When children negotiate the illiberal: the relationality of the migrant other in Hungary

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This thesis is dedicated to those children and adolescents who let me peek into their everyday lives, shared moments in protests or made me dance in the classroom. You stole a piece of me and I hope you nothing but the best.

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Abstract

In this thesis I study the relationality of children towards representations of the migrant, guided by their societal positions in the power nexus of class and race. My research contributes to existing accounts of children's otherness, and of their othering, by looking at the relationality of citizenship and belonging in multiple social strata. I investigate the representations of the migrant as a new, illiberal external other among two groups of children and adolescents: middle class, white Hungarian students and marginalized Hungarian Roma students. Through ethnographic fieldwork in two schools in Budapest, I employ an intersectional approach in investigating how these children from different socioeconomic backgrounds understand the figure of the migrant. The ethnographic data, which I contextualize with an analysis and historization of the marginalization of the Roma on one hand, and the development of a restrictive migration regime, on the other, demonstrates that children from different social strata learn to navigate in processes of citizenship from heteroglossias, which in turn are related to their social positions and create spaces for negotiating dynamics of otherness. Heteroglossias manifest the cacophony of narratives within which children select and construct their worlds, as the double-bind of class and race define not only how social worlds are constructed for children, but also how children learn to construct those realities.

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Introduction

This family came from Syria. They escaped from the war. They want to live in Germany. The dad is a terrorist. The woman wants to take revenge on Orbán Viktor. The little girl is their child. The dad has 100kg of C4 in his bag. The mother has an AK-47 and the child has a frog in his pocket. They forgot to take clippers so they have to crawl under the fence. They catch a train. They'll arrive in Budapest on 1st Jan 2018. They'll kill the president and afterwards they'll go to Germany and live happily.

- Peták, 13

In this thesis I study how children and adolescents in Hungary construct the migrant as an other in relation to their societal positionalities. The above short essay is one student's conceptualization of a picture I showed about a migrant family crossing the Hungarian border. While the essay is not necessarily a typical sample of the stories I collected, it is rich in the themes I wish to analyze: different representations of migrants, narratives of threat of terrorism, conflictual relations of children as subjects to domestic politics, and the rich imagination of a child's mind that often escapes the logic of an adult understanding.

I argue that the relationality of children's positions to the migrant representations is guided by their societal positions in the power nexus of class and race[1]. This further guides how children learn to construct these representations: they are surrounded by narratives of everyday worlds, heteroglossias, from which they build their realities. In other words, the double-bind of class and race direct not only how social worlds are constructed for children, but also how children learn to construct those worlds.

I study the processes of othering, belonging and citizenship with an intersectional research approach, and embark from the understanding that childhoods are politicized and

[1] I will use the word race to refer to the power struggles that organize social reality based on the constructed inferiority of people of color. In this context, this mostly refers to the Hungarian Roma. In contrast to race, I follow the definition of ethnicity as cultural and political phenomenon (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1992).

racialized. I focus on children to understand how they, as subjects usually left outside of the political sphere, respond to the current political shifts in Hungary. For this thesis, I conducted an ethnographic research in two schools and with two groups of students, one consisting of white Hungarians and the other of Hungarian Roma. I chose to focus on these two groups even with the risk of polarizing the results, in order to understand dynamics of relative belonging and othering from multiple social strata, not only in relation to migrants but also in relation to each other. In recent years, migration has been a heated public topic in Hungarian society to the extent that even children have been exposed to it. Apart from occasional public attention to, for instance, children dressed as migrants and police in a Transylvanian carnival gathering[2], or drawing border guards in school competitions[3], children's views on this subject are not usually heard. Although I am hesitant to draw clear causalities to the adult world from the research findings, I'm confident that children as social actors are important research subjects by themselves and show that the processes of racialization and othering do indeed begin at an early age. In a broader context, I am studying migration but also looking at how the reception of migration is embedded into societal processes in a defined, local context.

My interest in the topic was sparked by a teacher in a marginalized school in Budapest. Back in October 2016, she told me that teenager students are insulting each other by calling each other "a migrant" (*migráns*). How did this come about, and did it matter that the students in question are Roma? Since when has it been an insult to be a migrant? Since there were hardly any migrants visible in public[4], this dissonance was striking: if migrants are kept out of the country,

[2] For a video about the children, see "'I am the migrant!': Embarrassing video from a school costume party" ("*Én vagyok a migráns": kínos videó egy iskolai farsangról)* , 27 February 2017, available at <http://eduline.hu/kozoktatas/2017/2/27/En_vagyok_a_migrans_kinos_video_egy_iskolai_QDWP0O>, accessed on 13 June 2017.

[3] for pictures about the occasion, se "Dear children! Today we will draw barbed wire" (*Kedves gyerekek! Ma szögesdrótot fogunk rajzolni!*), 7 February 2017, available at <http://reflektor.blog.hu/2017/02/07/kedves_gyerekek_ma_szogesdrotot_fogunk_rajzolni>, accessed on June 13 2017

[4] Since July 2016, when push backs of migrants into Serbia was codified in the Hungarian asylum legislation, there have been less and less migrants seeking asylum in the country. For a comprehensive overview of Hungarian border policy in recent years, see Nagy 2016.

but the media keeps on talking about them, who are the children actually talking about? What representation is the insult *migráns* based on? Clearly, a new external other was in the making, and since the illiberal political shifts had taken place in educational reforms from 2011, from founding the governmental education-monitoring body KLIK (*Klebelsberg Intézményfenntartó Központ*) to nationalizing school curricula, (Bozoki 2015:23), educational institutions as a field site of state, children and power came to interest me.

During my fieldwork, I explored how the children characterize and situate the migrant as an other in their social worlds, and what meanings and identities they attach to it. Simultaneously, I looked at how Hungarian identity is represented in contrast to the migrant as the other. In other words, I was looking to analyze the role of children as a political audience of the illiberal agenda, attempting to understand contestations, reproduction, and responses to the ongoing political shift towards illiberalism. I learned during the fieldwork that the question of the relationality of children's own identity to the migrant representation is of key significance for my research, since both the identities of Roma children and Hungarian children were acted out in relation to the representation of migrants, but also very differently from each other. This is important because the position of Roma children as an internal other within Hungarian society opened a space for identity negotiation where both contestation and relatedness towards migrant representations were simultaneously present.

The word *migráns* is a novel way to describe asylum seekers and refugees, and its emergence and salience is inescapably linked to the "illiberal democracy" that the nationalist conservative Fidesz government[5] has been building since 2014 under the direction of Prime Minister Viktor Orbán. In early 2015 the Hungarian government launched the first of many anti-migrant campaigns, and Bernáth and Messing (2016:52) have noted that following that, the Hungarian word *migráns* became a commonplace term to describe people who cross the

[5] Fidesz gained two thirds majority in 2010 and has since transformed the country from workfare to education and constitutional law. Gagyi 2016 has analyzed reasons for this on long and short term.

Hungarian-Serbian border with loaded implications referring to terrorism and national security threat, gradually replacing the earlier terms like asylum seeker (*menedékkérő*) or refugee (*menekült*), and to some extent, immigrant (*bevándorló).* The educational sphere also encountered this nely term in January 2016 KLIK sent a letter to school headmasters throughout the country, asking them to declare the number of "migrant students" of their school within some days[6]. This letter caused public outrage and received criticism since the word *migráns* is not a legally defined term, which tells about the delicacy and purpose of the letter. This constructed representation of the migrant seems to be an illiberal representation of the migrant other.

I justify using the term migrant by the fact that it is the closest English equivalent to *migráns.* By the word migrant I refer to the representations of migrant subjects that Hungarian youth seem to subscribe to, and do not wish to refer to any legal, political or ideological categories describing people on the move. Similarly, I must note that when I quote or rephrase what the Roma students have said about themselves, I will follow their lexicon and use the word gypsy (*cigány*) in these contexts. Finally, it is noteworthy that neither of the schools try to represent an average as an educational institution. This is therefore an account of two individual schools and their students, addressing the relationality of their positions in their surrounding social worlds.

