

RURAL RESILIENCE

Photographic Representation of Resourcefulness
in Hungary's Smallest Villages

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This book was submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degrees
of PhD in the Arts and Doctor of Liberal Arts.

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PROPOSITIONS, THESES

1. Investigating contemporary rural spaces, particularly on the peripheries, offers critical insights into global issues like food security, climate adaptation, resourcefulness, and cultural persistence.
2. Hungary is the only country in Europe experiencing a constant population decline since 1981. 40 per cent of the population lives outside of cities and, one-third of its settlements have less than 500 residents and over 5 per cent have a population below 100.
3. Complex geographical, historical and socio-political processes have shaped the development of Hungarian villages, which consequently exhibit distinct typologies.
4. Peripheral environments characterised by geographical, economic, or social constraints can foster ingenuity and resourcefulness as inherent adaptive strategies.
5. Contemporary documentary photographic practices are increasingly reflexive, inclusive and critical, challenging notions of objectivity and often combining fictional elements to address issues of power and representation.
6. Recent photographic projects focusing on the rural in Eastern Europe and Hungary address a comprehensive array of themes, including the experiences of women, gender roles, intergenerational connections, displacement and poetic narratives.
7. Documenting resilience requires a layered, adaptive and empathetic artistic research methodology, combining different approaches to observation, interaction and representation.
8. The artistic component (photobook and exhibition) is integral to this research, visually articulating and complementing the theoretical discourse presented in the dissertation.
9. Resourcefulness and adaptation in the face of adversity are revealed not as isolated acts, but as fundamental, pervasive aspects of everyday life, deeply ingrained in material culture, social interactions, and survival strategies.

Rural Resilience:
Photographic Representations of Resourcefulness in Hungary's Smallest Villages

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