
Campaigns of the Hungarian NGO Sector and Neoliberal Soft Power

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Abstract

Campaigns of the Hungarian NGO sector- the economy of displays of either strength or weakness and other such moral attributes, and how are these connected to both neoliberal subjecthood and soft power. I look in detail at Mályvavirág Alapítvány's "Beszélő Bugyik Bisztró" ("Talking Panties Bistro") and the Soros Foundation's "Good Person of the Year" contest. NGO's role was either to oversee the state or to fulfil its duties, yet these NGOs act as the local governors of 'Western progress' in the 'backward East', as the local advocates of values and practices deemed universally significant. The two campaigns seem to have a different scope- "Beszélő Bugyik Bisztró" is about a given issue, participation in cancer screening and the HPV jab, "Good Person of the Year" is about moral goodness. In both cases I argue how the neoliberal mode of "governmentality," (the mentality or manner in which people are governed and govern themselves) is really the core feature of both campaigns: they both feature explicitly and implicitly statements about the sharing of responsibility between state and citizen or the importance of self-governance and self-reliability.

Beszélő Bugyik Bisztró https://www.facebook.com/pg/malyvavirag/photos/?tab=album&album_id=17232203043
Good Person of the Year event forthcoming in February

Keywords: NGOization, moral geopolitics, feminism, public communication campaigns

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