Methodologically, the argument of this thesis relies on ethnographic research in two schools in Budapest, for one month in total. This was divided into two sets of two weeks, but because spring break fell in middle of the month, I finally spent around one and a half weeks in both schools. In the first school I was in contact with altogether six class cohorts whose students were from 13 to 19 years old. I held eight focus group discussions with them, and collected 78 essays based on pictures I showed them, while in their English classes, as they fit to the everyday school routine while being useful research methods in those settings. In the second school, which

1 [6] For an example, see "'KLIK is asking headmasters about migrant students" ("A Klik a migráns tanulókról kérdezi az iskolaigazgatókat) 9 August 2016. Available at <http://index.hu/belfold/2016/08/09/oktatas_migrans_klik_migracio_klebelsberg/> Accessed 13 June 2017

is considerably smaller than the first, I was studying students from one class who are from 11 to 14 years. I conducted this research in Hungarian. I collected seven interviews and conducted participant observation with students as well as attempted to use drawing as methodology as I heard from the teacher her studiers usually like it. In addition, I interviewed their form teacher (*Osztályfőnök*). I had numerous informal conversations in both schools with the teachers about the schools, their classes, the backgrounds of students, and about the theme of migration. As Swauger et. al. (2017) have recently noted, a creative choice of methodology is important when studying children in order to overcome possible power imbalances. Therefore, visual, artistic or digital research strategies can produce rich data in such research contexts (ibid.). Furthermore, language constitutes a potential shortcoming when conducting research with children, as some may face difficulties expressing themselves verbally or literally (Spyrou 2011:153). Although I took the above notions into consideration, practice showed that focusing on visual expression of child and adolescent informants would require a longer period of fieldwork in order to establish necessary rapport and familiarity while ensuring the voluntary participation of informants.

It is especially important to follow research ethics guidelines while studying children, and I took this into consideration: I highlighted that participation was voluntary and did not push any students if they signified they would rather not participate. I gained research permissions from both headmasters of the schools, and from all the teachers I worked with, and asked for permissions form the parents in writing. In the first school, I received the consent forms of the parents by when I began my research, but the short timeframe posed challenges in the other school. Even though I gave the consent forms on paper to the students, and their teacher explained what it was and what to do with it, I didn't receive back more than three permissions from the parents. The headmaster of the school foresaw this in our meeting and merely shrugged: she assumed that the parents would not deem something like this as important. She told me I could go ahead without problems if I keep the school anonymous in my thesis. After

hesitation I decided to go on, as I had made significant effort on receiving the consents, but I will keep the schools and all the people affiliated with the research strictly anonymous.

Theoretically, I build on relational sociology and theories of intersectionality (Crenshaw 1989, Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1992, Berger and Guidroz 2009). I relate these to processes of constructing citizenship and practices of othering (Isin 2002, 2013, Anderson 2013). In addition, sociological literature on children, adolescents and childhoods direct the research and the final argument. Following Mustafa Emirbayer's (1997) definition of relational sociology, the underlying theoretical approach of this thesis focuses on the complexity of transactions of social processes rather than on the constituent actors or substances themselves (1997:287). This allows me to move from a more substantivist approach to an intersectional interpretation of social worlds.

The structure of the thesis is as follows: I begin by contextualizing and historicizing the two schools, and introduce children as a subject of sociological study and of this thesis in particular. I show how experience of otherness in the Roma school is strongly linked to its sociopolitical context, and give a brief historical overview on how poverty has become increasingly racialized in Hungary. I situate the schools in relation to their context using focusing on the nexus of race and class. The second chapter builds on the previous insights of the historicization of othering in Hungary, and focuses on the contemporary construction of migrant as a new illiberal other. I analyse the emergence of illiberal discursive practices and characterize what I call the illiberal migrant other, but also question whether illiberalism is enough to explain its function. The ethnographic account will describe how children seem to perceive the multiplicity of migrant others.

The last chapter brings chapters one and two together and analyzes the relationality of the migrant other to the socioeconomic positionalities of the students. I introduce the multiple processes of othering that negotiate the notions of citizenship for children, and discuss the

presence of the political in their lives. This connects me to analyze how the representations are constructed, for which I introduce a theoretical approach that emerged from the field data, heteroglossias.

This thesis builds on several bodies of literature. Firstly, it is situated in the school of anthropology of children, which approaches children as valuable agents who define their own social realities (Spyrou 2001:168). Although there are numerous studies on the othering of children, or othered children, (Philippou and Theodorou 2014; Spyrou 2001; Christou and Spyrou 2012; Devine and Kelly 2006), my focus lies rather on 'the other of the other' as I study the relationality of the migrant other in two schools, one of which has students who are marginalized themselves. I specifically focus on having an intersectional approach on othered, racialized childhoods, which is a less explored field of child study (Zembylas 2010:313). I join the literature focusing on the identity building of children as a part of school institution (Cervinkova 2014; Bellino and Williams 2017 Crozier and Davis 2008; Abu El-Haj 2015) at a specific moment in the illiberal shift of the Hungarian political agenda that is also manifested in transformations in the school system.

1 Of class and race: power nexus at the school yards

1.1 The two schools

My field site represents a deep structural divide along lines of class and races in Hungarian society. The Deák Ferenc high school, a large, old building in a peaceful, green Pest-side neighborhood.[7] Possessing a historical reputation, it has served as a significant educational institution for decades, and today it has the reputation of a school with exceptionally liberal values. Hosting hundreds of students, the corridors were always buzzing with talk and movement when I was trying to find my way to the next classroom in time. Deák Ferenc is rated as one of the best state schools in the country, and thus there also reigns a highly competitive studying culture. The students are mainly middle class white Hungarians, with a significant minority of second generation students with background from an Asian country. During my time at Deák Ferenc, the students were welcoming and polite, even when occasionally embracing the insecurities of teenhood and reluctant to speak. Nevertheless, the majority of students participated in the activities during my research sessions.

I conducted fieldwork in Deák Ferenc during English classes, and worked together with five English teachers, each of whom gave 2 of their classes for my research – I divided them to a session with focus groups and a session for writing essays (see appendix for pictures I used for them). As I was not confident with my intermediate level to work with such big number of students in Hungarian, the English classes were an appropriate option. I visited or held 14 sessions in total. The teachers agreed to this on the basis that the sessions would be useful language practice for the students. The six class cohorts who I worked with varied from 8 to 15

[7] The names of the schools and informants are pseudonyms in order to guarantee anonymity. I will not also disclose the exact backgroung of the ethnic minority of the school.

students in number of participants.

The contrast with József Attila school, the middle school where I arrived after the spring break, was striking. József Attila is located in the 8th district on the Pest side, an area with a long-standing reputation as an ethnicized Roma district (Kerestély et. al. 2017). In recent years, many migrants have settled in the district because of affordable rent. József Attila has around 280 students, the majority of whom are Roma. All the students in the class I worked with are Roma. According to an estimate from one interlocutor, in the whole middle school there are fewer than ten white Hungarian students – structural segregation of Roma in the Hungarian education system is alarming and still increasing (Kertesi and Kézdi 2012). My key informant at József Attila was Zsuzsa, a teacher at the school. She provided me with access to her classes, arranged a meeting with the headmaster, and supported my endeavor to collect the headache-causing parental permissions, as elaborated in the introduction.

Upon first visiting József Attila, I perceived the building facade as nice and pleasant even though later one of my informant-teachers characterized the inner courtyard as "a bit prison-like". Everyday work at József Attila turned out to be like a tropical storm: maybe half of the students would show up on their classes, and the most common daily games among the students included boxing and physical confrontations. In comparison to Deák Ferenc, the students were far less disciplined, either unstoppable or indifferent, but also very friendly and curious about the foreigner in their classroom. Consequently, fieldwork in the second school turned out to be very different. In retrospect, it is clear that it was not only the emotional turbulence of teenagers that caused the chaos, but that I was sensing traces of the long history of racialized poverty and the experiences of internal others there and then, in the classrooms.

At József Attila, I attended the after school club[8] (*napközi*) of the class of my teacher

[8] The afterschool club is a system established in as a part of educational reforms of the government in 2011: it requires students to stay in the school until 4pm every day. Consequently, schools have to arrange program for the students for the full time, which can at times be very frustrating for both the school staff and the students. With the class I worked with, the routine was the following: after lunch, free time for one and half hours, and

contact, so I accompanied a group of 11-14 years old students from lunchtime till 4pm for one and a half weeks. Due to their irregular attendance, around seven students were usually present from the 25 people registered in the class. I attempted to use more visual research methods with the Roma children because I heard they like it, and they were younger than students in the Deák Ferenc school, so I also draw migrants with one of the students.

Deák Ferenc carries an air almost of a factory, complete with high productivity goals and a competitive study environment. In this efficient environment, however, the data remained on the level of 'front stage' in the Goffmanian understanding of different representations of the self in different environments (1990). With the students in József Attila, on the other hand, a personal connection began to form immediately: after my first short visit, the teacher soon sent me a message with a picture of a pudding "let's see how it goes, but it started well. The girls made this for you. ;)".

My own positionality as a white, middle class, educated woman is fundamental in the above ethnographic accounts of order and chaos. Sharing a similar background with the majority of those in Deák Ferenc, it requires attention from me to explicate constructions that are normalized in their social background. In József Attila, the situation was the opposite: with a different background I was under conscious effort to avoid exaggerating our differences. My differing background as a foreign woman with piercings and a difficult research agenda was oddly interesting for the children, and therefore my clumsy Hungarian skills did not make me stranger than what I already was. My positionality thus already showcases the relational nature of identity I set to research, always constructed against backgrounds that express socioeconomic positioning and values.

