

THE 1956 MEMORIAL YEAR



The 1956 Memorial Year at the NSZL 1956 Institute – Oral History Archive

The 1956 Institute set up several major projects to mark the 60th anniversary of the Hungarian revolution and freedom fight. The first was the *1956 and Socialism – Crisis and Rethinking* conference organized jointly by the 1956 Institute Foundation and the Károly Eszterházy University of Eger on 8-10 September 2016. For three days, more than 240 historians, sociologists, political scientists and other experts discussed the topic in more than sixty sections. The second project was the edition of the special issue of the illustrated journal *BBC History* published at the end of September with the title *The Hungarian October*. The richly illustrated album of almost 150 pages was published also as an individual volume with twenty-five articles written by our staff (excepting the excerpt of the memoir by ex-ambassador of Great Britain in Budapest Peter Unwin). Our colleagues also carried out the task of text and picture editing.

The 1956 Institute staff members published more than 70 publications for the anniversary, including eight individual volumes of which five ones were written by László Eörsi [*Közbánya 1956 – Armed Resistance in the 10th District.; Armed Resistance in Csepel – 1956; Zugló 1956 – Armed Resistance in the 14th District.; “Unusual Times, Unusual Events” – The History and Myth of Ilona Tóth and Péter Mansfeld; The Budapest Lads in Erzsébetváros*]. The unique historical travel guide by Gábor Tabajdi published by Jaffa Publishing House [*Budapest in the Days of Freedom – 1956*] describes the everyday life of the capital city during the revolution. János M. Rainer published two summaries, [*The Hungarian Revolution of 1956. Introduction*] (Osiris), and Imre Nagy (Imre Nagy Foundation), the latter being the extended and corrected version of the small biography published almost 15 years ago.

Our staff contributed to more than 50 conferences including 16 foreign language events, some of them abroad. They presented papers on 30 commemorative events. 25 exhibitions of different scopes related to the

Memorial Year were assisted by our experts. Our partners included Tatabánya Museum, Hungarian Writers’ Association, DUE- Hungarian Embassy in Vienna, Monori Vigadó Cultural Civil Association, Bartók Chamber Theater and House of Arts, Nagykovácsi Civil Association, Eleven Emlékmű [Living Monument] Group, the outdoor exhibition *For Freedom and Independence* of The House of Terror, Institute of Military History, Parliament Museum, Budafok Neighbors’ Market, Budapest Lads Memorial Park, and the town councils of the 7th and 8th districts of Budapest.

János Rainer M.
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The Hungarian October. The revolution of 1956 online

In 2016, we celebrated the 60th anniversary of the Hungarian revolution of 1956. Two years ago, National Széchényi Library launched a web project to make available for the public an interactive experience of the historical events. The project consists of two major parts: the visual representation of the revolution on photos and footages taken on specific sites that you can locate on a map, and all the audio programs broadcast during the events by Radio Free Europe, together with their word-by-word transcript.

During the revolution of 1956, thousands of photos and footages of various length were made. Their collection, elaboration and publishing have not been concluded yet, and many of them are still unknown for the experts. The project is a result of a thorough research: János Varga has been working for 30 years on the collection and identification of the images recorded during the revolution. To make the collection complete, not only the Hungarian National Film Archive, but also foreign archives must be searched, and the material must be brought to Hungary, a work still under way.

Our compilation is a result of the cooperation between several institutions of the Hungarian public collection network, civil archives, and foreign resources, and we still count on private collections yet to be discovered. The visual material is collected in a database organized by specialized historians. We added GPS-coordinates to the sites identified, so that the audience can follow the events realistically, relating them to the current locations.

The audio recordings of Radio Free Europe broadcast in 1956 entered the collection in the autumn of 2001, on 311 audio cassettes of 90 minutes that contain almost the entirety of the Radio Free Europe programs from

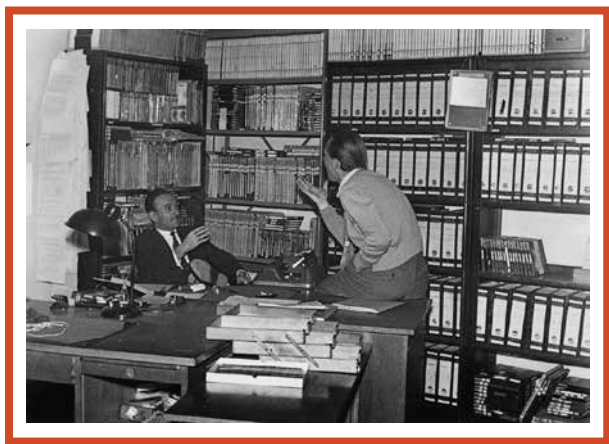
22 October to 12 November 1956. National Széchényi Library digitized and elaborated this material and recorded the contents in writing. The identification of the contributors and editors is still under way, as well as the proofreading of the word-by-word transcript. The audio material is downloadable for free, together with the transcript, and it is ideal to evoke the events of the revolution in exact chronology and reconstruct the information environment that influenced the thoughts and deeds of the people of that time.

László Major, Bea Lukács

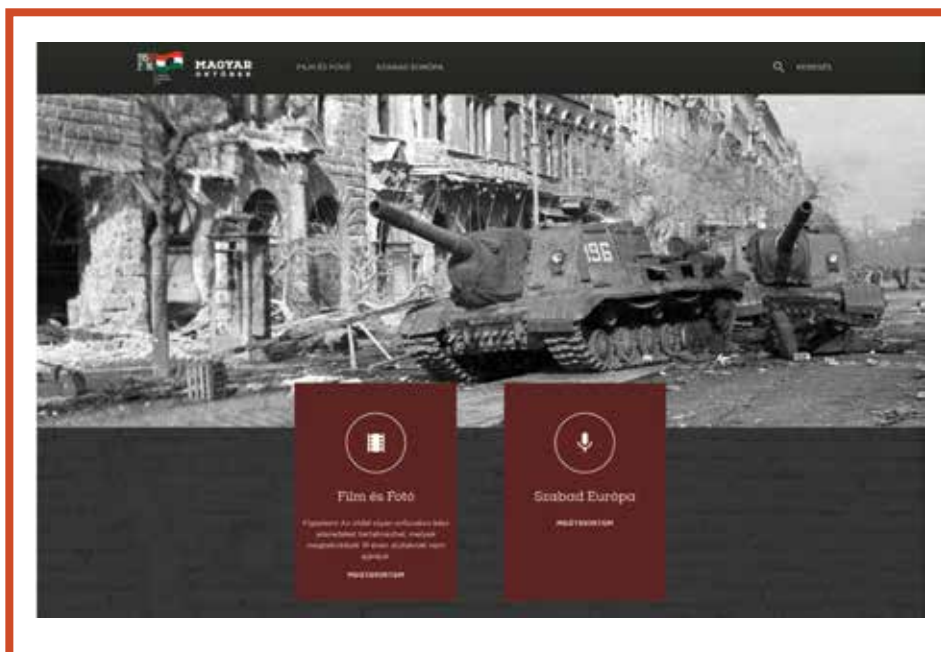
major.laszlo.at.oszk.hu, bealukacs.at.oszk.hu



Mária Gring-Mikecz, newsreader of Radio Free Europe/
The studio of Radio Free Europe in the 1950s. Mária Gring-Mikecz, newsreader



The editorial room of Radio Free Europe in the mid-1950s.
Editors Csaba Skultéty and László László



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