

Tomasz Nowicki
University of Gdansk

A study towards change
(with mobile technologies in the background).
Integration and resistance of Roma families
against displacement and expulsion

I did not come to ask for food.
I come for you to believe in me.
I did not come to ask for wealth.
I come so you can give it all away.
I come to you from ragged tents
which the wind has torn and taken our water.
I ask you all, the old people too,
the smallest children and beautiful girls,
please build houses as silver as tents
that glisten in the woods, cold-white with rime.
I did not come to ask for wealth.
I come for you to take me in,
and not let the black night
take our broad daylight.

Papusza, *I come to you* (1953)¹

Introduction: methodology, data analysis and practical ethics

The events that inspired this text unfolded between August 4 and August 26, 2014, when the authorities of the city of Gdańsk illegally dismantled a Romanian Roma² family's encampment and displaced them from the plot of land they oc-

¹ Translation Raf Uzar, English translation retrieved from http://en.picture-doc.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2014/12/11_DIALOG_01_72_EN.pdf

² This publication will use two terms referring to the ethnic group in question interchangeably: Gypsies and Roma. The word *Gypsy* is an exonym, i.e. the name of an ethnic group used by others. Nonetheless, the word is used and practiced in communication by the representatives of this group as their name. The term *Roma*, on the other hand (i.e. *man* in the Romani language) is an endonym, i.e. a name invented by members of this group. Although political correctness would today

cupied. During these events I played the role of a researcher involved in social change, an educator, a facilitator and an activist. The nature and form of the narrative that I will adopt later in the text on the course of the events and observations is firmly rooted in action research and situated knowledge. The programme formulated in such a way will not adopt strategies that could objectively distort my axiological and ethical assumptions – strategies consisting in masking the presence of an observer or a participant, removing their presence and influence on the observation of the analysed phenomena, and ascending to the position of an all-encompassing gaze.

The rationale behind such a starting point to the study is the identification of the research problem, which lies in the social conflict between the majority, represented by the Gdańsk authorities, coupled with the public support for their activities, and the minority of the Romanian Roma. Nevertheless, I will strive not to discuss the exclusion of the Roma by the city authorities in a polarising way along the majority-minority opposition axis, realising that the choice of such terms fits seamlessly into the logic of a discursive construction of victims. The informal Romanian Roma Support Group, of which I was a member, was working to emancipate, enfranchise and empower the Roma by involving them in jointly developed strategies to resist and put pressure on the Gdańsk authorities. While conducting my action research in this context, any attempt to take an objective view would be skewed ethically and methodologically by confirmation bias, i.e. constructing the truth using a language that makes the Roma problem transparent, without having the concepts and categories to describe this group. Moreover, as became apparent in the course of the study, the adoption of objective concepts of the “truth”, which is the language of the dominant group, inscribed the Roma in the normative concepts of the “equality” of rights, and identified the issue of their citizenship as a human rights problem. Starting with the dominant discourse would legitimise the violence exercised by the authorities as objective (normative) and transparent. This is why I started from the conviction that it was not possible to assume the position of an impartial researcher in a situation where there was no will or tool to work towards intersubjectivity within the realm of this social conflict. In a process in which the normative categories of the majority group did not pass the dialogue test and were not subject to epistemic curiosity aimed at finding a common language to frame the “Gdańsk problem with the Roma”, it meant taking a position of commitment over knowledge of the privileged dominant group.

The adopted methods of data collection have undergone critical discourse analysis (CDA). The need to extract hidden meanings and demonstrate or make perceivable what is entangled in the structure of invisible “plain truths” speaks in favour of this method as a way of reading empirical data. Disaggregating the discourses allows us to examine old positions from new viewpoints and, consequently, modify them. Thus, as a tool of analysis and criticism, it can lead to a change in language and social practice. The change and criticism of the discourse, under-

require the use of the word *Roma*, because of the negative connotations of the term *Gypsy*, I have decided to use both names. In my opinion, the contemporary use of the word *Gypsy* is part of a subversive strategy of using language by quoting it, contrary to its original version, both by the Gypsies themselves and by artists and culture makers.

stood as a communication and performative act, in this case concerns the perlocutionary nature of the statements made by the representatives of the authorities of the city of Gdańsk. In this context, the language of the statements concerning the Roma has been analysed. It was particularly important to see how acts of speech produced social facts and how, as a result of the action research, these facts were subject to syntactic and semantic displacements.

It should also be noted that dispensing with objectivity (normativity) was an implication of the action research, which forced us to give priority to accuracy in following/keeping up with the discourse and ongoing events. The unique nature of such studies forced the participants to adopt the 3-step method of evaluation and production of empirical data in the research practice: 1) planning of the activities, the overall idea and objectives; 2) implementation of the planned activities; 3) establishing the facts, assessing the state of play in the implementation of the general plan and modifying future plans to incorporate new facts. The stages of individual segments of activity frequently intertwined and formed a spiral, until the working group considered the study to be saturated or implemented in relation to the planned objective of the intervention (Lewin 2010: 9).

However, the reader deserves additional clarification regarding the ethical challenges posed by action research, often accused of interfering with the study subjects and, consequently, changing them. Therefore, we are dealing with research which, in the course of its analysis, uncovers new meanings in order to show their hegemonic bonds and to bring out new discursive spaces. Objectivity of research is usually understood as a non-invasive, non-evaluating approach to the subject being investigated. From a critical standpoint, we could dispense with this approach, as it would force us to adopt the ideological positions of an impartial researcher, i.e. the perspective of a third party.

The extensive literature on studies of science has demonstrated repeatedly that such objective approaches stem from the Enlightenment concept of instrumental reasoning (Horkheimer 2007; Horkheimer, Adorno 2010; Haraway 1988). This method assumed that objective regimes of truth must yield conclusions allowing for the technological application of knowledge and analysis of the world as if in a laboratory setting, stripping phenomena of their variables and, in the case of the social sciences, of the background to the phenomena under investigation and the reapplication of such facts under the conditions of the dominant "truth" of the laboratory (Latour 2013; Afeltowicz, Pietrowicz 2009).

In the case in question, such an approach would entail complete assimilation of the Roma into the Polish reality. At first, our understanding of empowerment did not assume exclusion as a condition for multiculturalism. This is why we tried not to make inequality a starting point for inclusion measures. Nevertheless, this approach changed during the planning of the activities and, in the further part of the research, emphasising cultural differences became a crucial part of the strategy. Although "difference" is a threat to the equality policy, in our project it turned out to be of strategic importance for mediation and for exerting pressure on the Gdańsk municipal authorities. Being actively involved offered the advantage of enabling a change of perspective, experimenting with adopting the point of view of the excluded group's particular interests (listening to their voice) and using this position to observe and plan activities. This allowed us to gain new perspectives

on the issue in question as well as to witness the varied discourse around it, which we otherwise would have missed, blinded by the objectifying (normative) power of the machine of methodological accuracy.

Criticism of “objective” approaches has shown that science most often constitutes a reflection of certain particular interests and ideologies (Haraway 1988). Our approach was not devoid of such sins, since it assumed communication with the Romanian Roma. This meant that the planned measures involving Roma participation were discussed in terms of the anticipated benefits and risks. This process needed to be repeated several times before any activities could be implemented. The need to repeat communication activities resulted both from cultural differences and the language barrier. Moreover, in the Roma community all decisions concerning external activities are made by the men and in order to make sure of their explicit consent to specific actions, it was necessary to clearly convey the ideas behind the actions to the whole group and obtain their express agreement. Respect for the family hierarchy and ensuring that the proposed measures were accepted by the father, i.e. the head of the family, also played an important role. Developing the conditions of intersubjectivity within the group was one of the methods aimed at minimizing the influence and authoritarianism of our intrusion into their community. The creation of these conditions was based on fine-tuning our mutual language skills to the range of vocabulary and concepts that both we and the Roma know, understand and are able to communicate. For us, these activities also meant overcoming barriers and prejudices between our worlds and building mutual respect, trust and emotional bonds. Still, it was up to us to comprehensibly convey the meaning and significance of the proposals. This meant adopting the position of a “knowledgeable” subject, assuming familiarity with the empirical data to be transmitted to and mediated with the group. This is why it was so important to create the appropriate conditions for intersubjective reality within the group. It was important for our research approach to distinguish authority from authoritarianism, which is why I have tried to emphasize our position in the dynamics of the research processes, where we played an active and participative role. Our involvement was based on targeted measures for social change, and our position was external to that of the Romanian Roma group. Any attempt to hide and erase our intervention would be a distortion of reality. Indeed, our method assumed dialogue; however, it was founded on the asymmetry of relations, in which communication assumed the transmission of knowledge and experience concerning the awakening of critical consciousness and the possibility of resistance against systemic exclusion. The partnership in emancipation activities meant, first and foremost, the transfer of instrumental knowledge about the formal and legal reality and the ability to “read” the mechanisms of public opinion and the role of the media (the so-called fourth power) in the democracy of the distribution of the sensible, in order to make visible the exclusion and discrimination faced by the Roma (Rancière 2007). Until these conditions had been fulfilled, our actions moved between the roles of educator and facilitator.

This being said, the stage on which we operated reflected the tensions between the universality of the concept of human and civil rights and ethnic and cultural differences, generating further ethical tensions. This meant that where the circumstances brought civilizational universalism to the forefront, priority was

given to the totalitarian breakdown in the equality categories of humans and citizens, transforming our position of intervention from outside into a fully participatory one on the inside; it became “our common cause”. In these fragments of the research our activity was dominant and it placed us, as “additional” actors, in the foreground. Such polarization along the human-citizen, Roma-Polish lines, caused epistemic difficulties in distinguishing the flickering of meanings between the position of an actor of events and the representation of events. In practice, however, this meant that our roles and the trajectories of assigning meanings were reversed, but the dialogue within the group remained preserved. In turn, as the categories of “difference” were gaining importance, the Romanian Roma became the actors of the events.

On the sidelines of this introduction, it should be noted that discussing the positioning of the meanings of man (citizen) versus the Roma as an ethnic group, requires reference to the debate on the identity of the subject and the criticism of normativising essentialism therein, which I believe, in the case of the category of the *Roma*, requires a clarification of any potential misinterpretations.

Research on the Roma community clearly demonstrates the constructivist dimension of the Roma cultural identity (Jakoubek 2010: 164). Therefore, the Roma should be understood as carriers of specific cultural patterns. In turn, their unique customs and cultural distinctiveness should be described as the “Roma tradition”. Such a definition of differences and distinctive conditions leads us to reject any essentialist and biological stereotypes about Gypsies. This problem has a long tradition dating back to ancient times, which through the Middle Ages until now has been called the dispute between the status of universals and particulars. This problem points to the connotations between the conceptualisation of the category “Roma” with its ontological and cultural status. In other words, I would like to say that any form of exclusion arises as a tension between acknowledging the primacy of the existence of a social group, as a closed system, and treating the manifestations of their individual existence as a mere display of a set of characteristics of a general concept. Another major aspect of starting from the tension in the relationship between man (citizen) and the Roma, i.e. the universals and particulars, is recognizing the mutual relationship between these categories, as they impersonally describe certain entities established this way. Such an approach still reveals a dream of objectivising research and analysis; it also reminds us that our model of knowledge, by reducing the truth to universality, has thus deprived it of subjectivity and divided it into science and literature. Therefore, action research would constitute an attempt at reconciling literature with science, i.e. a continuous switching from universality into the particularity of life. In other words, the categories of man (citizen) versus the Roma impose the treatment of individuals as a group, members of which are not perceived as actors (I), i.e. in the first person singular, or as partners in a dialogue (you), in the second person singular, but in the third person plural (they). If it is the ethnicity alone that defines the Roma in Polish society, they are perceived in that society through the lens of being Roma. Their activity and presence is explained as a consequence of their Romani heritage, i.e. the manifestation of their cultural tradition, especially the stereotypes that have arisen around this difference. In this sense, our involvement rejected such models of research, maintaining the perspective of the second person singular. Knowledge

would thus become an activity aimed at creating intersubjectivity within the space of mutual care and respect for others. Our approach to this group would therefore be a compromise between our understanding of who the people displaced by the Gdańsk authorities are and their cultural habitat. In the realm of political action, this would mean recognising their rights, which are built upon European humanism, and respecting their cultural separateness. Such an approach to Roma subjectivity did not reject the biological body, nor did it reduce it to a blank slate, but rather sought to combine it into a coherent whole with a cultural superstructure.

This problem was highlighted in Donna Haraway's early texts on feminism and the radical reduction of the problem of difference to the performative space of discourses and constructivism. Neither constructivist nor essentialist explanations boil down to reductionist approaches to choice and determination.

