VILLAGE AS A PROJECT:

MANAGERIALIST CITIZENSHIP AND POLITICS OF ENTITLEMENT IN VÁMOSSZABADI

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ABSTRACT

"You see, the village is like a project that needs to be managed. And we see ourselves as managing that project". – Civilian Settler

Demonstrations against the establishment of a refugee camp in a middle-class village in Western Hungary led to the establishment in the village of a vigilantist "civil control", designed to oversee political affairs and to assure 'homogeneity' in terms of class composition. My thesis unpacks the genealogy of the "civil control" by analysing the pre-existing social tensions in the village that triggered indignation against the refugee camp in the first place, and acted as precursor to local vigilantism. Using the various citizenship regimes developed and applied by the villagers themselves, I analyze the social history of the village as divided between "Aboriginals" and "Settlers", as well as between politically active "Civilians" and politically apathetic "Citizens". I then demonstrate how Civilians established their views as the hegemonic narrative in the village by invoking belonging through real-estate value and normative tax-paying behaviour, thus upholding and performing a desirable community. The second part of the thesis then focuses on Civilians as a contested community, unmasking some the tensions and conflicts behind the ostensibly harmonious community, exposing conflictual trajectories of belonging, highlighting dialogical nature of constructed citizenship and how contestations are constitutive of managerialist citizenship. Civilians thus emerge as a strategic community, promoting a specific type of homogenous class citizenship, localism and a quest for managerialist civil control of politics.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Ethnographic vignette

I visited the village of Vámosszabadi for the first time in July 2013. Arriving by bicycle from the nearby city of Győr, I stumbled right upon the scene of a flash mob demonstration. The villagers had organized a forum to protest against the establishment of a reception facility for asylum seekers and refugees in the village. The Head of Office of Immigration and Nationality (OIN) *(Bevándorlási Hivatal, BÁH)* the authority responsible for dealing with asylum requests in Hungary, was trying to calm down the angry crowd. Her speech, already disrupted multiple times, was stopped altogether when protesters surrounded the stage, carrying signs with the names of surrounding villages in the area. Simultaneously, a coffin was revealed in front of the stage, and Vámosszabadians dressed in identical neon green t-shirts, reading "Refugee camp does not belong here!" *(Menekülttabor ide nem való!)*, proceeded to attach words such as "democracy", "tourism", "calmness" and "economic development" on the coffin that symbolized the death of the village as a result of the arrival of refugees.

During the summer of 2013, Vámosszabadi evolved into the epicenter of an anti-refugee campaign in Hungary. The focus of the campaign, however, soon departed from the original goal of preventing the establishment of the camp towards internal conflicts over who constitutes the legitimate political voice, and from what background do those people come. Contrary to what had been expected, there were no problems with the refugees who eventually arrived in August 2013. Nonetheless, the protagonists of the anti-camp campaign, who soon became known as "Civilians" throughout the village and to the local authorities, then began to advocate a role of a watchdog

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over possible "atrocities" committed by refugees as well as the municipal government's possible mishandlings of politics. Seizing the political voice of the village on a fairly aggressive manner, as the above vignette with the flash mob depicts, the Civilians launched an active Facebook community in which they addressed perceived issues with the governance of the village, began to organize happenings such as village forums and movie screenings, and continued their protest by promoting "Civilian" control over village affairs and the doings of the Municipality. While to the rest of the country, the name "Vámosszabadi" quickly became known as a village with a "racist" demonstration, and journalists, documentary makers and sociology students rushed to the scene to document the happenings, the social relations in the village became indicative and even constitutive of the managerial project of the Civilians, at the heart of which lies dynamics of contradictory regimes of entitlements and governance.

Villagers in Vámosszabadi have developed a rich vocabulary for citizenship. In what follows, I only briefly introduce some of the most pertinent categories, and later on in the course of the thesis I will discuss each one in greater, and more analytical, detail. The most notable category of citizens is perhaps that of Settlers *(bevándorlók; betelepülők; jöttmentek),* who by and large consist of middle class or upper middle class families who have moved to the village in search of peaceful and quiet village life. The arrival of Settlers dialogically contributed to the construction of those presumably "rooted" in the village, the Aboriginals *(őslakok, törzsgyökeresek).* The Aboriginals, as later will be discussed, are generally perceived as older, and economically not as well off as the Settlers. The division of communities into Settlers and Aboriginals is not a novel phenomenon, and the "comeback" of indigeneity has also received attention from anthropologists (Strathern 1981; Kuper 2003; Jung 2008; Evans 2012; Smith 2013). In Vámosszabadi, however, the lexicon of overlapping identities of belonging also includes the

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dialectics between Civilians and Citizens. Civilians *(civilek)*, as I will later unpack in greater detail, denote people who take an active role in overseeing the politics and affairs of the local community, while *Citizens (állampolgárok)* are, as I was told by an informant, "just" Citizens, whose voice drowns in an ocean of fellow Citizens and thereby who cannot assume individual political agency. I grew to know the difference between these categories (Settlers/ Aboriginals, Civilians/ Citizens) during my fieldwork, and I adopted the same vocabulary that the villagers were using themselves. Originally, Civilians claimed to represent the village as a whole, but the tactic backfired when Aboriginals, frowning at the aggressive vocabulary used by the Civilians, quickly pointed out that the absolute majority of Civilians were Settlers. Thereby a dual opposition of categories emerged: Civilian-Settlers and Citizen-Aboriginals. While this distinction is by no means waterproof, it does reflect a general understanding in the village, and signals deeper, pre-existing conflicts between Settlers and Aboriginals. Even though in reality I never met a villager whose identity would unproblematically fit into these categories, these distinctions were evoked sometimes in protest, and sometimes in order to convince me of a certain person's allegiances.

1.2. Conceptual framework and research questions

Recalling that anthropology does not concern itself merely with the deconstruction of events and identities, but instead promotes an understanding of processes and frames through which occurrences become meaningful (Hastrup 2004), this thesis is not concerned with the anti-refugee camp protest *per se*, even though I depict it as one of the paradigmatic moments inside my field, and in any case, as the moment when I got the first glimpse of the processes I am examining. Moreover, this thesis is an investigation into those contingencies that made the apparition of the

refugee camp into a meaningful event with structural ramifications on different understandings of entitlement as consolidated by different trajectories of citizenship most notably by the managerialist approach advanced by the Civilians. By investigating notions of community and entitlement as desired, performed and advanced – indeed, "rendered technical" by the Civilians (Li 2007), I expose a nascent type of citizenship relying on repertoires of governmentality and managerialism, promoting the overseeing of representational politics with the help of responsible, managed members of a community that strives on bourgeois values. The boundaries of this community are not maintained only through primordial claims of autochthony, but by economic citizenship where real estate symbolizes entitlement to political voice. The backbone of the conceptual framework I employ relies on the deployment of elaborate managerialist repertoires (Clarke 2014), a notion that in turn draws on the work on governmentality as introduced by Michel Foucault (1991; 2008) and later elaborated and furthered by a number of scholars in a robust, growing field of literature (Lemke 2002; Li 2007; Rose and Miller 2008; Walters 2012). Managerialism, as advanced by the Civilians in Vámosszabadi, needs to be understood in a larger context and therefore scalar terms (Massey 2004): while the community remains torn by internal conflicts, a harmonious and unified picture of the community is crucial to be seen from the outside (Bauman 2001). Such staged portrayal of harmony is a crucial prerequisite of the Civilians for the deployment of a narrative of self-victimization against the central government (Jeffery and Cadea 2006). In light of this, I set forth the following research questions:

- On what basis do the Civilians claim their entitlements over the hegemonic political voice in village affairs?

- How are the internal struggles within the community constitutive of the Civilians' managerialist project of governing the conduct of the community?

All in all, this thesis seeks to contribute to an anthropological perspective to the growth of the managerialist construction of citizenship and community. The populist rhetoric adopted by Civilians echoes that of vigilante groups who, in reaction to what they depict as the absence of action on behalf of state institutions, claim exceeding authority in local affairs (Abrahams 1998). The prerequisite of the Civilians' protest against the refugee camp relies on a romantic and utopian narrative of the community, substantiating the findings of classic scholars on community: the closely knitted *Gemeinschaft* of smaller, rural communities as opposed to the mechanic *Gesellschaft* of the city (Tönnies 1955). In the case of Vámosszabadi, however, this binary opposition between the urban and the rural is only situationally evoked: the narrative of "a sleeping village" whereby the community is represented merely as an extension of the city is challenged by portrayals of the village as an idyllic and utopian "little community" (Redfield 1955). In the field of anthropology, Victor Turner's seminal work (1969) departs from the study of communities based on dialectics such as inclusion/exclusion and rural/urban by introducing the communities in light of temporality, liminality and the dynamics of structure and anti-structure in moments of contestation, thereby also advancing a scalar understanding of the notion. Furthermore, Turner's important argument of communities as a fundamentally symbolic form of interaction paves way for understanding the role of communication in communities. His argument of communitas as an interaction in which the symbols (form) may be shared by different members while the meaning (content) may alter is especially important as it takes into consideration the transient nature of communitas, a fleeting moment of liminality between the anti-structure and structure, that nevertheless provides individuals with aspects to identify with (Turner 1969).

