

## **Othering and Racialization of Roma and Muslims in a Nation State**

In Europe and elsewhere one can observe a rise of nationalistic feelings hostile towards minorities. The research scrutinises the mechanisms involved in the creation of the Others in public discourses viewed in historical, discursive and anthropological perspectives. The main emphasis is put on the images and practices of people in everyday life contexts, interacting with the Others or Aliens – old and new, real and imagined. In recent years, the attitude towards ‘strangers’, both historical minorities and newly arrived immigrants, in particular Muslims and Roma, has radicalized. These minorities are numerically low, but anxieties about them multifarious and high what encourages us to think about the perception of them in terms of a ‘fear of small numbers’, which is characteristic for relatively homogenous nation states in which populations are afraid of losing their cultural identity and concerned with upkeeping subjectively understood social integrity. The ambition of this project is to deepen our scientific knowledge about ‘making enemies’ on the example of Islamophobia and hostility towards the Roma in the perspective of racialization, ethnicization and fear of cultural identity lost. The research tasks involve the interpretation of these events by reference to empirical materials gathered and theoretical insights proposed. It implies a critical study of political discourses connected with the historically entrenched and re-emerging narratives on the Other, which will inform us about shaping the ‘Other’ as a cognitive, axiological and identity category. Light will be shed on how ordinary differences is transformed into politicised radical difference, how it is manipulated and possibly contested by social actors in their daily practices, in interpersonal interactions with Others. A new understanding of the complex phenomena related to the syndrome of xenophobia, taking into account relations of hegemonic discursive power and political domination, far from uncompromised blaming of people for blatant racism, cultural racism, and populism, can be developed. Explanations embracing socio-economic inequalities and political techniques of persuasion will be delivered.

The project is mainly grounded in anthropological theories, but at the same time, it benefits from the scholarship of other social sciences and humanities. The results of the research will also have an impact beyond academic circles and contribute to the society’s openness and tolerance.