No, we behave the way we do primarily because 1) we have been brought up that way (determination of tradition); 2) it is rather convenient (determination to adapt), while at the same time it is obvious that if we had been brought up in a different tradition (for instance "traditionally Roma"), or if we grew up or lived in a different environment (in a socially excluded place), our behaviour or its models, as well as its values and norms (whose observance would be forced by social control), would be different (probably very similar to the ones we described above as typical for the traditional Roma culture or culture of poverty). In other words, it should be remembered that the choice of the value system from which the norms of one's own behaviour are derived is hardly dependent on the free will of the individual (Jakoubek 2010: 178).

The social setting we live in is not given to us but, rather, it is entrusted to us. Our approach and ethics of action sought to preserve the spirit of Freire's philosophy of emancipation understood as a conscious liberation from experienced and recognised oppression. Another important paradigm of the chosen strategy was Jacques Rancière's idea of the distribution of the sensible and making the voice of the oppressed heard (Rancière 2007). This entailed a dual strategy of legalising the presence and visibility of the Roma in Gdańsk and empowering them to be present in the social fabric of the city by enabling them to take a vocal stance during the events. Exposure and publicity was an emancipatory process that allowed the Roma to speak in their own name and independently assess their own situation, as well as to articulate their needs and decisions on how to change it. However, it was not the work itself, which was focused on caring for oneself, that was at stake in this process, but the creation of such conditions for understanding the relationship between the self and the world, which would allow for the transformation of a selected fragment of reality. Paulo Freire defined liberation as the regaining of one's voice and the breaking of the silence that would, consequently, spur the rise of critical consciousness. However, in the case of cultural and linguistic differences, this process was complex when working with the Roma due to their differing communication competences. This is because in order to reinstate justice, we would have to overcome the fear of a discursive distortion of reality, which would have been impossible without the involvement of modern media technologies and the activation of mechanisms for translating the voice of the oppressed provided by the media culture. However, this hardly implied the need to develop the Roma's communication skills, but rather the need to persuade the authorities to enter into

dialogue and to draw media attention. Freire's pedagogy of the oppressed means working with socially excluded groups. It means arousing consciousness and not forcing a person to adopt the views and knowledge of the depositor of "consciousness". This requires a commitment from an educator who finds themselves in a precarious and unstable position between the ideology of the dominant group and the understanding and listening to the voice of the oppressed. This task makes it possible to fight to reclaim the freedom and humanity of the oppressed. Such an educational project makes economic and symbolic exclusion, with its consequences, a subject of critical reflection by the oppressed. It assumes that only this process makes it possible to engage in resistance and fight for liberation (Śliwerski 2010: 267). Our role, therefore, was in line with the approach taken by Bogusław Śliwerski, who understands involvement as taking the side of the enslaved, poor and oppressed in order to help them regain the power to speak for themselves, and regain a sense of security and trust.

However, and this should be stressed, from our perspective it was too premature to use literacy, of such importance to Freire, as a way of liberating the Roma from the "culture of silence". Our approach and objectives did not assume spreading literacy, nor did they determine on which side of the exclusion or resistance the Roma tradition of oral cultural transmission lies. The lion's share of our work consisted in the ethical adoption of the "veil of ignorance" until we gained a better understanding of specific behaviours and strategies of the Roma life and were able to determine which of these result from cultural separateness, and which are the consequence of adaptation to the culture of poverty imposed by social control and oppression. According to anthropologist Judith Okely, the belief in the need for Roma literacy stems from many misunderstandings about their culture and the nature of Roma education, which is aimed at learning the practice of everyday non-territorial life. As Okely points out:

A major corollary of their resistance to legal rational gorgio authority is the Gypsies' cultural tradition of non-literacy. This is partly explained by their semi-nomadism given that they were not fixed and settled in one place to attend non Gypsy schools. However, this is not a sufficient explanation. Other nomadic groups in the world such as those in the Middle East have inculcated literacy in their young, through the reading of the Koran. For Gypsies, literacy has not been a priority, nor has it been an economic necessity in their choice of occupations. It is more important for children to accompany their parents at work and learn how to make their future living that way. Besides, they can always make use of the friendly Gorgio or spouse for the occasional document. Well-wishers who favour a literacy programme and formal schooling often naively cite the need for Gypsies to read road signs. This presumes that the travelling Gypsies haven't made it their business to know routes. (...) The Gypsies' non literacy, far from being an inevitable cultural handicap, is in many key areas a force for freedom. They are free from the education system, and what Althusser [1971] has described the state apparatus. By avoiding this intensive training and cultural indoctrination, their consent, if we are to heed Gramsci's theory seriously, is not won over within the dominant hegemony. (Okely 1995).

The understanding of the Roma culture and the needs of the family displaced by the Gdańsk authorities could not, therefore, adopt a rigid framework of "certainty" as to what the oppressed should want. This led us to establish "ignorance"

in many aspects of what it would mean to regain rights and freedoms for this group. The awareness of “ignorance” and uncertainty meant consenting to potential refusal. It was a kind of bottom-up pedagogy, allowing for the polyphony of intertwining insights and theories. It would not be possible to carry out this action research were we to adopt the ideology of the state education apparatus. The fact that the Roma allowed us into their community meant, among other things, that we had to gain their trust by demonstrating our anti-systemic attitude and our opposition to the violence of the city authorities.

The media in the communication project with the Romanian Roma community have made it possible to establish a narrative network translating the voice of the oppressed. The Internet and social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter proved important in the analysis of events and in building resistance. The mobile technologies directly used by the Roma have opened the path to research and broadened the horizon to include the construction of nomadic subjectivity. The inclusion of such devices in the action study allowed for the analysis of this group in the context of intercepting the use of communication tools and building tactics of resistance to the all-embracing view.

Situation of the Romanian Roma in Poland

The Romanian Roma arrived in Poland at the beginning of the 1990s. Back then, overstaying their visas was illegal and meant that they were forced to constantly hide and avoid the authorities, frequently changing their place of residence. Deportations at that time were widespread. Since Romania became a European Union Member State (as of 1 January 2007), the Roma have gained the right to move freely within the EU (Article 45 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and Directive 2004/38/EC). Since then, the Roma have been legally resident in Poland and, as EU citizens, have been able to take up legal work, and their children have had the right to education. However, the scale of migration escapes government statistics, due to the abolition of border controls. Since its accession to the EU, the Polish government has not taken any action to introduce a migration policy on a national scale. The number of immigrants is constantly increasing and is no longer a marginal phenomenon. This group of people outside the system who are invisible to the authorities includes Gypsies from Romania. According to the regulations governing the registration of residence in the territory of another Member State, this formality must be completed after three months in order to become visible to the Polish system. Despite this, there are no mechanisms facilitating the fulfilment of this obligation by economic migrants, and, furthermore, Poland is not able to determine the period of residence of this group on its territory. Failure to register residence prevents the Roma from receiving support from social assistance and from using the services of a job centre. In order to register a stay in Poland, it is necessary to demonstrate an income sufficient to support the family independently and to have a contract of employment and health insurance. A large group of Gypsies do not meet any of these requirements and have no chance of doing so. For the majority, the possibility of finding a job is unattainable due to low qualifications, but most of all due to social prejudices. For example, the Municipal Family Assis-

tance Centre (MOPR) in Gdańsk, although it has a list of labour market partners employing the homeless, admits that employers refuse to accept foreigners as part of this cooperation (although allowing such restrictions is tantamount to blatant discrimination). Hypothetically, health insurance may be taken out on one's own – but how can this be done without having the possibility to take up a job, which in itself does not always guarantee that the employee will be covered by a healthcare plan, and that they will be able to afford it? Polish law segregates the Romanian Roma, marginalising them and pushing them into extreme poverty. The current legislation favours economically desirable migrants and throws the undesirables out of the system. Such policies lead to poverty, pathologies and exclusion. The Roma are forced to develop their own adaptive mechanisms of survival and life overnight, culminating in begging. It is mainly women and children who leave to earn money on the streets. Men are involved in scrap collection and housework during this time. When asked about their profession, they mention metalworking and the construction of metal furnaces (occupations now disappearing as a result of extreme poverty, lack of access to materials and tools, and lack of marketability). If someone from the Roma community manages to get a job, it is usually illegal, without any agreement. These are mainly casual activities for a few hours, for example clean-up works in the gardens of the local residents or on construction sites.

The effect of these conditions and the lack of awareness of one's rights is that the community focuses on securing basic means of survival. Their everyday life is about finding food, shelter and closing themselves off in family groups and relationships that give them a sense of security. Lack of access to housing means that they take matters into their own hands by finding abandoned plots of land, where they put up makeshift houses, made of what they find in the street, or they squat in vacant buildings. Only some manage to rent flats, of a very low standard.

It is the "Gypsies' fault" that they live in extreme poverty. The rules are designed to confine this community to a vicious circle. This is why Polish officials in their contacts with the Romanian Roma most often suggest that the best solution for them is to leave the country. Their situation makes them particularly vulnerable to discrimination and exclusion. The lack of real anti-discriminatory measures only exacerbates the stereotypes that have accumulated around the Roma. City authorities, representatives of public institutions, the police and border guards, either do not have the tools and the means to address the problems of migrants or (most often) violate the rights of the Roma by exploiting the language divide and their lack of knowledge of the law.

According to an Amnesty International report, the economic migration of the Romanian Roma is caused not only by extreme poverty, but also by discriminatory policies in their country of origin:

On 17 December 2010, 76 Romani families were forcibly evicted by the Cluj-Napoca authorities from their city centre homes in Coastei Street. The only official warning they got was a written notice delivered two days before. The families were not consulted and/or given access to legal remedies or adequate alternative housing. The families were relocated to the city's outskirts, close to a landfill site and chemical waste dump, in an area already predominantly inhabited by the Roma. Only 40 families received housing. Even this meant only one room of up to 18m² per family. Four rooms share a bathroom with only cold water. The housing units were built with public money;

they are thus part of a municipal policy that actively fostered residential segregation, a form of discrimination. For 36 of the 76 evicted families no alternative accommodation was offered and they were left homeless. Some moved in with relatives, which resulted in severe overcrowding, others built houses next to the existing units. With only verbal permission from the municipality to build on that land, families live in inadequate housing and fear further forcible eviction and losing their homes (*Human Rights HERE! Roma Rights NOW! A Wake-up Call to the European Union* 2013).

Intimidation, being chased away, humiliation or, in extreme cases, battery and abuse of the law by the authorities, as reported by AI, are the day-to-day reality of Roma life. Economic migrants are also targets of ethnic attacks. One of the main reasons for the Roma community's aversion to local authorities is the constant threat of deportation, removal of children and, above all, evictions from the vacant buildings or makeshift homes occupied by them. The tragedy of these people is not only the loss of their home, but also the systemic inability to obtain the rights or the means to find a new one. Very often, in such cases, the authorities abuse the Roma's lack of knowledge of the applicable legislation by exploiting the language barrier and their systemic illiteracy to intimidate them. It was only in Wrocław that the city's eviction plans were halted, and the case of Roma expulsion was referred to the court. When it comes to court proceedings, the Roma are not entitled to an interpreter for the Romani language (most Roma do not know Romanian, as they were born in Poland and their parents pass on the tradition to their children in the Romani language). The hearings, in turn, are conducted in Romanian. Legal interventions in most cases concern parental rights. In some cases, Romani children were taken away from their mothers in hospitals. Most often because of poverty, which is diagnosed on the basis of a shortage of means to cover the costs of childbirth and hospitalisation resulting from the lack of health insurance. The second most frequent form of legal intervention concerns the detention of persons who are begging.

The expulsions of the Roma are particularly harsh on Roma children, who, from a very young age, are already discouraged from coming into contact with the outside world.

Roma children are often eyewitnesses to the brutality and cruelty inflicted upon them by outsiders. Usually they are the first to meet the representatives of the authorities during police raids on the camps. They are not 'innocent', but politically entangled. They assume the role of witnesses and messengers between the two worlds. Therefore, educators have to ask themselves why those children would want to become part of a dominant community that has persecuted them for centuries, confiscated all their possessions and used violence against their parents? I remember a little Roma girl – while putting her younger sister to sleep, she assured her that no policeman, counselor or teacher would come and do her any harm (Okely 1997).

Sadly, the Roma's experiences with Poland are also inscribed into the history of mass displacement, reinforcing their mistrust of the authorities:

One of the most notorious initiatives undertaken by Polish local governments, which took place in 1996, was the police raid on the encampment of the Romanian Roma in Warsaw. At four o'clock in the morning, considerable forces of the capital's police, ac-

accompanied by city officials, raided the settlement under the Grota-Roweckiego bridge. As a result, 129 migrants were deported from our country, of whom about a third were children (*Minorities without rights, Roma migrants in Poland 2014*).

A year later, a similar scenario unfolded in Wrocław:

In 1997, the whole group of Roma migrants camping in Tarnogaj, one of the districts in Wrocław, boarded the buses provided by the authorities. They were told that they would receive aid and assistance. However, these were not the authorities' true intentions. The group was deported. Their property and their barracks were destroyed. The consequence of such behaviour is the reluctance of the Roma to cooperate with city officials and public service officers; the Roma community does not trust them (the Romanian Roma community in Wrocław 2013)³.

