This essay is republished from *Reartikulacija* no. 7, 2009, Ljubljana, Slovenia. *Reartikulacija* no. 7 has a title *The Law of Capital: Histories of Oppression, part 1*. The number is edited by Marina Gržinić and Sebastjan Leban.

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Contention of antiromaism as a part of the process of Decoloniality of Europe

## 1.

This text gives an account of actions against Roma people carried out by Belgrade authorities in spring and summer 2009 prior to and during the international sports games *Belgrade Universiade 2009* and during the Serbian presidency of the international *Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015*. I will term these actions racist, though they are presented in the media differently. I claim that these actions are setting a frame with and within which to examine the "colonial power matrix" (that was coined by Hanibal Quijano and re-proposed by Walter Mignolo) in contemporary Europe. This matrix allows for historical patterns of racism (known from the colonies) and new forms of contemporary racism to be implemented in EU integration and security policy today. The actions I will analyze are important, as they make visible the processes of discrimination and segregation in EU and further more, they allow for a different development of the relation between capitalism and "antiromaism" that was proposed by Lorenz Aggermann, Eduard Freudmann and Can Gülcü. Finally, I will propose that the concept of *inclusion* as it is promoted by the *Roma Decade* is based precisely upon the exclusion of differences for the sake of belonging to the colonial matrix of power.

## 2. In order to expose the discriminatory processes that Roma are facing today, we will take a closer look at a paradigmatic example, the temporal conjunction of *Belgrade Universiade 2009*<sup>2</sup> and the Serbian presidency of the *Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015*. At the intersection of these events many phenomena have converged that are defining today's reality in Serbia and Europe: past Milošević's turbo-fascist<sup>3</sup> war economy elite and the present "democratic" political elite

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Antiromaism is used here instead of more widespread term Antiziganism as proposed by Lorenz Aggermann, Eduard Freudmann and Can Gülcü: "It seems counterproductive to resort to a word for expressing the discrimination of the Roma which itself is derived from the discriminatory term 'zigan' ('gypsy')." "Antiromaism . . . ranges from prejudices against Roma over open rejection, exclusion and forced displacement to massive persecution and genocide. Anti-Romaism includes not only discrimination and demonization of this minority, but also the widespread glorified picture of the 'carefree gypsy life,'" in: Beograd Gazela – Vodič kroz sirotinjsko naselje, eds., Lorenc Agerman, Eduard Frojdman, Djan Gildji, RENDE, Beograd, 2009, p. 198.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> "Universiade" combines the terms "University" and "Olympiad" and designates a multi-sport biennial event that is today the second largest one in the world behind the Olympic Games. It was held in Belgrade from 1 to 12 July 2009.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Žarana Papić, "Europe after 1989: ethnic wars, the fascisation of social life and body politics in Serbia," in: *Filozofski vestnik*, special issue The Body, ed., Marina Gržinić Mauhler, FI ZRC SAZU, Ljubljana, 2002, pp. 191–205.

(called the "opposition" of the 1990s), racism and capitalism, modernity and the "colonial power matrix," domination through inclusion and exclusion.

The *Decade of Roma Inclusion* is the "unprecedented political commitment by European governments to improve the socio-economic status and social inclusion of Roma," which "brings together governments, intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations, as well as Romani civil society, to accelerate progress toward improving the welfare of Roma and to review such progress in a transparent and quantifiable way." Thus, it is not only an European project but also an international one, assembling on the one hand illustrious organizations such as the *World Bank*, the *Council of Europe*, the *Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe*, the *Open Society Institute*, the *United Nations* and on the other hand, countries that were noted to lack the inclusion of Roma people, as well as international Roma NGOs.

