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## Where Only the "Decent People" Live : the Gypsy "Menace" and Forging a Neoliberal Utopia in a Czech Postsocialist City

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Václav Walach

## Where Only the „Decent People” Live: The Gypsy „Menace” and Forging a Neoliberal Utopia in a Czech Postsocialist City\*

On 15 IX 2011, in the time of the groundbreaking „Events in Šluknov Hook”<sup>1</sup>, the mayor of Havířov Zdeněk Osmanczyk called an exceptional meeting on urban security.<sup>2</sup> The representatives of city council, state and municipal police, social services’ department, citizen commissions, and housing services gathered to discuss the situation of so-called „problem localities” in the city, that is, the areas inhabited to a certain degree by impoverished Roma. Increase in crime and growing fears of the arrival of additional „socially maladjusted”<sup>3</sup> people causing others to vacate flats in SEL were identified as main public concerns.

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\* Author enormously thankful to Charlotte Krass. Without her help, this paper would not simply be half as good as it is now. However, all shortcomings are mine.

<sup>1</sup> In Šluknovsko region, it was for the first time in last twenty years when the Czech public, not far-fight activists, initiated the mass protests, partly violent, against the local Romani population. In total, 18 demonstrations took place between 15 VIII and 2 X 2011 and shaped significantly the perception of Czech-Romani coexistence as well as the role of politicians within the problematics. MV ČR, *Události ve Šluknovském výběžku*, Praha 2011, <http://www.mvcr.cz> (31 VIII 2014); See also: A. Kluknavská, L. Zagibová, *Neprispôsobiví Rómovia a slušná väčšina? Spravodajský diskurz po násilných udalostiach na severe Českej republiky 2011*, „Středoevropské politické studie” 2013, vol. 15; M. Křížková, *Analýza mediálního zobrazení Romů v českých médiích od začátku července 2011 do konce května 2012*, Praha 2012.

<sup>2</sup> Havířov is a city in North Moravia, the Czech Republic. With almost 80 000 inhabitants, it belongs to the largest cities in the country. It has served historically to accommodate people working in nearby industries. Currently going through de-industrialisation, it faces a variety of problems typical for post-industrial regions such as higher unemployment, welfare assistance dependency, economic emigration, crime, etc. Since 2010, the city is governed by the left-wing coalition composed of Czech Social Democratic Party, Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia and The Movement for Havířov.

<sup>3</sup> Many authors have uncovered that the term of the „socially maladjusted” functions as a politically correct code for Roma. B. Vacková et al., „Za čistší město”: *Problémové lokality a jejich obyvatelé z pohledu místní politiky a správy*, „Sociologický časopis” 2011, vol. 47, p. 645-646; K. Čada, *Social Exclusion of the Roma and Czech Society*, [in:] *The Gypsy „Menace”: Populism*

Several weeks later, discussion resumed in two public meetings held in the districts containing „problem localities” where residents protested against ongoing Romani immigration and accused the largest housing landlord RPG Byty of deliberately participating in the process. Although the firm’s spokesperson denied the observable movement of Roma from other regions, both he and the mayor expressed a commitment to address the local community’s people’s concerns. In Osmanczyk’s words, the city’s government *ends with tolerance*<sup>4</sup> and, among a variety of forthcoming security measures, considers not only preventing ‘undesirable’ people from settling but also displacing *those Havířov inhabitants who refuse to adapt to a native, decent lifestyle*.<sup>5</sup> *Those who don’t respect plain rules, those who don’t behave in accordance with law, can’t live in our city*.<sup>6</sup>

Drawing attention to the politics of security in which Roma play the role of „suitable enemy”<sup>7</sup>, this paper contributes to a recent body of scholarship in Czech academia which examines the empirics of „actually existing neoliberalism”<sup>8</sup> in a postsocialist context.<sup>9</sup> My paper focuses on how the construction of the *Gypsy „menace”*<sup>10</sup> enhances the neoliberal revolution from below. I argue that the ethnicized image of urban outcasts dwelling in „problem localities”<sup>11</sup> facilitates the

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*and New Anti-Gypsy Politics*, M. Stewart (ed.), London 2012, pp. 67–80; Social Watch, *Česká republika: Chaos a nekompetence v dalším roce krize. Národní zpráva české koalice Social Watch za rok 2013*, Praha 2014, pp. 9–10.

<sup>4</sup> L. Běčák, *Havířov končí s tolerováním problémových lidí*, „Karvinský a havířovský deník“, 13 X 2011, [http://karvinsky.denik.cz/zpravy\\_region/20111013havirov-byty-rpg.html](http://karvinsky.denik.cz/zpravy_region/20111013havirov-byty-rpg.html) (31 VIII 2014).

<sup>5</sup> P. Bartíková, *Havířovu dochází trpělivost. Problémové lidi vytěsníme, slíbil primátor*, 13 X 2011, [http://ostrava.idnes.cz/havirovu-dochazi-trpelivost-problemove-lidi-vytesnime-slibil-primator-1ol-/ostrava-zpravy.aspx?c=A111013\\_144437\\_ostrava-zpravy\\_jog](http://ostrava.idnes.cz/havirovu-dochazi-trpelivost-problemove-lidi-vytesnime-slibil-primator-1ol-/ostrava-zpravy.aspx?c=A111013_144437_ostrava-zpravy_jog) (31 VIII 2014).

<sup>6</sup> L. Běčák, *Havířov končí s tolerováním problémových lidí*, [http://karvinsky.denik.cz/zpravy\\_region/20111013havirov-byty-rpg.html](http://karvinsky.denik.cz/zpravy_region/20111013havirov-byty-rpg.html) (31 VIII 2014).

<sup>7</sup> N. Christie, *Suitable Enemy*, [in:] *Abolitionism: Toward a Non-Repressive Approach to Crime*, H. Bianchi, R. von Swaaningen (eds.), Amsterdam 1986.

<sup>8</sup> N. Brenner, N. Theodore, *Cities and the Geographies of Actually Existing Neoliberalism*, „Anti-pode” 2002, vol. 34, pp. 349–379.