The same applies to access to health care. Medical assistance is refused not only to adults, but also to children. Few from the Roma community have been granted access to health services. In such isolated cases, the Roma do not usually enter the system, but bypass it with the help of a third party. This access is mostly limited or unavailable.

On 29 September 2014, I assisted in receiving help for a 16-year-old Roma woman, who had been previously fitted with a urinary catheter as a result of postpartum complications. This was two months past the date the catheter was to be removed. However, the hospital where the girl had given birth refused to perform this procedure – although the doctors were aware of the health risks, possible complications and infections. The hospital administration resorted to economic blackmail, making the provision of aid conditional on the payment of a fee of 9,000 zloty for the delivery and the removal of the catheter. It was not until we found another facility that the girl received help after I had made it clear that the patient was a minor and that treatment could not be interrupted if it threatened her health. After these explanations, the hospital agreed to perform the procedure upon payment of 500 zloty.

Assistance was provided in this case because the Roma family had raised the necessary funds. However, such discriminatory practices in relation to the poor most often result in health complications and are the everyday reality of the excluded. The health problems of Roma families include not only the lack of access to health care, but also starvation and poor diet. As a result, members of this community rarely live to see old age, suffering most of their lives from chronic diseases. Children, in turn, suffer from developmental disorders, and undiagnosed diseases result in long-term complications.

However, the lack of an adequate local government policy does not dissuade the Roma from remaining in Poland. Although pushed to the margins, they do not disappear from the urban landscape, becoming an embarrassing "problem" and part of the Polish reality. Many of them were born in this country, but do not receive Polish citizenship, inheriting their status from their parents along with difficulties in obtaining registration of their stay. Although Roma children learn

³ From the Roma group described below, who currently live in Gdańsk, Constanti and Ewa Stoica were also victims of deportations from Wrocław in 1997.

Polish on their own when watching television, they cannot read or write. Their legal status is suspended and they remain invisible to officials. It is hard to believe that Roma migrants, who have lived here for many years, remain unnoticed, and that the authorities and Polish society only remember them when there are media reports or when the Roma set up encampments in their neighbourhood. The current legal situation polarizes public sentiment, contributing to the creation of a culture of poverty, perpetuating the stereotype of the Gypsy. Exclusion is reinforced by the lack of willingness of public administrations and services to respect the rights of the Roma and to inform them about their rights and obligations as EU members and residents of Poland. Our experience of working with this group shows that often the depositaries themselves do not obey the law because they do not know it. This creates a culture of poverty whose mechanisms require a great deal of determination to survive. Poland is not prepared to receive migrants. Under the legislation in force, the Romanian Roma do not constitute a Polish ethnic minority, nor do they qualify for refugee status. Ironically, in order to circumvent the obligation to register a stay in Poland, it is sometimes easier for the Roma to obtain the status of victims of human trafficking (even if a member of this group did not fall prey to traffickers). This situation seems to be convenient for the Polish authorities, who claim that the problem of Roma migration does not concern them. The lack of any kind of friendly mechanism for integration into the system and economic exclusion antagonise public opinion, making intercultural dialogue very difficult.

The Romanian Roma in Gdańsk – discourse analysis

The first media mention of the presence of Gypsies in ul. Bursztynowa in Gdańsk-Jelitkowo dates back to 2012 (Kozłowska 2012a). The article by Aleksandra Kozłowska, a “Gazeta Wyborcza” journalist, entitled *Beautiful Ergo Arena surrounded by dirt and squalor*, contrasts the presence of poverty with the new urban investment of a sports facility to become a showcase of the Tri-City and an advertisement of its sponsor, STU Ergo Hestia. The article depicts poverty in a language appealing to aesthetics, and whatever is undesirable is described with the use of phrases like: “squalor”, “seedy dens”, “poverty”, “despair”, “various shady characters”.

In January 2014 “Gazeta Wyborcza” returns to the subject of the Romanian Roma living on abandoned plots in Gdansk, describing their life, and problems connected with their stay in Poland. From these articles we can learn that the community occupying the area consists of 17 Gypsies from Romania. The reason for their arrival in Poland is economic migration. Before they came to Gdańsk, where it is stated they have been living for two years, the Roma stayed in a settlement in Wrocław. They had lived there for five years. The media reports also tell us that they were not entirely invisible to the representatives of the Gdańsk authorities:

Monika Ostrowska, spokeswoman for the Municipal Family Assistance Centre: – The families discussed by “Gazeta Wyborcza” reside in the Republic of Poland of their own free will. They do not have a Residence Card – essential for receiving support in terms of vocational development, the education of minors, health insurance or social welfare benefits. Nonetheless, for several months now, a social worker has been in

contact with these families, despite the limited possibilities of providing them with support, including monthly referrals to the Food Bank. They use and are satisfied with this form of nutrition (Kozłowska 2012b).

At the same time, the Gdańsk authorities boast about the success of sending three Roma children from another Gypsy group living in the city to school. Gdańsk is the first city which has managed to enrol the children of Romanian migrants at a Polish school (Kozłowska 2012c, 2012d). "Gazeta Wyborcza: Tri-City" returns to the subject of the Roma on several occasions, describing their everyday life and systemic problems related to their inability to meet the conditions set by Polish law for economic migrants to register their stay in Poland. These articles show that the Roma's presence does not disturb local residents and that they often meet with the support and understanding of their neighbours.

On 2 August 2014, municipal police officers arrived in the Roma settlement to inform them of the need to vacate the plot by 4 August. On the scheduled date, about 7-8 o'clock a.m., BOM (Residential Services Office) staff, accompanied by police and municipal police, arrived at ul. Bursztynowa together with workers who are tenants of municipal flats and who work to cover their unpaid rent. The Roma are given an hour to pack up and leave their homes; they can only take their belongings by hand. Any houses and left-over property are demolished and destroyed. The Gypsies are not made aware of their rights (no alternative premises for the group to go to have been designated) and are not presented with a final eviction court order. Without support, they leave their homes in an atmosphere of fear caused by the presence of uniformed services. In addition, no interpreter was provided to ensure that they understood the situation. Since then, the Roma have been sleeping in tents, hidden in nearby bushes in Sopot.

The eviction was publicized in the media on 7 August in "Dziennik Bałtycki", "Gazeta Wyborcza: Tri-City" and by Amnesty International. The city authorities explained the reasons for the eviction as follows:

[...] city officials repeatedly received "complaints from the inhabitants about the nuisance caused by their neighbours" (Wierciński 2014a).

[...] this site (located close to the beach, which is very popular during the summer season) needed to be cleaned up as a matter of urgency according to the city authorities. Homeless people are usually directed to a hostel, while tourists use the tourist accommodation base (Kozłowska 2014a).

Journalists establish that the Municipal Family Assistance Centre staff had not been alerted about the evictions and the decisions taken by the city authorities on the Roma. Aleksandra Kozłowska from "Gazeta Wyborcza" notifies Amnesty International about the eviction. She sends a letter to the President of Gdańsk, Paweł Adamowicz, expressing her concern about the situation and requesting an explanation. Moreover, the journalist reports that Agata Ferenc from the Wrocław-based Nomada Association for the Integration of a Multicultural Society intends to refer the case to the prosecutor's office. Adamowicz explains that: "on the one hand, the right of ownership must be respected and, on the other, my colleagues must abide by the rules, and that is what I am going to investigate" (Twitter: EU Citizens 2014).

The attitude of the media towards the case is unequivocally critical of the city's governing bodies. It is the first time that the city authorities have described the Roma as "tourists".

In the days that followed, the expulsion of the Roma was also discussed in the "Journal of Opinions" (Mandelt 2014), Radio Tok FM (Wieczorek 2014) and Wirtualna Polska. There were questions and statements in the media about the extent to which these events were connected with ethnic origin; however, the dominant theme in the statements was legalism, and it was stressed that the eviction took place without a court hearing and a binding court ruling.

On 12 August, the Prosecutor's Office received a notification of a suspected crime from Nomada. Paweł Adamowicz admitted in the press that certain mistakes had been made during the eviction process:

We have been implementing a programme of cooperation with the Roma for years. We all know that it is not easy, especially to convince them of the need for childcare and compulsory schooling in line with our standards. The mistake of my co-workers was that they failed to invite the Municipal Family Assistance Centre (MOPR) to be present during the eviction, as they would have suggested alternative accommodation for the homeless, but as a rule I do not accept the idea of building a camp on someone else's land. Well, there are many aspects to working with the Roma. Apart from the fact that they do not respect the right to property, there are considerable problems in terms of childcare and compliance with compulsory schooling. For years, MOPR has been cooperating with Roma families in various ways, and it was a mistake that they had not been invited to cooperate in this particular instance. I am aware of the Wrocław issue, and I also realise that these are EU citizens who, like any other citizen, have rights that must be respected, but also obligations that they must fulfil (Kozłowska 2014b).

In his reply to Amnesty International, Paweł Lisicki, Deputy President of Gdańsk, also emphasizes inadequate communication between the city authorities and the MOPR. In this letter, the Gdańsk authorities point out that the Roma claimed to be tourists and that they had deliberately and voluntarily left the area. In turn, Lisicki refers to the abandoned sheds and the property left by the Roma on the site as rubbish that had to be cleared from the municipal plot (*Reply of the Deputy President of the City of Gdańsk* 2014). Draginja Nadazdin, Amnesty International Director, responds to this letter, arguing that the situation in which the Gypsies were told to leave their homes is not one of a voluntary nature (*AI's Letter to the President of the City of Gdansk* 2014).

Talks with activists from several cities and Nomada are under way about meeting in Gdańsk and starting work with the Roma. The initial idea is to rebuild the demolished dwellings in their previous location. This would be in conformity with the law, since according to Art. 344 of the Civil Code, the owner whose property has been compromised is entitled to so-called property claims, which consist of a claim for *restitutio ad integrum*.

On 20 August, the Commissioner for Human Rights notifies the President of Gdańsk that he has opened an inquiry into the case of the Roma being displaced from city-owned areas in Gdańsk-Jelitkowo. At the grassroots level, in turn, a working group of activists is set up. We embark on working out the details of our activities and our strategy. As a first step, the need to explore the area and, above

all, to meet the displaced migrants, is identified. We are trying to determine what the Stoica and the Calderar families need and expect.

We set up our first meeting with the Roma at the Ergo Arena in Sopot, where we are picked up by Constantin Stoica. We are led into nearby bushes, in the depths of which there are three tents and a makeshift stove, where the Roma prepare meals. Rugs are spread out on the ground, and there is a hearth nearby, which serves as a source of heat for the Gypsies when the weather gets colder. At that time, the Roma group consisted of eleven people (the rest left after the eviction to Wrocław). We are warmly welcomed and offered cola with instant coffee. The children are very happy to see us and want to play with us. We talk about what we can do and how we can be of assistance to them. We listen to what they have to say and how the eviction went. We agree that we should find them a new safe place to live, away from the media and that is unknown to the city authorities. We begin to view and inspect the first vacant sites and plots where the Roma could potentially settle.

In the following days our initiative attracts new female activists. The Syrena collective publicizes the Gdańsk evictions in the anarchist environment, publishing a radical text entitled *The Anatomy of Fascism, Participation and Revolt: The Housing Mafia and Modern-Day Slavery in Gdańsk* (Syrenka 2014). The article is an attempt to broaden the perspective of discrimination to include issues related to the housing policy in Gdańsk. Our group is engaged in discussions on how to empower the Roma and remind the city authorities that this family is part of the Gdańsk community, as well as to make them understand the Roma's plight. At the same time, we are committed to giving the floor to the victims and making them be heard and seen. A letter is prepared and signed by the Gypsies. The local media are informed about the letter that is to be handed over to the President. The letter outlines the needs and circumstances of the Roma.

On 22 August 2014, the expelled Roma, together with a group of activists, head to the office of the President of Gdańsk, Paweł Adamowicz, and present a letter asking for help. Antoni Pawlak, a spokesman for President, faces the migrants and reiterates that the Gypsies are tourists and had no right to occupy municipal land. The whole event is observed by journalists of "Gazeta Wyborcza" and "Dziennik Bałtycki". As suggested by the President's spokesman, the group goes to MOPR, which is expected to assist the Roma. There we meet with a MOPR representative, who makes the offer of shelter conditional on the segregation and separation of women and men (*The letter of the evicted Roma addressed to the President of Gdańsk, Paweł Adamowicz, 2014*). Moreover, on that day the press reports that the decision to evict the Roma was prompted by the city's interest in selling the plot of land at ul. Bursztynowa to a developer (Wierciński 2014b).

In the following days our team splits into two groups and we focus our efforts on searching for safe havens that seem inhabitable. During this search we spend many hours together with the Roma and begin to understand each other better.