For the period of July 2008–June 2009, when Serbia was holding the *Decade's* annually rotating presidency, one would expect the Serbian government to make efforts in approaching the *Decade's* objectives and decrease the effects of centuries lasting antiromaist politics in the region. Far from it! What we were witnessing was the total disregard of the *Decade'* s goal in Serbia, and even an intensification of discrimination by Belgrade authorities, citizens and media – discrimination that has to be defined as structural and institutionalized, as it traversed so deeply and systematically into the social fabric and its institutions. Taking into consideration that at the same time all public attention was drawn to the *Belgrade Universiade 2009*, it became obvious that this intensification of discrimination was in order to construct and maintain the concepts of *nation* and *race*. Sport is one of the key elements of national cohesion and national pride in Serbia, the relatively successful national athletes are considered as international ambassadors of Serbian superiority, whereas Roma are constructed as threat to the Serbian national body, and the visibility of the processes of discrimination imposed on the Roma endangers the international image of the nation.

Because of the lacking infrastructure to accommodate the eight thousand international athletes and officials of the *Universiade*, the city of Belgrade made a deal with a private investor, the multinational consortium *Blok 67 Associates d.o.o.* The consortium consists of *Delta Real Estate*, owned by Serbia's biggest tycoon, and the Austrian *Hypo Alpe-Adria-Bank*. The city provided public land, the private investors erected a building ensemble called *Belville* (in French: beautiful city), which was used to accommodate the international guests during the *Universiade*. After the event, the flats, shops and offices were ready to be purchased from the consortium. *Belville* was strategically located next to the largest shopping mall in the Balkan, *Delta City* (owned by *Delta Real Estates* owned by *Delta Holding*) which brought extra profit, as *Universiade* international guests spent their leisure time mostly shopping there.

Before the construction works for *Delta City* and *Belville* could start, the land had to be *cleansed*, meaning that the informal settlements inhabited by Roma people had to be demolished. The term *informal settlement* designates settlements that are not part of the regulated framework of the government and that are characterized by temporary shelters, inadequate connection to an

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> http://www.romadecade.org/index.php?content=1, retrieved on August 25, 2009.

infrastructure and scant supply.<sup>5</sup> As a result of the waves of refugees that were a consequence of the Yugoslav Wars, numerous informal settlements emerged – it is said that they cover 43% of Belgrade's residential area.<sup>6</sup> In contrast to other informal settlements, informal settlements inhabited by Roma are in constant danger of being demolished and have no chance to be fully or semi-formalized in the future regarding gaining access to the public sewage system, electricity and water supply. These facts and the poverty of the inhabitants are resulting from racist discrimination and turn most of Roma informal settlements into slums. Although their legal status is equal, slums differ tremendously from the "white" informal settlements.

My thesis is that this impossibility of legalization and the condition of becoming a slum is the result of deeply racist and discriminatory policy effectuated by the city and the government.

The main characteristic of slums and the essential condition for their existence is their invisibility in the public perception. But if a slum turns visible for random reasons it has to be demolished. As we will see later, from time to time it also happens the other way around: a slum becomes visible because it is about to be demolished. After the first expulsion of Roma people that happened prior to the building of *Delta City*, some inhabitants settled a few hundred meters away. Two years later they were expelled once again from that location prior to the building of *Belville*. Both expulsions didn't cause public attention nor any protests, although the media reported in several articles how successful the building of *Belville* was proceeding after "technical and other problems" had been removed, i.e. after the removal of the slum that covered one third of the building land. The authorities decided to accomplish the total cleansing of the territory around *Belville* in spring 2009.