<sup>9</sup> J. Paul, L. Lupták, *Enemy within: Constructing Social Exclusion in the Czech Media, 2010–2011*. The Paper presented at the international conference „Re-inventing Eastern Europe”, Vienna, 17–19 V 2012; L. Toušek, *Prostor, transgrese a bezdomovectví*, Plzeň 2013; L. Lupták, *Bezpečnostný diskurz v SR: Lokalizácia neoliberálneho vládnutia v postsocialistickom barbaricu*, Plzeň 2011; L. Lupták et al., *Neoliberalismus a marginalita: studie z českého reálkapitalismu*, Brno 2013; O. Hejnal, L. Lupták, *Desekuritizácia bezdomovectva v postsocialistickom urbánnom laboratoriu*, [in:] *Bezpečnostné fórum*, Banská Bystrica 2013, p. 478–488; P. Krčál, J. Mertl, *(Neo)liberální governmentalita v České republice*, Brno 2013; P. Krčál, *Vztah instituce trestu a legitimacy: Od divadla krutosti k neoliberální revoluci*, „Acta FF ZČU v Plzni” 2012, pp. 39–58.

<sup>10</sup> M. Stewart, *The Gypsy „Menace”: Populism and New Anti-Gypsy Politics*, London 2012.

<sup>11</sup> B. Vacková et al., „*Za čistší město*”: *Problémové lokality a jejich obyvatelé z pohledu místní politiky a správy*, „Sociologický časopis” 2011, vol. 47, p. 633–656; L. Wacquant, *Urban Outcasts: A Comparative Sociology of Advanced Marginality*, Cambridge 2008.

implementation of security practices intended to increase penetrating surveillance by strengthening the penal wing of the state. To analyse how the mayor's goal of creating the city where *only decent people will live*<sup>12</sup> is to be materialized, the concepts of social panopticism and ban-opticon are applied.

There is an abundance of activities targeting the „problem localities” in Havířov. Thus, this analysis is purposefully selective to engage with only the most visible examples of repressive measures imposed or advocated by the local government. Data are drawn from local and national media sources, official government announcements and documents, semi-structured and open-ended interviews with councillors, bureaucrats, and private sector representatives, as well as participant observation during the local assembly's meetings in the election period between 2010 and 2014 and also in the „problem localities”.

### **Conceptual Framework: Introducing Neoliberal Postsocialism**

As is the case with the most (if not all) concepts in the social sciences, neoliberalism and postsocialism defy an easy specification; despite a voluminous body of attempts, no single definition is adequate.<sup>13</sup> Scholars have attempted to define neoliberalism, through structural, governmental and cultural approaches (or combinations of these approaches pursuing a theoretical totality).<sup>14</sup> Postsocialism has also been defined in terms of the delimitation of specific geographico-temporal situation, a set of cultural processes or the issue of economic differences in general.<sup>15</sup> As would be expected, no lesser predicament arises when these concepts are employed to make sense of their entwinement with Central European countries.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>12</sup> B. Kelnerová, *Primátor města Havířova: Ve městě budou žít jen slušní lidé!*, Ostrava 2011, <http://www.infoportaly.cz/karvinsko/havirov/8442-primator-mesta-havirova-ve-meste-budou-zit-jen-slusni-lide> (31 VIII 2014).

<sup>13</sup> See, e.g., N. Brenner et al., *Variiegated Neoliberalization: Geographies, Modalities, Pathways*, „Global Networks” 2010, vol. 10, pp. 182-222; T. Tehlen, *Shortage, Fuzzy Properties and Other Dead Ends in the Anthropological Analysis of (Post)Socialism*, „Critique of Anthropology” 2012, vol. 31, pp. 43-61.

<sup>14</sup> M. Hilgers, *The Three Anthropological Approaches to Neoliberalism*, „International Social Science Journal” 2010, vol. 61, 351-364; O. Hejnal, *Úvod do studia neoliberalismu: Inspirace pro antropologii*, „Antropowebzin” 2014, vol. 7, p. 33-47.

<sup>15</sup> K. Horschelmann, A. Stenning, *Ethnographies of Postsocialist Change*, „Progress in Human Geography” 2000, vol. 32, pp. 3-29; S. Brandstädter, *Traditional Spaces: Postsocialism as Cultural Process (Introduction)*, „Critique of Anthropology” 2007, vol. 27, pp. 131-145; K. Verdery, *What Was Socialism and What Comes Next?*, Princeton 1996.

<sup>16</sup> P. Vašát, *Kdo je a není bezdomovec? Představy bezdomovce v praxi organizací poskytujících sociální služby*, [in:] *Neoliberalismus a marginalita: studie z českého reálkapitalismu*, L. Lupták et al. (eds.), Brno 2013, pp. 117-121.

This study however is not an exercise in a theoretical problem-solving. Rather, it applies a perspective that sheds light on certain aspects of the management of 'problem localities' in a postsocialist city. For the purpose of this paper, I define post-socialism in Central European as the era of „worldview transition from Marxism to neoliberalism”<sup>17</sup> – the age of „liberalism after communism”, which „differs from Marxism chiefly in that, instead of socialism, it sanctifies capitalism”<sup>18</sup>. As a „*philosophy*” of *capitalist restoration*<sup>19</sup>, neoliberalism has infused political governance in the regime successors of actually existing socialisms and replaced the previous ideology with the „ideas and practices centred on an increased role for the free market, flexibility in labour markets and a reconfiguration of state welfare activities”<sup>20</sup>.

This process was initially marked by the privatisation and liberalisation of centrally-planned economies that encompassed „one of the most if not the most severe economic crisis in modern history”<sup>21</sup>, out of which deepening social inequalities, along with the dissemination of „new social risks” such as „poverty, destitution, loss of social status and social exclusion”<sup>22</sup>, originated. This development induced a need to regulate and mitigate urban disorders bubbling at the lower end of class structure. This social challenge is addressed by the very same actor that was indispensable in the top-down neoliberal revolution: the state. The reinforcement of the state's penal wing on behalf of „security” is thus conceived as an inevitable consequence of neoliberal transformation, for which Loïc Wacquant coined the term of centaur state.

As an entity comprised of half man and half horse, the neoliberal state is distinguished by dual *and* contradictory approaches to its citizens on the opposite ends of class structure. While the dominant are able to fully enjoy the benefits of the „laissez-faire-et-laissez-passer” doctrine, the dominated are subjected to paternalist and intrusive supervision, as their freedoms and rights are restricted by the mesh of disciplining institutional practices. Hence, the state's implementation of the market fiction in an economic (the commodification of welfare services) and social domain (social assistance is conditioned by un-paid or low-paid jobs and other activities) is systematically accompanied by the expansion of penal institutions that govern the social insecurity inflicted upon the poor.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>17</sup> I. Šrubař, *Neoliberalismus, transformace a občanská společnost*, „Sociologický časopis” 1996, vol. 32, p. 67.

<sup>18</sup> J. Szacki, *Liberalism after Communism*, Budapest 1995, p. 6.