The Roma will later say that this was an important time for them, because they felt that they were not alone and that they had support in us. Gypsies feel safer with us and they move around more confidently in places unknown to them. Mobile phones play a very important role in communicating with the Roma during the ongoing search. Men, leaving children and women in their tents, constantly call each other, shortening the distance between them, reporting on their searches. Not knowing the spelling and not knowing how to write, contacts on the phones

are saved and remembered on the basis of the sequence of digits that make up the individual numbers. In this way, they are able to memorize from a dozen to several dozen contacts.

On 25 August, the current Roma refuge is discovered by the Sopot municipal guards, who order the migrants to vacate their camp by 29 August. We schedule another meeting with MOPR staff, at which we jointly work on ways to include the Roma in the social assistance programme.

So far, there has been a balance in the media narrative between the emphasis on the ethnic background of the Roma as motivation for their eviction and the illegality of evicting them. In the letter submitted to the President of the city by the Stoica and the Calderar families, the perspective of being a citizen of Gdańsk and the desire for integration are underscored. Nevertheless, new references to the historical identity of the city of Solidarity and multiculturalism are beginning to appear in the media discourse. In this context, the issue of the upcoming opening of the European Solidarity Centre is raised in the media. The writer and historian Mieczysław Abramowicz becomes the voice of this criticism and poses a question:

We pride ourselves on a centuries-old tradition of multiculturalism and tolerance, and on the ideas of freedom and solidarity which, here in our city, laid the foundations for the greatest bloodless revolution, where the European Solidarity Centre is about to open, of which we will all be so proud. Where was Gdansk solidarity, respect for diversity, the right to decent treatment, the right to dignity when, on 4 August, a group of municipal officials, assisted by the Municipal Police, expelled Romanian migrants from their slums in Jelitkowo? (Abramowicz 2014)

Despite the promise made the day before, on 26 August we receive a phone call from the Roma, saying the municipal police have arrived at their encampment and are ordering them to pack up and leave. We rush to see them and inform the media about this incident. The employees of the Sopot Municipal Social Assistance Centre (MOPS) are also present and are trying to persuade the municipal police to give the Gypsies time to take all their belongings. The Roma are frightened, anxious and powerless. We are working together on what to do next, and we are waiting for journalists. We inform the Roma that we do not yet have a new site for them, but that the Gdańsk and Sopot authorities do not leave us a choice... We know that, under the law, we can try to restore the lost property, namely to return to ul. Bursztynowa in Gdańsk-Jelitkowo, from where Roma families were originally displaced. We make a joint decision to return to their previous place of residence. Meanwhile, one of the Roma, Ewa Stoica, gives an interview to TVP Gdańsk. She tells the story of what happened and shows the reporters where they lived before – this is her first ever televised interview (*Roma thrown out of Gdańsk and Sopot* 2014). An eleven-member Romanian migrant group returns to ul. Bursztynowa, which is an unsecured area. We help them to move their belongings and put up their tents. A municipal guard patrol appears on the site, observing us, but does not approach us and does not intervene. Soon the representatives of the Gdańsk authorities also arrive, including employees of the Gdańsk Municipal Real Estate Authority, employees of the Municipal Family Assistance Centre and the Police. City officials accompanied by the municipal police inform us that we have to leave the property:

You have no right to be here, and whatever you are doing here at the moment is simply provocation [...]. There was no eviction here. Asked by Aleksandra Kornatowska from the informal Romanian Roma Support Group in Gdańsk about what the actions of the authorities should be called then, the official replied: – It was just putting the site in order. – You can put the site in order by collecting rubbish from the ground, Kornatowska answered. Head of the Residential Services Office (BOM): – That is precisely what it was – rubbish (Hukało 2014).

We inform the uniformed services that the Roma lived here before and have the right to stay here, and that the city evicted them without a final and binding court ruling. Following consultation with their superiors, the police and municipal police realise their hands are tied and do not intervene. However, they continue to assist the officials in their work. Then Maciej Lisicki, Deputy President of the city arrives and, in an effort to get rid of the Roma, calls on the border guards to check the migrants' documents. In addition, workers and private security guards are being summoned to destroy the Roma property again, tents this time. The measures taken by Lisicki are clearly aimed at intimidating the Gypsies and forcing them to "voluntarily" leave the city's plot. Lisicki responds to our demands for a legal justification and a valid document by saying:

– You had nothing and you have nothing. – Nobody here removed anyone [...]. I do not care about their nationality. These are people who are trespassing and are to leave the plot today (Hukało 2014).

The Deputy President reiterates that the Roma who have lived there for the past three years are tourists and not residents. Despite our efforts to persuade the Roma that there is no legal basis for their expulsion, Constantin (who makes decisions in this family), frightened and upset, decides not to stay there. Therefore, we leave the plots in ul. Bursztynowa.

In the course of these events, Gypsy property is destroyed again, the family is deprived of its stove and mattresses, and only two of its three tents remain. Eleven people are left with two three-person tents and seek shelter for the upcoming night. They manage to find a place near the cemetery in Gdansk Oliwa. It is cold at night and we bring them sleeping bags, gas bottles, rugs and hot tea. In the morning, the cold becomes unbearable and the Roma move to spend the rest of the night at the railway station. The area where the tents were pitched was not safe. As of 26 August, our actions and attempts to exert media pressure have ceased to seek dialogue and consensus. Our strategy morphed into emphasizing the conflict with the city, by adopting a discourse accentuating exclusion, persecution and discrimination. Successive expulsions have brought about anxiety and distress for the Stoica family and a temporary breakdown in communication between our group and the Roma. Nevertheless, we are able to establish that they are now safe and that they are renting a campsite. We launch our own media campaign by starting a blog titled *The Roma in Gdansk. Against expulsions and evictions* (<http://romowiegdansk.wordpress.com>), as well as a Facebook group (www.facebook.com/pages/Roma-w-Gda%C5%84sk/761684880543694?ref=hl), I also write my own press release on recent events and draw up a Petition against the illegal eviction of Roma in Gdańsk (Nowicki 2014a, 2014b; Facebook: Roma in Gdansk 2014; Roma

in Gdansk. Against expulsions and evictions (2014)). We are slowly establishing a network spanning the virtual and material strands of the Gdańsk Roma story. Information about the events begins to travel, creating a map between the corporality of our movements and its technological mediation.

In the aftermath of the successive evictions, the plight of Gdańsk Roma is beginning to generate interest beyond the local media. Roman Kwiatkowski and Bogdan Trojanek, members of the associations of Polish Roma, also choose to address this issue. These organisations wish, first and foremost, to promote their particular interest in preserving the good reputation of their community. Therefore, they emphasize their national origins, built on the multiculturalism of Poland. It is in their interest to criticise all the actors who highlight the Roma's ethnic origin in this matter and to highlight the Polish nationality of the Romanian Roma and issues relating to equality before the law for all citizens. For example, Bogdan Trojanek, President of the Royal Roma Foundation, has stressed that:

- The behaviour of some of our Romanian brothers has had a very negative impact on the reputation of the Polish Roma. We feel that we are Polish patriots, we obey Polish law, we work hard. We love Poland. Unfortunately, the media often do not distinguish the Polish Roma from the Romanian Roma. And the differences are enormous. I urge you to pay attention to this. [...]
- The Nomada Association for the Integration of the Multicultural Society and Amnesty International have established cooperation with the Roma from Gdańsk...
- In my opinion, these people are manipulating the Roma of Gdańsk and instead of helping them, they are harming them. They do not offer them any genuine support, e.g. in the form of accommodation. Instead, they insist that they stay on an illegally occupied plot of land and violate Polish law. Unfortunately, these types of organisations very often exploit the situation of the Romanian Roma to promote their own agenda. The louder the publicity, the better. [...] – The Polish state should guarantee the security of the ethnic minorities, respect human rights, cultural rights and so forth. Likewise, every Roma who arrives in Poland should abide by the Polish Constitution. It is unacceptable that the Roma enjoy the hospitality of Poles and, at the same time, disregard the rules of our homeland (Heblowicz 2014).

In an interview with "Gość Niedzielny" Trojanek also deplores the street begging, which is a means of survival for the Romanian Roma. This positioning of the difference between the Polish and the Romanian Roma is far removed from reality, as a different picture emerges even from the life story of the author himself of this criticism:

They lived off what she had earned with fortune-telling and begging. In winter, when it was so cold that the water was freezing in their cups, they hid under down duvets. When there was nothing to eat, he drank water with sugar and begged. He was given more than others, because the passers-by sympathized with him, thinking he was a Pole who had simply got lost (Kłóś 2011).

In turn, the letter of the Association of Roma in Poland to the President of Gdańsk, Paweł Adamowicz, concludes with the following words:

[...] why did your officials, aware of the infringements committed by Romanian citizens, not take legal action against them (immediate removal from the site, failure to

register their stay, failure to call on the border guards to send them back to Romania)? Have the officials responsible suffered any consequences, as would any other citizen who does not enforce the law? Why has our Association decided to approach you with this letter and ask you to enforce the law against Romanian citizens of Roma descent? This is because the Polish Roma already had enough of continuous racist, hateful, xenophobic commentary by some of the media and by many Internet users. Why should the failure of state and local government authorities to fulfil their duties always affect the Polish Roma, constantly lumped together with foreigners breaking the law? Mr President, please visit the websites that have previously published articles on the eviction of the Romanian citizens in Gdańsk. You will read several dozen (several hundred) hateful entries aimed at our community, and how are we to blame? For an average Pole, the Romanian and Polish Roma are one and the same thing! In the light of the above, we kindly ask you to instruct your subordinate services to enforce the law (*Letter to the President of Gdańsk in connection with the eviction of the Roma* 2014).

Not all Roma organisations in Poland gave priority to identity based on citizenship over ethnicity. The Association of Polish Roma has adopted a different position in an article published on its website, describing the course of events in Gdańsk (Huczko 2014).

As I noted before, the pressure on the Gdańsk authorities became increasingly focused on the historical policy rooted in the ethos of solidarity. This coincided with the opening of the European Solidarity Centre, a project which aroused much controversy among the city's inhabitants, and among former "Solidarity" activists and social activists alike, who were critical of the authorities and politicians hijacking the workers' movement to use it as a symbol of the fight against communism. Criticism of this policy in the context of the issue of the Romanian Roma appears both in my petition and in the statements of public figures, journalists and sociologists (*Sociologists on the Roma of Gdańsk* 2014; Wierciński 2014c; Żakowski 2014). In connection with the opening of the European Solidarity Centre, a discussion is under way in our group on staging a protest on the day of its launch. Our main concern is that we have little time to promote the protest and doubt whether there is a chance of receiving support from Tri-City activists, who have so far ignored the behaviour of the Gdańsk authorities towards migrants. We inform the Roma of this initiative, of the risks involved and the uncertainties we face, as well as of the potential benefits. We are beginning to seek support from local Tri-City communities. So far, apart from journalists, two people from Gdansk have actively joined in helping the Roma (myself included). We attend several meetings where we collect preliminary declarations of support from a few individuals. There is not much time to organize a protest as there are only two days left before the opening ceremony. Some members of our group are preparing a banner for the upcoming opening of the ESC. The day before, it turns out that part of the Gdańsk-based KIPi SAMBA group, which had previously pledged to prepare the soundtrack for the protest, withdraws from participation. With little support from the local community, we give up on the protest. Our decision is further reinforced by the concern about our inability to protect the Roma from the intervention of the various uniformed services present on the ground and the risk of turning the media coverage "against" those involved.

Following the evictions of 26 August, the Roma find shelter on a plot of land with an elderly man who, exploiting their exclusion, charges them 90 zloty per

day⁴ for the possibility to pitch their tents. We try to negotiate the price, but the person renting the plot does not want to hear about lowering the cost. The man who leases out the land believes that Gypsies do not deserve better treatment because they are inferior on the grounds of their ethnicity. We cannot reach any agreement. The conditions in which the Gypsies live are described by Aleksandra Kozłowska from "Gazeta Wyborcza":

They rent a small house in a neglected garden from an elderly man for 60 zloty a day [in the article there is an error as to the actual amount per day, which totalled 90 zloty - T.N.]. A living standard not much better than a garden shed, and if they don't collect enough scrap and pay up each night – the "old man" yells at them and threatens to call the police, "to make those Gypsies get the f*** out of here, there is no way I'm going to court" (Kozłowska 2014c).

On 29 August, the case of discrimination against the Romanian Roma is reported on in the nationwide media. TVN24 in the "Dwie prawdy" show by Roman Kurkiewicz and Jan Wróbel critically portrays the actions of the Gdańsk City authorities. This broadcast is the result of our work and establishing contact with Roman Kurkiewicz.

The next day the members of our group go back to their respective cities. Agata Ferenc from Nomada and two people from the Tri-City remain in Gdańsk. We are continuing our quest for a solution to the housing problem of the Roma from Gdańsk.