The field for the eviction has been prepared from the beginning of 2009 through typical racist propaganda by media and politicians addressing the broad antiromaist consensus in Serbia. While the government plastered Belgrade with giant billboards depicting one of Serbia's currently most popular sportsmen, swinging a broom like a tennis racket and calling out to his fellow countrymen: "Let's Clean Serbia!," the media was focused on constructing a contrast image of "Uglyville," as the settlement was presented, saying that it just happened to grow overnight and was getting out of control. One thing was made perfectly clear: Roma will not be allowed to pollute the beautiful image of Belgrade and the *Belville* that was supposed to be sent to the world as the image of Serbia. Finally, it was reported that the organizer of *Universiade*, the *International University Sports Federation* insisted on the removal of the eyesore before the start of the eyent.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Cf. *Beograd Gazela – Vodič kroz sirotinjsko naselje*, eds., Lorenc Agerman, Eduard Frojdman, Djan Gildji, RENDE, Beograd, 2009, p. 204.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> http://www.beodom.com/sr/journal/entries/what-are-the-risks-of-building-or-buying-an-illegal-construction, retrieved on August 25, 2009.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Blic, 13.06.2007, <a href="http://www.blic.rs/beograd.php?id=5805&pid=154&results=true">http://www.blic.rs/beograd.php?id=5805&pid=154&results=true</a> and B92, 12. 06.2007, <a href="http://www.b92.net/biz/vesti/srbija.php?yyyy=2007&mm=06&dd=12&nav\_id=251052">http://www.b92.net/biz/vesti/srbija.php?yyyy=2007&mm=06&dd=12&nav\_id=251052</a>, retrieved on August 25, 2009.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup>Politika, 23. 01.2009, <a href="http://www.naslovi.net/2009-01-23/politika/uz-luksuzni-kompleks-romska-naseobina/1009277">http://www.naslovi.net/2009-01-23/politika/uz-luksuzni-kompleks-romska-naseobina/1009277</a>; Danas, 12.02.2009; <a href="http://www.naslovi.net/2009-02-12/danas/karton-siti-uz-luksuzni-kompleks/1036712">http://www.naslovi.net/2009-02-12/danas/karton-siti-uz-luksuzni-kompleks/1036712</a>; Večernje novosti, 19.02.2009, <a href="http://www.naslovi.net/2009-02-19/vecernje-novosti/belvil-okruzen-ruglom/1047043">http://www.naslovi.net/2009-02-19/vecernje-novosti/belvil-okruzen-ruglom/1047043</a>, retrieved on August 25, 2009.

After the public opinion had been prepared, the operation could start. On April 3, 2009, authorities of Belgrade's City Secretariat for Inspections showed up in the settlement handing the eviction order over to the inhabitants, according to which the settlement would be demolished in 14 days. On the next day in the early morning, a bunch of bulldozers guarded by the police started with the eviction of the settlement and destroyed around 40 houses. Most house owners were not even allowed to take their belongings out before the demolition. 9

As a reaction to this annihilating act, something exceptional happened. A series of public protests were organized in the streets of Belgrade by the settlement's inhabitants who were supported by Roma representatives, NGOs, activists, and also students, independent cultural workers, artists and other citizens that protested in solidarity. The actions put a public pressure on the City decision-makers to an extent that they had to momentarily interrupt what they started: the total erasure of the settlement.<sup>10</sup> The mayor stated that a few dozen citizens can not keep the entire city hostage and declared that he and the reigning power did not want to brutally dislocate anybody, but only those who are endangering the growth of Belgrade,<sup>11</sup> which was a perfidious reversal of guilt.

Under the pressure of international humanitarian organizations and the protests, the city authorities offered temporary "alternative accommodation" to some of the now homeless Roma by installing a few modified freight containers in a village near Belgrade that is well-known because a Roma teenager was killed there few years ago. As soon as the news spread the villagers started to protest against their potential new neighbors (what meanwhile became a common practice in Belgrade whenever it is rumored that Roma should be relocated in the neighborhood!); the villagers burnt one of the containers and threatened that if Roma move in they will burn them together with the containers. Instead of condemning this racist act, Belgrade's mayor publicly expressed his understanding for the behavior of the villagers and did not withdraw the plans of accommodating the homeless Roma in that village. Another alternative accommodation was offered to Roma women and children as to be accommodated in orphanages and homes for old people- men were excluded.