<sup>19</sup> K. Kosík, *Poslední eseje*, Praha 2004, p. 26.

<sup>20</sup> K. Willis et al., *Introduction: Social Justice and Neoliberalism*, [in:] *Social Justice and Neoliberalism. Global Perspectives*, A. Smith (ed.), London 2008, p. 1.

<sup>21</sup> I. Szelenyi, *Cities under Socialism – And After*, [in:] *Cities after Socialism: Urban and Regional Change and Conflict in Post-Socialist Societies*, G. Andrusz et al. (eds.), Oxford 1996, p. 309.

<sup>22</sup> J. Keller, *Nová sociální rizika a proč se jim nevyhneme*, Praha 2011, p. 191.

<sup>23</sup> For Wacquant, the last element of neoliberal project is a cultural trope of individual responsibility that functions as a motivating discourse and glue pasting all above-mentioned components together. L. Wacquant, *Three Steps to a Historical Anthropology of Actually Existing*

In Central European countries, the Roma occupy a privileged position among the most marginalized communities. Although they had been disadvantaged, compared to the majority of society, for the past century, their standard of life decreased significantly after 1989.<sup>24</sup> This was mainly driven by labour market re-structuralization, but also longstanding ethnic prejudices and stereotypes exerted an impact. Given that Roma were employed in mostly low-skilled jobs, and the real-socialist regimes failed to raise their educational level, they soon found themselves on the margins or exterior of the post-industrial labour market.<sup>25</sup> The income decline has impacted on the territorial concentration of poor Roma. Strikingly, the formation of many spatially bounded, sometimes isolated, and ethnoracially stigmatized locations has been frequently influenced also by the active participation of local political elite.<sup>26</sup>

A reason for this might be located in the functions that the existence of „problem localities” fulfils. First, it allows the separation of unpopular and dreaded social categories from the „normal” population. Second, it makes possible the extraction of economic and symbolic value. The cost of living is paradoxically more expensive, as inhabitants generally pay higher rents, overcome an underfinanced public infrastructure, and are targeted by various predatory strategies, be it usury or gambling provision. Having gained the status of the least popular social group in the Czech Republic<sup>27</sup>, the Roma serve as a „suitable enemy” – they are

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*Neoliberalism*, „Social Anthropology” 2012, vol. 20, pp. 66-79; L. Wacquant, *Punishing the Poor: The Neoliberal Government of Social Insecurity*, Durnham 2009, pp. 304-314.

<sup>24</sup> J. Ladányi, I. Szélényi, *Patterns of Exclusion: Constructing Gypsy Ethnicity and the Making of an Underclass in Transitional Societies of Europe*, New York 2006; M. Stewart, *Deprivation, the Roma and „the underclass”*, [in:] *Postsocialism. Ideals, Ideologies and Practices in Eurasia*, C. M. Hann (ed.), London 2002, s. 133-155; N. Sigona, *The Roma in Neoliberal Europe: Anti-Gypsyism, Poverty, and Limits of Ethnopolitics*, [in:] *Criminalisation and Victimization of Migrants in Europe*, S. Palidda (ed.), Genova 2008; Z. D. Barany, *The East European Gypsies: Regime Change, Marginality, and Ethnopolitics*, Cambridge 2002.

<sup>25</sup> In the 1970s, the „male employment rate for Roma in the Czech lands equalled the national rate and since, as heavy manual worker in a socialist state their wages are generally above average”, whereas, in 2001, their unemployment rate increases to 45% approximately. W. Guy, *Ways of Looking at Roma: The Case of Czechoslovakia*, [in:] *Gypsies: An Interdisciplinary Reader*, D. Tong (ed.), London 1998 (1975), pp. 44; T. Sirovátka, *Exkluze Romů na trhu práce*, „Sociální studia” 2003, vol. 3, pp. 11-34.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. A. Baršová, *Problémy bydlení etnických menšin a trendy k rezidenční segregaci v České republice*, [in:] *Romové ve městě*, P. Víšek (ed.), Praha 2002, pp. 3-42; A. Baršová, *Etnická segregace v bydlení*, Praha 2003, pp. 40-55; I. Šimíková, I. Vašečka, *Mechanismy sociálního vyčleňování romských komunit na lokální úrovni a nástroje integrace*, Brno 2004; M. Růžička, *Urbanizace chudoby a etnicity v socialistickém a (post)socialistickém městě*, [in:] *Československé město včera a dnes: každodennost, reprezentace, výzkum*, B. Vacková et al. (eds.), Červený Kostelec and Brno 2010, pp. 137-158.

<sup>27</sup> V. Walach, *Czescy Romowie. Społeczne wykluczenie a bezpieczeństwo. Spojrzzenie z drugiej strony konfliktu etnicznego*, [in:] *Kwestia romska w kontekście bezpieczeństwa wewnętrznego*, E. Szyszlak, T. Szyszlak (eds.), Wrocław 2013, pp. 217.

simultaneously a „symbol of and target for all social anxieties”<sup>28</sup> – whose countering creates collective solidarity on the punishing side. The „scapegoating” of people in „problem localities” moreover enforces a particular *raison d'être* of political elite. As the promise of securing public order and protecting the „decent people” is at stake, politicians can take advantage of the electorate’s anxieties to achieve their political objectives (which often align with the prospect of re-election).<sup>29</sup>

The theorisation of a Czech variant of postsocialist neoliberalism in which „problem localities” partake of its „best visible expression”<sup>30</sup> returns us to the ways through which urban outcasts are controlled and managed. Within this constellation, there are two distinctive security apparatuses: social panopticism<sup>31</sup> and ban-opticon<sup>32</sup>. They both constitute a specific form of neoliberal government orienting the state institutions, both in security field and social assistance, towards an „ever-more precise and penetrating form of punitive surveillance”<sup>33</sup>. They however differ in purpose.

As Zygmunt Bauman contends: „Surveillance technology today develops on two fronts, serving two opposite strategic objectives: confinement (or *fencing in*) on one front line, exclusion (or *fencing out*) on the other.”<sup>34</sup> Considering how those under surveillance are seen as socially and economically „redundant”, he continues by elaborating the functional aspects of these security apparatuses:

The principal purpose of the ban-opticon is to make sure that the waste is separated from decent product and earmarked for transportation to a refuse tip. Once it is on it, the [social] panopticon will see to it that the waste stays there – preferably until biodegradation completes its course.<sup>35</sup>

Although they usually go hand in hand, the confinement and exclusion of urban outcasts represent the two main strategies under which various security measures can be subsumed. Far from being an isolated fragment, the case of Havířov is just one example of a broader trend in the Czech Republic (and

<sup>28</sup> L. Wacquant, „Suitable Enemies”: *Foreigners and Immigrants in the Prisons of Europe*, „Punishment & Society” 1999, vol. 1, p. 219.

