *ECPR Joint Sessions of Workshops, Workshop 9: Low Turnout—Does it Matter?*, available at: <http://www.essex.ac.uk/ecpr/events/jointsessions/paperarchive/uppsala/ws9/Mihalyffy.pdf>, accessed 30 September 2010.
- Moeller, R. G. (2005) 'Germans as Victims? Thoughts on a Post-Cold War History of World War II's Legacies', *History and Memory*, 17, 1/2.
- Nora, P. (1996) 'In Remembering of Things French', in Kritzman, L. D. (ed.) (1996) *Realms of Memory: Rethinking the French Past/Under the Direction of Pierre Nora*, translated by A. Goldhammer (New York, Columbia University Press), pp. 1–20.
- Nyssönen, H. (1999) *The Presence of the Past in Politics: '1956' after 1956 in Hungary* (Jyvaskyla, Sophi).
- Rádi, A. (2006) 'Kikészültségi Állapot', *HVG*, 28 October.
- Rainer, J. M. (2009) *Imre Nagy, a Biography* (London, I.B. Tauris).
- Romsics, I. (1999) *Hungary in the Twentieth Century*, translated by T. Wilkinson (Budapest, Corvina Osiris).
- Romsics, I. (2003) *Volt Egyszer Egy Rendszerváltás* (Budapest, Rubicon).
- Swain, N. (2006a) 'Negotiated Revolution in Poland and Hungary, 1989', in McDermott, K. & Stibbe, M. (eds) (2006) *Revolution and Resistance in Europe: Challenges to Communist Rule* (New York, Berg).
- Swain, N. (2006b) 'The Fog of Hungary's Negotiated Revolution', *Europe-Asia Studies*, 58, 8.
- Tőkés, R. L. (1996) *Hungary's Negotiated Revolution: Economic Reform, Social Change and Political Succession, 1957–1990* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press).
- Tölgyesi, G. (2008) 'Boldogságkeresők és Ízléstelenkedők', *Magyar Nemzet Online*, 27 August, available at: <http://www.mno.hu/portál/581300>, accessed 14 November 2009.
- Torkos, M. (1996) 'Új 56-os Emlékművek', *Magyar Hírlap*, 6 June.
- Verdery, K. (1999) *The Political Lives of Dead Bodies: Reburial and Postsocialist Change* (New York, Columbia University Press).
- Yerushalmi, Y. H. (1996) *Zakhor: Jewish History and Jewish Memory* (Seattle, WA, University of Washington Press).

Copyright of Europe-Asia Studies is the property of Routledge and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.