Rather than studying communities as sites of belonging, scholars following the tradition of the Chicago school have highlighted the conflictual nature of communities in the wake of

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modernity. Differential regimes of citizenship, gentrification and securitization have been important features of modern, urban communities (Harvey 1990; Delanty 2003; Low 2003; Smith 2006; Slater 2006; Lees *et. al.* 2007). For the purposes of the present study, the middle-classification is important as it is compounded with the growing salience of a desired community as an aesthetic community (Delanty 2003:59). Particularly the work of Neil Smith is revealing: he exposed the rise of the revanchist city (1996), where middle-class interests produce a differentiated space in order to guarantee the survival of the middle-class against other, marginalized communities. In this process, the middle-class takes the position of the victim, instead of more foreseeable victimization of marginalized communities such as homeless people, unemployed, immigrants or sexual minorities. The revanchist city is invoked to an extent in the literature on Not-In-My-Backyard (NIMBY) movements (Lyon-Callo 2001; Maney and Abraham 2008; Device-Wright 2009). These studies, while providing a rich discussion backed up with empirical research nevertheless portray the community either as vanguards of civic good (in protecting the neighborhood from environmental hazards) or as fiercely promoting the interests of the middle-class by opposing the establishment of facilities for marginalized groups, does not touch on the internal conflicts that all communities are ridden by, as Bauman (2001) reveals.

The above-mentioned studies complement the claim made by Nikolas Rose that local communities are exceedingly becoming the primary sites for the art of governance (1996). This rise of the local does not, however, necessarily signal the rendering obsolete of the nation-state. Rather, localism is becoming an issue on the national and even international agenda. Corresponding to the increasing salience the notion of "place" into international policy agendas (such as the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007), the shift towards localism has also been evident in a rising number of scholarly works on indigeneity and

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autochthony (Kuper 2003; Ceuppens and Geschiere 2005; Ceuppens 2006; Jung 2008; Geshiere 2009; Hilgers 2011; Yuval-Davis 2013). Importantly, indigeneity does not only refer to "ethnic" minorities but is more and more used in order to claim rights for the majority, as Gillian Evans (2012) finds in her ethnographic investigation of far right voters in London, UK. This logic of employing human rigths discourse to promote the rights of the majority will be discussed in the penultimate section of the thesis.

The relation between community and entitlement, that essentially constitutes the main project of the Civilians in Vámosszabadi as well, also coalesces in the proliferating academic literature on citizenship. While work on transnational and postnational communities has gained popularity (Benhabib 2005, Glick Schiller et. al. 1995; Soysal 1994), it has sided more towards migrants and mobile people than "host" communities. Engin Isin, on the other hand, has historicized citizenship as an uneven dialogical process (2002) and has suggested the notion of "acts" of citizenship performed by marginalized groups, in order to claim their presence, and therefore entitlement to rights (Isin and Nielsen 2008). The current thesis departs from Isin's focus on the marginalized by examining the narratives and the agency of the dominant group in the community – the Civilians, who claim to represent the majority. However, my intent is not to write a genealogy of the Civilian Control, but rather to unpack the managerialist dynamics in the village by exploring the conflictual relations that the Civilians – as a civic association – have with regard to other claims of entitlements.

Social sciences focussing on civic associations was for a long time the battleground for the neo-Tocquevillian social capital approach as advanced by Robert Putnam (1993; 2000). For Putnam, a functioning and vivid civil society, manifested through civic associations, was a precondition for functioning institutions. More recently, as growing austerity measures in Europe

since the financial crisis of 2008, policies promoting "active citizenship" have peaked, and so have their anthropological and sociological critiques (Bifulco 2013; Fortier 2010). Andrea Muehlebach in particular has impressively unpacked the culture and value of volunteer work as a prominent feature of neoliberal governance (2012)**.** Neoliberal values of ownership and consumption are at the core of the performance of community as advanced by the Civilians, not merely as expressed in the consolidation of public space, but also in their advancment of micro-level governance whereby the centralized governance is secondary to citizens who control their local affairs.

Governmentality and community, then, constitute the main frame of analysis in this thesis. While the camp situation and subsequent movement could be studied from many different perspectives, such as the detailed study of the contestation and conflict over public spaces, a more nuanced investigation of the Settler-Aboriginal relations or social movement theory, I chose to focus on the Civilians because of the prevalence and mushrooming of similar movements in contemporary Hungary. Indeed, such civic controls are becoming almost the norm in other areas in the country, mostly in areas with marginalized groups such as refugees or Roma, as studied by Szombati and Feischmidt (2011). By no means are such semi-vigilantist civic associations unique to the region: the minuteman civic patrol in United States has been largely studied, as well as the emergence of vigilantist movements in Spain during the harsh austerity measures during the financial crisis has been documented (Galdon-Clavell 2013) The idea, then, is not to show Vámosszabadi as an exceptional case: rather, my thesis is a study of a exemplary community where certain types of entitlements are claimed in order to consolidate citizenship that advances values of liberal ownership as expressed in real estate. All in all, this thesis seeks to contribute to an anthropological perspective to the growth of managerialism and governmentality in the construction of citizenship and community.

1.3. Thesis structure

Following this conceptual framework and literature review, my thesis continues by depicting the setting that the research took place in. Drawing on ethnographic research material, I analytically outline the social history of the village and the event of the refugee camp. I continue by introducing the crucial category of investigation, the community of "Civilians", and how they emerged to be the main lens through which I investigate the village. Sections three and four conceptually unfold the community of Vámosszabadi. First, I discuss the village as a <u>performed community</u>, through which Civilians in the village legitimate their entitlements for political voice and managerial roles. Section four, <u>contested community</u>, unmasks some of the tensions and conflicts behind that performance the harmonious community and exposes how conflictual understandings of entitlements actually contribute to the construction of managerialism. The section finishes with a discussion on the ways in which contradictory understandings of community takes a spatial form in the material and infrastructural reality of the village, paying special attention to the debates over construction of a new community space. Finally, I will conclude by drawing the two sections together and bring the discussion back into the issue of the refugee camp by examining the strategy of self-victimization that Civilians deploy in order to advance a specific type of citizenship and belonging. The overall purpose of this thesis, apart from making a contribution to the existing anthropological literature on governmentality, is to unpack the Civilians' understanding of the village as a project that needs to be managed, thereby transforming the conduct of politics in the community.

2. THE SETTING

2.1. Social history of the village

The locals living in city of Győr and its surroundings often state that the area has "an air of the West", the city itself symbolizing "The Gate to the West". The city of 130 000 people is relatively well off because of industry and investment. The reputation of Győr in rest of the country echoes the understanding of "the West" as clean, rich, orderly and calm, as people from Győr would often remind me. The wider area, so-called "Little Hungarian Plain" *(Kisalföld)* is likewise known to be economically productive and less troubled by social inequalities than other parts of the country, is situated in Western Hungary, bordering both Slovakia and Austria, and has traditionally been a stronghold of the conservative Fidesz-party. In 1993, the car manufacturer Audi invested majorly in the area by building a car-plant in the city, bringing in thousands of jobs both directly and indirectly. The economic development brought about by the Audi factory and the proximity to Austria are difficult to miss in the centre of the city, which is held in neat condition, although a large shopping mall has replaced the historic centre as the meeting point of citizens. Economic development had major ramifications in the surrounding area as well. The opportunity was seized by the surrounding villages of Vámosszabadi, Kisbajcs and Nagybajcs, all of which are situated by the delta of the river Danube. In mid-1990s, village municipalities started a conscious and very successful project of attracting well-off middle-class families, often employees of Audi, to move to the villages to pieces of land that were carved out of existing properties. A research dating back to early 2000s notes that in in the case of Vámosszabadi, the "Settlers", as they were called, were decidedly richer than the villagers (Hárdi 2002). As the population of Vámosszabadi more than doubled in a decade, alongside with other surrounding

villages it turned into a "sleeping village" *(alvó falu)*, a quiet place from where people drive to work early in the morning to return late at night.

Map 1. Vámosszabadi, Hungary (Google Maps 2014)

The second time I visited Vámosszabadi in late January 2014, the scenery was a striking contrast to the coffin-spectacle of the previous summer. I could hardly believe I was visiting the same community. Merely eight kilometers from Győr, the village conveys an idyllic impression. In the old local bus, many commuters know each other, and chat friendlily through the 20-minute ride over the fields to the village. Entering the village, the first thing one sees is a small lake, one of three in the village. The bus rides through the old centre of the village with crisscrossing small streets and the church, later to exit the village via bigger new streets in the north, where many Settlers live. The difference between the Settler streets and Aboriginal streets is clearly visible in

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map 1. that depicts the village. Nearby, less than a kilometre towards North from the Settler areas flows the Danube and its delta-area Szigetköz. The river is beautiful and mighty, and elder residents still remember back to the 50s when the flooding Danube destroyed half of the village. The village was in a similar danger once more in May 2013, but the villagers (Settlers and Aboriginals alike) stood together to fight the flood, and by carrying sand bags they managed to stop the flooding of the Danube into the village that was on the brink of evacuation. Indeed, nature plays an important role in the village and the community, as can be also deciphered on a rather new village info table, situated in the middle of a crossroads between some newly built roads. The info table reads in English:

> "The land, which used to belong to the fishermen, today is a paradise for the anglers with its many well-maintained angling ponds surrounded with green areas with benches and play-grounds. You can also explore the beauties of the land by boat where the trees on the banks are accompanied by reeds and sedge, and water lilies glow blue against the green background."