<sup>29</sup> M. Růžička, L. Lupták, *Těžební limity prolomeny: Extrakce ekonomického a politického kapitálu z romského ghetta*, [in:] *Neoliberalismus a marginalita: studie z českého reálnokapitalismu*, L. Lupták et al. (eds.), Brno 2013, pp. 192-207.

<sup>30</sup> *Neoliberalismus a marginalita...*, pp. 209.

<sup>31</sup> L. Wacquant, *Ordering Insecurity: Social Polarization and the Punitive Surge*, „Radical Philosophy Review” 2008, vol. 11, pp. 22.

<sup>32</sup> D. Bigo, *Globalized (In)security: The Field and the Ban-opticon*, [in:] *Terror, Insecurity and Liberty. Illiberal Practices of Liberal Regimes after 9/11*, D. Bigo, A. Tsoukala (eds.), London 2008, pp. 31-33.

<sup>33</sup> L. Wacquant, *op.cit.*

<sup>34</sup> Z. Bauman, D. Lyon, *Liquid Surveillance: A Conversation*, Cambridge 2013, pp. 58.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 60.

throughout Europe) towards more repressive urban policy. The Union of Towns and Municipalities of the Czech Republic<sup>36</sup> has recently called for „faster and more consistent punishment of crimes and misdemeanors”, because „a group of people have been created who suffer a feeling of so-called *impunity*”, and the „fast execution of punishment, even in the case of petty crime, has an educational and warning effect on the whole society”<sup>37</sup>.

The subsequent analysis is focused on the role of the municipality as an actor in the state’s neoliberal transformation. As the local politicians are pressured by the public worrying about urban disorders caused by the implementation of the neoliberal project from above, they may feel unable to cope with them and thus demand the allegedly missing repressive instruments to be grounded in law, sustaining the neoliberal revolution from below. If this anxiety is re/constructed as the „Gypsy menace”, it has, I claim, a facilitating effect on the process vis-à-vis a widely shared socio-symbolic structure in which the term „Gypsy” is equated with a derelict and disordered quality of living. It is for this reason that the existence and severity of „Gypsy menace” stereotype often goes unchallenged and contributes to crafting the centaur state.

### **Empirical Analysis: The Securitization of Romani localities in Havířov**

Claudia Aradau suggests that the „securitization of the Roma in the European space does not rely on an explicit discourse of friend and enemy”, but is rather entwined with a discourse of „cleanliness and dirt”<sup>38</sup>. The Czech context also conforms to such a view, even though the two discourses seem to intermingle at times.<sup>39</sup> In this case, the marginalised Roma tend to be constructed as a „security

<sup>36</sup> The Union is a non-governmental organisation that „associates approximately 2500 municipalities and towns” and thus „represent more than 70% of the total population of the Czech Republic” in the legislative process. Havířov is a member of the organization and its mayor is part of the Union’s chairmanship. Svaz obcí a měst ČR, *Union of Towns and Municipalities of the Czech Republic*, 2014, <http://www.smocr.cz/default.aspx?languageCode=EN> (31 VIII 2014).

<sup>37</sup> Svaz obcí a měst České republiky, *Petice ve věci řešení problematiky veřejného pořádku a sociálních záležitostí*, Praha 2014, pp. 1.

<sup>38</sup> C. Aradau, *Security as Universality? The Roma Contesting Security in Europe*, [in:] *Contesting Security: Strategies and Logics*, T. Balzacq (ed.), Abingdon (forthcoming), p. 9.

<sup>39</sup> Naturally, the question is how to differentiate properly between the discourses. At what point do Roma cease to be „only” a problem of impurity and become an „enemy”? Perhaps, a way out of this complicated dilemma lies in the distinction between stigmatization and securitization, saving the latter for the explicit re/construction of stigmatized social category as a threat by the exceptional state practices. See V. Walach, *Sociálně vyloučené lokality mezi stigmatizací a sekuritizací: Výzkumná re-orientace*, [in:] *Mladá politologie: Sborník z konference studentů*



risk for the majority<sup>40</sup> because of their reputed antisocial behaviour, including „maladjustment”, „parasitism”, „mess”, „vandalism”, „noise”, „dirt”, „disorder”, „crime”, etc.<sup>41</sup> Hence, the Romani dwellings are conceived as having high rates of crime and possessing „social pathologies” generally „higher than... average”<sup>42</sup>.

The Havířov case is no exception here. There are four „problem localities”: „socially excluded localities” in the Šumbark and Prostřední Suchá districts and the Merkur and Impulz dormitories.<sup>43</sup> In spite of the fact that it is usually *not just Roma [but also] the problem white people who fell down to the social bottom have been grouped there together*<sup>44</sup>, there is a tendency to perceive them all as „Romani localities”.<sup>45</sup> Additionally, they are widely seen as *risk localities*<sup>46</sup>, as places where *violence, drugs, alcohol and aggression are everywhere*<sup>47</sup>. The fear of the „Gypsy menace” became particularly significant in the autumn 2011 when night buses transported the „socially maladjusted” from different cities in North Moravia, then in the Šluknovsko region to the Havířov „problem localities”, urged the city’s government to react. Although the story was rejected as a rumour, the mayor decided to take seriously both increasing crime and mushrooming complaints about „Romani’s delinquency” and appease the *decent* people of the city.

Currently, the priority is the security of citizens. Increasing crime, aggression, the impudence of chiefly, but not only Romani youth, lead us to adopting a number of measures of repressive character too.<sup>48</sup>

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*doktorských studijních programů v oblasti politických věd*, P. Krčál, V. Naxera (eds.), Plzeň 2013, pp. 197-208.

<sup>40</sup> GAC, *Sociální vyloučení Romů a česká společnost. Klíč k posílení integrační politiky obcí*, Praha 2008, pp. 25.

<sup>41</sup> R. Weinerová, *Anti-Gypsyism in the Czech Republic: Czechs’ Perception of Roma in Cultural Stereotypes*, „Acta Ethnographica Hungarica” 59, pp. 211-221.

<sup>42</sup> Úřad vlády ČR, *Strategie boje proti sociálnímu vyloučení 2011-2015*, Praha 2011, pp. 8.