The mayor insisted on the demolition of the settlement and a number of other Roma settlements that were situated in locations where infrastructural construction was planned. He announced that all inhabitants who do not hold a residential registration in Belgrade have to return to their hometowns- the city would pay their one way tickets. Although there is no legal basis for an expulsion from the city territory, the mayor sent the message to UNHCR, OSCE and Belgrade NGOs stating that no compromise will be made regarding this issue. <sup>13</sup> Furthermore, he denied alternative accommodation to all inhabitants whose children did not start to attend school,

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Alo! 04.04.2009, http://www.alo.rs/vesti/13801/48 sati rusenje, retrieved on August 25, 2009.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> For more about the protest, cf. the film *BELLEVILLE* (Biro Beograd, 2009). Short documentary about the protests due to the demolishing of the Roma settlement at Block 67 in New Belgrade, Serbia, in April 2009, http://www.archive.org/details/BELLEVILLE

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Alo! 04.04.2009, http://www.alo.rs/vesti/13801/48 sati rusenje, retrieved on August 25, 2009.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> B92, 30. 01. 2007, <a href="http://www.b92.net/info/vesti/index.php?yyyy=2007&mm=01&dd=30&nav\_category=12">http://www.b92.net/info/vesti/index.php?yyyy=2007&mm=01&dd=30&nav\_category=12</a>, retrieved on August 25, 2009.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> e-novine, 05.04.2009, http://www.e-novine.com/index.php?news=24673, retrieved on August 25, 2009.

thereby reproducing the classical colonial enlightening mission attitude and proving his total ignorance of the multiple problems slum inhabitants who want to send their children to school face. <sup>14</sup> Finally, in order to stop the protests, one of the organizers was arrested and accused of having rented houses in the settlement- about such a "delinquency" did not exist a single record.

As the *Universiade* was approaching, it turned out that the total eradication would not be possible due to the protests. Thus, the new strategy of the city authorities was to hide the settlement and its residents, and thus make them "invisible." Two weeks prior to the opening of the *Universiade*, under the excuse of the event's necessary security measures, a metal fence was erected around the settlement. Surprisingly, the *Delta City* shopping mall was not fenced for security reasons, commodities were circulating and surplus value was gained without a barrier. In order to hide the settlement a banner was installed on the fence that was guarded by security staff and police. They prevented the inhabitants from leaving the settlement and threatened them with arrest if they were seen in the streets around *Belville*, especially if caught searching secondary materials in trash cans. Thereby not only their freedom of movement was withdrawn, but they were also deprived of their existential basis by being prohibited to carry out their regular daily work on the streets of Belgrade.

This situation caused a few solidarity actions such as a protest in front of *Delta City* shopping mall by *Belgrade Antifascist Campaign*; press releases by different NGO's and several activities by *Belgrade Other Scene* and Friends (the platform of Belgrade independent cultural and activist scene) were carried out. The latter organization took a public position opposing Roma discrimination for the first time. These actions were ignored by the authorities, except that a press conference that was organized in the settlement pressured the authorities so they removed the banner, thereby making the settlement visible from the outside again.

## 3.

First it has to be put clearly, that in the analysis of these events, we can not refer to human rights regulated by international conventions or the Serbian constitution, because there is no such a thing as universal human rights being guaranteed by the present world order. There is only the power of capital and, related to it, sovereign power that is determining who has the right to be human and thus has human rights, and who does not. Insisting on human rights without taking politics into consideration would lead us in a wrong direction, overlooking the sovereign power and its reproduction. Giorgio Agamben pointed out, "The separation between humanitarianism and politics that we are experiencing today is the extreme phase of the separation of the rights of man from the rights of the citizen, in the final analysis, however, humanitarian organizations — which today are more and more supported by international commissions — can only grasp human life in the figure of bare or sacred life, and therefore, despite themselves, maintain a secret solidarity with the very powers they ought to fight."

Living in Europe for centuries, Roma have to be considered as a constitutive part of it. They settled long before the concept of nations was made up, thus we could ask on which basis they

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> For a detailed description cf. *Beograd Gazela – Vodič kroz sirotinjsko naselje* eds., Lorenc Agerman, Eduard Frojdman, Djan Gildji, RENDE, Beograd, 2009, p. 142.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Cf. Giorgio Agamben, *HOMO SACER*, *Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, 1998, p. 133.

are regarded as something exterior to the nations that has to be included. Therefore, the concept of inclusion seems paradoxical. But if we take a look at how power functions and to which extent coloniality is embedded in capitalism, we realize that it is not paradox at all.

