



## SCIENTIFIC FINAL REPORT – RESEARCH NETWORK

Regnr Östersjöstiftelsen: dnr 21-RN-0002

Project manager: Andrej Kotljarchuk

Project title: History and Memory of the Holocaust and Romani genocide in a Comparative International Perspective

### 1. Purpose of the research network

The purpose of this research network has been to build up an international network based at Södertörn University that bring together scholars on both the Shoah and Romani genocide for discussion the history and memory of the genocides in a comparative international perspective. The network is novel not only in its theoretical framework, which places the Holocaust and the Romani genocide in a comparative perspective, but also in being one of the first attempts that brings together scholars specializing in both these fields of studies. A better understanding of the history and memory of the Shoah and the Romani genocide goes well beyond the research interests of the network members.

The research network had three main goals: First, to develop the existing network of Swedish scholars to the international network, which unite specialists in Holocaust and Romani genocide studies from the Baltic Sea region and Scandinavia. Second, to bring together senior and younger scholars in Holocaust and Romani genocide studies through a) the international workshop for senior researchers; b) the summer school organized by the Institute of Contemporary History, Södertörn University with both senior scholars and PhD students as well as postdoctoral fellows. Finally, the network supposed to be a platform for the working group that since June 2022 deals with the application for new research fundings.

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

The Holocaust and Romani genocide is recognized by the international community as one of the greatest acts of crimes against humanity in modern history. They were two ethnic groups (Roma and Jews) that systematically exterminated by the Nazis. In 2015, the genocide of Roma was recognized by the EU countries as a Holocaust committed simultaneously with the Shoah. The European Parliament declared 27 January as Holocaust Remembrance Day and 2 August as the European Roma Holocaust Memorial Day. However, there was not the immediate understanding of these tragic events following the end of World War II and the research on the Romani genocide has started many years after the explosion of the Holocaust studies. Therefore, a key idea of the research network was to bring together scholars on the Shoah and Romani genocide for discussion on the history and memory of the Jewish and Romani genocides in a comparative international perspective as well as to formulate the new dimensions for research.

This aim has been achieved through the following activities. First, the international workshop for senior researchers has been organized on 20<sup>th</sup> May online. Due to the pandemic restrictions that still existed in many countries this event took place online via zoom. The main goal of the workshop was to discuss the ways and possibilities for new research fundings. The participants discussed this topic in three working groups that were divided according to three research areas: a) history; b) memory, c) oral history and representations. In the result, the initiative group that continued to work with the project idea has been established, which included senior scholars from the Romanian Academy of



Sciences, Leibniz-Institute for East and Southeast European Studies, the Center for Research on Antisemitism TU Berlin, the International Institute for Holocaust Research at Yad Vashem; Université catholique de Louvain, Ukrainian Center for Holocaust Studies, the University of Iceland and Södertörn University.

Second, our international summer school *History and Memory of the Holocaust. Comparative perspectives on the Nazi genocides of Jews and Roma* was held during three days (May 23-25, 2022) at the campus of Södertörn University with support from the Foundation for Baltic and East European Studies. The summer school has become a unique platform for younger and senior researchers of the history, memory, and representations of the Jewish and Roma genocides. The summer school had two keynote lectures and six sessions with about 25 participants. Keynote lectures were devoted to the complexity and complications of the Nazi genocides. The sessions had following topics: “History and Memory of the Jewish and Roma genocides in Ukraine”; “The Memory of Holocaust in Yiddish and Romani-language literatures”; “Antigypsyism and Antisemitism in Sweden”; “Oral history of the Nazi genocides”. The sessions were followed by discussions with active participation of PhD student and postdoctoral fellows, as well as senior researchers.

The summer school was attended by eight PhD candidates and postdocs from Germany, Lithuania, Sweden, Poland and the USA. All of them presented their PhD and postdoctoral projects on the special session. The summer school had also a session with presentations made by the special guests. Among them were the representatives of Sweden’s Romani Cultural Association É Romani Glinda, the Swedish museum about the Holocaust, the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, the Baltic and East European Graduate School (BEEGS), and Riksorganisationen för fortbildning om Förintelsen.

The discussions during the workshop and summer school helped us to formulate new dimensions for research as well as to establish a working group who will develop our ideas for a new research application on the integral history and memory of World War II Jewish and Roma genocides in the Baltic Sea region.

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

Due to the research network the cooperation between the Institute of Contemporary History and the newly established Swedish museum about the Holocaust and the Institute for Holocaust Research in Sweden; as well as many academic centers in the Baltic Sea region has been established. The members of the network delegated to a working group that include four scholars the task to prepare the application for new research fundings. The key idea is to apply for an infrastructure grant under the title *The Integral History and Memory of the Nazi genocides of Jews and Roma in the Baltic Sea region*. We hope that this project will be served as a research hub for the new Holocaust Museum in Stockholm, which will focus both on the history and memory of Jewish and Roma genocides.

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

Our focus on comparison of the Jewish and Romani genocides as well as scholars and academic centres we have chosen, contributed to the substantial development of the scholarly environment at Södertörn University. The summer school was organised in cooperation with other academic centres in Stockholm and Uppsala regions, among them are the Hugo Valentin Centre at Uppsala University and the Institute for Holocaust Research



in Sweden. Besides the Institute of Contemporary History, two other departments of Södertörn University were involved in the network's activity and events (Programme for Romani Studies and the BEEGS). The summer school was open for different NGOs, which reinforced the cooperation between Södertörn University and non-academic institutions.

The session "Antigypsyism and Antisemitism in Sweden" has been recorded by Södertörn University Library and now is a part of SH-play database. The film will be used in teaching at the doctoral courses and Romani studies at Södertörn University.

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

The project compares the history and use of memory of the Jewish and Romani genocides in the countries of the Baltic Sea region, moreover, in a comparative international perspective. The network contributed to more deepen understanding of the integral history and memory of the Nazi genocides in the countries of the Baltic Sea region. Our international workshop brought new international scholars to Södertörn University. Our summer school contributed to the development of the dialog between younger scholars and senior researchers on this topic. Södertörn University's interdisciplinary focus on Baltic Sea region and Eastern Europe furnishes a wide range of network partners. Our focus on comparison of the Jewish and Romani genocide as well as scholars and academic centers we had chosen, made a substantial contribution to the scholarly environment of Södertörn. The members of the established network represent different countries and academic centers in the Baltic Sea region and the Nordic countries and have multidisciplinary background and long experience within the study of the Holocaust and the Romani genocide. The list of scholars who attended our activities at Södertörn University includes both leading international researchers as well as doctoral candidates and postdoctoral fellows from the Baltic Sea region.