<sup>43</sup> The first two have a character of parts of neighbourhood and are officially registered by the state as areas inhabited by poor Roma. The last two partake of single hotel buildings and present a last option for people excluded from regular forms of housing to stay out of the streets. All the estates are completely or partly owned by a billionaire Zdeněk Bakala and are administered through the companies RPG Byty and Asental Group respectively.

<sup>44</sup> L. Běčák, *Lidé mají stále větší strach z Romů*, [http://karvinsky.denik.cz/zpravy\\_region/201110-915exodus.html](http://karvinsky.denik.cz/zpravy_region/201110-915exodus.html) (31 VIII 2014).

<sup>45</sup> Cf. B. Vacková et al., „*Za čistší město*”: *Problémové lokality a jejich obyvatelé z pohledu místní politiky a správy*, „Sociologický časopis” 2011, vol. 47, p. 638.

<sup>46</sup> Odbor sociálních věcí Statutárního města Havířova, *Koncepce prevence kriminality na léta 2012-2015 v Havířově*, Havířov 2012, pp. 8-9.

<sup>47</sup> Sociotrendy, *Situční analýza vybraných sociálně vyloučených lokalitv obci Havířov*, Olomouc 2011, pp. 98.

<sup>48</sup> A. Vidiševská, *Komunální politici to nemají jednoduché, tvrdí starosta Havířova*, „Parlamentní listy”, 30 XI 2011, <http://www.parlamentnilisty.cz/zpravy/Komunalni-politici-to-nemaji-jednoduche-tdi-starosta-Havirova-215445> (31 VIII 2014).

It is impossible to have a certain minority group of inhabitants privileged at the expense of the majority. Laws hold good for everyone, and it is necessary to enforce justly that everybody abides given rules.<sup>49</sup>

We demand much more vigorous approach from the municipal police in dealing with cases related to the safe life of our inhabitants not only in „problem quarters”. Who does not want to uphold the rules of decent behaviour, he is not welcomed in the city.<sup>50</sup>

Thus declared Osmanczyk, indicating whom he supposes to be the most important source of insecurity. Following this, he led an unparalleled series of acts directed at the „problem localities”. Prior to the analysis of their character, a few issues need clarification, namely how the problem of in/security is constructed and legitimised with respect to the mindset of local political actors.

The ways in which the interviewed officials understood the issue were complex, and sometimes even contradictory. There is, however, a common trait which seems to underpin the whole semantic construction: the idea of „bad Gypsy”<sup>51</sup>. This is defined as „ethno-culturally different Rom” who are „by its nature ... mal-adjusted to the norms and *normality* of society”, and, it is argued, cannot or „do not want to adjust”<sup>52</sup>, therefore rendering them „unadaptable”. Though the exceptions of *decent Roma* are always mentioned, they appear only to confirm the rule according to which a Rom is equated with disorder by definition. To illustrate this point, a councillor urged that:

The nature of these people will not change. They will not change. Roma are Roma and their nature will not change. And if even small children, I am not even talking about smoking, seven-year old kids usually smoke, but [about] how rude they are. They stop a person, a woman: „Give me a crown, a cigarette” and if she does not, they scold her. And if you say something, so there is a scream out of a window, as though you hurt them. It is just unacceptable.

For the interviewee, there are the two features of permanent Romani nature: bad manners and vindictiveness based on collective solidarity among the ethnic’s members. As it is also apparent from the following quotation, these cultural characteristics are seen as the reason why the interethnic co-existence is so difficult:

<sup>49</sup> L. Běčák, *Lidé mají stále větší strach z Romů*, [http://karvinsky.denik.cz/zpravy\\_region/20110-915exodus.html](http://karvinsky.denik.cz/zpravy_region/20110-915exodus.html) (31 VIII 2014).

<sup>50</sup> Idem, *Policie v Havířově musí měnit systém své práce*, [http://karvinsky.denik.cz/zpravy\\_region/20111021policie.html](http://karvinsky.denik.cz/zpravy_region/20111021policie.html) (31 VIII 2014).

<sup>51</sup> N. Mappes-Niediek, *Chudáci Romové, zlí Cikáni*, Brno 2013.

<sup>52</sup> O. Hejnal, *Nacionalismus, multikulturalismus, sociální vyloučení a „sociálně nepřizpůsobiví”: Analýza dominantního politického diskurzu v České republice (2006-2011)*, „Antropowebzin” 2012, vol. 5, pp. 62, italics in original.

They live for today ... They are natural people. They are used to live by what is today ... They are used to live outside from spring to autumn, to live loudly, and [especially] those people who moved there about 50 years ago and want to finish their days there have suddenly a problem, because there is singing all night long, campfires are built between houses, and it is not just about singing with a guitar today but rather about the music played through speakers which, really, is shouting until someone calls the municipal police. Thus, they muted it, but as soon as they leave, it is on again. This unfortunately has the consequences that these people even do not call the police anymore, since they have, I don't know, cars scratched, windows smashed, cellars robbed and so. Hence, it is a very unpleasant habitation with this community.

In this passage, the „savage” nature of Roma is identified as the cause of cultural conflict between Romani and non-Romani inhabitants who are almost always constructed as victims who must be defended. The latter are referred to as *natives*, while, the category of *newcomers* or *immigrants* is reserved for the Roma. This is an important distinction. It is said that the Roma used to live in Šumbark and Prostřední Suchá together with ethnic Czechs for decades with no trouble. The situation has however changed, as the Romani population of the localities has increased. The „Gypsy menace” thus has a substantive territorial dimension; the more Roma live in a place, the bigger the problem of security:

I think that the mentality of this community is different from the mentality of the majority of society, and it unfortunately multiplies, as the number of these people multiplies on one spot. This means that if there are two or three Romani families somewhere, then neither a problem with the violation of the silent hours, nor with the public order, nor with the crime is so appreciable, as if the bigger set of these people concentrate on one spot.

This „multiplication” of Roma has a peculiar side-effect. It causes the departure of the majority population from such localities, making the problem of insecurity there even more acute. A councillor of Havířov Ivana Kožmínová said:

I have to state that the owner of RPG apartments does not care whom he moves to the houses. [His] tenants will further produce poverty in these areas. What will happen when the state will stop paying fat welfare benefits on housing? It is necessary to deal with that and search for levers. Otherwise, the people who do not want to live here will move from the city and the minority will become the majority.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> L. Běčák, *V Havířově se v pondělí sešli zastupitelé*, [http://karvinsky.denik.cz/zpravy\\_region/20110919zastupitelstvo.html](http://karvinsky.denik.cz/zpravy_region/20110919zastupitelstvo.html) (31 VIII 2014).