Exploring contemporary racism in Europe, Manuela Bojadžijev explains: "Like anti-Semitism, neo-racism is an ideological practice, in which its specific object is constituted and constructed. This presumption implies a crucial challenge: something that does not exist, such as race, is coming into being through different forms of praxis by individuals, groups, institutions, or states and therefore a reality, a social relation and a policy. The fiction of race is produced by a vast number of narrations: gestures, rituals, images, texts. The fictional narration creates something as a race, particular racisms then seem as an application, while reversely it is exactly racism and its fictional object, race, that is the effect of a multitude of racist techniques of narrations: ethnicity and race – to take up a metaphor of Adorno – is a rumour, once it is the rumour about the Jews, the other time the rumour about the migrant or the refugee." <sup>16</sup>

To understand the logic of inclusion we have to go back to the core of capitalist exploitation – the colonial history of Europe and slavery that was conducted for the sake of capitalist progress and the development of white Europeans – because its mechanisms are still defining human relations today. For centuries, colonial history is and has been normalized by European knowledge production such as school and university books, encyclopedias, art works etc. Colonialism is trivialized (and thereby justified) as the modernization of backward areas, trading with spices, geographical discoveries, missionary missions, Western artists traveling in the Third world to find their inspiration, and not as cruel exploitation, mass murder, enslavement and expropriation in the name of European progress and modernity.

Walter Mignolo pointed out that there is no modernity without coloniality: "There is no modernity without coloniality; coloniality is constitutive of modernity. Modernity is not a historical period, but it is a rhetoric grounded on the idea of salvation . . . The rhetoric of modernity has been, since its inception, the rhetoric of salvation: by conversion (Spanish and Portuguese mendicant orders), by civilizing missions (British and French agents); by development and modernization (US experts in economy and politics guiding the Third World towards the same standards as the First); and salvation through market democracy and consumerism . . . What is eliminated by the narratives of modernity (and post-modernity) is not its own past, but all knowledge and life-forms that have to be integrated, marginalized or destroyed, so the salvation mission of modernity can continue, like a juggernaut, to roll over the differences. In other words, the narrative of modernity constructs and invents differences in order to eliminate them or keep them under control (in multiculturalism) . . . Thus, modernity conceived in terms of a rhetoric of salvation, goes hand in hand justifying the logic of coloniality: control and appropriation of land, exploitation of labor, human lives converted into commodities; control of authority; control of gender and sexuality; control of knowledge and subjectivity. All spheres just mentioned are interrelated and integrated into the logic of domination and

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Manuela Bojadžijev, "Does Contemporary Capitalism Need Racism?," eipcp.net, 2006, http://translate.eipcp.net/strands/02/bojadzijev-strands01en/print, retrieved on August 25, 2009.

exploitation: the logic of coloniality . . . What holds the spheres of life and society, in which the logic of coloniality operates, is a locus of enunciation grounded in patriarchy and racism."<sup>17</sup>

So, the mentioned spheres of life and society are, according to Mignolo, constitutive for the colonial matrix of power where racism plays a crucial role. The colonial matrix of power, along with racism as its main technology, has not been functional only outside of Europe (in Asia, Africa, America, and Australia) but also within it. It has subjugated all who did not fit into the category of "white Christians", who were constructed as the most worthy. Furthermore, colonial history is determining the present – normalized, it is perpetually maintained in the First capitalist world and outside of it through migration politics, globalization, debt slavery, ongoing confiscation of natural resources, and contemporary wars and invasions.