1.2 Children as a sociological other

then a sandwich and one hour of doing your homework.

I will now provide a brief theoretical overview on literature on research of children, and continue below with my main theoretical concept that characterize the politicized youth world I am studying. The classical sociological approach that portrays children as unfinished adults and passive recipients of social influences has received serious critique since the 1970's. In recent years anthropology of children has had its fair share of interdisciplinary criticism for studying children as adults-in-making, instead of as social agents of equal important (Chin 2001). Since then, the perspective of the discipline has broadened, and today the more common paradigm is to look at childhood as a social construct in relation to class, gender and race (Spyrou 2001:168). Formal education is a logical environment in which to conduct research on childhood, and studies on educational processes have recognized the ways in which children learn about ethnic and racial positioning at a young age (e.g. Troyna and Hatcher 1992; Ausdale and Feagin 2001). That said, Schwartzman (2001:3) has criticized the fact that childhood itself is not recognized as a racialized, gendered and class-based social construct. Such an important omission overlooks connections to the state, politics, and broader economic forces (ibid.). I aim to look at these connections while noting that children's perceptions of the social and political world constitute a valuable lens with which to look at social experiences. I follow a reflexive research approach to children, positioning them between structure and agency and treating them as social actors who interpret, negotiate and construct their own realities with the knowledge available to them (Spyrou 2001:182). This is an important epistemological stand in order to give space to the research topic itself: the negotiated identities of children in relation to internal and external others.

In the wake of the illiberal turn in Hungary, studying children and the related contestations and constructions is especially important because schools are powerful political and ideological sites for the production of "desirable" citizens, and serve as one of the daily contact points between children and the state (Cervinkova 2016:45; Bellino and Williams 2017:13).

Schools deeply political locations. Hana Cervinkova describes the power of school curricula in producing national homogeneity in neo-conservative Poland, which bears similarities to the illiberal regime of Hungary. Bellino and Williams (2017) argue that (both formal and hidden) school curricula and schools as institutions for contestations of power can work for the purposes of nation-building and construct divisions between us and others as students are taught tenets of political membership and belonging (13). Furthermore, students themselves bring to school informal curricula which stem from family and social background (ibid.). While I do not focus on school curricula in my research due to practical limitations of resources, I have gathered data on the presence of political agendas by talking to the children who are growing up under the current political shift.

1.3 The relational intersections of othering

The debates about otherness and social stratification are built on classics in social theory. Georg Simmel has shown how conflict is constitutive, and necessary for any group to exist, because it marks the line where us ends and the other side of conflict, them, begins (Simmel (1964 [1955]). Simmel thus demonstrates the dialectical nature of insiders and outsiders, as later also shown by Engin Isin's extensive work on citizenship (2002, 2009). Simmel further characterizes the other as an internal part of group formation solely by token of being external (1950). Social dynamics of inclusion and exclusion coexist with conflict, power and group formation, including that of people to society by the manner of their exclusion. Building on Edward Said (1978), Etienne Balibar (2005) has shown that the notion of otherness derives its origins from racist the Western notion of the Orient when naturalized outside the cultural, historical and geographical domain (29). Balibar characterizes the processes of otherness as being projected on people unlike 'us' to anticipate community-feelings of belonging and non-belonging on different societal scales up to supra-national levels, beyond conceptualizations such as race (ibid.:20). Haldrup et. al.. (2006)

highlight the banal nature of otherness: they discuss otherness as an embodied practice which is enacted through mundane acts and everyday attitudes that constantly redraw the line between us and them (183). In other words, processes of otherness are inseparable from processes of belonging, as if in a painting where one line in the middle gives a form to both sides.

The illiberal regime in Hungary is producing local marginalizations, conceptualized as common marginalizations by Prem Kumar Rajaram (2015). Rajaram advances Bridget Anderson's notion of internal and external others (2013) to a spatially defined context. He argues that both internal and external marginalizations derive from hegemonic governmental practices such as political-economic state policy, and need to be studied together instead of rendering them artificially separate (2015:67). In other words, the processes of othering migrants does not take place in a vacuum, but in the context of state policy and relational societal practices.

Scholars have studied such local marginalities in Hungary, most significantly from socioeconomic perspective on homelessness (Bence and Udvarhelyi 2013; Misetics 2013; Dosa 2014). On policy level, the marginalization of homeless people bears similarities to policies that dehumanize migrants; both processes are fueled by legislative changes that make public sentiment suspicious toward the marginalities and give space for more punitive policies, further endorsing the image of minorities as a threat. Roma are othered by the aspects of ethnic exclusion or socio-economic segregation (Hobson 2004; Kende 2000; Kligman 2001). On the other hand, parallels between racialized othering of the Roma and migrants are not hard to find, as illustrated in the Prime Minister Orbán's statement about how unfair accepting a suggested EU quota of refugees would be for Hungary, since the country has had to live with Roma for centuries already (Balogh 2015). The others in Hungary, like Roma or from historical accounts, Jewish people, most often serve a purpose of strengthening national identity by ethnic or cultural exclusion (Fox et. al. 2010:11). The illiberal new nation building project could benefit from a mutual enemy of the migrant. Statements such as that of Orbán's illustrate vividly who has the

power to draw the line between us and them, and where this is line drawn. In recent years, it has been drawn towards the external other – the migrant. This rhetoric defines the genealogy of Roma as a local marginality, with a complex, centuries-long process of constellations of different narratives and policies under different regimes, and intersections of class, ethnicity and spatial configurations.

Intersectional approach gains salience in the context of fieldwork at a Roma school. In the students' situation of racialized poverty, class and race manifest relations of inequality that direct one's position in the social world (Berger and Guidroz 2009:1). With an intersectional approach, scholars aim to highlight and analyze the interrelatedness and interconnectedness of the hierarchical and mutually reinforcing issues of race, gender and class, among many more themes (ibid.). Processes of racialization are at the core of these phenomena, where fixed power divisions, such as racialized poverty, are justified by racial differences, and are then rendered neutral (Yuval-Davis et. al. 2017:1048). Signifiers of these positionalities appeared on a daily basis: in József Attila, Lili, a 12-year old girl, was honestly surprised when she noticed I have mobile data on my phone, while the 15-year old Zoli from Deák Ferenc would greet me in the morning and jokingly complain how stressful his life is, since he had to go shopping for clothes in the afternoon. Furthermore, Miklós from József Attila is from a wealthy family background but has a gypsy identity which he identifies with, and which others attach to him and thus position him to otherness. The processes of racialization render the "racial" difference of Roma children fixed, even when economic matters are not the differentiator.

The two schools substantiate Stuart Hall's formulation of class as the modality within which race is "lived" ([1978] 1996). Hall refers to the ways in which structured economic inferiority follows the constructed subalternity of blackness, or that of non-whiteness. Before Hall, Franz Fanon has argued that racial order and economic order are inherently linked and dialectically reproduced (Kane 2007:355). Balibar, in turn, points out that the modern concept of

race was originally tied to a classed context rather than that of ethnicized division of people (Balibar and Wallerstein 1991:207). He characterizes racism fundamentally as a tool of capitalist power struggle on division of labor (ibid.208). To discuss race without discussing class would mean to detach the fundamental power struggles of contemporary world society from each other. I therefore keep these intersections near in the ethnographic analysis, and support it by leaning to theories of citizenship in order to deepen my understanding on the processes of othering.

1.4 Naturalization of poverty and identity politics: a brief history

Before turning to the two schools I study in contemporary Hungary, I now non-exhaustively outline processes of racialization that have constructed and naturalized Roma as an internal other in Hungary. Understanding this dynamic supports the forthcoming analysis of the relations of my field sites.

Regime change and the joint arrival of capitalism and the liberal democratic political system in early 1990s had a dramatic impact on the socio-economic situation of large part of Hungarian society, including Roma, whose long history of marginalization Barany (1994) and Váradi and Virág (2014) have researched. During the state socialist regime, a great number of Hungarian Roma fell into the category of industrial workers with lower education, and while their employment rate was higher during socialism than now, nevertheless, Roma were more heavily affected by the negative impacts of regime change than their non-Roma peers (Kertesi 2004:45). Corroborating Balibar's notion of racism as a function in the struggle between capital and labor, in the newly-arrived logic of capital, Roma were often the first to be laid off and subject to strong assimilation policies (Schwarcz 2012:106).

As struggles for primary employment was one of the most important causes of social segregation and exclusion of Roma (Kertesi and Kézdi in Váradi and Virág 2014:53), poverty became increasingly racialized. Schwarcz notes that official-institutional discourse on poverty

disappeared together with the socialist regime, leading to a failure to recognize poverty as a structural issue and the giving way tothe domination of a moral narratives discourse about poverty at the municipal level (2012:101). This adds to the moral stigmatization of poverty that characterizes the poor today regardless of their attachment to a crafted race.