In sum, according to research participants, insecurity derives from the nature of the Roma, which tends to intensify, as it Roma populations accumulate in certain areas. This definition has two implications: First, the Romani nature is unchangeable, so the acts of urban disorder will take place and threatened ethnic Czechs will leave the city unless, and second, one changes the external conditions upon which these acts are partly dependent. Roma therefore might be ‘unadapt-able’, but not unmanageable, and this is the point where the state comes in.

In the second half of 2011, the Havířov government devised twenty measures to remedy the urban security condition, ranging from strengthening the police force and increasing the control of social welfare recipients to expanding the city’s CCTV system and buying out the estates where the poor Roma either live or have fun.<sup>54</sup> Three years later, some were indeed put into effect, while other remained unrealized. This is partly, because, even if there seems to be a consensus to „do something” with the „problem localities” among the officials, there is a discrepancy among officials over what they deem to be the most appropriate approach.

This was particularly evident in the discussion on the proposal of the city’s government to purchase the Merkur dormitory to prevent the deterioration of security in the area during the assembly meeting on 23 VI 2014. Although considered prevalently as, to quote a councillor, a *hotbed of criminal elements*, the proposal did not pass the vote. The opponents primarily objected on the basis that it would be irresponsible to run into debt at the end of election period, as the estates were too expensive for the city’s budget. The poor technical state of buildings was also mentioned. A councillor then asked what would happen to the people from the dormitory, explicitly addressing the suspicion that the fundamental motivation for the take-over was to evict the urban outcasts out of the city. The same ban-optical logic was articulated by an interviewed councillor:

Of course, when mister mayor buys Merkur, then it will go to the media and mister mayor will be presented in the role of ordinary people protector. It was indeed expensive, but he did it in order to improve the security situation. Of course, for us as the opposition, it is very bad to be against it, as we know that the majority of people is upset both at Merkur and Impulz and wants to put them away. But the question is where they will go afterwards. The problem might just get into another region of Havířov.

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<sup>54</sup> L. Běčák, *Havířov končí s tolerováním problémových lidí*, [http://karvinsky.denik.cz/zpravy\\_region/20111013havirov-byty-rpg.html](http://karvinsky.denik.cz/zpravy_region/20111013havirov-byty-rpg.html) (31 VIII 2014); P. Daňková, *Nové policejní služebny v problémových částech Havířova*, <http://www.ceskatelevize.cz/zpravodajstvi-ostrava/zpravy/157567-nove-policejni-sluzebny-v-problemovych-castech-havirova/> (31 VIII 2014); B. Kelnerová, *Chceme žít v bezpečí! To přišlo říct na veřejnou schůzi zhruba tři sta občanů Prostřední Suché*, <http://www.infoportaly.cz/karvinsko/havirov/8400-chceme-zit-v-bezpecito-prislo-riect-na-verejnou-schuzi-zhruba-tri-sta-obcanu-prostredni-suche> (31 VIII 2014).

This was not the first attempt to regulate urban disorders by intervening into the business infrastructure. The city's government wanted to purchase the Bivoj bar where mainly the Šumbark Roma come to dance on weekends. Conceived again as a conflict between security and economy, the intention was refused by the assembly. The more successful ban-optical revision was introduced in the area of municipal housing administered by Městská realitní kancelář<sup>55</sup>. The existing waiting-list system was changed in favour of a more selective and manageable process in which only those who were employed, have no debts and no previous housing issues would be able to acquire a tenancy contract. As former director of Městská realitní agentura and councillor Pavel Merta said:

Now we proceed in the way that we post the list of apartments for rent and then we assess candidates. We are interested in their indebtedness, reasons why they left the previous residence, if they are employed, etc. We hereby try to make the apartments occupied by the promising inhabitants.<sup>56</sup>

To assure that the accommodation clients will remain „promising” (whatever it is supposed to mean), the close-knit collaboration between the Městská realitní kancelář and the municipal police was introduced. Consequently, every caretaker was assigned a policeman to contact if he encounters any form of disorder.<sup>57</sup> The municipal police, the state police, and the social assistance bureaucrats also cooperated with the RPG Byty on the practice called *Zero Tolerance* on 10 IV 2012. The goal of this was to uncover the illegal inhabitants residing in the property. Out of 120 apartments, about 80% were controlled and only three cases that violated house rules were found.<sup>58</sup> As a result, nine tenancy agreements were terminated in 2012.<sup>59</sup> The same approach was adopted by the municipal government. However, as the mayor pointed out, being tough on disorder is „complicated” by law:

We have Mrs. X on the Y street who made there such a mess that they [her family] almost beat down policemen. We did not extend the tenancy contract, and she did not move away, [but] the house did. There was also a seizure, a judicial decision, she appealed against it, and this all in six-month periods. It has been a year, and she is still there. People are disgusted and criticize us, but we cannot do anything with it. I simply cannot go there with guys and throw her away. It ought to be like that, because that's the only way. Here, the state just provides a help not to those

<sup>55</sup> Literally: Municipal Real Estate Agency.

<sup>56</sup> K. Piechowicz, *Co se zchátralými domy na Šumbarku?*, „Šumbarák” 2014, no. 2, pp. 3

<sup>57</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>58</sup> L. Pristáš, *Bytmistři RPG a policisté provedli šárú v domech ve starém Šumbarku*, [http://karvinsky.denik.cz/zpravy\\_region/120412\\_nulova\\_tolerance\\_havirov\\_sumbark\\_rpg.html](http://karvinsky.denik.cz/zpravy_region/120412_nulova_tolerance_havirov_sumbark_rpg.html) (31 VIII 2014).

<sup>59</sup> K. Piechowicz, *Ohlédnutí za uplynulým rokem: Šumbarští udělali kus práce*, „Šumbarák” 2012, no. 1.

who need it, but it provides a help largely to those who abuse it, to those who have not worked for years and would not work. There is a generation which does not know what responsibility is.

The legal protection of tenants was seen as an obstacle in pursuing security. From the viewpoint of the Havířov government, the existing laws render municipalities incapable to effectively manage urban disorders and privilege the well-being of the „unadaptable” over the security of *decent* citizens. Hence, the conflict between the municipality and the state might be understood as perhaps even more important than the conflict between the municipality and the „unadaptable”. As stated above, whereas the Roma are considered a constant in the urban security equation, the state is a variable. It is therefore the state, or, more precisely, the legislatures, who need to be addressed primarily if one genuinely wants to tackle the problem of urban disorder.