Roma, as people of color and assumed pagans, were from the time of European modernity and enlightenment targeted by the colonial matrix of power. For centuries, kingdoms, holy empires, totalitarian regimes and democracies of Europe issued a great many decrees and laws to banish, exploit, enslave, torture, discriminate, expel, and massively exterminate them in Europe. Examples are numerous from the 16<sup>th</sup> century on, from England, Romania, and Nazi Germany to contemporary EUrope. Roma were slaves of Christian monasteries and of feudal rulers partly until the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century; they were banished from many European countries, they were branded with branding irons, they were forbidden to use their own language and marry among each other, children were abducted from their parents to be brought up in Catholic families in the Habsburg Empire, they were massively exterminated by Nazis throughout Europe, Roma women were coercively sterilized till the 1980s in Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Sweden, and Norway- recent cases have been made public in the Czech Republic but it would not be surprising if this is going on in other countries as well.<sup>18</sup>

In collaboration with EU candidates as part of their application process, Germany deports Roma to their countries of origin without prior notice and leaves them alone on the streets upon arrival. In Italy, the state of exception was proclaimed in order to fingerprint entire Roma communities, including minors. Roma have lately been exposed to pogroms, homicide and expulsion all over Europe in Austria, the Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Serbia, Slovenia, Slovakia...

Romani Women," <a href="http://www.errc.org/cikk.php?cikk=2626">http://www.errc.org/cikk.php?cikk=2626</a>; Vesna Rakić-Vodinelić and Saša Gajin, "Kratka istorija pravnog položaja i diskriminacije Roma u nekadašnjoj Jugoslaviji i nekadašnjoj i današnjoj Srbiji," Peščanik, 2009, <a href="http://www.pescanik.net/content/view/2965/171/">http://www.pescanik.net/content/view/2965/171/</a>; "The Roma Question 2006," archive by Tanja Ostojić, in: <a href="https://www.pescanik.net/content/view/2965/171/">https://www.pescanik.net/content/view/2965/171/</a>; "The Roma Question 2006," archive by Tanja Ostojić, in: <a href="https://www.pescanik.net/content/view/2965/171/">https://www.pescanik.net/content/view/2965/171/</a>; "The Roma Question 2006," archive by Tanja Ostojić, in: <a href="https://www.pescanik.net/content/view/2965/171/">https://www.pescanik.net/content/view/2965/171/</a>; "The Roma Question 2006," archive by Tanja Ostojić, in: <a href="https://www.pescanik.net/content/view/2965/171/">https://www.pescanik.net/content/view/2965/171/</a>; "The Roma Question 2006," archive by Tanja Ostojić, in: <a href="https://www.pescanik.net/content/view/2965/171/">https://www.pescanik.net/content/view/2965/171/</a>; "The Roma Question 2006," archive by Tanja Ostojić, in: <a href="https://www.pescanik.net/content/view/2965/171/">https://www.pescanik.net/content/view/2965/171/</a>; "Snapshots from around Europe. Report reveals that Romani women were sterilized against their will in Sweden," <a href="https://www.pescanik.net/content/view/2965/171/">https://www.pescanik.net/content/view/2965/171/</a>; "Snapshots from around Europe. Report reveals that Romani women were sterilized against their will in Sweden," <a href="https://www.pescanik.net/content/view/2965/171/">https://www.pescanik.net/content/view/2965/171/</a>; "Snapshots from around Europe. Report reveals that Romani women were sterilized against their will in Sweden," <a href="https://www.pescanik.net/content/view/2965/171/">https://www.pescanik.net/content/view/2965/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Marina Gržinić and Walter Mignolo, "De-linking epistemology from capital and pluri-versality," *Reartikulacija*, Issue No 4, 2008, <a href="http://www.reartikulacija.org/pdfs/Reartikulacija4\_web.pdf">http://www.reartikulacija.org/pdfs/Reartikulacija4\_web.pdf</a>, retrieved on August 25, 2009. 18 Cf. Dimitrina Petrova, "The Roma: Between a Myth and the Future," <a href="http://www.errc.org/cikk.php?cikk=1844&archiv=1">http://www.errc.org/cikk.php?cikk=1844&archiv=1</a>; "UN Presses Czech Republic on Coercive Sterilisation of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> http://www.errc.org/cikk.php?cikk=2980&archiv=1; Vladan Jeremić and Rena Rädle, "Anticiganizam i klasni rasizam u Evropi, Pokret za slobodu," 2009, http://freedomfight.net/cms/index.php?page=anticiganizam-i-klasni-rasizam-u-evropi; retrieved on August 25, 2009.

