

Kalina Kirilova

Kalina Kirilova, born in 1984 in Bulgaria, lives in Mannheim, Germany. She is student of Media and Communication Sciences and Sociology at the University of Mannheim.

Remembering Hungary 1956 in Bulgaria

A brief overview on the commemorative events in Bulgaria, with an emphasis on two different exhibitions. All these events remind and inform the Bulgarian public about events that were shrouded in silence for many years, and try to consider the impact of Hungarian events in Bulgaria. The text stresses on how important visual events and performances are for keeping a memory alive.

Bulgaria marks the anniversary of the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 in a number of ways. The major Daily newspapers in Sofia reminded the chronology of events to their readers, publishing a number of photos. However, the articles did not attempt to analyze the events as part of the process of consolidation of communist regimes in East-Central Europe. The emphasis of the majority of publications is on the links between the events in 1956 and the current unrest in Budapest. 'Standard' daily from Oct 25th published a document under the headline 'Budapest is back to 1956' commenting on the demonstrations (from Oct 23rd) in the Hungarian capital. The paper published two photos. The first one showed Hungarian rebels from 1956 waving the national flag on a captured Soviet tank. Next to it is the second photo showing the current demonstrators in Budapest mounted on a Soviet tank taken over from the street exhibition commemorating the event.

The anniversary of the revolution of 1956 was also marked by a series of events organized by the Hungarian Cultural Institute in Sofia. The center organized the show of four films. For the first time, Bulgarian audiences had the opportunity to see the film 'The one who was not buried' in honor of Imre Nagy. The center also organized two exhibitions. One of them was prepared under the theme 'Hungarian Revolution of 1956' and presented by the National Museum of Military History in Budapest. It contains series of photos with short commentaries. This exhibition was shown in the University of Sofia, a fact that is indicative of its intended audience.

The second exhibition was displayed in the Hungarian center and will be displayed in regional centers, as well as Sofia. The emphasis in this exhibition is to focus more on the

actual demonstrations, the fallen symbols of Soviet occupation (the decapitated statue of Stalin for example), and the locations of the headquarters of the rebel forces. There are also some materials showing the demonstrations outside of Budapest. The Soviet invasion and the bloodshed on 'Lajos Kossuth' square are shown in photos from the time. The exhibition seems to stress the mass nature of the rebellion and the spirit of the people participating in it, rather than focusing on specific political personalities. The photographs are overwhelming of young people looking enthusiastic and resolute. The pictures of the victims are particularly touching.

The exhibition is clearly intended to stress the importance of the visual material as a way to preserve the history and the common memory. The very title of the exhibition is intended to that direction: 'Hidden, confiscated, used as corroborating evidence'. The photos were collected from private and state archives. The commentaries give information of the events while telling the history of the author and the circumstances in which the photos were taken and preserved, including their use as evidence for the incarceration of even executions of participants in the revolution.

Part of the events that marked the Revolution of 1956 focused on the impact of Hungarian events in Bulgaria. Professor Plamen Doinov gave a lecture on the impact of the Hungarian Revolution on the Bulgarian literature. A collection of documents testifying the reaction of Bulgarian Communist leadership and the wider public was published, including materials from secret archives.

All these events and initiatives remind and inform the Bulgarian public about events that were shrouded in silence for many years. In summary: all aspects of the Hungarian Revolution – political leadership and their destiny, the mass nature of the resistance, its direction and purpose, the consequences and impact on an individual level and the impact of the events on the political situation in Bulgaria – are reflected in these events.

Concerning the anniversary of the revolution in Hungary 1956, I have to say that it is not the majority of the Bulgarian population that is interested in this event. Maybe it is partly because in the past there was little known about Hungary 1956, and now it is associated with the "Soviet past" of the country, which is also still a very controversial topic. As I already mentioned there were not many media events connected to Hungary 1956 in Bulgaria, which more or less proves that statement.

Sources:

Standart, 3.10.2006; 4.10.2006; 5.10.2006; 7.10.2006; 12.10.2006; 25.10.2006; 27.10.2006:
daily newspaper

Semkov, Andrei: "Otzvukat na revoljucijata ot 1956 v Balgarija", Sofia, 2006.

Booklet of the Hungarian Cultural Institute in Sofia for the graphical material:

ИЗЛОЖБИ

13-31. петък-вторник
Пловдив, Балабанова къща
56 ФОТОСА ЗА 56-ТА – фотоняж-ба на Карой Коход
XVI Международни фотографски срещи
Критиките четиридесет години фотографии са малко съдържани заради риска при направата им и от етични съображения. Авторът им след 1989 г. потърсва оригиналните места на заснемането им и запечата промените или точно обратното: липсата на промени през тези четири десетилетия. Петдесет години: две поколения са ги отишли. Нека посеем да си спомним!
www.ideabg.com/clients/oldtown/bg/mesta/balab.php
www.plovdiv.bg

16-23. понеделник-понеделник
СУ "Св. Кирил и Методи" Охридски, Аула
УНГАРСКАТА РЕВОЛЮЦИЯ ОТ 1956 – изложба на Военноисторически музей (Буапена)

27. петък 16.30
Шумен, Регионална библиотека "Стефан Цвиллингов"
СКРИТИ, КОНФИСКУВАНИ, ПРИЛОЖЕНИ КАТО УЛИКА... – изложба на Унгарски Национален Музей (съставител: Каталин Ялшовски)
Фотосите показват не само мигове от тринадесетте драматични дни на революцията, а и с по-нататъшната си история отразяват жестокостта на репресиите и свързаната на диктатурата.

1. неделя 10.00-16.00
Шуменска крепост
ВЪЗСТАНОВКА НА БИТКАТА ЗА ШУМЕНСКАТА КРЕПОСТ с участието на Служенето за съхраняване на традициите – гр. Егер
През 1444 г. войските на Владислав Варненчик, предвождани от Янош Хуняди отново поемат на поход, за да изтласкат турците от Европа. Последната им битка преди поражението при Варна е превъзмето на Шуменската крепост. Град Шумен и тази година организира възстановка на обсадата.

26. четвъртък 17.30
Варна, Царк-музей "Владислав Варненчик"
ПРЕДСТАВЯНЕ НА ПРОСПЕКТА "ВАРНЕНСКАТА БИТКА"
Варненската битка от 1444 г. има катстрофални последици както за българската, така и за унгарската история. Тази година за посетителите на царк-музей "Владислав Варненчик" излезе съвременен проспект, който по достъпен начин обобщава фактите.
www.magyarintezet.hu/sofia (архив: август 2006)

УНГАРСКИ КУЛТУРЕН ИНСТИТУТ
София 1000, ул. "Аксаков" 16, тел. (02) 987 23 07, 987 29 63, факс: (02) 981 91 79
e-mail: uki@mbox.digsys.bg, <http://www.magyarintezet.hu/sofia>

РАБОТНО ВРЕМЕ:
секретариат: **понеделник-четвъртък** – 9.00-17.30 ч., **петък** – 9.00-15.00 ч.;
библиотека: **понеделник-четвъртък** – 9.00-17.30 ч., **петък** – 9.00-15.00 ч.;
изложбена зала: **понеделник-петък** – 10.00-18.00 ч.

Zitierempfehlung:

Kalina Kirilova, Remembering Hungary 1956 in Bulgaria, in: Zeitgeschichte-online,

Themenportal Ungarn 1956 – Geschichte und Erinnerung,

URL: <http://www.zeitgeschichte-online.de/portals/_ungarn1956/documents/kirilova.pdf>