This attitude is not limited to housing. The interviewees also proposed that the municipal competencies should be broadened and deepened in expelling the „problem people” out of the city and above all in regulating the welfare assistance. The first is essentially a ban-optical institution, since it is envisaged as an instrument that would keep the „unadaptable” beyond the city limits. The welfare regulation is fundamentally a panoptical device. It aims to put urban outcasts under control through the establishment of specific requirements that recipients either meet or lose welfare benefits. Answering my question what he regards as the most important measure in managing urban outcasts, a councillor suggested: „Chiefly, to tighten up the welfare system a bit. I would condition it by this: a child honestly goes to school, you help the city either through community services or in some non-profit organizations, then only you are entitled to a welfare benefit.”

The abolition of an obligation to work after 1989 is not coincidentally interpreted by some as the most problematic aspect with respect to the development of the „Romani question”. Given that the Roma have been historically related to laziness and idleness, only the state could reverse this „natural” characteristic which is also recognized as a precursor to criminal behaviour.<sup>60</sup> This probably explains a persistent endeavour to use community service as an instrument of surveillance on the side of Czech municipalities, despite a similar law that imposed a duty to work without compensation to those registered at Public Employment Office was declared unconstitutional.<sup>61</sup> Following the logic according to which the „devil finds work for idle hands”, compulsory work is deemed to be one of the

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<sup>60</sup> The above-constructed definition of Romani nature has to be thus extended by including this feature.

<sup>61</sup> T. Langášek, *ÚS zrušil tzv. veřejnou službu a některá ustanovení zákona o zdravotních službách pro rozpor s ústavou*, [http://www.usoud.cz/aktualne/?tx\\_ttnews%5Btt\\_news%5D=175&-cHash=0b63d8ae3e3d820ca1bbcd97d437e46](http://www.usoud.cz/aktualne/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=175&-cHash=0b63d8ae3e3d820ca1bbcd97d437e46) (31 VIII 2014).

most efficient ways to counter urban disorders. It is not just a matter of security prevention, but also a painstakingly crafted act of moral punishment.

We want above all punish those who abuse the social welfare, avoid work, and the state generously pays them accommodation at dormitories. Whereas people currently in community service have this job as a reward and fight for it, the majority of three hundreds of the unemployed whom we hire in our cities now will have it as a punishment.<sup>62</sup>

Behind this statement of three North Moravian mayors is this rationale: if one refuses the job, she will be temporarily discharged from Public Employment Office, losing unemployment benefits and an exemption from the payment of health insurance. When asked about this institution, Osmanczyk replied that the city's government has no authority towards the Office and vice versa. As this initiative was basically about allocating more money to communal service, its function in relation to the punishment of urban outcasts might be rather symbolic. Either way, the intention to *force people to work* was stressed, since otherwise *we will degenerate*.

A reason for this might be founded on the high importance of the value of work in the Czech society.<sup>63</sup> This, together with the widespread „tendency to blame the poor themselves for their poverty”<sup>64</sup>, further explicates the symbolic meaning of making the unemployed people to work. As a privileged ethical category, work is reconstructed as a moral examination inflicted upon free-riders. It is a base for a mechanism that allows separating those who will to work from the rest and penalizing the „undeserving” by a means of „normalizing sanctions”<sup>65</sup>. As well as to the „socially maladjusted”, this „moral crusade” is directed to the public. An interviewee remarked that she felt a *mistrust, if not even hatred* to the welfare recipients, as still more impoverished and insecure middle class people perceive them as living at their expense. Such a feeling of is typical for the late modern societies where „punishment becomes vindictive rather than instrumental and rational”<sup>66</sup>. Disciplining and punishing the urban outcasts is then a value *per se*, since it satisfies the desire for revenge.

<sup>62</sup> Město Bohumín, *Ulice Bohumína, Havířova a Karviné budou čistší, města dají práci dlouhodobě nezaměstnaným*, <http://www.parlamentnilisty.cz/politika/obce-volicum/Ulice-Bohumina-Havirova-a-Karvine-budou-cistisi-mesta-daji-praci-dlouhodobe-nezamestnanym-317020> (31 VIII 2014).

<sup>63</sup> P. Mareš, T. Katrňák, *Hodnota práce u české veřejnosti v letech 1991-2008*, „Sociální studia” 2010, vol. 7, pp. 121-143.

<sup>64</sup> P. Pakosta, L. Rabušic, *Postoje k příčinám chudoby v České republice v letech 1991 až 2008*, „Sociální studia” 2010, vol. 7, pp. 108.

<sup>65</sup> M. Foucault, *Dohlížet a trestat. Kniha o zrodu vězení*, Praha 2002, pp. 254-261.

<sup>66</sup> J. Young, *Merton with Energy, Katz with Structure: The Sociology of Vindictiveness and the Criminology of Transgression*, „Theoretical Criminology” 2003, vol. 7, pp. 1362.

Apart from the „compulsory work”, there is a variety of panoptical measures implemented in the „problem localities”. In the rest of the paper, I will take into account only those realized in the „socially excluded locality” Havířov-Šumbark where I have conducted a field research. The locality is part of the larger housing estates having a population more than 20 000. 1200 urban outcasts are predominantly concentrated in the so-called „core of socially excluded locality” where their share is estimated at the 70% of total population.<sup>67</sup> This area is unambiguously identifiable by the yellow signs situated on the houses’ corners, informing residents as well as visitors that they are under the CCTV monitoring. Interestingly, the video cameras were installed and granted by the RPG Byty to the municipal police as a part of security cooperation between the private and public sector. In conjunction with it, the company also supplied the police with a space to establish a field office which replaced the mobile office deployed at the locality’s square.

The office serves as an important component of the new police strategy „Officer Closer to Citizens”. The urban area was divided into 13 districts, and every one got its „patron” – a police officer who lives there and is personally responsible for the situation there. All officers were specifically trained to take this position.<sup>68</sup> The office also functions as a hinterland for the assistants of crime prevention. Financed from the specific programme of crime and extremism prevention of the Ministry of Interior, the two women operate within „problem localities” where they help to deal with the local people’s problems, gather information about local life, and transmit them to the superiors. The idea is that, since they are themselves Romani, they have a better access to „their” community. When I interviewed them, they complained the unfavourable weather and frostbites caused by the fact that they spend almost all the time in the streets.