The Settlers brought with them more than just a higher headcount and more taxes. They built their own wide roads, such the Kökenyszeg Street in the North of the village, and a village pub *Moszkitó* by one of the lakes. Given that many houses are still being constructed, some streets literally smell new. Vámosszabadi, thanks to the migration from Győr, now has 1600 inhabitants (compared to 700 in the early 90s) and can boast of a primary school and kindergarten, tennis court, aforementioned lakes, a few bars and restaurants. The rather active communal life in the village consists of a Fishing Association (who protected the lake from pollution by setting a fence around it), a Village Development Association (that began when villagers wanted to install satellite TVs in the 90s), a very active Pensioners' Club, Civic Guards' Association and a very active Catholic congregation that has even featured on the local TV. In Vámosszabadi, the village life is stable.

An informant, himself something between a Settler an Aboriginal, having grown up in the village, studied elsewhere and then moved back, told me:

> "Those who move out [from Győr] are people who have enough money to spend in on buying or building a family house, so whether you like it or not it shows a certain economic position within our society. Homeless people have not come here, neither people with the minimum salary… The village was calm, there was peace… There are no overarching economical differences; the village is not divided into a poor part and a rich part. It is a unified trustworthy place where people live well together, exactly because the village grew suddenly and very much – like I said earlier, there was a kind of a filter for those who could move in."

The informant further expressed his pride for the fact that there were relatively few Roma in the village, and none of them were unemployed, as the popular stereotype would suggest. Of all the municipalities surrounding Győr, Vámosszabadi grew the fastest, and the income of Settlers was nearly double that of the Aboriginals (Hárdi 2002:62). The suburbanization of Győr to the surrounding villagers marks the mushrooming of gated communities in Hungary, a process of postsocialist aspiration of "becoming bourgeois" that at its core relies on the dialectic of inclusion and exclusion (Bodnár 2008).

2.2. The event: the Refugee camp

For Sewell, a historical event is characterized by a ramified sequence of occurrences, by its being recognized as something notable by contemporaries and by resulting in durable structural transformations (1996:844). Although his theorization has since come under some criticism (Steinmetz 2008; Patterson 2007), the concept of an event is nevertheless helpful in dissecting consequent developments in the village. Steinmentz, in particular, complements Sewell by

drawing attention to slow, gradual changes that are not necessarily recognized by contemporaries, but nevertheless result in transformations in the structure that is a combination of semiotics and the built environment (2008:538). Such slow processes are doubtlessly paramount also in Vámosszabadi, for the very event of refugee camp was made possible because of the earlier change in the socio-economic composition of the community.

As I mentioned earlier, the flood of May 2013 had been a groundbreaking, unifying experience for the village, one that nearly all my informants stressed in semi-structured and informal interviews alike. After the flood, when life had calmed down once more, with no warning and no official communication to the villagers, the news broke out first at the local newspaper, Kisalföld, that the Hungarian government in June 2013 decided to place a refugee camp, or more precisely, a reception facility for asylum seekers (from hereafter I refer to the facility merely as "the camp") (Sudár 2013a). Villagers recounted to me later how after the news, they had immediately rushed to study the facts. Who were these refugees? Why did they come to Hungary, and why was a new camp needed, and why exactly in Vámosszabadi? Finally, why on earth were the villagers not informed, and instead had to find out from the local newspaper? It was soon discovered that the skyrocketing number of asylum applications in Hungary in 2013, 900% growth in comparison to the previous year (OIN 2013), had lead to an extreme overcrowding of refugee camps in Hungary, with even tent camps being set up. The authority responsible for Hungarian asylum policy, Office of Immigration and Nationality (OIN), was looking for a quick solution where to place asylum seekers, and finally settled on a building on the edge of Vámosszabadi, situated on a road with no name merely 200 metres from the Slovakian border. During state socialism, the building had been first a lodging house for dam-workers on the Danube, and later after the regime change a barrack for single soldiers in the army, but now since nearly a decade it

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stood empty by the border. In 2012, when the Vámosszabadi municipality was asked whether it wants to exercise the legal right to buy the building from the owner, Ministry of Defense, the Mayor declined on the grounds that the municipality could not afford 70 million HUF (225 000€). The Mayor, who had ran as an independent candidate, had soon after election revealed to support a left-wing party Democratic Coalition (DC), an ad hoc party that a previous socialist Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsány set up in 2011 after being ousted by a corruption scandal. Soon, some in the village rumored that the conservative Fidesz party (the arch enemy of Democratic Coalition) that held all the government offices and two thirds of the Parliament, wanted to punish the village for having a DC Mayor.

Fierce anti-camp protests commenced immediately. It was the same people who had been fighting the wrath of the Danube only a few weeks before, who quickly re-organized. As a prerequisite of an effective anti-camp movement, an open, shared and instant platform for communication was needed. Therefore, an open Facebook group was set up by the name REFUGEE CAMP IN VÁMOSSZABADI? WE DON'T WANT IT! *(MENEKÜLTTABOR VÁMOSSZABADIN? NEM AKARJUK!)* (Facebook 2014), attracting nearly 3000 members, not only from Vámosszabadi but also from nearby settlements, Győr as well as other cities in Hungary, where there are similar movements against refugee camps. In a few days, identical neon-green T-shirts were also quickly printed featuring the slogan of the movement.

The first few protests - roadblocks - were organized together with the Municipality and the protesters, but soon enough the main group of protesters broke away and started organizing by themselves without further help from the municipality. For an anti-camp petition, 11 000 signatures were collected from Vámosszabadi, from nearby villages and from the city of Győr. The Minister of the Interior rejected the petition, saying "I could collect ten million signatures that

Hungary does not want any refugees, but we need to stick to the European Union rules" (Sudár 2013b). Collective blood donation was organized in order to show that the villagers were ready to even give their blood for their home, and in the village pub frequented by Settlers, *Moszkitó*, there was a list of those who had donated. Several protests, including marches with torches, were organized in the village and in Győr. The anti-camp movement gained strenght when it turned out that Innopharma Kft., a British medical factory cancelled its plans to build a factory in the village that would have provided 140 jobs, citing worsening public security due to the camp (Sudár 2013b). The protests culminated in a fierce village forum, spiced by a coffin-flash mob, organized on a hot July day on the open football field, which I described earlier in the introduction.

The whole village seemed to unite in their opposition towards the camp. As the protest secured plenty of attention in the media, Vámosszabadians explained how the future of the happy community is jeopardized by the arrival of refugees. Examples were cited from other locations with refugee camps, where refugees allegedly molest local young women. It was emphasized that the family-friendly nature of Vámosszabadi, where children could play outside by themselves, would be placed severely at risk. New families would not want to move to the area, the value of properties would decrease, and then there were those 140 jobs that were lost as well. Over the summer, the village's performance of suffering in the media developed into a means of securing the sole legitimate voice that can make a moral claims regarding the reception of refugees; the situation could not possibly be understood by those who did not live in the village or in the vicinity of a refugee camp elsewhere. In short, it was the suffering that gave Vámosszabadians the right to have an opinion via claims of self-victimization communicated through highly visual and provocative means on the popular social media page frequented by journalists. When Austrian newspapers wrote in November 2013 that there has been a case of polio in a refugee camp in

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Austria (Der Standard 2013), there was immediately a strong reaction in the online community of the villagers, demanding OIN whether their health concerns would finally be taken seriously (Buruzs 2013), as it was becoming clearer and clearer that the camp posed a threat to the health and rights of the villagers. This emphasis on the human rights of the majority is a case in point to illustrate Redfield's (2010) argument that the very "neutrality" of supposedly universal human rights is a generative force; in Vámosszabadi, the human rights of the majority generate, and to an extent, legitimize the exclusion of refugees. Ironically, although the Civilians were themselves protesting against EU policies of reception of refugees, the protest was mimicking the discourse of those very policies by invoking the sense of a close, but sieged community under threat from refugees at the borders. Although the Civilians claimed that refugee camps had disastrous effects everywhere in Europe, destroying local communities, they chose a very selective reading of communities' attitudes towards refugees. For instance, a small town in Southern Italy, Riace, the municipality has begun an active policy of welcoming refugees and immigrants to the community thereby reviving the economy and communal life of the town, as recently reported in media (Kington 2013). The Civilians' focus on the imagined fears, rather than possible positive examples, is indicative of the managerialist position they have appointed for themselves, and even a prerequisite of it.