Regime change also introduced identity politics and neoliberal human rights language (Trehan 2009:200). Human rights discourse was introduced as a Western, mainly Northern American concept through the newly arrived foreign NGOs which was set to frame Roma as an ethnic minority. It has gradually redefined the question of rights more towards issues of individual civil based rights instead of socioeconomic justice (ibid.3). This human rights discourse bears striking similarities with the liberal discourse on the rights of migrants in the illiberal context. Substantiating the claim of Nancy Fraser, the discourse focuses on questions of recognition instead of redistribution (2000), thus gradually shifting structural problems of social exclusion to the background. The following two decades lacked efforts to deconstruct this societal divide, and Roma have gradually become ethnicized. For the local white Hungarian majority, Roma appear as a homogenous ethnic minority, despite their possible own identification primarily as Hungarians (Schwarcz 2012:100).

Spatial segregation of Roma throughout the country dates back to decades before regime change (Váradi and Virág 2014). City planning and privatization in 1990s in Budapest caused significant disadvantages for the poor, including many Roma communities: gentrification projects in the 8th and 9th districts, with underlying political implications, gave birth to policies which dislocated impoverished people from outer city districts to small, inner city flats of poor quality (Czirfusz et. al. 2015:61). Furthermore, public housing estates were privatized and many Roma residents were evicted (ibid.62). In particular, the 8th district of Budapest, where József Attila school is located, gradually experienced appropriation of space by the Roma community, and developed a stigmatized image of an ethnicized ghetto distince from the rest of society

(Keresztély et. al. 2017:1087).

I have outlined in this chapter the main theoretical framework where I situate the children and the two schools I am studying. While the student of Deák Ferenc mostly enjoy the position of a social majority, the societal position of Hungarian Roma is of special attention because it is configured under multiple oppressions stemming from class and race struggle, and manifested as chronic racialized poverty in a spatial dimension. This setting is of key importance for the analysis of the migrant positionalities in the chapter to follow.

2 Migrants as the new illiberal other?

2.1 Migrant others in the Deák Ferenc school

The following lines, originally by a group of 15-year old students, was present practically in every focus group's output at Deák Ferenc: "Migrant is someone who comes to Hungary to live but not for a political reason, a foreigner is someone who comes to Hungary for a short period of time like a vacation, a refugee is a person who comes to Hungary or to any country because of some political reason". Older students echoed the same pattern: "In our opinion migrants are those people who change their place of living between countries, refugees are the ones who are running from a threat, and foreigners are all the people whose home country is not the one they are currently in". The drowsy mornings in the cellar classrooms surprised me when I realized that most students sound to contest the terrorism-ridden ideas they hear from the news. Students seemed to have a consensus.

When looking closely, these responses show two levels of sympathy: on the one hand, they sympathize with refugees, maybe because of assumed suffering. On the other, migrants would attract sympathy because of their presumed strive for success and potential integration. This pattern is largely repeated also in the students' essays: concepts of war, journey, escape, horror, starvation, safety, violence, victims of terrorism, shelter, persistence, and refugee camps are commonly used when the subject of the story was sympathetically characterized as a refugee. A caption from an imaginative essay, describing a picture of two children struggling with a policeman in an outdoor space (Appendix), exemplifies this:

> Jack is very tired. He's been on foot for over 12 hours. They are heading to Germany to feel safe again. There is war in his hometown. His father, his older brother and his cousins were killed in the war. When a bomb destroyed their house, his mother decided that they had to go. --- They had never been rich, but they had enough money to buy three tickets to a boat that was heading to Greece. The time they spent on that boat was

> the worst period of Jack's life. They were starving, it was very cold, people around them were ill. It was terrible to see people around them dying. – Now that they have reached the border of Hungary no one can stop him. He has been through a lot and his intention is to get himself and his sister to a safe place.
>
> - Ilona, 14[9]

Ilona repeats here the usual trail of thought: people in the pictures were most commonly characterized as refugees when there was uneasiness or distress in the picture, when the people in the picture did not appear remarkably wealthy, or when their presumed location affiliated them with refugees, such as at an identifiable state border. Sometimes boundaries between the terms were not clear, or possibly insignificant to the writer as is visible from this account describing the iconic picture of an Afghan Girl by journalist Steve McCurry:

> I think, she might be a migrant, because she is dressed like a migrant. She is very similar to the main character of the film Star Wars VII. She looks like she is afraid of something, because in her eyes I can see fear. She lost one of her family members I think. I think, she try to escape from her country, because there is a war. I think, she is poor.
> - László, 13

For many, the term 'migrant' itself seemed to be difficult to comprehend, and the question of a correct definition of the word migrant arose several times during the focus group conversations. Student were confused and were asking me if it can refer to people crossing the Hungarian-Serbian border, as well to those migrants "who arrive here legally." Both ideas are reproduced in the findings, and the latter is usually uttered in contrast to those who cross the border, or possibly also to Asian migrants who have moved here several decades ago - after all, there is also a large minority of people with Asian origin in Deák Ferenc.

I asked in the focus group conversation why the students think migrants come to Hungary. "To go to Germany" was always one of the first replies. Even though everybody at the class agreed that 'migrant' refers to many different groups of people, although often implicitly

[9] I have left the quotes from the children's essays and discussions in their original form, including grammar and vocabulary.

divided into legal and illegal migrants, the repeatedly occurring tendency in the students" opinions are that migrants seek a better life, a better job, a better salary. Some consider that moving another country for a *similar* job than as in one's home country renders people "just" foreigners instead of migrants. This pattern reflects on moral judgement of migratory agendas: refugees are almost only described as fleeing war with genuine intentions, which is implicitly acceptable, but migrants coming to Hungary for a better economic situation is less worthy or justified, even if they also took a dangerous path and face hardships on their journey, as several essays described.

Educated and informed as they were, many of the students sarcastically joked about migrants "coming to steal our jobs while they also don't work". Most of these adolescents would consciously reject the current governmental discourse on migrants as terrorist or migrants raping Hungarian women. As a group of girls furiously questioned in our debate, "who says Hungarians don't rape Hungarian women?". This juxtaposition of political refugees with the economic migrants rejects the illiberal representation of the migrant I described briefly before, but follows what Raia Apostolova (2016) characterizes as key essence for liberalism: the ways economic liberalism separates the economic from the political, which in turn makes violence appear possible only within the political sphere. This philosophy has been translated in migratory regimes in liberal democracies.

In my findings, there are a number of differing voices. Two people question the distinction between a refugee and a migrant, defining the term refugee as a legal status and two adolescents from the upper grade class discuss explicitly what they considered as a political agenda behind the word migrant: "What I see is that this whole crisis was a great opportunity for the politicians to bring in a new enemy, they always, they feed or force certain fights, and you know what happened yesterday about the new law, about CEU – it's actually completely the

same".[10] In contrast, themes of national security, economic stability and threat of terrorism are also present – employed not explicitly against migrants but addressed as important, rational narratives or, like in the essay that begins this thesis, outside of the logic of adults (Spyrou 2001:180). A rational approach is exemplified by the following account:

> In the third picture I can see a refugee family trying to rant beneath a wall of barbed wire. They seem to be rather cautious, especially the woman, who is looking in the distance, the father is more concentrated in his wife and children.
>
> What is happening is a bit uncertain to me, because it's daylight and the photo was taken up close and personal. Therefore it might be planned, however it clearly shows the desperation of the migrants, and how far they go to find a better place to live.
>
> I can imagine what they could feel about this situation, but my personal opinion is this can be sortened out in a more legal way, fair enough it takes more time, but this type of running away from anything could be avoided.
>
> Migration is a big problem in the European countries and based on my personal experience and the knowledge I acquired from the news, I am really against the placement of such refugees in Hungary. And the government should come up with a more efficient way to repel those inhuman beings.
>
> - Bence, 17

This essay touches on a number of important themes. Firstly, it justifies its opinion by using a rational approach to the topic. It also shows that the terms 'migrant' or 'refugee' may be used interchangeably. Thirdly, it demonstrates a theme I will discuss in chapter III: the political importance of this topic, demonstrated by the authors' twist of his perspective from private to the public sphere. In one of the essays, I also received a poignant critique from a student, who wrote that he is not for against migration in general, but was unsatisfied on my selection of pictures, as they did not portray a complete picture on the topic. He asked me to "next time [also] show pictures about migrants throwing rocks at police officers at the border and about radicals and terrorists". This is a very accurate critique: when preparing, I excluded such pictures

[10] During the one and a half weeks I was at Deák Ferenc school, the attention to the case of Lex CEU was at its peak and a series of mass demonstrations took place on the topic of CEU and beyond it. For more information on the case, see https://bbj.hu/politics/tens-of-thousands-protest-against-lex-ceu-in-budapest_131364. Accessed 13 June 2017.

consciously to avoid pictures that have the most common narrative in the media, in order to see more original narratives from the students, but after this critique I saw that by doing so I had possibly hindered the more critical voices. It is of course by itself fascinating that official rhetoric of violent, aggressive migrants is so naturalized that excluding it seems to make the larger discourse blatantly distorted for some students.