After the August incidents, the media have focused their attention on tracking the proceedings of the Gdansk Public Prosecutor's Office, which is handling the notification of a crime filed by Nomada⁵. The grounds for opening an investigation are being examined. "Gazeta Wyborcza" manages to obtain a statement from the Prosecutor's Office indicating a breach of law by officials:

– Even if we do not find any violations, it will not change the fact that there are other legislative provisions in force in Poland which prohibit evictions without a final and binding court ruling, says Renata Klonowska, Head of the Gdańsk-Śródmieście District Prosecutor's Office (Włodkowska 2014).

In September, our team continues to focus on supporting the Stoica and the Calderar families and setting up a public debate on the city's migration policy. We already know that the authorities are preparing some form of assistance for the evicted Roma. However, the officials remain silent on the details and do not involve the residents, the Roma or us in consultations on the shape of such a policy.

⁴ In September, the man allows the Roma to move into a small room and hall in the sheds located on the plot.

⁵ While writing this article I discovered that it was not the first wrongly conducted eviction by the Gdansk Municipal Council. The previous one took place in Gdansk in 2004, when the Deputy President, Szczepan Lewna, evicted a restaurant owner from city-owned premises. In that case, the Gdańsk court issued a verdict and sentenced a city official to six months in prison, with a two-year probation period ([ms] 2006). Maciej Lisicki took over from Lewna and is responsible for the current Roma eviction of 26 August. As regards the eviction of 4 August, we do not yet know the person responsible for this decision.

It is particularly important to allow the Roma, who wish to speak on their own behalf, to have a say in this matter. We expect the city to try to exclude us from public debate and co-operation with the Roma, treating us as external and redundant players. The partner to whom the work with the Roma will be delegated is the Centre for Support of Male and Female Migrants (CWII), an organisation that has been collaborating with the city for a long time and maintains good relations with civil servants.

The Gypsies give an interview to Jacek Wierciński from “Dziennik Bałtycki” about the recent events, and recount their side of the story, the way they experienced it. Ewa Stoica, partner of Pardelian Calderar:

[...] is proud of herself, of her courage on that day. The point is that the vice-president of Gdańsk, Maciej Lisicki, was there. – She told him that he was heartless, that he was a pig, says Pardelian, while the Roma woman sitting next to him giggles (Stomczyński, Wierciński 2014).

On 11 September, Jacek Wierciński reports in “Dziennik Bałtycki”:

After a series of articles in “Dziennik Bałtycki” and protests by activists, Gdańsk officials have changed their minds. The matter is being investigated by the prosecutor’s office in Gdańsk. [...] – Poland is not prepared in legal terms to deal with the problem of migration. Gdańsk is currently preparing a pilot programme of social assistance for Roma migrants (Wierciński 2014d).

On the other hand, “Gazeta Wyborcza” describes the change in the policy of the Gdańsk authorities as follows: “Perhaps it was the pressure from NGOs and the Ombudsman for Human Rights that made the difference?”. (Kozłowska 2014d). Amnesty International also stresses its role in the launch of a pilot programme to help the Roma family by the Gdansk authorities (*Roma in Gdansk* 2014). Roman Kurkiewicz, on the other hand, ironically suggests that the city authorities decided to revise their policy after his show (Kurkiewicz, Wróbel 2014).

It is worth noting that this took place before the upcoming local government elections and the authorities certainly did not want to continue their streak of bad press in popular titles. The combination of factors that caused the city authorities to deflect from their former stance had many actors. An analysis of events and media discourse shows that the authorities were defeated in the media. Also in terms of the law, the Prosecutor’s Office, at the request of Nomada, launched an investigation, having doubts about the decisions taken by the officials. Finally, there is also the informal Romanian Roma Support Group in Gdańsk. One should not forget about the Roma themselves, who showed their commitment to fight for their rights, shouted out loud that they were being harassed and mistreated, gave interviews to journalists, visited the City Hall and took part in a public debate. Although the city authorities wanted to forget about them, the Gypsies were continuously coming back into the media. They appeared on the Internet, in front of cameras, by microphones, in photographs and in texts. Our team worked in the shadows to support the Roma and to explain when and why they should speak for themselves.

On 13 September, a debate was held entitled *What kind of integration do we need? The Roma in Poland – tenants, tourists, immigrants?* To discuss the issue, the city del-

egated a number of officials who had no real influence on the expulsion of the Roma nor any decision-making authority over the city's social policy. Representatives of NGOs, activists and representatives of the Municipal Family Assistance Centre in Gdańsk and the Social Development Department took part in the debate. The representatives of the authorities were not able to say anything about the forthcoming assistance programme for the Roma. They repeated what we already knew: the support that is available concerns people with a registered stay. At the moment, they could offer in-kind assistance: clothing and food, and school kits and school lunches for the children. In view of our comments that in order to register their stay, the Roma need money which they do not have and support from institutions, they replied that their capabilities are limited by the Act on Social Assistance. The officials suggested that the assistance should be provided by independent self-government organizations or activists. At the end of the discussion, officials declared that they would contact us in order to further develop their plans for Roma assistance and strategies for dealing with migrants. These promises were not fulfilled (Kozłowska 2014e).

The official announcement of the launch of the support programme for the Roma took place on 16 September, during a meeting with Draginja Nadazdin, Director of Amnesty International, and Ewa Kaminska, Deputy President of Gdańsk (*Will Gdansk help the Roma?* 2014). In the subsequent days we would learn that the programme will cost 10,000 zloty and will last from 1 October to the end of 2014. However, the authorities declare that they will continue to work with this group in the following year. The programme is to include assistance in registering a stay in Poland, support in finding a flat, as well as education, health insurance and finding a job. The organization to which the city delegates these tasks is the CWII (Wierciński 2014e).

However, until the programme starts, the Informal Romanian Roma Support Group continues its work and search for housing. The members of the family we are working with cannot read or write. They learn about what is currently happening in the press from us during joint meetings. We all gather together from time to time and read the newspapers and their online issues. We share a laptop, which the Roma mastered very quickly using the touchscreen. On 19 September, I travel to the place of residence of the Romanian Roma family. I have brought with me the press clippings of the past week to tell them what the media are reporting on their cause. The visit is very exciting, because they learn of the fact that the city has granted 10,000 zloty to the CWII for the purpose of helping the family. I need to explain to the Roma what this means and how this money will be distributed. The difficulty is to clarify that this amount will not go directly to them, but to the organisation that will provide the aid. I explain to them that only the elder Ewa Stoica holds a valid Romanian identity card and can apply for registration of her stay right away.

On 26 September, Ewa Kaminska, Deputy President for Social Policy, sends her response to the petition *Against the illegal eviction of Roma in Gdańsk*. The authorities explain that the decision to launch an assistance programme for the Roma is motivated by their difficult circumstances (A reply from Ewa Kaminska 2014). We wonder why the city fails to respond to the Stoica and Calderar letter of 22 August, to which the deadline for replying has just expired. After all, the petition was never officially submitted, it was only posted online...

By the end of September, the Roma manage to find new housing. We negotiate with the owner the terms of the lease agreement. I prepare a document that the Roma sign with the landlord. On 1 October, the family moves in with the assistance of the CWII (Kozłowska 2014f).

My work with the Roma during these events develops into a friendship. I am currently supporting them in their communications with the police and the public prosecutor's office. During one of the conversations, before moving, Pardelian Calderar says: "You know what Tomek, recently, when the old man's son threatened to evict us, I repeated what you had said to him the last time, that he was not allowed to throw us out just like that, and that I would call the police or report it with Tomek, where necessary. And you know what, he turned around and left us alone!"

Finally, the role and importance of public opinion should be mentioned, including in the form of comments under articles published on the Internet. Their significance in the study of social attitudes should not be overestimated, as the percentage of people who read and want to comment on published texts would also require a separate analysis. In their assessment, however, it is worth emphasising the anonymity offered by the Internet. For example, the same people who display xenophobic attitudes in anonymous posts, in situations of undispersed visibility and responsibility, might speak differently. Nevertheless, the comments can be classified into the psychoanalytical categories of the Real Self and the Ideal Self. In this approach, the online commentary space may in some cases be treated as a source of research on the Real Self of the speaking entities. Therefore, it seems reasonable to note the importance of a qualitative analysis of real social attitudes on the basis of online entries. In certain situations, they can become a structure that shapes the attitudes of the Ideal Self, that is, the way we want others to perceive us. On the basis of such reasoning, it was possible to create rhetorical arguments criticising the Gdańsk authorities for the wave of hatred, Romaphobia and xenophobia triggered by their actions. The media covering the events from the standpoint of situated knowledge were also the cause of the wave of online "hate speech" aimed at the Roma. Still, one should remember that the role of journalists was to report, to obtain information and to make socially important content public. This made it possible to indict the Gdańsk authorities for stirring up the dormant aversion to the Roma. I used this argument to write my petition, and the Association of Roma in Poland also raised this allegation. In a slightly different context, Przemysław Gulda addressed the online comments to pass judgement on the residents of Gdańsk, Poles and people in general. However, the text in its entirety was a criticism of the policies of the Gdańsk authorities (Gulda 2014; Nowicki 2014a; *Letter to the President of Gdańsk in connection with the eviction of the Roma* 2014).

The comments under the articles were permeated by Romaphobia and stereotypes that have grown up around Gypsies, manifested in a derogatory description of this group. Another part of the online entries criticized the journalists who reported on the matter praising the Gdańsk authorities for their evictions. The fewest comments were made in defence of human rights. Whenever Internet users tried to challenge the arguments in the text, the dominant structure was the one called in eristic "the missing middle ground". "Well, perhaps the activists from Amnesty International or the disgraced reporter who wrote this article should take them home and let them become part of the landscape there". The argument was aimed to bring down the actions of those who stood up for the Roma to an

extreme. Such accusations are often levelled at activists or persons with a strong social conscience. The rhetorical value of the argumentation thus constructed lies in placing the rightness of action in the position of holiness and total dedication to the cause, abandoning one's own particular interests. It distorts the scene of a conflict and presents it in an exaggerated, ludicrous way. In the case of eviction, the conflict occurred along the Roma-city of Gdańsk axis. When third parties (activists/social activists) entered the space of this relationship to help the oppressed, the conflict map reconfigured and new actors appeared on the side of the excluded. That moment was used to substitute the system/authorities with the activists and challenge the activists to take responsibility for the effects of the actions taken by the authorities. It was the city authorities who were supposed to demonstrate holiness, which in this case meant respecting the law and the rules of social conduct.

Diagnosis – a theoretical analysis

The dispersion of the Roma minorities within the EU Member States, caused by economic violence and Romania's policies, can be considered an attempt to spread Romaphobia among the nations that, in the past, had a friendly attitude towards them.

According to the findings of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights in 2009, it is estimated that every Roma has fallen victim to racial discrimination in their life, which prevents them from finding a job or from gaining access to high-quality education (*Human Rights HERE! Roma Rights NOW! A Wake-Up Call for the European Union* 2013).

The history of the places where Gypsies appear shows that their presence in Western democracies is perceived as a threat. A review of EU countries' policies for dealing with the Roma indicates one of the main actions taken is the removal of the Roma from a given country's territory. The influx of Gypsies into other countries and their constant migration spur opposition from the native population and thus become the most effective force in building a policy of prejudice against this group. Continued persecution and flight from one place to another are depriving the Roma of the opportunity to accumulate economic capital, leading to a situation in which they are becoming poorer and therefore more burdensome for the host country. As a result of growing exclusion and poverty, the social response to the presence of Gypsies becomes increasingly stronger.

From the legal point of view, the Romanian Roma do not constitute a Polish ethnic or national minority as they are citizens of another country. They are not eligible for refugee status either, as they are members of the EU. However, the very outrage of being a human being unforeseen by Polish law points to the danger of exclusion through absence. The need for a mechanism of reporting and legally classifying a given group reveals the paradox and etymology of the meaning of the word "subject", i.e. someone subject to the law and entitled to their rights. In practice, this means that a country's citizens include only members of the state nation and, in order to make other groups equal, people need specific legislation on refugees or ethnic groups. The uniqueness of their circumstances and the necessity

for an additional provision, a protocol on rights and obligations, underlines their difference and unassimilated distinctiveness. The ambiguity of the situation of the Romanian Roma in Poland is due to their obligations under the law of the country in which they are staying, and at the same time having Romanian citizenship. Although they enter the territory of the Republic of Poland, they remain invisible to the system. In this context, the only possible inclusion of Gypsies in the legal system takes place when the legal obligations are violated and broken. I would call the situation where an invisible individual becomes subject to the law and becomes an offender, a negative inclusion. This is the most common mechanism for exclusion of the Roma, which leads to their being suspended in the space between the deprivation of their rights and the simultaneous evocation of their legal obligations. Consequently, the criterion for checking whether anyone has found themselves outside the law is the question of whether they are benefiting from a breach of the law. If crime becomes the only way that can alter someone's legal situation, we can presume that they have been deprived of human rights. Breaches of the law are the only means of regaining 'equality' before the law. It is not important that this equality is regained through the violation of a legal norm, the most important is the fact of regaining one's subjectivity. This rhetoric appeared explicitly in the statements of the authorities of the city of Gdańsk: "Someone has seized a municipal plot and we are least interested in whether it is a Pole, a Romanian or a Swede. If the Swedes had set up a tent in the city park, we would have asked them to leave too" (Włodkowska 2014). This possibility of being equal before the law and not being treated less favourably was recognised by the city authorities, who noted that by violating the law, we become equal before the law. Equality in the public domain is not given to us, but, rather, it is entrusted to us, while a privatised life is characterised by inequality and difference. It was precisely this that contributed to the force of the Gdańsk authorities' message that, while reminding the Gypsies of the laws in force, they were offered the legal disadvantage of having to carry out their obligations. It turned out that it was only by infringing the rules that the Roma managed to recover their rights and the resultant protection. This leads us to a paradox: for those excluded from the system and disenfranchised, it is only by breaking the system's rules that they recover their legal personality and become part of the community (Arendt 2008: 401). The tension between equality and difference in this case is the struggle between what is public and what is private. The inability to integrate Roma into the legal system stems from the inability to equalise ethnic differences with the equality of social groups, to whom the mechanism of extracting what is private into the sphere of politics is applied by obtaining a level of homogeneity satisfactory to the majority national community.