2.3. Emergence of the Civilians

The initial wave of protests by the villagers was not in vain. The municipality and two visible protesters who by now had acquired the name "Civilians" (marking the opposition to the municipality as well as more passive "Citizens") were invited to official negotiations at the Ministry of Interior. A compromise was reached – the need for the refugee camp would be renegotiated in March 2014, with reference to the migration situation and anticipating

parliamentary elections that would take place in April 2014. To the protesters, this essentially meant that the camp would be temporary. It was also agreed that refugees would commute to Győr on a separate bus ride, so that in fact refugees would have no business in the village, nor have to take the public bus. It was time for "ceasefire" *(tűzszünet)*, during which the first refugees arrived to the camp in August 2013. The nature of the protests by the Civilians now changed to monitoring incidents that would happen with the refugees. However, things did not turn out as planned: before February 2014, when a few refugees started attending the church service on Sundays, refugees did not enter the area of the village at all. In fact, they were encouraged not to use the village bus, and had a private bus ride commuting between the camp and Györ. The Civilians, who from the beginning had shunned away from any connections with political parties, especially the extreme right wing party Jobbik, then, adopted a rhetoric of protecting the village from the rise of extreme right. The Civilians' gaze into the future as legitimizing the events of today is striking. If the camp would stay, they claimed, in the parliamentary elections in April 2014, Jobbik would gain strength, making the decision of maintaining the camp strategically unfeasible for the governing party Fidesz. Before the elections, the Civilians emphasized this line of thought in all situations possible. However, they passed on the issue of planning alternative uses of the building to the Municipality, with whom a friction soon developed. According to the Civilians, apart from minor accusations of corruption regarding the fixing of a local bus, the Municipality did not do enough to find alternative uses for the building, nor did the municipality forward onwards their correspondence with OIN. Notwithstanding the fact the Mayor was not on Facebook, the main communication from the Civilians towards the Municipality was taking place on Facebook, on the anti-camp group. In October 2013, the Civilians launched another Facebook page called "Vámosszabadi Civilian Control" (VCC*) (Vámosszabadi Civil Kontrol)*. VCC, with 170 "likes", soon developed to an

online-watchdog with the self-appointed task of keeping an eye at the doings of the municipality. Curious about the deployment of the concept of "civilian" in conjunction with the watchdog-role, I asked one of the directors of the Civilian movement what they meant by the name:

> "Civilian control, as a concept, is not our discovery…. But this is a new kind of thinking, a new approach, according to which one should not be interested in politics only every four years during elections, but rather the civilians need to be there constantly."

Another Civilian chieftain added to this,

> "Until this happened, nobody cared - if there would not have been a refugee camp. Maybe we could have even survived the flood so that after that everyone goes home thinking we were good and now let's forget about it all. This camp-issue brought forward how things are not working in the village. Unfortunately the Hungarian legal system is built so that every four years we give someone the free hands, and then after four years we look what that person has been doing… And the Civilian Control is somehow about all this, that unfortunately we cannot just step back and say just do what you do, but we say that it is a must to keep an eye, because we gave you an opportunity and now we feel like things are not proceeding to the right direction."

Two things are striking about the quotations above: first, the necessity of the event of the refugee camp in order for the Civilian politics to have bee launched, and secondly, the Civilians' clear idea of a right direction, an ideal state of being that can be advanced, and the role of Civilian Control as a form of pastoral power (Walters 2012:20). They elaborate on the power as dispersed by suggesting that Civilians – and indeed, members of the community – are also in possession of power, and can and *should* direct the conduct of the authorities towards the desired state of being. or as conceptualized by Clarke, the managerialist approach to politics "disperses 'responsibility' across all layers of the organisation, while concentrating the power to create and disseminate visions, strategies and objectives in a central core. It also enables the recruitment of external forms of managerial expertise in the guise of consultants who will 'enhance' the organisation's capacities." (2014:16). Simultaneously, the Civilians remind that citizenship does not only come

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with entitlements but also with duties (Rose and Osborne 1999:752). Indeed; the Civilian-Settler protesters, who at this point began to focus their critique on the doings of Municipality, had by now taken over the political voice of the village, gaining the dominant position that was even feared by the others.

Anticipating the negotiations regarding the future of the camp in spring 2014, and remembering that the politicians at the Ministry of Interior in Budapest still held the power to decide on the fate of the village, it was essential for the Civilians that the conflict between Civilians and Municipality should remain a strictly internal matter. For example, when at an anti-camp village forum, where strategies regarding the how to close the camp were discussed, a villager in the audience suggested a demonstration in front of the Mayor's house, the Civilians adamantly refused. The community, my Civilian informants emphasized at the forum as well as in private interviews, needed to *appear* as unified in opposing the camp. For this very reason, the Civilians decided not to start collecting signatures for another petition in spring 2013 – they expressed to me their fear of not being able to gather as many signatures as the previous summer, because people in the village did not "care" for the future and safety of the community. In this way, the Civilians cast themselves as responsible members of the community who are capable of long-term planning and holding a vision of the desired, political community of the future, as opposed to "free-riders" of the community who did not fulfill their citizenship duties.

2.4. Methodology

I set out to the village to study the rhetoric and strategies of the Civilians' anti-camp social movement, but soon I broadened my focus to the larger role of the anti-camp movement in the construction of community, belonging and citizenship. From the beginning the movement had a

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strong virtual presence, which seemed extremely important for the Civilians. The two Facebook pages related to the village - the anti-camp group as well as the page Vámosszabadi Civilian Control, were updated several times during the day with lengthy analyses of the current situation with the refugee camp or doings of municipality. Although I followed these analyses and pages closely, I intended to study the social reality in the village - as the Aboriginals mentioned to me, they knew about Facebook, but did not know what on earth it looked like. There was striking contrast between aggressive behaviour online, but it does not necessarily transcend into lived reality where people meet face to face, has been well documented before (Boler 2008; Daniels 2009) and is not the focus of my research, although sometimes I refer to conversations that have been taking place online.

I conducted ethnographic fieldwork in the village for a period of three months in early 2014, in the months leading to and following the parliamentary elections. I did not manage to find accommodation in the village - apart from the camp, all the houses in the village are family houses, and I had no prior personal contacts in the village. I rented a room in Győr, which proved convenient also because many of my informants preferred to have interviews in the city rather than in the village - a tendency that once more suggested that for some, the village is merely an extension of the city. I began the research by interviewing the main organizers of the summer protests, as I deemed them to be significant gatekeepers. Secondly I set out to interview the Mayor, and after these initial meetings, I started arranging interviews with whomever my informants had suggested. The young Catholic priest of the village, who in the beginning was enthusiastic about showing me around the village, finally did not appear on our agreed meeting, and since then, he did not answer my emails anymore. The Civilians, on the other hand, were very helpful and prompt in answering my requests, and I soon developed a good relationship with them. Apart from the

interviews, I attended whatever communal activities I could. I visited the Church, visited the village museum and attended village celebrations for Hungarian national holidays, was present in a village-forum organized by the Civilians, participated in election rallies organized in Győr, observed the municipal meetings, and naturally, occasionally I frequented the village pubs. In late March, very unexpectedly, I was also made an honorary member of the Pensioner's Club, in which I held a focus group and started then attending every Thursday afternoon.

Although I intended to study the Civilian protest, relatively few of my questions to the villagers related straight to the camp, for the simple reason that the villagers meet with refugees extremely rarely. Rather, I asked all my informants to historicize the village, how long they had lived there, why did they move there, and how has the village changed in those years. Narratives of people were strikingly different - given that I was speaking to pensioners who remembered 1950s in the village, and then to young couples who had lived in the village for merely a few years. I also asked villagers about what they consider to be constitutive of public security, what kind of community activities there are in the village, and whether villagers meet with refugees. My intention, then, was not to prove whether the village is racist or not - rather I intended to examine what kind of a community the anti-camp movement consolidated. I recorded and transcribed all the interviews, and kept detailed field notes throughout the fieldwork period. Many things my informants did instead of me, and I am in great gratitude to their meticulous research into the history and electoral behaviour of Vámosszabadians. Indeed, the protesters put together detailed documents regarding the history of the building of the refugee camp, demographic change in the village, and finally comparative charts regarding voting behaviour before and after the camp.

The timing and tempo of my research was very much set by external factors, first and foremost the planned negotiations with the Ministry of Interior regarding the possible closure of

the camp in the end of March, and Hungarian parliamentary elections in early April. Consequently, in February, even if life in the village went on as usual, the anti-camp movement was more silent but seemed to stay determined to achieve their goal of removing the camp and civilian control. In the beginning of my fieldwork, the Civilians gladly spoke to me about their movement. During the later half of the fieldwork period, in March and April, things started to escalate and the conflict between Civilians and municipality grew very tense, also approaching Civilian informants grew more difficult. Vámosszabadi, and the decision of the Ministry of the Interior not to close the camp, was once more in the national news. The escalation, however, was notably present in the virtual reality, which soon developed into a cyber-war on two platforms that were not shared – Civilians on Facebook and the Municipality on the official webpage of the village, both addressing each other in absentia. Indeed, the waning support for the anti-camp protests seemed to correspond to the rising number of posting and communicating on virtual platforms, and the atmosphere became more and more tense during my time in the village. In March a journalist as well as a documentary-maker, both intending to document "racism" in the village. At the time of writing, conflicts in the village are still going on, the negotiations with the Ministry of Interior have resulted in the decision that the camp will stay as it is, the main locus of the anti-camp campaign has moved the Győr, while the conflict between the Civilians and the Municipality is becoming fiercer and fiercer. The village is preparing for municipal elections in autumn 2014, and chief sources of gossip revolve around the question that whether some of the Civilians (altogether a group of ca. 20 people) will stand for elections.

3. PERFORMED COMMUNITY

3.1. Performance and Managerialism

In the words of Benedict Anderson, "communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined" (2006:6). Vámosszabadi, for the Civilians, is imagined as a "project", as an informant recounted to me: "you see, the village is like a project that needs to be managed. And we see ourselves as managing that project". As such, this authorization of knowledge (Li 2007c) suggests the role of governors that the Civilians have seized for themselves. What were, then, the prerequisites for this self-appointment? What kind of performance is linked to the community imagined by the Civilians? The Civilians' attempts of portraying the community as harmonious to the outside depends on downplaying the existing divisions brought about autochthonous claims of belonging and agency, as already suggested by the rich lexicon of regimes of citizenship that the members of the community use. The extent to which the community of Civilians coincides with the community at large is situational, and the tension between these overlapping natures of the different groups is at the heart of the struggle for belonging. All in all, this section introduces the performance of a middle-class idyll, which while being the prerequisite for the performance of suffering is also constituted by internal struggles over autochthonous and economic understandings of entitlements. It was this very struggle, between Settlers and Aboriginals, and consequently between Civilians and Citizens, that during research led me to understand that the community was not "a location" for the anti-camp protest, but rather the social relations within were the very object of my research, as citizenship is constructed and regulated by asymmetrical social struggles that always position the dominant narrative with the alterity (Isin 2002:30). This section first discusses the strategies of managerialist citizenship and

the add-on of economic citizenship to autochthonous claims of belonging in order to promote a harmonious depiction of the community, and secondly the role of the Internet in this process.