The Deák Ferenc students share a full range of imagined representations of migrants and refugees, quite tenaciously clinging onto the liberal divide between political refugee/economic migrant as discussed by Apostolova (2016). The liberal migrant subject with moralistic undertone for poverty is used to explicitly contest the illiberal political discourses now prevalent in Hungary. But a number of narratives also portrayed these illiberal types of threatening, dangerous or terrorist migrants through rationalizing why it is politically necessary to portray them as such. It was a week later when I discovered a different version of illiberal narratives from other side of the city. But to understand that better, I will now to zoom into the definition of illiberalism.

2.2 Building blocks of illiberalism

In late summer 2014, Prime Minister Orbán declared in a public speech that the Hungarian government is building an illiberal democracy. According to him, this means focusing on the "best interest of the nation", to national security, workfare state and strength of the community.[11] Illiberal democracy and the definitions of thereof are important to understand in order to perceive right the boundaries that the state draws for belonging and otherness in Hungarian society. For Fareed Zakaria, who coined the term in 1997, democracy means in its procedural character merely the right to have free and fair elections, while constitutive liberalism rather

[11] A clear definition of illiberalism by Fidesz is lacking, but guidelines have been given in speeches such as "Full text of Viktor Orbán's speech at Băile Tuşnad (Tusnádfürdő) Published 26 July 2014. Available at <http://budapestbeacon.com/public-policy/full-text-of-viktor-orbans-speech-at-baile-tusnad-tusnadfurdo-of-26-july-2014/> Accessed 13 June 2017.

refers to the political goals of a government, such as civil liberties or having a welfare state (1997:25). Illiberal democracy, then, differs from its liberal counterpart by its agenda of centralizing political power, limiting civil or political liberties and creating ethnic divisions (ibid.42).

Centralization of power is a reoccurring theme on recent literature on Hungarian illiberal context. Curtailing the national justice system, and deploying the constitutional law for political purposes is regarded as a clear symptom of illiberal governance (Bíró-Nagy 2017; Bozoki 2015:17; Enyedi 2016:13). Limiting press freedom with a variety of government-affiliated means, such as by establishing a state-controlled monitoring body for media endorses self-censorship and creates a sense of surveillance (Bozoki 2015:20). State functions like the electoral system have been reformulated to advance the political interests of big parties (Bíró-Nagy 2017), a shift that could be characterized as move towards illiberal majoritarianism, as framed by Arend Lipjhart (Bozoki 2015:4). As per the punitive turn on social policies in 2010 (Misetics 2013), interests of disenfranchised citizens such as Roma or homeless people have been dismissed, while concentrating assets to the people close to the ruling party. More recently in 2016 and 2017, civil sector has faced several attempts to curtail their work from the side of the government, who argues to be defending transparency and revealing foreign-based interests from the background of civil actors.). Bozoki points out that in addition to all of the above, also political participation of people without a permanent address, in practice usually being the poorest people of society, such as homeless people, Roma or recently arrived migrants, has been made more difficult than before (2015:21). All in all, the Fidesz government has centralized as many threads of control as possible throughout the spheres of society in the past seven years. It seems to aim to not only control decision-making processes, but also to control whose voice is heard and who gets to produce knowledge.

The official government rhetoric on Hungarians, migrants and Roma has been

particularly aggressive, and in the context of controlled media these views are pervasive throughout the society. The Prime Minister Orbán characterized migrants as "poison" for Hungary already in early 2015[12]. In 2017 he mentioned in a public speech that Hungary would aim for ethnic homogeneity[13], which characterizes the practices of symbolic national unification (Bozoki 2015:13). The fragmentation of opposition adds to the pull to the right. That said, I see nothing particularly illiberal about the structural segregation of Roma in Hungary, which has been a long-debated issue for centuries. In a similar vein, exclusion and securitization as migration management practices are not particularly outside of liberal logic, as I argued earlier following Apostolova (2016). As Bridget Anderson has shown (2013), liberal democracies also draw crude lines between citizens and non-citizens, and also define the nations through exclusion. The remarks on ethnic homogeneity construct this understanding even further as Hungary has become increasingly an ethnicized and nationalized state (Lendvai and Stubbs 2015:455). Since the powerful rhetorics about national unity still persists, could the illiberal nature of the Hungarian migration regime then be rather defined as discursive? Keeping this is mind, I will now study how the students of József Attila navigate in the illiberal.

2.3 Representations of the other from the other

On one afternoon after lunch, the students had disappeared all over the József Attila school building and their teacher made desperate attempts to collect them back to the classroom. I followed her to trace down the students, and could sit down with them individually for an interview about migrants. While at the school yard, I made an interview with five József Attila

[12] see "Hungarian prime minister says migrants are 'poison' and 'not needed'" 27 July 2016. Available at < https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jul/26/hungarian-prime-minister-viktor-orban-praises-donald-trump> Accessed 13 June 2017

[13] see "Hungary's Orbán: 'Ethnic homogeneity' vital for economic success". 1 March 2017. Available at http://www.dw.com/en/hungarys-orban-ethnic-homogeneity-vital-for-economic-success/a-37755766. Accessed 13 June 2017

students. Four of them said they do not personally know any migrants, while one of them mentioned he has a friend who is "coloured." Three girls I spoke to at the school yard knew that migrants come "from the border", and clarified enthusiastically that while immigrants pass through Hungary, migrants are the ones that flee from war[14]. They claimed to see migrants often: on the TV, on the streets and "everywhere". One of the girls had been passing the border with Serbia to Hungary a month before and had seen migrants "there". During the conversation one of them had to go inside to begin her class, but she came to the window to continue throwing friendly insults with other girls, sometimes excitedly shouting "migrant, migrant!" to each other. When I asked whether I could be a migrant as I come from abroad, all of them were horrified by the idea: "You're none of those, not a migrant, nor an immigrant".

The silent but confident Attila described migrants as "somebody who comes here without ID or papers because of a fight or war". For Attila, immigrants and migrants are the same thing. When I asked if Hungarians could also be migrants, he simply said yes, if they leave the country without their IDs. Dániel, the smallest of the class, listed the actions migrants do in Hungary: they damage places, they harass women, and they have guns, knives and machine guns. Migrants have nothing here, no home, or anything to do. I had discussed the topic earlier with Zsuzsa, the teacher of the class, who herself volunteers for a migrant advocacy group in Hungary. She assessed that the children have a very limited knowledge on the topic, they only know "the government propaganda, that migrants steal from you, rape you. They are very scared". She also mentioned that the children are so young that the topic doesn't come up often, and that the question of politics, let. al.one migration, is not part of their lives in general.

I finally caught Marcell, the 12-year old slender-built boy who Zsuzsa had described as a dedicated drawer. Marcell agreed to draw a migrant for me but did not know how to, and kept on asking if I could help him, so I agreed we could draw the picture together. We were sitting on a

[14] They used the terms *bevándorló* which literally stands for an immigrant, and *migráns* which I translate as migrant.

desk together, me trying not to direct his thoughts too much because I was curious to see what he would draw by himself. He told me what he wanted to do in order to hear if I was satisfied with the idea.

Marcell: I'll draw a migrant that is bored.
Me: Okay. Why is he bored?
Marcell: I'll draw him as dead.
Me: Really! How did he die?
Marcell: He was killed with a *kés* –
Me: wait, *kés* was in Hungarian..?

Marcell reached out to his pocket of his red spring jacket, opened the zipper and took out a pocket knife. I was trying to cover my surprise:

Me: Oh right, a knife! Why do you carry a knife?
Marcell: Because of pedophiles or migrants.

Marcell smirked and continued to explain: "Yeah I know. But it's a must, you know". We continued to draw, and Marcell allowed me choose the shades of red that we would use for coloring the blood in the picture. According to Marcell, the migrant was finally killed by little soldiers who were counter-attacking the migrant-invader. I am cautious of taking the act of drawing a dead migrant itself as a sign of political influence – drawing pictures of battles or wars can be usual for any 12-year old child who has, for example, played video games. But Marcell's pocket knife tells about the reality of otherness he lives in: he told me his parents gave the knife to him to protect himself on the streets.

The encounter with Marcell represents otherness which is not only symbolically present for the children, but it manifests on the way to school, in the upbringing by parents, during the weekends. The children are not only faced with discourses of migrants on the media, but they live in subaltern social conditions, where the sense of danger they face is present as is demonstrated by the pocket knife, even if the cause of danger is not.