Gypsies are trapped in their own distinct ways. Remaining outside the scope of the policy for eliminating inequalities, they are at the mercy of institutions and organizations that can only remind the community that the group still have human rights. The depoliticization and privatization of the life of the oppressed reduces their existence to the expression of the difference in the space deprived of communication with the public sphere co-inhabited and created by others.

There is one more way to establish a subjectivity that is both more dangerous and more unpredictable: to transcend the space of the invisible exception and to make one's "private" exclusion a political matter. Such a path has now been taken

by the media, which have the power to make the private public. While the law paved the way for negative inclusion, it was the media that allowed the invisible ethnic difference to be shifted from the area of equality before the law into the area of significant difference, making the privatized life of the excluded a matter of public concern. A person who is deprived of legal personality lives in a non-transparent grey zone; their entire life becomes private, only sheer subsistence remains, even in places where there is a public sphere for others. Therefore, the risk of such action stems from the fact that the life of the excluded people is put into a space whose strength lies in arousing emotions – and these in the case of the Roma generated hateful comments from the Internet users under the articles describing their story. The degree of otherness and the construction of the difference achieved through the use of the media allowed the Gypsies to break out of the nameless, invisible crowd, and to regain their voice. Overcoming powerlessness and helplessness was accomplished by publicising the exclusion, the public was given a chance to find out who the Roma were, what their story was, and why they had violated their legal obligations despite being denied basic rights.

The de-territorialization and dispersion of the Roma, together with their systemic oppression, have also determined the specific nature of their use of mobile phones for communication. The tactics of resistance they develop are created in a “culture of silence” – without literacy. Instead of a discursive structure of the subject, built around education, childhood and text, the Roma create a structure of the subject based on the determination to adapt. The instructions and comprehension produced by the oral culture were not subordinated to this kind of questioning. In their strategy of non-discursive practice, the Roma simultaneously refused and intercepted the path of mastering a particular competence, learning it by combining symbolic representations used in phone interfaces with the oral nature of the meanings conveyed. A mobile phone has become the heuristic key to anchoring and adapting to what this instrument can do in the hands of a community that maintains its tradition through oral communication of knowledge and culture. Another problem area was the subjective opening of this group to constructing its own positions through mediation and networks created by expanding its identity with technological prosthetics. Mobile artefacts proved that the obvious nature of discourse and language competence can be surpassed or omitted in the process of mastering the ability to handle a particular technology. In this context and in the face of the growing complaints about secondary illiteracy among Western societies, the new media with their “friendly” interface can be treated as a linguistic leap from language to the iconicity of our culture. Studies by Julia McAdam and Evelyn Arizpe show that bilingualism and the cultural diversity of migrants use image representations in the process of understanding and reading, thus creating hybrid identifications (McAdam, Arizpe 2011). The Roma admitted that they learned Polish at home while watching TV and while using mobile phones. Their strategy for overcoming the barriers caused by illiteracy was to create associations between the number sequences that appear when answering the phone and a specific person. On this basis, they were able to create pictorial subject representations and assign symbolic images to people.

An important tactic of this group in using mobile technology was to acknowledge the potential threats of oppression and panoptical surveillance. For example,

this awareness led them to discard their previous phone cards and change their numbers after another expulsion of 26 August. They took this step because of the presence of border guards in the displacements and fear of the Municipal Family Assistance Centre, which insisted on establishing their location and on conducting background checks. Their fear was justified by the loss of housing and the inability to provide security for their children, as the lack of proper housing, according to the officials, could constitute grounds for taking the children away. Our team also lost contact with them and had to wait for the Roma to contact us.

In view of the non-territoriality of the Roma culture and their traveller lifestyle, the mobility of new technologies has become intrinsically incorporated into their identity. Just as caravans used to be the distinguishing sign of their mobile tradition, so have mobile phones become embedded into the trajectories of their relations with technology. They made them a tool, the availability and speed of which became an element of the tactics of resistance to systemic oppression. While the physical mobility of this group used to be the main tactic of escaping oppression, nowadays, in a forever changing world, in which relations with the technological other have made our bodies computerized, it is the phone that has become synonymous with mobility; still, however, not a metaphor of fluidity between the body and the digitalization of our identity (Braidotti 2014). If we look at it in the spirit of Freire's pedagogy, mobile technology has enabled this group to emerge from the "culture of silence" and to build alliances and symbolic-corporeal relations that have gone beyond discourse. It was thanks to their mastery of this technology that we were able to maintain constant contact with the Roma; to immediately be informed of further persecutions; and to initiate a network of interconnections between the information received and its mediation by the "fourth power", i.e. the media. It would be a mistake to make their ethnological difference the essence of the distinction between them and the Westerners. Their exclusion is political in nature, but the way they interact with technology shows how relations with machines can evolve into a path towards emancipation. The nomadic subjectivity of the Roma shows the limits of ambivalence between mobility and the determination to adapt. On the one hand, we have the shifting of boundaries between the organic and the inorganic and, on the other hand, the adaptation to conditions of a constant readiness to change the place of residence. Finally, the question must also be asked as to whether it makes sense to talk about technology in the context of highlighting the ethnic difference? No, it doesn't. This process affects all users of technology to varying degrees. The expansion of modern technologies must be seen from the perspective of streamlining our relationship with machines that transform information into hyper-reality. However, their involvement in the media culture is based on a selective entry into the simulation space. Their links to technology do not make the difference between *zoe* and *bios* disappear. Our experience gained during the fight against exclusion by the Gdańsk authorities may serve as an example of the fact that politicising the Roma's private existence was a process carried out through tactics of fighting oppression, rather than a permanent fusion into the simulation and computerisation of their experience. It is true that the technologies and the systemic exclusion described in this article create transversal connections, which make up the contemporary map of the political economy. Nevertheless, it is difficult to agree enthusiastically/affirmatively with all

the posthumanist diagnoses describing, as feminism used to do, the problems and transformations taking place in the first world, which ricochet and hit the excluded communities in the form of exploitation and political and economic oppression. The non-territoriality of the Roma and their lack of nationality situate them in the non-place on the political map of Europe (since even their own country of citizenship persecutes and expels them). An example is the lack of the defamiliarization effect with respect to this group. On the contrary, any links to technology serve to maintain family ties and relationships. This is directly related to the fact that they are not usually separated by voluntary decisions, but rather by the exclusion and persecution that affect them. The Stoica and Calderar families did not come to Gdańsk because they wanted to settle there, but because of the imprisonment in Gdańsk of one of their group members. I helped them to communicate with Constantin Stoica⁶, who was detained in custody, by recharging his phone over the Internet so that he could have contact with his loved ones. Before arriving in Gdańsk, the Stoica family sold their house in Romania to pay for a lawyer to get Constantin out of prison and prove to the court that he had been unjustly convicted. For the Roma, the family is the most sacred value – they are ready to make many sacrifices – and technology builds and sustains this bond.

On many occasions, in the context of the Roma migration, there are accusations of a lack of willingness to assimilate. Without going into details, it is worth emphasising the colonial dimension of this claim and starting to talk about integration. However, this would be premature, because in the context of the relationship with the technological other, we can speak of a process of assimilating the inorganic. In this sense, the appropriateness of these calls for integration should be considered. Our symbolic superstructure, legislation and identity policy does not keep up with the identification and changes that arise from the transversal links with the inhuman. If we agree, at least to some extent, with the diagnosis of post-humanism and its proposed approach to assimilation and integration, then the Roma community on this map does not stand out from other social groups involved in the changing world of the fusion between technology and the body.

Returning to the issue of the equality of the Romanian Roma before the law, the problem which arose as a result of the policy of the city authorities boiled down to the violation of the principles of public order. For the Romanian Roma, it meant denying them equality by reducing them to those who have obligations under the law, but no rights. When the correlation between obligations and rights is disrupted with regard to one group and continues to exist with regard to other members of society, the existence of the legal order becomes a privilege and a reward for the selected few. The abolition of the equality and universality of the rule of law contradicts the very nature of legislation. The legal system is thus revealing its exclusivity, reducing its formulation to a Schmitt vision of a sovereign exception. The legal order becomes an arbitrary whim of the person or persons with the power to make sovereign decisions.

⁶ Constantin Stoica is the son of Constantin Stoica, the person who heads the Roma family in Gdańsk. Roma often give their children the same names as their parents, in order to make it difficult for the authorities to identify them, if necessary.

The fact that the city authorities and their social services offered only material assistance to the Roma, such as food and clothing, put this group in the position of someone who can be helped because they are beyond the scope of the law. Thus, the right to assistance ceases to be an obligation and becomes an act of grace within the framework of the sovereign policy of the municipal authorities.

– Having conducted background checks, we can offer legal and psychological assistance, food allowance and medicines, said Anna Sobota. – If you had a temporary address at least: in a hostel or with someone from your family, then we could present you with job offers (Kozłowska 2014g).

It has rightly been pointed out in the envious comments under the articles on the Roma that the assistance they receive is a privilege, does not stem from the legislation in force, is arbitrary, and is independent of what the beneficiaries do or are supposed to do.

The only instance one could try to appeal to was human rights, but these, despite their name, are only a kind of declaration, a cry for help from people who are deprived of their rights. According to Hannah Arendt, the paradox of inalienable human rights is that the notion of an abstract man (*tabula rasa*) was brought to life, who did not exist before at any historical moment (Arendt 2008: 407). Man, analysed outside the context of his identity and outside of social conditions, becomes an idea of the mind, which is left nothing but thoughts closed off in the monad of their “idiocy”. Human rights have been defined as inalienable because they are intended to be independent of the existence of specific governments and to apply across borders. The problem is that if there is no government or body to enforce the law, there is no authority or guarantee that it will be enforced. This is reminiscent of Agamben’s reflections on the state of exception – *zoe*, or the bare life excluded from the political area (Agamben 2008). Such stripping down of life to its bare bones makes it impossible to talk about legal violence and economic oppression against *zoe*. First, *bios*, a political life, should be restored, which allows for a further expression of injustice and the establishment of a disenfranchised person as a victim. In this sense, human rights would be, in Arendt’s view, the rights of a bare life, whose *bios* dimension is reduced to *zoe*.

[...] civil rights – that is the varying rights of citizens in different countries – were supposed to embody and spell out in the form of tangible laws the eternal Rights of Man, which by themselves were supposed to be independent of citizenship and nationality (Arendt 2008: 410).

This equation of two modes of life leads to a confusion of concepts, creating a dangerous fracture in the perception of politics. The human rights referred to in the conflict between the Roma and the city of Gdańsk became a claim for a sovereign act of clemency against those who were reduced to two extremes: the legal mockery of human rights and the privatised ethnic otherness. The very existence of such an expression of injustice shows us that the recognition of human rights, or the bare life, as an area of political intervention, has led to a combination of two types of existence – the private *zoe* and the political *bios*. Agamben called such a transition the transformation of sovereign power into biopower. This is how leg-

isolation lays its foundations on human rights. When such an appropriation of human rights takes place, they turn into civil rights. Thus, a Romanian citizen, when staying on the territory of Poland, can only regain his or her human rights by acquiring the privileges of Polish citizenship, which are partially provided by the registration of his or her stay. We are therefore faced with a contradiction: either civil rights are equivalent to human rights, which cannot be true, because citizenship would then be the right of people without rights, or human rights are the right of citizens, that is to say, the right of people with rights. Rancière offers a way out of this conundrum, saying:

Meanwhile, the third theory exists, which can be summarised as follows: human rights are the rights of those who have not the rights that they have and have the rights that they have not. (Rancière 2008: 128).