The performance of an idyllic, middle-class community, a unified voice and a certain idea of belonging first of all relies on repertoires of managerialism, understood as an ideology proclaiming "the value and necessity of management for organizational, economic and social progress, and which establishes the foundational claim that to be effective, managers must have 'the right to manage'" (Clarke and Newman 1997). Governance of the social in such a manner essentially involves attempts of inclusion of "ordinary people" to programs of "good governance" that promotes "active citizenship". The normative project of manufacturing a desirable community is guised in an "apolitical" appearance in order to attract people who are widely disenchanted with party politics and the central state (Clarke 2010). Clarke further elaborates on managerial governance of conduct as including: imperatives and injunctions that legitimize the actions of managers; deployment of conceptual and discursive resources (such as the fine-tuned language used by the Civilians on social media), analytical and empirical justifications; transformative devices; techniques and technologies; and finally and importantly, outlines of identities and identifications as well as sets of scripts if social interactions and relations between different identities (2014:5). Performing the community in a dialogical relation to the internal as well as external Other, then, was a prerequisite in the consolidation of the type of citizenship. As Paul Lichterman notes in relation to local activism in America, imagining the political community is a precondition for performing it (1996).

By adopting managerial features, the performance contributes to the Civilians' legitimate portrayal of the direction they envisage for the village as desirable from the viewpoint of economic and social development. The leverage of the Civilians to gain the managerial position and

constitute the performance of community towards the rest of the country lies on their emphasis on economic citizenship, thereby diverting, but not questioning, the discourse of autochthony in relation to belonging and political agency.

3.2. Autochthony and economic citizenship

Autochthony, conceptually transcending nationalism by emphasizing the right to belong due to origins, or even fetishizing origins as argued by Comaroff and Comaroff (2001), is premised upon a division of autochthons (those "born of the soil") and aliens (Geschiere 2009:1). Autochthony is a rich, yet flexible concept, given that it "cannot be reduced to ethnicity, nationalism, or right-wing racism" (Ceuppens 2006:149). Rather, the key to understanding entitlements relates to the location and the origins. Autochthony, as well as indigeneity, then, bears a strong connotation to temporality and "who was first", as the position of first comers holds a moral force (Jung 2012). If we were to take the categories of citizenship used by the villagers at face value and recall the rapid growth and expansion of the village in rather segregated terms, the Settlers would stand out as the Aliens, thereby holding less moral leverage to village affairs. The ethnographic data collected in the community, however, suggests that the Civilians deploy economic citizenship as a means to merge economic and autochthonous citizenship together. Civilians, then, do not only promote their own understanding of citizenship and belonging, but also conceptually break away from the autochthonous focus on roots and immobility by suggesting that one can, almost literally, buy oneself a place of belonging in a community apart from strengthening one's belonging by acting as a watchdog of the community.

In many of our conversations (and not to mention on the Vámosszabadi Civilian Control Facebook-platform), the nearness of nature and the unique landscapes found in the area were often

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invoked in a romantic atmosphere. Many Settlers recount their joy in moving to a quieter place close to the nature, and then emphasized the positive effects of nature on their life and family. Indeed, a desirability of modernity in terms of consumption, leisure time and infrastructure (Bodnár 2008) converges with emphasis the prominence of nature in the Vámosszabadi area. While deploying an autochthonous rhetoric of focusing on the nature, however, The Civilians substantiate their claim of by emphasizing the material benefits they brought to the village: the right to belong can also be "earned", and thereby the social contract of the village is based on a mixture of "true" autochthony, taxation and class-position. To further such a discourse, however, the Civilians rely on criticizing "pure" autochthony as fetishizing origins, and also softer values such as hospitality.

The debate over autochthony in Vámosszabadi neatly exposes the relational nature of the concept of autochthony with regards to temporality. While in the face of the refugees or Hungary as a whole, all residents in Vámosszabadi can invoke autochthonous claims, in fact within the community, the Settlers are considered "less" local. Politically active Settler-Civilians are consequently faced with the need to complement the notion of entitlement as advanced by the Aboriginals. While retaining claims of autochthony in comparison to the refugees ("the aliens"), the Civilians seek to establish their right to belong through economic value. These claims of belonging were crucial in order to imagine, and thereby perform, an ideal community as manifested by public spaces that fetishize modernity and ownership of real estate. This performance, in turn, was a quintessential point of departure for the Civilians in their tactical performance of suffering as a result of the refugees in the eyes of the rest of the country. More importantly, the performance is needed within the community in order to gain entitlement for managerial positions to combat the municipality that does not hold the same idea of a desired community as the Civilians do.

Stuart Hall, invoking Foucault, pointed out that identity should rather be understood as a process of discursive practice of identification, that is, a "process never completed" as new allegiances and points of similarity are constantly discovered (Hall and Du Gay 2000:6), not unlike Simmel for whom individuality is constructed by a unique set of overlapping allegiances to different groups (1971). Identity and the process of identification, too often understood in primordial terms of coming from "within", is then dependent on the constitutive outside. Hall notes that identity, then, is not essentialist but rather strategic – as the myriad strategies and instances of identification as advanced by the Civilians also suggests. Indeed, villagers' adoption of these identities (Civilian, Citizen, Settler, Aboriginal) proved to be situational. When I asked Civilians, who were relating to me the incompetence of the municipality in communicating with the OIN, whether they had considered simply bypassing the municipality and contacting OIN on their own to ask for information regarding the camp, they rejected the suggestion on the grounds of being "just Citizens". Civilians, on the contrary, consist of politically aware citizens who hold the existing power structures accountable making claims to transparency.

Why do the Settlers downplay the difference between themselves and Aboriginals? Ironically, myself I was not aware of the division between Aboriginals and Settler-Civilians before the Vámosszabadi Civilian Control published an opinion piece on their Facebook page regarding the matter. Titled "Settlers or Aboriginals? We don't find such a division fortunate!" *(Bevándorlók vagy őslakók? Nem tartjuk szerencsésnek az ilyen megosztást!)* (VCC 2014a), the post aspires to portray that the Settlers have as much right to belong to the community as the Aboriginals:

> "Who is trying to dig a ditch and stir up conflict according to such a simple division, and why? Those who are born in Vámosszabadi signify the continuation of heritage, but also they reflect and follow modern trends. We wonder, what would the village be like

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without Settlers? Would we have a kindergarten, would we have a school, would we have so frequent buses, would we have a bus stop, would we have asphalt roads, a doctor, a post office? Maybe! But it is not so straightforward! Where does the village have more money from? The local industrial tax, the communal tax, income tax, vehicle tax, head count quotas, etc. Some of these are proportional to income, and others are paid for some sort of property (motorbikes, cars etc.), and not only by the old people."

The anonymous post that finishes by calling an end to such divisions and emphasizes the role of children as the future of Vámosszabadi, clearly emphasizes the desirability of village development in material, modern terms, and implies that the Aboriginals could not have reached this state by themselves. Interestingly, the discourse deployed by the Civilians in this post does not seek to counter the Aboriginals' autochthonous right to belong. Rather, the Civilians accept autochthony as an unquestionable right to belong, but seek to add to, and to level it equal with economic citizenship based on liberal values of ownership and property. The understanding of entitlements and citizenship, then, turn into "flexible" notions (Ong 1999, 2006a, 2006b) corresponding to the subject's financial abilities and usefulness. To quote Ong, "the new synergy between global capitalism and commercialization creates milieus where market-based norms articulate the norms of citizenship" (2006a:501). Poverty (or in the case of Vámosszabadi, other norms such as hospitality) or delinquency, in contrast, are interpreted as signs of not belonging to the community (Wacquant 2009). Conceptually, then, as Bridget Anderson has also found out in her historicization of British immigration policies (2014), class precedes race in the pathways of belonging. According to the depiction of community as advanced by the Civilians in portraying as citizenship and belonging as attributes resulting from one's position as a member of the middle class and therefore, via taxation and economic contribution, the community knows no other boundaries than those of class. As debates on gentrification have usually centred in urban anthropology (Smith 1996; Low 2001; Webster 2002; Slater 2006), this view from the countryside

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provides a fresh look at gentrification that does not take place in a limited space. Precarious groups, who in urban areas are in the way of the gentrification process, need not be removed and replaced elsewhere, because there is plenty of space to build at the edges of the village. The axis of contestation, consequently, transcends to the relationship between economic citizenship and autochthony. The chief platform for the staged performance, however, is not locality, but rather the virtual reality.