The illiberal stereotype of migrants is more prevalent and not explicitly contested in the

constructions of the children in Deák Ferenc. Still, the essay in the introduction which represented migrants as terrorists does not, in fact, differ too much from the account of students at József Attila – it differs by the presence of explicit political agenda, but constructs migrant representations in a similar creative manner that the children and adolescents from the Deák Ferenc school do. Traces of illiberal discursive practices are present in both schools but manifest in varying ways. I will return to the presence of the political in chapter III in more detail, and now turn to analyze the practices through which this representation of the illiberal migrant other is constructed in official discourse.

2.4 Constructing the illiberal migrant other

The construction of the new illiberal migrant other begins in early 2015, when governmental media discourse about migrants began with full force (Nagy 2016; 2015; Bernáth and Messing 2016). In the state response to Charlie Hebdo attacks in January, economic migration was with terrorism and thus the anti-migrant campaign began (Nagy 2016:1053). During that spring the number of asylum seekers in Hungary increased simultaneously with Fidesz's anti-migrant media campaigns, culminating to the summer months when over a hundred thousand people registered for asylum in Hungary on their way to seek asylum in the West (ibid.1035). A wave of humanitarian support emerged while the Fidesz government amended major shares of its asylum law to criminalize the most basic practices of seeking asylum (ibid.1040). The intense summer had a dramatic turn on September 4th when thousands of frustrated people began to march from Keleti railway station towards Austria, which forced the Hungarian government to temporarily arrange transportation between its borders in order to keep migrants out of public places of the capital. In September 2015 the border fence was finished and closed, causing clashes which resulted in a still ongoing political project of show

trials on alleged and highly contested terrorism trials in 2016 and 2017 of a Syrian-born man, Ahmed H. (Raj 2016). This widely publicized trial has been widely present in governmental media, aiming to prove a connection between migration and terrorism. By late autumn the dust settled, and by 2016 summer when pushbacks to Serbia began, migrants were gradually less visible in public spaces in Hungary. The decrease of migrants coming to Hungary was a turning point for the illiberal discursive practices about migrants because from then on migrants – or those perceivable as migrants – have been present in the news but not so much in public places anymore. Today, one and a half years later, migration is still dominating the news headlines, and governmental agenda battles against a self-claimed threat of mass migration on the state borders with Serbia by a double fence which speaks in three languages[15] and tracks down migrants with heat cameras.

Media discourse has the potential to create hegemonic narratives (Hall et. al. 1997:259). The power of media has been one of the key points in creating the illiberal migrant other. State practices have shaped the migrant representation in the media especially because of the significant state control or ownership of media outlets. Szalai and Göbl have analyzed that with this power, the governmental narrative on migrant subjects developed throughout 2015 from economic scapegoat to a cultural threat and finally to a security risk (2015:20) Bernáth and Messing (2016) have in turn showed that the Hungarian word *migráns* has origins from foreign languages, and that the official narrative discovered it in 2015 and have since then replaced with it the more empathetic words like immigrant and refugee[16]. With this power on media, the migrant representation is now mainly affiliated with threats of national security, terrorism and moral corrosion. It was striking to hear the open contestation of this from the older Deák Ferenc school students – that in their view, "the government is building a new enemy which is the

[15] For a sound clip, listen to https://soundcloud.com/g-bor-medvegy/folyamatosan-beszel-a-kormany-hatarkeritese. Accessed in 13 June 2017.
[16] as above, I refer to *bevándorló* with the word immigrant, and to *menekült* by the word refugee.

migrant and that's why they don't use word refugee – that creates feelings of empathy and they don't want that". Thus, the official project of building a representation of the illiberal migrant other doesn't pass without critical voices.

With the support of the media discourse, the Hungarian government is also effectively utilizing the discursive power of law and legal-material spectacles to enforce the idea of the illiberal migrant other. Law as a discursive power has the ability to shape and create meanings (Bourdieu 1986:838; Mezey 2001; Silbey 2005:333-334). In other words, law as such is discursively make-believe: it could be called public fiction. The categories of law do not reflect a material reality, but construct it. In this sense, they are devices that help managing populations. (Pottage 2004:12). By techniques of reification and the power to create meanings, the migrants that threaten Hungary, its national security and cultural heritage are in fact creations of legal fiction (ibid). Redefining irregular entry as an act under criminal law with possible prison sentences is almost a textbook example of such practices. The most recent invention, upgrading the transit zone concept into container camps where migrants need to stay for the whole length of asylum procedure effectively implies that they are dangerous if let roaming free in the territory of the country. The new law that gives the police the authority to "collect" foreigners without necessary residence permits throughout the country, and either incarcerate them for purposes of expulsion, or in case they apply for asylum, to deliver them to the container camps, is officially justified by national security reasons[17]. This is a clear sign that as a construction, these migrants, if uncontrolled and uncontained, threaten the country's security. As these legal categories create legal and non-legal subjectivities, the illiberal migrant other is increasingly illegalized and criminalized in Hungary.

Because national law as such is a rather uninteresting set of texts in governmental archives, it is its implementation and material spectacles that support their discursive power. The

[17]see "Kids in jail and a price tag for detention: what does the new asylum law mean in practice?" 14 March 2017 Available at http://www.migszol.com/blog/kids-in-jail-and-a-price-tag-for-detention-what-does-the-new-hungarian-asylum-law-mean-in-practice Accessed 13 June 2017

spectacle in this regard "renders the migrant illegality visible and lends it the air of a 'natural' fact" (De Genova 2002:436). Along with normalization of the legislation that enables the border spectacle, the criminalization of these legislative migrant subjects also becomes normalized. Legislation a tool of lawfare for the ruling government (Comaroff and Comaroff, 2009:36), who uses it to create a material spectacle from a discursive threat. Through these discursive practices, the representation of the migrant has gained its illiberal shades of threat to security, danger of terrorism, and sense of criminality and illegality.

This chapter has revisited the corner stones of illiberal democracy and questioned whether the policies regarding Roma or migrants in Hungary are illiberal, or whether they are actually still within the liberal logic on belonging and exclusion. I have examined how the migrant other has gained its illiberal characteristics through the discursive power of media and legislation, and I have also introduced how the students of the two schools receive the proposal for the new migrant other: it is evident that the Deák Ferenc students to subscribe to it to some extent, but through rationalizing why it is necessary to think so. The József Attila students seem to endorse it in general. It is also evident in the light of this chapter that the illiberal migrant other is contested, but mainly by using the liberal representation of economic migrant and political refugee, which also includes the logic of exclusion as other. These finding guides me to move forward to analyze deeper how the students in my fieldwork have come about these representations they subscribe to. What is the relation of these representation and the ways in which the students discover them?

3 Citizenship in the struggle for knowledge

In this chapter I relate the findings from the two earlier chapters to each other. by analyzing the societal positions of the students in relation to the representations of migrants that they encounter and seemingly reproduce. I claim that the dynamics of citizenship, are in the core of relating differently to migrant representations and illiberal narratives. Stemming from that, my findings suggest that a mutual experience of otherness can at times create a stronger sense of connection than territorial proximity. To conclude, I analyze how these representations could be created, as my field data leads me to discuss the concept of heteroglossia.

3.1 On being political

I can identify a juxtaposition of presence and absence of illiberalism among the students I worked with: while the illiberal narratives of the migrant others are distant from the everyday realities of the Hungarian children in Deák Ferenc, they are symbolically present in their lives as a political theme. The children in József Attila, in contrast, are directly affected by the marginalizations of illiberal nation building processes, but the politics of illiberalism is not explicitly discussed. This refers to different experiences of citizenship (Isin 2002).

Migration appeared as a highly political topic at Deák Ferenc. One teacher asked for special sensitivity when discussing the matter – she did not want any of her students to feel like they are cornered, as "there are opinions from one end to the other in the classrooms". A group of four 14-year old students addressed the hostility of the politicians while they were discussing why migrants to Germany:

- But why are they welcome in Germany but they aren't welcome here?
- Because we don't like others.

- Just the politicians!

These adolescents didn't address the political agenda directly, but knew that it is in the core of the migration debate. The class of young adults of 19 years had a longer conversation about the politics of the topic, where all the nine of them agreed on the following comments:

> János: The sad thing is that sometimes [migrants] were portrayed like as rats, like some unwanted people, but I mean I can totally see that those politicians wanted to treat these people, like, I don't know, cockroaches – I know, I know it's really, really strong thing that I say now – but I can totally see the behind things, like, the things behind that why they did this.
>
> Ági: Yeah I absolutely agree with János because there are lot of people in Hungary who see refugees as migrants only in the TV, so they have never met anyone who came to the country because of for example the war, so they are just afraid of them but they don't really know who they are actually.

