

Melinda Harlov-Csortán

PhD candidate (without scholarship or employment)

The memory of the 1956 Revolution and its legacy. The role of commemoration in the relationship between Hungary and Russia

The proposed presentation introduces and analysis those public art examples that commemorate the 1956 Revolution in Budapest, Hungary. The time frame of the research is from the date of the Revolution as there were certain spots of the city that were used as memorials even if the political leadership did not “support” that process to 2015, when the call for tenders was announced to establish new memorials for the 60th anniversary. Like any public art example, the researched cases define their locations and speak about the ruling standpoint on the represented topic and its actors. They can be seen as the instrumentalization of the past in the present circumstances especially through directed ceremonies. The goal of the presentation is to look at the relationship between Hungary and Russia between 1956 and 2015 through these public art examples and the connecting commemorations. Besides the territorial and time contextualization, the paper contains art analysis, quotes and comparative research methodologies to point out the allusions and correlation in time and the possible effects on the international relations between the two states both on political and social levels. Social (media) reactions to these art pieces, as well as, the presentation and inauguration steps are going to be reviewed to investigate the influence of these symbolic venues on the contemporary evaluation and role of the former victim and perpetrator relationship between the two countries.