3.3. Virtual reality

On a sunny afternoon in April, I was conducting a semi-structured interview with Anikó, one of the main organizers of the Civilian Protest. We sat on the outside porch of her workplace, a department store that sells mainly construction tools and household items. Anikó has a pivotal role in the Civilian movement, and like many other Settlers, lives on Kökenyszeg (Blackthorn spike) Street on the outskirts of the village. Gladly, occasionally even giggling at funny memories, she told me about the different community activities that take place on the street. They make their own pálinka (a strong spirit, out of "Kökeny" (Blackthorn), they have their own stamp (illustration of a Blackthorn pike) they use in house parties, mimicking the practice in nightclubs. They have barbeque and grill parties together, but most importantly – they have a Facebook group. The group, "Inhabitants of Kökenyszeg Street", is closed and secret. Only those who live on the street are allowed to join. I exclaimed my surprise at such a group: is everybody on the street a member of the group? What kinds of things are posted in the group? What happens if someone, a good friend, let's say from the neighbouring street, wants to join? The answer was an absolute negative - there was no way for an outsider to join, but it was rather straightforward, as everybody who lives on Blackthorn Street knows one another and was a member of this group. It took me a month

to realize that the social reality was in stark contrast with the depiction of Anikó. Walking on Kökenyszeg Street, I ran into the Vice-Mayor of the village. Casually chatting, as I made a remark on the Kökenyszeg Street Facebook group that I had heard about, the Vice-Mayor started cynically laughing and exclaimed how he would never be allowed to join this group even though lives on the street, and for that matter, he would not even wish to. The criteria of the Facebook group do not, then, exactly correspond to social reality.

These two contrasting portrayals of the community of this specific road exemplifies the importance of the performance a harmonious community in social media. The virtual reality, while easily bypassed as a second-class reality, is a fundamental necessity and tool the Civilians in their performance of unity. Fierce discussions over village politics – rumours of the refugee camp or judging the incompetence of the municipality – happen mostly in the virtual space. In several updates, the anonymous administrators of the Vámosszabadi Civilian Control page assert their unwillingness of stepping into official politics and emphasize the role of the Civilian Control as a watchdog, outside the established structure. The tone of the posts is often condescending, for instance asking followers why they have not "liked" the content of the page. Several posts begin by directly addressing the Mayor, who himself told me that he does not have a Facebook account. Social media as a primary site for consolidating of vigilantist citizenship has been researched by Graham Candy (2012), who sees potential in online communities as platforms of virtual punishment and seizing empowering language of authority that does not necessarily reflect the social, unmediated reality.

Even if the language adopted online does not match immediate social relations, the virtual reality still has tangible ramifications in social relations in the lived, non-virtual reality. In the Pensioners' Club, the Internet was occasionally referred to as "The Civilian Place", as if the

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Internet would actually constitute a physical location where different rules of communication apply. While comparing the intersection of villagers' attitudes towards understanding of community to their understanding of social media, it seems that social media has brought about a fundamental change in the notion of what an ideal community should be like: whereas before it was important for the people to have a good neighbour, now it is important that your neighbour is your friend on Facebook. Finally, because social media is accessible to everyone, and a tempting, easy source of information for journalists writing about the Civilians of Vámosszabadi all around the country, thereby fulfilling the purpose of virtual reality as platform of staged performance. Indeed, social media and virtual reality are a crucial element in the Civilians' portrayal of a unified community, and is also a prerequisite for the tactical suffering: in the end, on the scale of the whole country and in the eyes of the media, it is the online image of the village that matters. In words of Ahmed and Fortier, "[w]e can therefore think of a community as a site lived through the *desire for* community rather than a site that fulfils and 'resolves' that desire" (2003:257). The practice of the Civilians bears resemblance to diasporic communities (Shailoh 2007; Kissau and Hunger 2010), who lack a location other than a virtual one and share concerns about the alleged place that exists in physical reality. All in all, the performance online serves a twofold purpose, as the Civilians are simultaneously those who stage the performance as well as those who follow it, thereby legitimizing in their own eyes their seizure of hegemonic narrative.

4. CONTESTED COMMUNITY

As tempting as it would be to remain studying the genealogy of the Civilians and their hegemonic narrative of a desired community, Li points out that it is exactly the limits of

governmentality that open up "a critical terrain of ethnographic analysis" (2007:276), which is why I will now turn to the limits faced by the Civilians. She further elaborates her approach into four axes: governmental power's limitation to form rather than totality ("total power is an oxymoron"), the inherent limitation of government to the target of people and territory, available forms of knowledge and techniques that may produce unintended consequences, and finally the thin borderline between governmental rationality and the practice of critique (277).This short typology, answers the call of O'Malley, Weir and Mearing (1997), who criticize existing studies of governmentality for focusing excessively on the genealogy of existing dominant narratives, rather than the contestations through which art of government is, in fact, produced. In this final section of the thesis, I will depart from the earlier discussion that concentrated more on the Civilians, and I will look into the contested relations that Civilians have with Aboriginals and municipality, and how it manifests in disputes over understandings over daily life in the community as well as public space.

4.1. Aboriginals

My very first interaction with an Aboriginal in Vámosszabadi immediately shattered the idyll of aesthetic middle class-prosperity that had been presented by the Settlers, as discussed in the previous section. One morning in the village, I started chatting casually with an old man who was leaning to his fence by the main (Aboriginal) road in the village. He told me he was born in the village before state socialism. To my rhetorical exclamation how many things must have changed since, I received a very practical answer:

> "No. There's no dough *(lóvé)*. It has not changed that much, it's all shit. It was shit before communism, and then during communism it became more shit. Then we thought it would

be better, but it just became more shit. I'm ill, and I don't have money to do the treatments at the hospital in Győr".

The distinction between Aboriginals and Settlers, that depending on the situation was either refuted, made fun of or invoked, was clearly relational to many of the Aboriginals. The majority of members of the Pensioners' Club are Aboriginals, and their stories of how the "feeling" of a community has diminished in recent years correspond with the arrival of the Settlers and the growth in virtual communications. In the old days, they recounted to me, people spent more time together: after long working hours they took care of each other's children, greeted everyone in the street, and cooked together. Pensioners emphasized that before "a good neighbor meant more than a sibling", but today, one did not necessarily even know one's neighbors – let alone the Settlers living at the other end of the village! Some of the older men described how in the old days, on Sundays after the mass, people would gather at the Aboriginal pub, *Fenyőfa*, to drink a fröccs (wine mixed with soda water) and talk about village affairs and politics. Although *Fenyőfa* is barely ever frequented by Settlers, the different atmosphere brought about by the Settlers was blamed for this habit having ceased, illustrating the fact how the arrival of the Settlers temporally divides the history of the community. Aboriginals consider some of the "young" Settlers exclusive, and disapprove of the Civilians' "aggressive language" (as many Civilians, often equated with Settlers, used considerable amounts of swearwords and threatening tone when referring to the refugee camp or the municipality). Many older Aboriginals share a feeling that Settlers are not interested in dealing with the Aboriginals apart from when it comes to their own advantage – the few Settler pensioners in the club disagreed with such allegations, denying the friction, and emphasized the existing feeling of a welcoming community and their satisfaction in the decision to move out from Győr.

Historicization of the village by the Aboriginals stands in stark contrast to that of the Settlers and the narrative of a "sleeping village". To my inquiry about this category, many of the Aboriginal pensioners merely laughed. For the Aboriginals, the village is, first of all, very much alive. They are busy with daily programs such as the Club, choir practice, preparing performances for the national holidays, organizing walking tours and baking for fellow pensioners' name days that are celebrated every three months. As to the refugees and their rare presence in the village, the pensioners replied cheerfully that in fact there is no problem with them – it is, of course, strange to occasionally see black people around, but they at least all smile and wish them a pleasant day, which is something that the Settlers do not always do. Even though sometimes engaging in long talks regarding the "horrendous" ways of Muslims and as well as the "shocking" traditions of polygamy in Africa, the Aboriginals found a way of relating to the refugees beyond their first appearance of a different skin color, proving to be welcoming to the refugees with no strings attached. Indeed, with a pinch of salt, the Pensioners' Club is the most tolerant institution of in the village. This different way of relating is also telling of understanding of community life, belonging and entitlements.

The Aboriginals' understanding of belonging, then, stands in stark contrast with the Civilians. The Civilians campaign for advancement of the middle class organizing its own village by acting as a watchdog of the government, and for the village as an idyllic extension of the urban areas where work and consumption possibilities are found. Membership, for the Civilians, is either based on autochthonous claims or economic citizenship. For the Aboriginal pensioners, however, the claims of economic citizenship and autochthony, that for the Civilians are performed in rhetoric and in the virtual reality, are superseded by face-to-face communication and the romanticized *Gemeinschaft* illusion of a community where people know each other personally.