The assistants also take part in maintaining public cleanliness. Keeping the streets clean is another panoptical measure. In the interviews, the recent revitalization of local square and the construction of forest park next to the locality were often related to the maxim *environment guides* as well as other reconstruction activities aimed to prevent vandalism and other disorders *à la* the broken windows theory.<sup>69</sup> They included also the removal of homemade outdoor seating which was, according to the assistants, heavily criticized, as no „standardized” benches

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<sup>67</sup> Sociotrendy, *Situační analýza vybraných sociálně vyloučených lokalitv obci Havířov*, Olomouc 2011, pp. 43; Agentura pro sociální začleňování, *Strategický plan Lokálního partnerství Havířov*, Havířov 2011, pp. 10.

<sup>68</sup> Redakce, *Čtyři roky v Havířově: Kriminalita*, „Radniční listy” 2014, no. 9, pp. 4-5.

<sup>69</sup> V. Walach, *Nulová tolerance, kontrola zločinu a sociální vyloučení: Analýza související literatury a navržení konceptuálního aparátu k výzkumu nulové tolerance v českých sociálně vyloučených lokalitách*, Praha 2014 (forthcoming).



were situated there instead. While clarifying reasons for such an action on which the RPG Byty participated, a representative insisted:

Nice weather is a problem. As soon as it's nice outside, all the unemployed go out at ten in the morning, take out kitchen and living-room furniture, and it indeed doesn't look nice. It is one thing, if there is a grandmother sitting under a tree on a bench which is there installed and designated for this purpose, and it's something else, if a Romani family takes out an armchair, chairs and put them just in front of entrance. It doesn't make a good impression, and I believe that it has a negative effect on those people. I was talking to our brokers who go there with new clients, and it's not something that you would like to see every day when you go to work and back through an alley [between the pieces of furniture].

Last but not least, the urban outcasts of Havířov-Šumbark are surveilled by the dense network of public institutions. Wacquant actually invented the concept of social panopticism in order to point out that „social services play an active role in ... criminalizing process, since they possess the administrative and human means to exercise a close-up supervision of so-called problem populations”, while they are „ever more directly subordinated to”<sup>70</sup> the penal institutions treating the urban disorders. The interviewees present Havířov as *number one on the market*, even as the *pioneers in working therapy* which were based on providing certain services in exchange for work. And although some see it as another way how to give money to the „undeserving”, the services are overall planned to be expanded.

The needs of the Roma are specifically addressed in the Community plan under the category of „persons in temporary crisis and ethnic minorities” consisting of counselling, field programmes, the institution of „Romani assistant”, a bureaucrat who is in charge of providing the social assistance in Romani communities, etc.<sup>71</sup> In Havířov-Šumbark, the city operates the counselling centre Khamoro which was specially built to offer an assistance concerning indebtedness, stabilization of finance situation, housing issues, childcare, job-seeking, and support in dealing with bureaucracies.

The city also backs up various NGOs providing social and leisure services. There is the Junák scout troop. The Don Bosko Havířov takes care of children and juveniles at the Maják youth centre. Families with children and seniors can use the services of the Salvation Army. Slezská diakonie meets the needs of homeless people, disabled people, people with mental illnesses, and others.<sup>72</sup> All these sub-

<sup>70</sup> L. Wacquant, *Ordering Insecurity: Social Polarization and the Punitive Surge*, „Radical Philosophy Review” 2008, vol. 11, pp. 22.

<sup>71</sup> Odbor sociálních věcí statutárního města Havířova, *Komunitní plán sociálních služeb a souvisejících aktivit statutárního města Havířova na období 2014-2017*, Havířov 2014, pp. 103-115.

<sup>72</sup> Agentura pro sociální začleňování, *Strategický plán Lokálního partnerství Havířov*, Havířov 2011, pp. 9.

jects then participate in the Šumbarák civic association whose activities, financed partly by the RPG Byty and encouraged by the city’s government, seek for depriving Šumbark of the „problem locality” stigma.<sup>73</sup>

## Concluding Remarks

This paper clarifies how the construction of the „Gypsy menace” contributes to the neoliberal transformation of the state from below. Analyzing the security practices of the Havířov government towards local urban outcasts, I firstly pointed out that they are basically legitimized by the idea of „bad Gypsy” – an ethnoracial other who is maladjusted to the majority of the Czech society by its specific way of life, and this is a „natural” fact that cannot be overcome. As such, the Roma are supposed to be the source of urban disorders and insecurity in the „problem localities”. The „unadaptability” however does not mean the unmanageability of the Roma. Then, I showed that the practices pursue two main orientations: to confine and exclude.

The selected instances of neoliberal governance realized in Havířov from 2010 to 2014 were scrutinized with the use of the concepts of social panopticism and ban-opticon coined by Loïc Wacquant and Didier Bigo respectively. On the one hand, there is a tendency to expel the urban outcasts beyond the city limits by purchasing the estates where they dwell, as in the case of the Merkur dormitory. The proposal however did not pass the vote of municipal assembly. The RPG Byty was more successful. In the collaboration with the police and city bureaucrats, they carried on the unannounced controls of apartments several times. Just in 2012, the company terminated nine tenancy contracts with „problem tenants”. Another example of ban-optical logic was a change in the provision of municipal accommodation. The previous waiting-list system was replaced by more selective approach which enables to exclude the jobless, people with debts, and those with the problematic past in advance.

On the other hand, the panoptical apparatus is enforced by the ever more close cooperation between the public, business, and non-governmental organizations. In Havířov-Šumbark, this partakes of granting the CCTV system to the municipal police, providing the police with a space to establish a field office, and joint cleaning activities, as for the relationship between the city and the RPG Byty. Concerning NGOs, the city government contributes to a variety of activities tackling the problem of urban disorders, be it social assistance or leisure. The city also customized the organization of the municipal police, employed the assistants of crime prevention, and opened the counselling centre directly in the area. The

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<sup>73</sup> Šumbarák, *O nás*, <http://www.sumbarak.cz/o-nas/> (31 VIII 2014).

ultimate expression of social panopticism relates to efforts to tighten up the social welfare system. This primarily means to introduce a sort of „compulsory work” that would condition the reception of welfare benefits. As a disciplining instrument, this would also produce a mechanism to separate the „deserving” poor from „undeserving”.

As however pointed out by the interviewed officials many times, the current legislative hinders the execution of desired measures. Hence, the conflict between the state and municipalities is presented as of even more importance than the conflict between the municipality and urban outcasts. For this reason, I argue that what we can observe now is a tendency to forge the neoliberal state bottom-up. If successful, the Havířov treatment of „problem population” might indeed herald a future for postsocialist cities which is far more repressive and illiberal. Given that this is hardly a unique case in contemporary Europe, more studies are definitely necessary. To grasp recent developments in regulating the poor under neoliberal postsocialism more adequately, it is especially a voice of urban outcasts that should be included in the analysis.

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