These young adults are very aware of political agendas and how they impact society. The focus now is not primarily on what they think about politics, but in the fact that they think about it in general. Even though I did not ask the students of Deák Ferenc to write about migration politics or the Hungarian migration regime in their essays, almost a third of them explicitly addressed these themes in writing. This account situates the author to a certain position in their own society:

> I think building fences around the country because of refugees is really stupid and unnecessary because I really don't know what's it out to. Because they are refugees, they came here because there is a war in their country and they want to survive it. They don't want to explode a bower/lower here as till?? Us and there's just one reason why I hate the Hungarian government because they say that the refugees do want that to the uneducated people who believe it.
>
> So I think this is a really sad picture because the people in the picture are trying to escape but they just can't. So I feel terribly sorry for them.
>
> Also I think refugees must be treated like every other humans, because they are people who

just want to live and not terrorists.
- János, 16

Political nature was sometimes present without taking an explicit stand on it, as the first essay in the introduction also presents. Another student describes in her essay a family escaping from an imaginary country called Al Quaryatayn to another imaginary country called Latakia with a smuggler, and from there to Turkey on a boat and then to Greece:

> When we reached the shore, the police were already waiting. They took us to a camp, and we had to stay there until our visas were checked. It took two years, but we could finally continue our way to a better life.
>
> From here on everything went fine until we reached the border of Hungary. They built a fence to keep out all the refugees, and only those could enter who had the wealth to bribe politicians. On one day we sneaked through the barbed wire fence. All of us got through, but my mother was cut badly.
> - Sándor, 17

The age of students seems often to affect how explicitly they address political questions, but the material from the younger students of 13 and 14 years old also show that the topic of politics is present in their social worlds. Finally, I witnessed some of the students as politically active also beyond my official fieldwork. During the fieldwork, I met six of the students on Lex CEU demonstrations or at street occupations. I also met three of the five teachers I was working with in the same occasions. In contrast, for Roma students I worked with, the topic of migrants and migration seemed to not to be connected to the topic of politics. Their teacher confirmed that politics in general is not a topic that the students discuss.

The concept of citizenship could be defined as construction of belonging and agency of social and political beings within their surrounding polities. Conceptually, citizenship parallels the dynamics of otherness and belonging, but focuses on the question of political abilities in its subjectivities. Engin Isin elaborates the dialectical nature of constituting citizenship through an example from Ancient Greece: women or slaves were not citizens but were not excluded from

society either – they "were constituted as its other as an immanent group by citizens" (2002: 3-4). In other words, the construct of both categories, citizens and their others, sustain each other in a dialectical nature, and their dynamic is a process of constant change and reflection (Anderson 2013; Isin 2002: Isin 2009). Citizenship is a spatiotemporally navigating process that situates beings in the field of the political throughout its spectrum, from the core to the margins (Isin 2002:36). Citizenship is constantly constituted and expressed against the alterities who lack the qualities of the citizens (Isin 2002:275). This, in turn, resonates with the above described processes of othering – the others are included in society through their very exclusion. This also shows how citizenship is a process of negotiation instead of a fixed attribute on a certain category of people: if the exclusion of others was a static status, according to Isin, they should have preexisted as fixed categories which is false (ibid.4). Many children of Deák Ferenc school have the background which enables and encourages them to enact their citizenship, while the situation is different with the student of József Attila.

3.2 Good, failed and external citizens

My findings suggest that a mutual experience of otherness can at times create a stronger sense of connection than territorial proximity. In József Attila, it became evident that the children do not identify themselves as Hungarians[18]: Miklós would sing to himself "I'm a gypsy, gypsy I am" while he was practicing boxing in the classroom after lunch, and also other children referred to themselves "as gypsies" on daily basis. They listened to Roma music, hip hop or techno during their breaks, but I never heard them listening to non-Roma Hungarian music. More to the point, Attila told me there are many differences between Hungarians and gypsies, and named music as the most important difference. Ágnes repeated the same, and added food and habits to the list of differences. She was explicit about the separation of the two groups and concluded that

[18] in this context I used the Hungarian word *Magyar* in conversations with the students.

Hungarians live in "a completely different world", and also defined a Hungarian by saying "they are everybody except the gypsies". Dániel brought up the difference in clothing and the question of skin color when he distinguished Hungarians as white, gypsies as brown or white. Their teacher later told me about a time when the class was preparing for a national holiday and were listening to the Hungarian national anthem, but the children started to protest. They said that the song is not their song. All this refers to a strong experience of being a Roma, and crucially, explicitly rejecting being a Hungarian. This could be said to be an experience of otherness in relation to the majority, and strong experience of belonging to one's own community. However, it is also a striking account on the results of deep societal segregation that begin with policies but end in the very experience of self of these students.

The general pattern regarding migrants is that the children in József Attila mainly reproduce the illiberal narratives of migrant representations, and find the general category of migrants scary and threatening. However, after talking about Hungarians, I asked Attila what's the difference between migrants and Roma and he replied that there is nothing, really. Dániel also straightforwardly said "nothing" when I asked the same. After he had mentioned that migrants have guns, I inquired where they get them, to which Dániel speculated that probably from the gypsies. Even though the two boys regard migrants as dangerous, they in some level seem to relate the otherness of Roma to the otherness of migrants rather than to Hungarians. Is there a possibility for an internalized sense of otherness that makes migrants at times appear potentially relatable to the Roma children, another racialized other of the country? Jekatyerina Dunajeva has studied the identities of Roma children in Hungary and does bring up the internalized sense of stereotypical and negative self-image that the children reproduce (2017:61). In this light, the negative responses to one's own group do not contradict the sense of belonging. This leaves an open question whether the sense of otherness in itself could be a shared experience when contrasted with the boundaries of the majority group, from which both others are excluded from,

such as was the case with the two students I talked with. This is not enough to draw conclusions, but asks to further analyze the academic-drawn boundaries between internal and external others. This potentiality furthermore highlights the importance of notion of common marginalizations by Rajaram (2015) as an analytical framework for otherness, which should be used to examine this more.

Bridget Anderson (2013) recalibrates the boundaries of citizenship as she introduces the concepts of Good Citizens, failed citizens and non-citizens (4). She discusses the importance of values in forming communities, into which these citizen subjects belong. According to Anderson, Good Citizens subscribe to a basis of values that is recognized as acceptable by the majority, and the boundaries of these communities are marked by the relation to these values (ibid). The Deák Ferenc students navigate within the boundaries of Anderson's Good Citizens in many respects. They mostly belong to the group of the ethnic majority, and therefore their relation to the migrant other was more straightforward than for the students in József Attila: as has come across previously, most of them publicly subscribe to universal values like humanity and need to help those who are suffering. Those more critical of migration in principle also agreed that suffering people should be helped, but they disagreed on the rational question of how, when and by whom. However, the liberal political/economic divide that is very prevalent in the data from Deák Ferenc carries with it the divide between deserving and undeserving migrants, and exposes the moral underpinning of poverty and need. The boundaries of Good Citizens are sharply draw through the lines of race and class in this essay of a 17-year old Miki who writes about one of the pictures I showed, the movie poster for the Citizen (Appendix). Miki is self-conscious and apologetic about being politically incorrect while he discusses the importance of looking good and dressing nicely, but deems it such an important point he elaborates:

> Guaranteed, most of the time they [migrants] didn't have the chance to try themselves at saving money, but a good look means "There, I saved enough money to make myself look good for this occasion". And that's a big plus both here and later when he is finding jobs, etc.

> As harsh and negative as it may sound, letting a bunch of poor people in won't be better for them, and definitely worse for us – they won't get employed easily with no previous employments, so they will create slums in the cities, living in the same conditions as before Hungary. Which is worse for the country, as it has to provide everything for them.
>
> I know it's not really correct to say things like this, but I believe this is the case now, and that it won't be easily changed in the future either. It just isn't a feasible option to provide equal opportunities for everyone.

His argument pinpoints the boundaries of Good Citizens and recalls the double-bind of race and class. Class, or economic capability, is a crucial axis in defining whether the racialized, external migrant other is worthy of help. The children from József Attila who are themselves positioned as the internal, classed and racialized other, did not mention economic questions when talking about migrants.

3.3 Knowledge and heteroglossias

Where are these different understandings of representation, belonging and citizenship derived from? Spyros Spyrou, who studies ethnic identity construction of children in Cyprus, has introduced Mikhail Bakhtin's concept heteroglossia to describe children's processes of identity construction (Bakhtin in Spyrou 2001). For Bakhtin, language is to be considered as inherently social and political tool which contracts meanings and participates in struggles (Martin-Jones et. al. 2012:20). Within this framework, heteroglossia could be translated into "social diversity of speech types" (Bailey 2012:499) and an in brief, describes the varying types of narratives that children are surrounded by on a daily basis. Children navigate in this cacophony and don't necessarily select the dominant narrative to follow, but they rather reconstruct their own meanings from the cacophony they are living in. They build meanings to words based on the

multiplicity of narratives they hear in their lives and if the narratives contradict, they solve the contradictions based on their own logic, which can appear as illogical to adults (Spyrou 2001:180). I follow Spyrou's framework and advance it by arguing that the different heteroglossias surrounding children can also act as a manifestation of intersectional power struggles. In what follows I will unpack, why.

