

Beyond the Closet Queer Russia from the Silver Age to the Putin Era

Syllabus

Though fascinating and vibrant, the history and culture of queer Russia are little known in the West and in Russia itself. Despite a long-standing tradition of the domination of heteronormative subjectivities, the ideas of a “queer self” have proliferated in Russia even in what may seem the most obscure times. This course opens avenues for the exploration of practices and discourses of sexual non-heteronormativity from the early 20th century until nowadays by giving voice to cultural texts and historical research on queer selves and others in the Russian context. It delves into the defining moments of the Russian LGBTQ history to trace its ups and downs and question how queer subjectivities have been constructed under quite varying circumstances of tolerance.

Course requirements: regular attendance; active participation in class; one oral presentation on a chosen topic; (at least) one watched film from the film screening series; a course paper of 10 or 20 pages (depending on the respective program’s requirements)

1–2. Seminar: October 23, 2018 (a double session, 4 p.m.–8 p.m.)

Organizational Matters & Theoretical Approaches

Sedgwick 1990, 1–22;¹

Sedgwick 1990, 22–60; Karlinsky 1992; Barker and Scheele 2016; Butler 1990; Foucault 1990; Solie 1993; Greenberg 1990.

3. Seminar: October 30, 2018

Lesbian Prose of the Queer Liberation

Lidiia Zinov’eva-Annibal, *Tridtsad’ tri uroda* (*Thirty-Three Abominations*, 1907)

RU: Zinov’eva-Annibal 1999; ENG: Zinovieva-Annibal 1975; GER: Zinov’eva-Annibal 1995.

Ekonen 2014; Chantsev 2009.

4. Seminar: November 6, 2018

Gay Voices in Early Modern Russia

Mikhail Kuzmin, *Kryl’ia* (*Wings*, 1906)

RU: Kuzmin 1980, Part II; ENG: Kuzmin 1972, Part II; GER: —

Malmstad and Bogomolov 1999; Malmstad 2000; Field and Kuzmin 1963; Rylkova 2002; Panova and Pratt 2011.

¹ In this course plan, obligatory reading for each session is underlined. Please, *always* have obligatory texts with you in class in a printed or digital form. Texts for further reading that are given in a smaller font size only serve as recommendations for additional information on each topic. For the details on the texts, refer to the bibliography on pages 5–8.

5. Seminar: November 13, 2018

From Queer Desire to the Closet: The Fruits of October Revolution

Case files: male and female cross-dressing, homophobic discourses (Healey 2001 44-49; 66-73; 181-196)

Healey 1997; Healey 2015; Karlinsky 1989; Kon 1995.

6. Seminar: November 20, 2018

Homolog: Histories and Herstories of the Gulag Era

Case files: Sergei Parajanov (Steffen 2013, pp. 186–201); lesbian lives in Soviet Russia (Stella 2014, pp. 45–66)

Clech 2018; Healey 2017 (27-50); Stella 2014 (26-44).

7. Seminar: November 27, 2018

Crossing the Double Line: Queer Sexualities in Late Soviet Literature

Kharitonov, Evgenii. *Selected Stories* (1970s–1980s)

RU: Kharitonov 2005, pp. 104–107; 288–293; ENG: Kharitonov 1996, pp. 216–223; GER: Charitonow 1996, pp. 75–80; 277–286.

Rogov 2005; Shatalov 1995; Witte 1996; Healey 2017, 93–109.

**The December 4, 2018 seminar will take place on
Wednesday, January 23, 2019, as an evening film screening session**

8. Seminar: December 11, 2018

Performing Homosexual Desire: Queerness on Stage in Post-Soviet Russia

Koliada, Nikolai. *Rogatka* (The Slingshot, 1989)

RU: Koliada 2016; ENG: Kolyada 1996; GER: Koljada (n.d.).

Beumers 2001; Ross 2006; Freedman 2010.

9. Seminar: December 18, 2018

Disrupting the Canon: The Caucasian Theme with a Twist

Makanin, Vladimir. *Kavkazskii plennyi* (The Prisoner of the Caucasus, 1995)

RU: Makanin 2009; ENG: Makanin 1996; GER: Makanin 2005.

Vishevsky et al. 1998; Armstrong and Vishevsky 2004; Lipovetsky 2007; Oloffson 2008; Anisimova 2017.