What would this mean for the situation of the Roma, who have been deprived of their right to housing by the Gdańsk authorities? Rancière proposes to look at the issue of the invocation of human rights as the phenomenon of the production of dissensus (Rancière 2008: 131). In his view, dissensus constitutes a mismatch between the norm and the law, i.e. what should be and what is given in the content of a concept. He proposes to refer to the notion of injury caused by the deprivation of rights, which creates the possibility of invoking rights which are not vested but are guaranteed as human. The second option would be to break the law as an act of disobedience, for example by securing the right to housing guaranteed by the declaration of human rights and invoking a criminal sanction against those who prevent the exercise of that right. Such action would bring resistance down to enforcing the rights which the Roma did not have but which they were entitled to. This empowerment process would therefore process exclusion and oppression by identifying pathways to winning back rights and obligations and the persons who deny them. This conceptualization of the abstract nature of the term "human" in the declaration of rights allows us to treat its provisions as a normative space to which we can refer if we want to challenge the difference between being a Pole and a Roma, i.e. in the case in point, between being in the political space and being negatively included by having obligations (violating the law).

Another type of exclusion was the accusation that the Roma and activists who joined the fight for their rights were not willing to build a consensus between the parties to the conflict. This happened during an attempt to reclaim the plot of land taken away by the Gdańsk authorities: "You have no right to be here, and whatever you are doing here at the moment is simply provocation [...]. There was no eviction here" (Hukało 2014). Subsequent statements by the Deputy President also pointed to an attempt to shift the responsibility for the lack of dialogue and real policy on the part of the authorities onto the Roma being reluctant to accept the proposed solutions:

– But what else is there to talk about? – the Deputy President asks. – The fact that these people spent the night outdoors and could not sleep because of the cold. – But that's their choice! We offered them places in the shelter for the homeless. There are separate centres for men in Gdańsk, separate centres for women in Gdańsk, Kaminska replies. – But they don't want to separate. They are a three-generation family, they

need each other. – Well, since they do not want to separate, it is their choice. If they do not want to take advantage of our range of proposals, we cannot force them. They simply do not want to integrate; they are not looking for a job, says the Deputy President. – It is difficult to find an employer in Poland who will employ a foreigner legally, especially a Roma. Ewa Kaminska has one answer to that. – Our biggest mistake was that we did not remove them from the occupied area immediately, after three months of living in Gdańsk. They should have registered their stay after three months and, as they have not done so, we should have called on the border guards to send them back to Romania. But you know how it is – you have a good heart, you start looking for legal loopholes, you turn a blind eye. We pretended that we did not know that they lived there. And we don't have areas for nomadic encampments. We have land for roads, schools, apartments, but not for nomadic encampments (Kozłowska 2014h).

What was the consensus reached on the terms of the Gdańsk authorities intended to be, other than forcing dialogue in a conflict situation where one of the parties is aware that the Roma were being deprived of their right to legal eviction, refused legal personality and offered charity instead? In fact, this criticism boiled down to imposing conditions for dialogue by excluding from its space additional parties, such as ourselves, and the Stoica and Calderar families – replacing the unwanted entities with 'real partners'. This scenario recurred even after an apparent victory, a public declaration by the city authorities to launch a pilot programme of support for the Romanian Roma family. This was when Vice-President Kaminska, instead of responding to a letter from the Roma asking for help, responded in writing to an online petition, addressing it to me. It was clear from her reply that a new partner in the dialogue with the city would be a self-government organisation appointed without any competition. Such a strategy of overcoming the difficult situation of the conflict built upon the opposition between the city's policies and human rights was aimed at removing the fact of the deprivation of fundamental rights and replacing it with a technical problem of distributing aid to the "Roma community". Eliminating politics, such as problems of exclusion, from the space of the conflict, and the smooth transition from the debate on the compliance with and applicability of the law, leads to an artificial situation of shifting the focus to expert "crisis management" strategies. Such a policy results in the suspension of the problem of the migrants' legal status, and, consequently, rights becoming useless as human rights. Rancière has no illusions about such a devaluation of politics and rights, saying:

They seem to be of no use. And when they are of no use, you do the same as charitable persons do with their old clothes. You give them to the poor. [...] It is in this way, as the result of this process, that the Rights of Man become the rights of those who have no rights, the rights of bare human beings subjected to inhuman repression and inhuman conditions of existence. They become humanitarian rights, the rights of those who cannot enact them, the victims of the absolute denial of right (Rancière 2008: 136).

In conclusion, if we believe that the rights of the excluded are the rights of the rightless, and that the only feasible response from the system to this lack of rights is not to modify the legislation in order to restore those rights, but to await a sovereign exception in order to find a way out of the hiatus between charity and humanitarianism, then the rights of those who are denied them become an

extravagance and a privilege. If the current legislation does not provide an opportunity to combat exclusion, but legally deprives others of the opportunity to live in dignity, then the history of the 20th century has taught us little. And yet we know what hiding behind the law has led to in situations where such law has deprived others of the chance to stay afloat. In this sense, there is also a difference between the subject and the object, the subject in the legal order is the one who has (is subject to) rights and obligations, while at the other end there is the object of *zoe*, or the bare life, referred to in modern politics in the third person plural. Such a shift in political conflicts effectively constitutes a negation of politics if the social groups subordinated to the government become an objective “problem” (they – the third person plural). In practice, the addressees of this policy become a thing, a “social group”, with which the authorities do not engage in a dialogue, implying a conversation in the second person plural – politics *par excellence*. In fact, this is what happened in Gdańsk when the city authorities, instead of replying to the Roma’s letter, responded by describing the Roma in a form that was appropriate for constructing the power knowledge, using phrases that objectified the family, reducing it to the third person form of an “ethnic group”. By bringing the fight against exclusion and discrimination down to a humanitarian policy, we are actually following the logic we want to challenge – we are making human rights completely void. Such authority reduces its policy towards the excluded to an exception, where helping the excluded becomes the rule. But it is not a rule that becomes law, it is a rule that is dependent on the will of politicians – it becomes sovereign over those who do not have any power or rights. Maintaining a legal order in which acts and laws effectively prevent others from participating in the community leads to what Hannah Arendt called the banality of evil (Arendt 2010). This was the case with the employees of the Municipal Family Assistance Centre in Gdańsk, when the provisions of the Act on Social Assistance, i.e. the conditions of being subject to the law, did not allow for granting support and working with Gypsies. From a human perspective, this situation resulted in a moral and legal dilemma for the MOPR staff, who were eager to provide support, but lacked the legal instruments to do so.

Literature

- Abramowicz M., 2014, *Wstydę się za moje Miasto. Gdański pisarz ostro o sprawie Romów z Jelitkowa* [I am ashamed of my city. A Gdańsk writer fiercely critical of the treatment of the Roma from Jelitkowo], http://trojmiasto.gazeta.pl/trojmiasto/1,35636,16525358,_Wstydze_sie_za_moje_Miasto_Gdanski_pisarz_ostro.html#ixzz3HpgLmD66 [access: 22.11.2014].
- Afeltowicz Ł., Pietrowicz K., 2009, *Czy socjologowie są w stanie budować maszyny społeczne? Rekonceptualizacja różnicy między przyrodznawstwem a naukami społecznymi* [Are sociologists capable of building social machines? Reconceptualising the gap between natural science and social science], *Kultura i Społeczeństwo* No. 1, p. 53.
- Agamben G., 1998, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, transl. Daniel Heller-Roazen, Stanford University Press.
- Arendt H., 1973, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich.
- Arendt H., 2006, *Eichmann in Jerusalem. A Report on the Banality of Evil*, Penguin Classics.
- Braidotti R., 2013, *The Posthuman*, Polity Press.
- Facebook: Romowie w Gdańsku [The Roma in Gdańsk], 2014, <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Romowie-w-Gda%C5%84sku/761684880543694?ref=hl> [access: 22.11.2014].

- Ficowski J., 2004, *Mistrz Manole i inne przekłady* [Master Manole and other translations], selected by J. Ekier, P. Sommer, eds., afterword by J. Ekier, Sejny: Wydawnictwo Pogranicze.
- Gdańsk pomoże Romom? [Will Gdańsk help the Roma?], 2014, http://amnesty.org.pl/no_cache/aktualnosci/strona/article/8413.html [access: 22.11.2014].
- Gulda P., 2014, *Romowie nas sprawdzają* [The Roma are calling our bluff], http://trojmiasto.gazeta.pl/trojmiasto/1,35636,1660_5696,Romowie_nas_sprawdzaja.html [access: 23.11.2014].
- Haraway D., 1988, *Situated Knowledges. The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective*, *Feminist Studies* Vol. 14, No. 3 (Autumn, 1988), pp. 575-599.
- Heblowicz J., 2014, *Polski Rom: Rozumiem gdańskich urzędników* [A Polish Roma: I understand the Gdańsk city authorities] <http://gdansk.gosc.pl/doc/2137761.Polski-Rom-Rozumiem-gdanskich-urzednikow> [access: 22.11.2014].
- Horkheimer M., 2013, *Critique of Instrumental Reason*, Verso Books.
- Horkheimer M., Adorno T.W., 1997, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, Verso Books.
- Huczko A., 2014, *Eksmisja Romów w Gdańsku-Jelitkowie – poza prawem?* [Eviction of the Roma in Gdańsk-Jelitkowo – outside the law?], <http://www.romow-ie.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=1368> [accessed on 22.11.2014].
- Hukało P., 2014, *Romowie znowu wyrzuceni. Urzędniczka: To było porządkowanie terenu* [The Roma evicted again. Official: it was a clean-up operation], <http://www.dziennikbaltycki.pl/artukul/3552645,romowie-znowu-wyrzuceni-urzednicz-ka-to-bylo-porzadkowanie-terenu-zdjecia-filmy,id,t.html> [access: 22.11.2014].
- Jakoubek M., 2010, *Przyczyny „romskiej” przestępczości* [Reasons behind “Roma” crimes], *Studia Romologica* No. 3.
- Kłóś A., 2011, *Białe ucho cygańskiego króla* [The white ear of a Gypsy king], http://wyborcza.pl/1,76842,9085494,Biale_ucho_cyganskiego_krola.html [access: 22.11.2014].
- Kozłowska A., 2012a, *Piękna Ergo Arena, a w okolicy straszny brud i meliny* [Beautiful Ergo Arena surrounded by dirt and squalor] http://trojmiasto.gazeta.pl/trojmiasto/1,112654,11345820,Piekna_Ergo_Arena__a_w_okolicy_straszny_brud_i_meliny.html#ixzz3HMg08nqW [access: 22.11.2014].
- Kozłowska A., 2012b, *Cyganie z działek pod opieką MOPR-u. „Oni nic nie mają”* [The Gypsies from the plot assisted by MOPR. “They have nothing”], http://trojmiasto.gazeta.pl/trojmiasto/1,35636,15273832,Cyganie_z_dzialek_pod_opieka_MOPR_u__Oni_nic_nie.html#ixzz3HRIkuZ3B [access: 22.11.2014].
- Kozłowska A., 2012c, *Dzieci rumuńskich Cyganów też chodzą do szkoły* [Children of the Romanian Gypsies go to school], http://trojmiasto.gazeta.pl/trojmiasto/1,35636,15287119,Dzieci_rumuńskich_Cyganow_tez_chodza_do_szkoly.html [access: 22.11.2014].
- Kozłowska A., 2012d, *Maria Larisa porusza umysł* [Maria Larisa moves the mind] http://trojmiasto.gazeta.pl/trojmiasto/1,35636,15687109,Maria_Larisa_porusza_umysl.html [access: 22.11.2014].
- Kozłowska A., 2014a, *Gdańsk wyrzuca Romów. Urzędnicy sprzątnęli działki razem z lokatorami* [Gdańsk evicts the Roma. Officials clear the plots together with the tenants], http://trojmiasto.gazeta.pl/trojmiasto/1,35636,16445143,Gdansk_wyrzuca_Romow_Urzednicy_sprzatneli_dzialki.html [access: 22.11.2014].
- Kozłowska A., 2014b, *NOMADA o wyrzuconych Romach: Potępiamy nielegalne eksmisje* [NOMADA on the displaced Roma: We condemn illegal evictions], http://trojmiasto.gazeta.pl/trojmiasto/1,35636,16461790,NOMADA_o_wyrzuconych_Romach__Potepiamy_nielegalne.html [access: 22.11.2014].
- Kozłowska A., 2014c, *Jak żyją Romowie w Polsce? „Tu zrobimy za 20 zł obiad dla całej rodziny, w Rumunii się nie da”* [How do the Roma in Poland live? Here we can make dinner for the whole family for 20 zloty, we could never do that in Romania], http://trojmiasto.gazeta.pl/trojmiasto/1,35636,16736335,Jak_zyja_Romowie_w_Polsce_Tu_zrobimy_za_20_zl_obiad.html#ixzz3HxFxpous [access: 22.11.2014].