According Spyrou's contextualization (2001), all the narratives that surround children function as ideological reproduction, coming from different socialization agents, such as the media, teachers or parents – and I argue that the narratives surrounding children's lives are not just dependent on one social factor such as party preferences of the family, but that children's world constructions are affected by their social positioning of race and class. This intersectional struggle directs the culture of one's community on valuing certain things and not valuing others: it impacts how politics is addressed, how identity, belonging and otherness are manifested, how the value of a community itself is perceived, how one's personal value as an individual or acts of citizenship are dealt with, how the value of education is addressed and so on. The ways of discussing things and navigating through everyday realities build heteroglossias, and the intersections of race and class are divisive instruments in defining everyday realities. Since children of the two schools construct their social realities from the information that is available for them but the available heteroglossias are very different because the long history of intersectional struggles has shaped their everyday realities, the students in the two schools learn to perceive the migrant other differently.

How the political is present in the lives of children tells about the heteroglossias they are surrounded by. Furthermore, the spatial boundaries of one's world exemplify the configuration of heteroglossias: as I was talking with the students of József Attila more and observed them in the neighbourhood of the schools, I began to understand that the students of the two schools experience some stark differences in their sense of spatiality. This captions from my field notes

illustrates the issue:

> After they [the students in the Roma school] were shouting too much on the school corridors (around 2pm, after lunch) the vice principal came to throw them outside to cool down for a while, and we went to a park nearby with seven of the students and the replacement teacher. It was a Friday afternoon and a beautiful weather, and it would have been impossible to keep calm indoors.
>
> The kids in Deák Ferenc live all over the city - close to airport, in Rózsadomb, next to Liget. For them migrants are at the border with Hungary, travelling through, traveling to Germany. The kids in József Attila live on the same street, where their school is, or only four streets down or up. The Roma kids met friends on the street during the 4-minute walk from the school to the park and in the park where we were. Their life is there. The Deák Ferenc kids already see a lot more of the city by their school travel, and of course this tells about how the school is chosen - Deák Ferenc is a place where you really want to put your kids into, and the Roma school is the school of the neighbourhood.

The basic everyday act of going to school can already draw a different understanding in spatial boundaries, which advances calibrating heteroglossias differently. The students of Deák Ferenc generally see more of the city at an early age, while the students from József Attila see some blocks from their neighbourhood. This further organizes social reality in terms of the people they meet, where they spend their free time, and so on. The question of heteroglossia of spatiality is replicated in the conversations about migrants' origins in my field data: the students in Deák Ferenc could name several countries or continent of origin for migrants, while students of József Attila school named places like "the border". However, as Ágnes mentioned in her interview, she also knew that some types of migrants pass through Hungary, which is information that is appears to be accessible for the students of both schools. When I discussed this with the other students in József Attila, an extreme example came up while interviewing Dániel, an 11-year old boy: I was trying to ask him where he thinks migrants are coming from, and we had difficulties understanding each other. First I thought it's a language barrier, but I finally understood that he did understand my question and was repeating to me that "how do I know? I guess they've born here, maybe in Budapest?". It was me who was confused, as I repeatedly thought that I must be

misunderstanding him, but I finally realized that for Dániel, migrants are not necessarily foreigners who come from abroad. There was no question of migration for him: they are here, and they are dangerous. When I asked another boy of 11 years old, Attila, if he can name any places where he thinks migrants are coming from, he mentioned they are coming from Islam. Later that day I was contemplating aloud to their teacher whether I had understood Dániel correctly, and teacher explained rather nonchalantly that while Attila is from one of the richest families from the class, Dániel is maybe from the poorest, which could explain their differences in knowledge. According to their teacher, Dániel lives in a one room flat with his mother and six siblings, and lives on the streets in the evenings and weekends. The teacher thought that he most probably does not have a place to watch television or hear the news. Dániel's inability to access knowledge, and possibly the need in his everyday life for different kind of knowledge than for abstract news items, demonstrate how a subaltern position of class and race can manifest in the way narratives are collected, and create heteroglossias. This demosntrats the connection of knowledge and power structural struggle in children's lives.

I have discussed in this chapter how the findings of the previous chapters relate to each other and discussed the relationality of belonging and otherness: while the students at Deák Ferenc distance themselves in liberal and illiberal narratives from the migrant representations, for the József Attila students the primary other is rather a white Hungarian as a Good Citizen. To follow this, I have posed an open question about the boundaries of internal and external others, as my findings suggest that a mutual experience of otherness could at times connect subjects stronger than territorial proximity, although this would need further research to make any conclusions. This dynamic took me to analyze the function of citizenship, which directed attention to the concept of heteroglossias within the intersection of class and race. My field data suggests that these powers not only structure the worlds of the children, but also direct them to narrate these worlds. Therefore, it is the question of knowledge and power that connects children

and the state.

Conclusion

In this thesis I have studied the constructions of migrant otherness that children and adolescents reproduce in relation to their intersectional positions of class and race, in two Budapest schools. Students of one school are mainly white, middle class Hungarians, and students of the other are Roma. I have studied the meanings that the students of the two schools attribute to migrant representations, as well as how their own identities of belonging or otherness are reflected in relation to the migrant other. Finally, I have also researched how children and adolescents, as a political audience, respond to the illiberal agenda, and why.

I have demonstrated that children and adolescents from the two schools relate to the migrant other in a variety of ways, but in varying degrees, the majority of them do reproduce the characteristics from illiberal discourse: seeing migrants as a security threat or danger. The Roma children reproduce this representation and in turn, those white, middle class students who reject this notion do so by instead clinging onto the liberal construction of migrant subjectivity, which is divided into the deserving, poor refugee and the undeserving migrant who searches for a better life. The children from the Hungarian white majority tend to distance themselves from the migrant other through the liberal economic/political migrant representations, or if they adhere to more illiberal agendas, they do so by using rationalized and political justifications for it. The topic of migration is very political for them and mainly present in their lives symbolically. I have discovered that the Roma students seem to reproduce the illiberal representation of a dangerous migrant without contestation, as the topic is not political for them. What complicates the picture is that the Roma children seem to potentially share a sense of common otherness with migrants: they distance themselves explicitly from the white Hungarian majority, but in times seem to relate to the role of the migrant other.

My research has shown that the intersectional position of class and race deeply impacts

how children relate to the political, which also affects their experience of being a citizen. While the middle class, white Hungarian adolescents in many respects follow the boundaries of Good Citizens and function as political actors, the Roma children do not connect to political agendas. The absence of politics is one expression of the processes by which children construct their worlds, and the data from my field has demonstrated that the children from different social strata learn to construct their worlds in very different ways, e.g. varying configurations of spatiality. I argue that this happens through the relation of their social positions to heteroglossias: the cacophony of narratives from which children select and construct their worlds. The migrant other is thus a production from the heteroglossias that children have access to. In other words, the double-bind of class and race define not only how social worlds are constructed for children, but also how children learn to construct those realities. The otherness of migrant representations is always related to the position of the children themselves, and to other others surrounding them.

In the future, this study could benefit from additional research on how the white, middle class children and adolescents relate to Roma children and adolescents, to gain deeper understanding of the belonging and otherness of communities inside the society at large. The findings could also be more nuanced by studying children of the same age to remove speculation about what kind of differences age gaps can cause. Additionally, it would be worth studying children from different class background without the axis of race, or vice versa. It would also be interesting to do research outside of Budapest in the countryside, possibly at the border region, as the everyday connection of children and migrants might differ greatly from those in the capital city. This short field period showed that in József Attila school, studying children of extreme economic disenfranchisement is a demanding endeavor which would need more time to follow research ethics vigorously - the gathering of permissions would be a project in itself, and as a part of this timeframe would not have been possible. With a longer timeframe and previous

experience in researching children, the methodology could be designed more in detail as the critique I received showed, and I could focus more on visual research instead of oral or literal research, as recommended in several accounts of sociological studies of children. In addition, longer periods of field work could enable conducting the study outside of school institutions, and could give space to recognize more silent acts of children's agency contesting all of the structural inequalities I have described in this research.

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Appendix

Here are the seven pictures I brought with me to Deák Ferenc school for writing the essays. I gave no additional information of the pictures, but asked the students to tell me a story about what happens, describe what they see, or tell their opinion on what they see on the picture.