

for “returnee counselling” (“Rückkehrberatung”) for rejected asylum seekers. Governmental representatives repeatedly stressed that the ‘proper’ way for volunteers to respond to deportation orders would be to advise the affected on how to ‘successfully’ return to their country of origin. During my field research, I encountered an example for this emphasis on returnee counselling at the conference “From Refugee to Fellow Citizen” organized by the Baden-Württemberg Greens in March 2015. Several speakers at the conference emphasized that, along with efforts to integrate accepted refugees, “qualified returnee counselling” for those asylum seekers who had been rejected was an “equally important” responsibility for committed citizens (Field notes: 14/3/2015). For instance, the moderator of the conference problematized how volunteers will often have emotionally bonded with families whose asylum case is eventually rejected. He therefore asked a governmental representative in the audience about the ‘right’ way to respond in such instances. The governmental representative replied: “You need to move on to returnee counselling, even if the heart says otherwise” (ibid.). She thus made it clear that volunteers had to put their personal attachment to rejected asylum seekers aside, to accept the governmental decision, and to counsel returnees on practical matters. With this emphasis on returnee counselling, she left no space for disagreement and protest and, instead, asserted that ‘civil society’ had to uncritically accept and support governmental decisions to deport asylum seekers. Vandevordt (2016) identifies a similar tendency in Belgium. He argues that, through the promotion of voluntary return to the migrants’ country of origin, civil society actors became complicit in governmental objectives in migration management.

Despite these government’s efforts to make committed citizens complicit in the governance of migration, volunteers did not cease to voice dissent and to demonstrate their disagreement, something I will illuminate in more detail in the subsequent fourth chapter of this book.

3.5. Concluding Remarks: The Government of Refugee Solidarity

This chapter looked at the manifold governmental interventions that aimed to enhance, coordinate or facilitate volunteering with refugees. Around the long summer of migration, governmental actors launched numerous programmes and instruments seeking to shape the volunteers’ ‘proper’ conduct while extending their control over newly committed citizens. By doing so, they in-

tervened in the contested practices of solidarity that developed around this time.

These interventions came with twofold effects. Firstly, they shaped the conduct of refugee support in ways that made citizens complicit in the governance of migration. Cloaked in humanitarian imaginaries, the introduced programmes and instruments backed those practices that were conducive to governmental decisions and policies in the reception of asylum seekers. At the same time, they depoliticized and silenced the dissenting potentials of refugee support. For instance, this crystallized in an emphasis on meaningful cooperation and harmony between 'state' and 'civil society'. While committed citizens were deemed responsible for the 'soft factors' of migration management, 'the state' was portrayed as being in charge of its key tenets, for instance via the making of laws and regulations. The emphasis on smooth cooperation also came with incentives to limit the space of disagreement between 'state' and 'civil society'. Thus, the state government sought to manage the rising numbers of asylum seekers through extended state-citizen networks that placed an emphasis on humanitarian compassion.

Secondly, governmental interventions shaped understandings of 'responsible' citizens in migration societies. Many programmes, such as the provision of training schemes and the employment of Volunteer Coordinators, promoted a focus on self-conduct and self-improvement. Governmental interventions in refugee support might therefore also be read as attempts to increase influence over the conduct of citizen-subjects while shifting responsibilities from the welfare state to 'responsible' citizens. The extraordinary increase in citizen engagement around the long summer of migration thus enabled governmental actors to engender a sense of responsibility towards the 'public good' and to exercise control over individual self-conduct and self-management in migration societies.

And yet, committed citizens did not uncritically accept governmental interventions in their role and (self-)conduct. Certain volunteers contested these efforts while demanding a space for disagreement and voicing a will to remain independent. They thus remained to a certain extent ungovernable. It was Michel Foucault who once remarked: "Where there is power, there is resistance" (Foucault 1978). I will turn to these dissenting and political dimensions of refugee support in the following fourth chapter of this book.