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How, then, did the Aboriginals react to the managerialism furthered by the Civilians? Although a few people in the Club are somewhat angry at the Civilians for "destroying" the reputation of the village. Allan Pred has studied a similar phenomenon in Sweden, where a "moral panic" and fierce protests against a reception facility for refugees and asylum seekers in the small town of Sjöbo, Sweden, that then evolved into the location of racism in the popular imagination of Swedes, thereby demonizing the whole community (Pred 2000:189-195) Most Aboriginals, however, tried to be pragmatic about the protests. They simply disapprove of anything aggressive, and would like to maintain the image of the village as a positive, hospitable place. As time went on and the schism between the Civilians and the Municipality gained stamina and grew more personalized, also the pensioners grew angrier. In a meeting in April, after a long session that consisted of congratulating the men of the club for the occasion of "Men's Day", the frustrations of the pensioners surfaced. The final piece of poetry cited, at the request of the audience, was titled "I ask you, do love the old people" (*Szeressétek az öregeket*, Óbecsei István), and related a message about bridging the gap between the young and the old. After the poem, the director of the Club, Aunt-Ili, suddenly announced: "Have you heard what is written about us on Facebook? That the Mayor is making the poor old people drunk!" Angry and shocked, she continued by recounting that the Civilians seemed to think that the pensioners vote "for" the camp or "for" the municipality. She emphasized that political affiliations are never discussed in the Club, unleashing a storm of agreement and opinion. This all happened on Facebook; But there were also Aboriginal people who wrote on Civilian page on Facebook; The Civilians were all Jobbik; The Civilians were aggressive and used curse words; Who from the Club had a Facebook account anyway; Should the Club respond to the Civilians and if so, how. One man advocated kicking the Civilians out of the village, while another one announced he would like to tear the eyes of the Civilian leaders from

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their head, because this was the worst "dirt", or "dirty gang" *(mocskos banda)* of Hungary that has somehow found its way to their peaceful, well-mannered and hospitable village. He continued by reasoning that in fact the fact that the camp stays is a good thing, because finally the state-owned, Aboriginal roads will be renovated in return – so far only the Settlers have had good roads. As the meeting slowly adjourned and I was packing my bag, a pensioner approached me and told me to make sure to write in "my paper" that 90% of the village is against Civilians.

The above vignette demonstrates how a desired vision of the community is not advanced merely the Settlers, but Aboriginals alike engage in painting a picture of a community deemed appealing and warm, a "little community" as once envisioned by Redfield (1955). Although the Civilians are accused of sowing seeds of discontent in the village by their too aggressive exclusion of others, some Aboriginals use similar tactics in denying the right of the Civilians to represent the village. Indeed, this battle over the reputation of the village – as a bourgeois harmony with an active Facebook group versus an old-fashioned small community where everybody knows each other – marks the chief negotiation of the nature of the community and belonging, as well as ruptures to the "scripts" of social interactions as identified by Clarke (2014). Because the Civilians, as self-appointed managers of the community do not relate what belonging means to the rest – that is, a vivid life offline, their strategy of seizing the legitimate voice has backfired, and led to an even more pronounced division and battle over the legitimate voice. From the perspective of the rest of the country, however, this internal conflict makes no difference. If anything, such a conflict leads to an even more pronounced attempt from behalf of the Civilians to stage a performance of a unified community in virtual reality. As a result, for those following the case in newspapers and social media, like many do – the whole village seems unified in its opposition towards the camp, and the category of "sleeping village" remains a typical characterization of Vámosszabadi as well

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as other small villages surrounding larger cities. Civilians in the village appear as not interested in joining the existing communal life in the village, but rather to in creating their own (not without parallels to sudden "invasion" of the village by refugees). Given that many from the older generation, that is, Aboriginals, do not follow Facebook and online media, the Civilians seized monopoly of representation, and to the critique targeted at them they still chose to respond on that very platform not shared by the targets of the communication. The Aboriginals' defense of communal life and *Gemeinschaft* leads to even more pronounced disputes, to which the Civilians further emphasize their rhetoric of responsible citizens that are needed to watch over the village.

4.2. Contested spaces: Cemetery, Memorial Park and Beach Volley

As mentioned, the division between Aboriginals and Settlers is pronounced for the uneven spatiality in the village and the differences in infrastructure. This dichotomy is not, however, the only striking spatial feature in the village. Ironically, the fast change resulted in identical housing solutions with little personal flavour, which, to the naked eye gives Vámosszabadi an air of a refugee camp, that in a similar manner is an "accidental community" (Malkki 1997): people brought together by a societal change, whether that be a conflict causing migration, or in the case of Vámosszabadi, upward social mobility combined with social norms of upholding a bourgeois lifestyle. Figure 1 depicts a typical Settler road in the village. The table reads "Vámosszabadi, a blooming village on the border", even though the wide, new road has little personal flavor and lacks a sidewalk, as villagers from this side of town typically move around by car.

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Figure 1. A Settler road in Vámosszabadi, Hungary.

Figure 2. Park next to the cemetery in Vámosszabadi, Hungary.

Figure 2 represents another type of an artificial spatial solution: public space that has not been shaped by usage, but rather has been planned with no consideration of the actual needs of the population. The figure shows a leisure space on a green area between the cemetery and the popular Settler pub *Moszkító*. A few benches are situated on the green grass area, however, there are no pathways that lead to the benches – one literally needs to jump over a ditch to get to the area.

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Between the benches there is an info-table (as cited in the beginning of the thesis) in English language as well as a map of the village. A bin is situated nearby. The fence discernable on the other side of the road is built to protect one of the lakes from pollution. The social function of this space, supposedly, is to spend time outside while observing the village map – however, understandably, not even once I saw anyone spending time in the area, sitting on a bench observing the map. This artificiality is in striking contrast to immanent construction of urban space, as discussed by Rose and Osborne: "[s]uch immanence embodies a tendency to a 'natural government', a self-government not dependent upon calculated intervention." However, immanence does not signal lack of disputes and conflicts, as Rose and Osborne likewise recognize and continue: "the idea of urban space is to represent a form of antagonism that in the long run shapes the tendencies of the political order" (1999:738).

As mentioned earlier, after the refugees in the camp turned out not to cause troubles in the village, the Civilians recycled their vigilance into becoming the self-appointed watchdogs over the dealings of the Municipality. Civilians adopted this role also by retrospectively scrutinizing the previous decisions of the Municipality. Among the decisions criticized was the decision of the Municipality to renovate the local, small cemetery during the previous year. According to the Civilians, the Municipality should rather spend time and resources on an area that would speak more to the community as a whole, because after all, the majority of the people do not frequent the cemetery. This action, however, caused general outrage among the pensioners – who did the Civilians think they were to criticize the renovation of the cemetery? Pensioners, however, did not find a way of communicating their critique to the Civilians due to the platform of communication being solely on social media. The evocative example of the cemetery illustrates the drawbacks of the discourse of Civilians whereby they seek to compound autochthony by economic citizenship

and ownership of real estate. The dispute over the cemetery illustrates how the Civilians to appear to refuse to accept municipality's priorization of communal life – and indeed, communal symbols – that precedes the arrival of the Settlers, and is not directly related to the issues of "the whole" community.

Another vocal point of contestation is the debate over the building of a "Memorial Park." In April, the local Catholic priest presented the plan of the Vámosszabadi Memorial park to the Municipality (figures 3 and 4).

Figure 3. Plan of Vámosszabadi Memorial Park (Vámosszabadi 2014)

Figure 4. Plan of Vámosszabadi Memorial Park (Vámosszabadi 2014)

The Catholic congregation would finance the construction of the park that would be situated on a central, currently unused square in the centre of the village. The plans of the park include an open-air church and a wooden pavilion, the four corners of which symbolize the four important national holidays of Hungary, one of which is a provocative commemoration of the borders of Great Hungary, dating back to the times when the territory of Hungary was two thirds more than presently. Indeed, the Memory Park carries important symbols of the governing Fidesz party: nationalist symbols compounded with promotion of the Catholic religion as the most important religion of the nation. The Priest envisioned the park as a symbol of unity in Vámosszabadi, which would unquestionably express the most important aspects of community life: spirituality and the respect for the nation. As the board quickly approved of the motion, one board member remarked that such a plan is a fine example of the very issue that the village needs the most: unity. The fact that the Catholic congregation has such a saying in the affair of constructing a new public space in the village did not seem questionable for the Municipality. It did so, however, for the Civilians, who boycotted the open Municipality meeting but followed the

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plans on the village webpage and quickly launched a counter-attack on the Vámosszabadi Civilian Control Facebook page. Why were the villagers not asked what sort pf public space they would prefer? Wasn't Hungary a secular country, and wasn't this cooperation between the Municipality and the Catholic Congregation therefore suspicious? What is more, the Civilian Control immediately posted, on Facebook, types of public spaces they would prefer (figures 5, 6 and 7). These spaces include a parkour-space for youth in the village, a jogging-area and a beach volley court. The importance of this brings us back to the camp by portraying Vámosszabadi as utopian middle class paradise, that will again be destroyed by not only the arrival of the refugees anymore, but also by what they perceive as an incompetent Municipality.
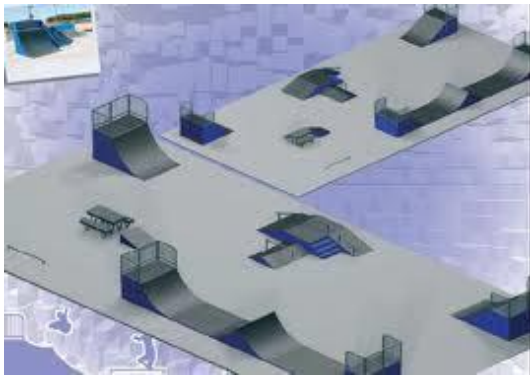

Figure 5. Parkour-space in the village (VCC 2014b)

