



## SCIENTIFIC FINAL REPORT – RESEARCH NETWORK

Regnr Östersjöstiftelsen: 21-RN-0001

Project manager: Yulia Gradszkova

Project title: Researching gender and sexuality in Eastern European history and post-socialist present:

Does race matter?

### 1. Purpose of the research network

The network was aimed at analyzing what is occurring with respect to studies of racism, racialization, ethnic discrimination and anti-racism in a cross-section, with research on gender norms and practices, as well as politics in the sphere of sexuality in the countries of Eurasia and Eastern Europe. The network had to facilitate an exchange of information, discussions around ongoing projects and new publications around these issues, and will bring together researchers dealing with both historical and contemporary problems.

### 2. A description of the research network's activities funded by Östersjöstiftelsen

The group of applicants (researchers from several countries) had first zoom-meeting in August 2021 in order to discuss plans for organizing workshop and the Call for Papers. The resulting Call with deadline on November 10, 2021 was widely distributed through e-mail lists, university web-sites and social media. As a result of the Call for Papers we received about 20 abstracts 14 of which were included into the final program for workshop (the organizing group had its zoom-meeting in December 2021). Due to new wave of the COVID infections in Europe and the beginning of the Russian full scale invasion of Ukraine the workshop had a hybrid form (in situ and in zoom) – March 3 and 4 (most of the paper presenters, but not all the organizers) were able to come to Södertörn University and participate in person. The workshop program included sections: Gender and Sexuality - an Intersectional Perspective; Gender and Racialization of Roma in Central and Eastern Europe; Identities and Decolonial Critique; (Post)socialism and Racism; Migration and Racialization as well as key-note lecture by Madina Tlostanova, Professor of postcolonial feminism at Tema Genus, University of Linköping, Sweden: “To the East of Eastern Europe: racism(s) old and new, or who is white here?”. The paper presenters at the workshop discussed situation of research on gender and sexuality in connection to research on racism in countries like Bulgaria, Hungary, Turkey, Russia, Kazakhstan, Poland and Estonia; participants of the workshop included several Södertörn university researchers and MA students as well as zoom-participants from various locations including Lithuania and Kazakhstan.

The discussions at the workshop showed importance of more frequent meetings and continuation of discussions among researchers dealing with research on marginalized groups and in particular, in the context of growing pressure in several states with tendencies of growing authoritarianism, nationalism and anti-gender and anti-LGBTQ campaigns. It led to the next online meeting of several participants of the network – in April where the possibility of future meetings and of the publication of special issue on the workshop topic was discussed.



### **3. The output from the research network, for example applications for research funding**

The participants of research network expressed their ideas of publishing a special issue and Yulia Gradszkova, Lidia Balogh (Hungary) and Mariya Levitanus (UK/Kazakhstan) expressed their interest to be the editors. Currently the named above group applied to “Intersections” journal (published in Hungary) with plans of making a special issue, probably in early 2024. Some of the researchers also established close collaboration around intersectionality and queer rights that is particularly important in the time of the war. We also think about possible application for research funding.

### **4. The research network’s contribution to research and/or doctoral studies at Södertörn University**

The participants of the workshop included several (different stage) researchers from Södertörn University interested in this topic – from professors and a guest researcher from Turkey to an MA student from Media and Communication studies. The participants evaluated the workshop as important; it contributed to bringing new theoretical perspectives and practical information to their research projects.

The exchange of information and knowledge during the workshop will contribute to improving teaching at Södertörn University, not least, changes in CBEES introductory course and course “Family as a gendering institution” (B-level) aimed for ERASMUS students.

### **5. The contribution of the research to the knowledge of the Baltic Sea Region and Eastern Europe**

The workshop contributed to evaluation of importance of the use of intersectionality approach for research of gender and sexuality in the context of Eastern Europe and Eurasia particularly stressing importance of the comparative perspective in this research. Paying attention to problems of racism in gender studies in the region is a contribution to the process of countering authoritarian tendencies in the sphere of research and education in these countries. Finally, possibilities of cooperation of researchers from different countries allowed to review theoretical and methodological tools for this research.