- Kozłowska A., 2014d, *Miasto opracowuje program pomocy Romom* [The city is preparing a programme of assistance for the Roma], http://trojmiasto.gazeta.pl/trojmiasto/1,35636,16618901,Miasto_opracowuje_program_pomocy_Romom.html [access: 22.11.2014].
- Kozłowska A., 2014e, *Po debacie w sprawie rumuńskich Romów: miasto i NGO-sy łączą siły* [After the debate on the Romanian Roma: the city and NGOs are joining forces], http://trojmiasto.gazeta.pl/trojmiasto/1,35636,16637525,Po_debacie_w_sprawie_rumuńskich_Romow_miasto_i_NGO_sy.html#ixzz3HwWjMLT3 [access: 22.11.2014].
- Kozłowska A., 2014f, *Udostępnił Romom połowę domu. „Jest ruch, jest życie”* [He offered half of the house to the Roma. “There is movement, there is life”], http://trojmiasto.gazeta.pl/trojmiasto/1,35636,16803980,Udostepnil_Romom_polowe_domu___Jest_ruch___jest_zycie_.html#ixzz3HxByGbII [access: 23.11.2014].
- Kozłowska A., 2014g, *Wyrzuceni Romowie proszą Adamowicza o pomoc. „Też jesteśmy mieszkańcami Gdańska”* [The Roma who have been expelled ask Adamowicz for help. “We are also residents of Gdańsk”], http://wyborcza.pl/1,75478,16522251,Wyrzuceni_Romowie_prosza_Adamowicza_o_pomoc___Tez.html [access: 23.11.2014].
- Kozłowska A., 2014h, *Wiceprezydent Kamińska o Romach: Niech zostaną na ulicy. To ich wybór* [Vice-President Kamińska on the Roma: Let them stay on the streets. It is their choice], http://trojmiasto.gazeta.pl/trojmiasto/1,35636,16539785,Wiceprezydent_Kaminska_o_Romach___Niech_zostana_na.html [access: 23.11.2014].
- Kurkiewicz R., Wróbel J., 2014, *W „Dwoch prawdach”: armia zawodowa czy z poboru* [On “Dwie prawdy”: a professional army or conscription service], <http://www.tvn24.pl/dwie-prawdy,101,m/w-dwoch-prawdach-armia-zawodowa-czy-z-poboru,468885.html> [access: 22.11.2014].
- Latour B., 1999, *Pandora’s Hope: Essays on the Reality of Science Studies*, Harvard University Press.
- Lewin K., 1946, *Action Research and Minority Problems*, Journal of Social Sciences, Wiley-Blackwell.
- List AI do Prezydenta Miasta Gdańska [AI Letter to the President of the City of Gdańsk], 2014, http://amnesty.org.pl/uploads/media/12.08.2014_List_AI_do_Prezydenta_Miasta_Gda%C5%84ska.pdf [access: 22.11.2014].
- List do Prezydenta Gdańska w związku z eksmisją Romów [A letter to the President of Gdańsk in connection with Roma evictions], 2014, <http://stowarzyszenie.romowie.net/czytnik-aktualnosci/items/list-do-prezydenta-gdanska-w-zwiazku-z-eksmisja-romow.html> [access: 22.11.2014].
- List wyrzuconych Romów zaadresowany do prezydenta Gdańska Pawła Adamowicza [A letter of the evicted Roma addressed to Paweł Adamowicz, President of Gdańsk], 2014, https://www.facebook.com/761684880543694/photos/a.761730513872464.1073741828.761684880543694/761752067203642/?type=1&relevant_count=1 [access: 22.11.2014].
- Mandelt M., 2014, *Burzenie mieszkań czy realne rozwiązania?* [Demolition of housing or viable solutions?], <http://m.krytykapolityczna.pl/artykuly/opinie/20140808/burzenie-mieszkan-czy-realne-rozwiaznia> [access: 22.11.2014].
- McAdam J., Arizpe E., 2011, *Journeys into Culturally Responsive Teaching*, Journal of Teacher Education and Teachers’ Work Vol. 2, Issue 1, December, http://www.strath.ac.uk/media/faculties/hass/education/JTETW_Issue2.pdf [access: 22.11.2014].
- Mniejszości bez praw. Imigranci romscy w Polsce [Minorities without rights. Roma migrants in Poland], 2014, <http://www.rozbrat.org/images/pdf/romowie-broszura.pdfs.6> [access: 22.11.2014].
- [ms], 2006, *Szczepan Lewna złamał prawo* [Szczepan Lewna broke the law], <http://www.trojmiasto.pl/wiadomosci/Szczepan-Lewna-zlamal-prawo-n20565.html> [access: 22.11.2014].
- Nowicki T., 2014a, *Przeciwko bezprawnej eksmisji Romów w Gdańsku* [Against the illegal Roma evictions in Gdańsk], <http://www.petycje.pl/petycjePodglad.php?petycjeid=10787> [access: 22.11.2014].

- Nowicki T., 2014b, *Gdańsk: Kolejna eksmisja Romów* [Gdańsk: another Roma eviction], <http://lewica.pl/?id=29752&tytul=Gda%F1sk:-Kolejna-eksmisja-Rom%F3w> [access: 22.11.2014].
- Odpowiedź Ewy Kamińskiej Zastępcy Prezydenta Miasta Gdańska na petycję „Przeciwko bezprawnej eksmisji Romów w Gdańsku” [Reply of Ewa Kamińska, Deputy President of the City of Gdańsk, to the petition against the illegal Roma evictions in Gdańsk], 2014, <https://www.facebook.com/761684880543694/photos/a.761730513872464.1073741828.761684880543694/774772322568283/?type=1&theater> [access: 23.11.2014].
- Odpowiedź Zastępcy Prezydenta Miasta Gdańska, 2014 [Reply of the Deputy President of the City of Gdańsk], http://amnesty.org.pl/uploads/media/12.08.2014_Odpowiedz%20C5%BA_Zast%20C4%99pcy_Prezydenta_Miasta_Gda%20C5%84ska.pdf [access: 22.11.2014].
- Okely J., 1997, *Non-Territorial Culture as the Rationale for the Assimilation of Gypsy Children, Childhood: A Journal of Global Child Research*.
- Rancière J., 2013, *The Politics of Aesthetics. The Distribution of the Sensible*, Bloomsbury Academic.
- Rancière J., 2014, *Hatred of Democracy*, Verso Books.
- Romowie w Gdańsku, 2014 [The Roma in Gdańsk], <https://storify.com/amnestyPL/romowie-w-gdansk> [access: 22.11.2014].
- Romowie w Gdańsku. Przeciwko wypędzeniom i eksmisjom [The Roma in Gdańsk. Against expulsions and evictions], 2014, <http://romowiegdansk.wordpress.com/> [access: 22.11.2014].
- Romowie wyrzuceni z Gdańska i Sopotu [The Roma thrown out from Gdańsk and Sopot], 2014, <http://gdansk.tvp.pl/16583773/romowie-wyrzuceni-z-gdanska-i-sopotu> [access: 22.11.2014].
- Słomczyński T., Wierciński J., 2014, *Zarówno przyjmowanie, jak i przepędzanie Romów ma swoje tradycje w wielowiekowej historii Pomorza* [Both the reception and the expulsion of Roma have their traditions in the centuries-long history of Pomerania], <http://www.dziennikbałtycki.pl/artykul/3565461,zarowno-przyjmowanie-jak-i-przepedzanie-romow-ma-swoje-tradycje-w-wielowiekowej-historii-pomorza,id,t.html> [access: 22.11.2014].
- Socjolog o gdańskich Romach. „To kłopot ogólnoeuropejski” [A sociologist about the Roma of Gdańsk. “This is a pan-European problem”], 2014, <http://www.radiogdansk.pl/index.php/audycje-rg/rozmowa-kontrolowana/item/16064-socjolog-o-gdanskich-romach-to-klopot-ogolnoeuropejski.html> [access: 22.11.2014].
- Spółeczność Romów rumuńskich we Wrocławiu [The Romanian Roma Community in Wrocław], 2013, http://nomada.info.pl/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/romaraport_pl_final.pdf [access: 22.11.2014].
- Syrenka, 2014, *Anatomia faszyzmu, partycypacji i rewolty: mafia mieszkaniowa i współczesne niewolnictwo w Gdańsku* [Anatomy of fascism, participation and revolt: the housing mafia and modern day slavery in Gdańsk], <http://syrena.tk/anatomia-faszyzmu-partycypacji-i-rewolty-mafia-mieszkaniowa-i-wspolczesne-niewolnictwo-w-gdansk/> [access: 22.11.2014].
- Śliwerski B., 2010, *Współczesne teorie i nurty wychowania* [Contemporary theories and trends in child-rearing], Kraków: Wydawnictwo Impuls.
- Twitter: Obywatele UE [EU Citizens], 07.08.2014, <https://twitter.com/Koczowisko/status/49743805941-6535040> [accessed on 22.11.2014]
- Wieczorek M., 2014, *Zlikwidowano osiedle romskie w Gdańsku* [A Roma encampment in Gdańsk demolished], broadcast on: 08.08.2014, <http://audycje.tokfm.pl/odcinek/17458> [accessed on 22.11.2014].
- Wierciński J., 2014a, *Romowie eksmitowani bez wyroku. Urzędnicy kazali zniszczyć ich obóz* [The Roma evicted without a court verdict. City officials order their encampment to be destroyed], <http://www.dziennikbałtycki.pl/artykul/3532923,romowie-eksmirowani-bez-wyroku-urzednicy-kazali-zniszczyc-ich-oboz-wideo-zdjecia,id,t.html> [access: 22.11.2014].
- Wierciński J., 2014b, *Eksmisja Romów w Gdańsku. Teren potrzebny był developerowi?* [The eviction of the Roma in Gdańsk. Was the land of interest to a developer?], <http://www.>

- dziennikbaltycki.pl/artukul/3548043,eksmisja-romow-w-gdansku-teren-potrzebny-byl-deweloperowi,id,t.html [access: 22.11.2014].
- Wierciński J., 2014c, *Eksmisja Romów. Ręce „turysty” marzną tak samo* [The Roma evictions. The hands of “tourists” get just as cold], <http://www.dziennikbaltycki.pl/artukul/3553417,eksmisja-romow-rece-turysty-marzna-tak-samo-komentarz,id,t.html> [access: 22.11.2014].
- Wierciński J., 2014d, *Eksmisja Romów w Gdańsku. Urzędnicy jednak pomogą imigrantom?* [The Roma evictions in Gdańsk. Will the officials help the migrants after all?], <http://www.dziennikbaltycki.pl/artukul/3570275,eksmisja-romow-w-gdansku-urzednicy-jednak-pomoga-imigrantom,id,t.html> [access: 22.11.2014].
- Wierciński J., 2014e, *Eksmisja Romów w Gdańsku. Miasto da 10 tys. zł organizacji, która pomoże rodzinie* [The Roma evictions in Gdańsk. The city pledges 10 thousand zloty to an organisation that will provide assistance to the family], <http://www.dziennikbaltycki.pl/artukul/3577111,eksmisja-romow-w-gdansku-miasto-da-10-tys-zl-organizacji-ktora-pomoz-rodzynie,id,t.html> [access: 23.11.2014].
- Włodkowska K., 2014, *Prokuratura bada eksmisję Romów. Miasto się broni: „Szwedów też byśmy wyprosili”* [The Prosecutor’s Office launches an investigation into the Roma evictions. The City argues: “We would ask Swedes to leave too”], http://trojmiasto.gazeta.pl/trojmiasto/1,35636,16591394,Prokuratura_bada_eksmisje_Romow__Miasto_sie_broni_.html#ixzz3HuzpKdQJ [access: 22.11.2014].
- Żakowski J., 2014, *ESC jako ból głowy* [ESC as a headache], <http://zakowski.blog.polityka.pl/2014/09/01/ecs jako-bolglowy/> [access: 22.11.2014].

Abstract

*A study towards change (with mobile technologies in the background).
Integration and resistance of Roma families against displacement and expulsion*

Poland is not mentally prepared to receive migrants. Under the legislation in force, the Romanian Roma do not constitute a Polish ethnic minority, nor do they qualify for refugee status. Polish law segregates the Romanian Roma, marginalising them and pushing them into extreme poverty. The current legislation favours economically desirable migrants and throws the undesirables out of the system. Such policies lead to poverty, pathologies and exclusion. Exclusion, in turn, raises social resistance and creates resistance tactics. The events described in this paper attempt to connect action research with the fight against exclusion.

Keywords

Roma, action research, exclusion, poverty, homelessness, human rights, civil rights, difference, universality, policy, subject

English translation: Anna Moroz-Darska

Tłumaczenie sfinansowano ze środków Ministerstwa Nauki i Szkolnictwa Wyższego na podstawie umowy nr 661/P-DUN/2018 z dnia 13 lipca 2018 roku w ramach realizacji zadania 1 – stworzenie anglojęzycznych wersji wydawanych publikacji w 2018 roku.

The translation was financed with funds made available by the Ministry of Finance and Higher Education under contract No. 661/P-DUN/2018 of 13 July 2018 as a part of the execution of task 1: the creation of English-language versions of the issued publications in 2018.