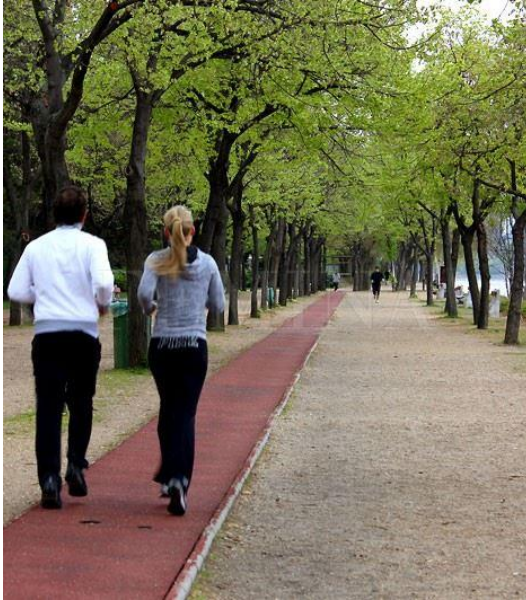**Figure 8. Beach volley court (VCC 2014c)**

Figure 6. Jogging area as depicted by Civilians (VCC 2014d)

As the Civilians confront these plans of the Municipality, they also simultaneously confront an existing sense of community, however controversial, that they have not strived to be a part of and rather campaign for a replacement of this previous community along spatial lines. The fact that Civilians go to such, minute details in their imagination of the community and common spaces is telling of how much, in fact, the idea (or performance) of community matters to them, and indeed, the dispute over public space can be seen as a directly related to the question of performed community as discussed in the earlier section. These battles over the cemetery and the remembrance park neatly substantiate Webster's claim that public and private spheres are not two strictly divided, opposite spheres: rather, the public space is fragmented into many publics - a realm of "clubs", that also correspond to consumption cultures – that continuously compete for the nature of the public realm (Webster 2002). Public space, then, is characterized and by the relations between the clubs, not unlike rationalities of government is produced by politics and contestations.

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The project of the Civilians, particularly, relies in the art of governance in terms of navigating the desirable conduct, where religion and nationalism are superseded by bourgeois identity, as illustrated by the figures they have in mind for the Memorial Park. The project as proposed by the Civilians may be understood to gain precedence over the project of a Memorial Park given that their contribution to the economy of the village via taxation. Also, the ideas as put forward by the Civilians, do not feature anything that would be unique to Vámosszabadi – indeed; the photos portrayed could be from any higher-class residence area, not exclusively in Hungary. Public space, to cite David Harvey, represents homogeneity based on "deceived expectations" and bourgeois commodities represent the spectacle of the city (Harvey 2006:22-24). The Civilians' response as to what kind of a public square would be the most suitable was a reaction to the original plans of the Municipality and congregation. Harvey's argument on the dynamics of public sphere that focuses on "relational connectivity among public, quasipublic and private spaces that counts when it comes to politics in the public sphere" (2006:31) echoes the call of O'Malley et al. (1997) for scholars of governmentality to not only focus on genealogies of specific phenomena, but rather look into relations and contestations as constitutive elements.

Indeed, as this section of Vámosszabadi as a contested community has shown, it is not adequate to trace the trajectory of the Civilians' managerialist practices. The practices, that started as an event, lead to claims for entitlement that they used for four purposes: 1) claims of managerialism, 2) performing the desired community as understood by the Settlers as an attempt to impose it on the others, 3) compounding claims of autochthony with economic citizenship 4) consolidating this in public space. This sequence emerged a response to the structure, thus substantiating the claim that studies of governmentality should not solely focus on delineating the trajectory of dominant narratives and bypassing politics, which actually is "relations of contest or

struggle which are constitutive of government rather than simply a source of programmatic failure and (later) design" (O'Malley et. al. 1997:505). The above however, needs to be taken into consideration scalar terms in order to understand the underpinning motivation of the Civilians as securing the hegemonic narrative over village affairs.

4.3. Tactical suffering

Figure 8. A photo uploaded on the "Refugee camp in Vámosszabadi? NO THANKS!" Facebook group in August, 2013 (Lizakne 2013)

Finally, in drawing together the discussion on performativoty and contestations, I will conclude the research by advancing a notion of tactical suffering as deployed by the Civilians in the protest. The performative imagery of the movement in Vámosszabadi further suggests that the benefactor/victim dichotomy as been "shifted", placing the villagers – and as argued in this thesis, the villagers who belong to the middle class in particular – in the position of suffering upon the arrival of refugees.

A response to a satirical blog post accusing Vámosszabadians of racism, titled "Do refugees eat people?" (Esznek-e embereket a menekültek?) (Mandiner 2013), the photo features a newspaper with the aforementioned title. On the newspaper there are placed traditional Hungarian sausages with the name of the village on Hungarian flags. The text underneath reads "We protest against the refugee camp in Vámosszabadi -Györ – new start in March!" The implication of the photo that refugees would eat Vámosszabadi is a powerful example of the performative suffering and self-victimization of the village: the fear and the feeling of being threatened equals the Civilians' sense of community and their desired and projected way of communal life. Both the community as well as the fears, then, are acted out in the realm of imagination.

As Fassin (2005; 2012) notes, our era is characterized by unprecedented focus on public suffering that is morally untouchable. Over the summer, the village's performance of suffering on the media developed into a means of securing the sole legitimate voice that can make a moral claims regarding the reception of refugees; the situation could not possibly be understood by those who did not live in the village or in the vicinity of a refugee camp elsewhere. In short, it was the suffering that gave Vámosszabadians the right to have an opinion – however, as discussed, for that suffering it is crucial to perform a desired community where entitlements to have a voice over political affairs in the village does not necessarily stem from primordial claims of belonging via autochthony. Indeed, although the responsibility to accommodate refugees seems to stem from purely contractual terms, and yet that contractual obligation of Hungary to accommodate refugees (as a signatory state of the 1951 Geneva Convention as well as subject to European Union refugee law) has been overridden with the moral imperative to protect the community and "others". In the discussion so far, other general instruments of human rights that relates to (European Declaration

of Human Rights, Convention on the Rights of the Child etc.) have translated to the responsibility

to protect the villagers rather than refugees.

5. CONCLUSIONS

In late May 2014, at the same time when Civilians advanced an accusation towards the Vice Mayor of the village for using the official webpage of the village against the law by posting his personal replies against the claims of the Civilians, the Vámosszabadi municipality filed a court case against three main Civilian propagators for injury of reputation *(jó hírnév megsértése)*. On their Facebook page, the Civilians defend themselves by invoking the right to free speech. As I have not visited the village since early May, and consequently have not spoken with the Mayor nor anybody else regarding this matter, I do not hold any further details of the case. It is quite clear, however, that the conflict that originally began because of the introduction of the refugee camp has evolved into a conflict over the understanding of citizens' role as political agents. The methods that the Civilians originally employed – online communications, managerialist rhetoric and the tactical suffering of the majority – are still in place, but the cause for suffering is now the municipality rather than the refugee camp. Indeed, perhaps one of the most striking features of my thesis has been the absence of refugees, majority of whom are not aware of the conflicts that the camp has caused in the village.

The identity of the three Civilians being sued is not known, although, neither is the identity of the people who run the Vámosszabadi Civilian Control Facebook page. The recent attacks on the Vice Mayor stem from the suspicions that he might want to be elected as a Mayor in the Municipal elections approaching in autumn. When I left the village in early May, there were rumours over the question whether some of the Civilians would run for board candidates in the elections. Whether that be the case or not, it is clear that the nascent type of citizenship furthered by the Civilians needs to constantly renegotiate its relationship to the institutional practice of politics. I have argued that the evolution and the main characteristics managerialist citizenship are

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negotiated through contestations. Managerialist citizenship, as consolidated by the Civilians, was sparked off by an event. In order to advance their understanding middle-class consumerist citizens as acting as watchdogs of the state institutions, the Civilians attempted to claim legitimacy for political agency based on economic citizenship. This strategy, however, backfired in the contradictory understandings of the desired nature of public space, and the Civilian project that was meant to unify the community has, in the end, had a divisive effect. There is no indication, however, that the Civilian movement would be retreating. The politics and controversy, if anything else, has resulted in enhancing the managerialist rhetoric of the Civilians, complementing the claim that "politics… is to be seen as a matter of struggle in which the outcome cannot be forecast because it is dependent upon the realization and deployment of resources, tactics and strategies in the relations of contest themselves. This highly fluid interpretation of power centres social relations, and to that extent it is perhaps surprising that such a view is virtually excluded from governmentality work" (O'Malley *et. al.* 1997:510). Consequently, politics over voice, entitlements and nature of citizenship is an ongoing struggle, and while managerial and vigilantist traits have been identified, Civilians' idea of citizenship will continue to be constructed.

Instead of this focus on governmentality, I could, alternatively, have chosen to structure this thesis along disputers over public space, along a village-viewpoint of gentrification, or along the study of generational differences between Settlers and Aboriginals – or I could even have studied the actual refugee camp. I chose governmentality and citizenship not only because of the increasing number of similar movements around Hungary, but the increasing connections between similar movements across Europe, as allowed by the Internet. During an interview, when I was wondering how to translate certain terms critical of multiculturalism into English, a Civilian informant told me to go and check the discussion forums of resembling movements in the United

Kingdom: the promise of community crosses borders. "Community cohesion" and the promise of community is a project furthered not only by citizen groups such as the Civilians, but also by good governance policies of nation states and the European Union (Ahmed and Fortier 2003:3). Radical right wing political parties, as well as populist parties likewise rally on the concept of localism as a way to realize democracy. Entitlements for politics, regardless whether they stem from taxation, real estate and class position, from autochthonous claims or from *Gemeinschaft* of little communities are all reflexive of growing disenchantment with existing institutions and politics. Indeed, the community as a project to be governed is advanced on several fronts simultaneously – the local, the national and the international, and this thesis has contributed to the study of therein.

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