10. Seminar: January 8, 2019

Media Visibility and Owning One's Voice: Queer Press in Post-Soviet Russia

Sender 2001; Case files: queer media from the 1990s until today

–Photos from the Russian queer journals of the 1990s (see the seminar folder in Stud-IP)

–Websites <http://www.gay.ru/>; <http://www.kvir.ru/>; <http://tguy.ru/>

Baer 2002; Baer 2009; Fejes and Balogh 2013; Mole 2018.

11. Seminar: January 15, 2019

Art as a Tool of Queer Empowerment

Lomasko, Victoria. *Other Russias* (Chapter "Side by Side: Homosexuals and Homophobes," 2017)

Lomasko 2017, 225–53

Jonson 2015, pp. 1–15; Jonson and Erofeev 2017; Ponomareva 2014; Etkind 2018.

12. Seminar: January 22, 2019

A Queer Eye on Russian Cinema

Schoonover and Galt 2016, pp. 6–26; Case files: films from the film screening series "A Queer Eye on Russian Cinema"

Hanson 1999; Beumers 2008; Gillespie 2002; Haynes 2003; Norris and Torlone 2008.

13. Seminar: January 23, 2018 (in place of December 4, 2018), 8 p.m.

Film Screening: *Campaign of Hate: Russia and Gay Propaganda* (dir. Scott Stern/Michael Lukas, USA 2014), 79 min

14. Seminar, January 29, 2019

Hypermasculinities and Traditional Values: Quo vadis, Russia?

Dan Healey 2017, pp. 131–147, 1–23

Wilkinson 2014; Bosia and Weiss 2013; Hylton et al. 2017; Soboleva and Bakhmetjev 2015

15. Seminar, February 5, 2019

Concluding Discussion

**Film Screening Series “A Queer Eye on Russian Cinema”
(Wednesdays, 8 p.m., HS 4)**

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| October 31 | <i>Treti'ia meshchanskaia</i> (Third Meshchanskaia Street, 1927), dir. Abram Room |
| November 7 | <i>Strogi iunoshka</i> (A Severe Young Man, 1936), dir. Abram Room |
| November 14 | <i>Pervyi paren'</i> (The Top Guy, 1958), dir. Sergei Parajanov |
| November 21 | <i>Serp i Molot</i> (Hammer and Sickle, 1994), dir. Sergei Livnev |
| November, 28 | <i>Vesel'chaki</i> (Jolly Fellows, 2009), dir. Feliks Mikhailov |
| December 19 | <i>Zimnii Put'</i> (Winter Trail, 2013), dir. Sergei Taramaev and Liubov' L'vova |
| January 16 | <i>Uchenik</i> (The Student, 2016), dir. Kirill Serebrennikov |
| January, 23 | <i>Campaign of Hate: Russia and Gay Propaganda</i> (2014), dir. Scott Stern/Michael Lukas (an <u>obligatory</u> documentary film) |

Bibliography

Legend:

“UL + Book Number”: available at the University Library

“UL —”: not available at the University Library

“KT”: key texts, available from the course reference shelf (*Semesterapparat*) at the University Library

“Scan in Stud-IP”: digital copy available in the session folder on the seminar’s page in Stud-IP.

- Anisimova, Irina. 2017. “The Post-Soviet “Orient” in Stories by Vladimir Makanin and Liudmila Petrushevskaja.” *Canadian Slavonic Papers* 59 (1-2): 1–20. UL —.
- Armstrong, Todd Patrick, and Anatoly Vishevsky. 2004. “The Image of the Prisoner of the Caucasus in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Russian Literature and Culture from Pushkin to Makanin.” *Przegląd Rusycystyczny* (3): 33–50. UL —.
- Baer, Brian J. 2002. “Russian Gays/Western Gaze: Mapping (Homo)Sexual Desire in Post-Soviet Russia.” *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 8 (4): 499–521. UL —.
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- . 2008. *A History of Russian Cinema*. Oxford: Berg. UL 67/KK 1035 B567.
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- Fejes, Nárcisz, and Andrea P. Balogh, eds. 2013. *Queer Visibility in Post-Socialist Cultures*. Bristol, Chicago, IL: Intellect. UL KT 67/KK 1040 F311.
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