Thus, Roma have been discriminated against for centuries in Europe, and subjected to racist politics whose discriminatory actions shows the continuation of strategies such as extermination, expulsion, assimilation, integration, and the most recent strategy of *inclusion*.

The constellation of the *Decade of Roma Inclusion* consists of proactive and reactive players. The former are the main powers of contemporary capitalism and those that maintain its status quo: the *World Bank*, the *Council of Europe* and its *Development Bank*, the *Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe*, the *Open Society Institute* (belonging to the Hungary-US stock exchange speculator George Soros) and the *United Nations Development Program* as well as other UN suborganizations. These agencies' engagement in globalization processes and in European colonial projects of the past and the present, warn us against being naïve enough to believe that the *Decade* is about the elimination of discrimination and poverty of Roma.<sup>20</sup> It rather gives us information about the functionality of the colonial matrix of power in the context of the European Union and global capitalism.

The reactive players of the project of the *Decade* are Eastern European countries that either recently joined the EU or are about to join it in the near future (the only exception is Spain!). One could conclude therefore that the absence of Western European countries in the project of the *Decade* is the result of the fact that Roma are not discriminated and thus there is no need for such a program there. As we saw that this is not the case, we can conclude that the *Decade* is in fact about the inclusion of the new and future EU countries and serves as a tool that enables Europe to ensure Roma's position in the colonial matrix of power – the inclusion of Roma according to racist EU standards. The ideology behind this is a neo-liberal capitalist ideology rooted in its colonial past that uses racism as a tool for exploitation. Its goal is not to bring pluriversality of human relations but to enforce the inclusion of Roma in the capitalist system of exploitation, meaning to "civilize" them according to EU standards. Inclusion thus doesn't mean that Roma will have equal rights but rather means that they will be exploited in a more cultivated way, as is the case in Western EU countries where their position in the colonial matrix of power can shift from *bare life* to *bios*. <sup>21</sup> Thus, what the EU suggests is that Roma should not be discriminated against in such an obvious way, but in a more subtle and low-key one.

One of the important aspects of *The Decade of Roma Inclusion* must be seen in relation to EU security politics: Roma should be prevented from migrating from poorer Eastern European countries to richer Western European countries. Thus, the participating countries are required to improve the living conditions for Roma and thereby secure that Roma stay where they are. The recent case of 100 Roma migrating from Romania caused immense panic in Germany. After being expelled from a park in Berlin, they were paid money to return to Romania!<sup>22</sup> This panic actually results from the fear that a growing number of Roma could increase German antiromaism which had been switched to *slumber mode* after the extermination of its target

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Cf. Walden Bello, *Deglobalization: Ideas for a New World Economy*, Revised Edition, Zed Books, London & New York, 2005.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Šefik Šeki Tatlić "The Truth Machine: The Relationship between Life and Sovereign Power, in: *Integration Impossible? The politics of Migration in the Art Work of Tanja Ostojić*, eds., Marina Gržinić and Tanja Ostojić, argobooks, Berlin, 2009, pp. 229–237.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup>http://www.berlinonline.de/berliner-zeitung/archiv/.bin/dump.fcgi/2009/0612/berlin/0031/index.html, retrieved on August 28, 2009.

objects within Porajmos, the genocide of Roma conducted in Nazi Germany (that included Austria). The awakening of latent antiromaism would disprove the Western European cultural-racist conviction of being less racist and thereby more civilized than Eastern Europeans.

However, we can conclude that the strategy of *inclusion* is an ideological concept targeting the production, reproduction, and maintenance of hierarchies and relations of domination, because it does not depart from the equality of people but from their inequality. This means that it takes an ideological division that was invented and maintained by capitalism for granted. Based on this, however, a setting where one is included "per se" (or by "nature") and the other has to be included can not lead to any promising and anti-discriminatory politics. The only way to eliminate discrimination is to eliminate the system that produces it – capitalism itself.

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