

**WHOSE IMAGINED COMMUNITY IS IT? THE EXCLUSION OF LGBTQI+
PEOPLE FROM THE NATIONAL NARRATIVES IN RUSSIA**

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ABSTRACT

Russia has a long track of human rights violations and one of the most vulnerable groups is the LGBT community in Russia. After passing the law on the ban of homosexual propaganda, members of the queer community have been legally persecuted by the state, and the number of hate crimes in the name of homophobia increased significantly. This thesis tries to look at the problem of the exclusion of LGBT people from the national imagination not just by stating as a given fact, but by asking why it is the case. By adopting the concepts from post-colonial theory, feminist re-readings of nationalism, gender and sexuality, queer theory and biopolitics, the theoretical framework of the given work challenges the convenient discussions on the nature of nation-building and nationalism in Russia by shifting the attention from the interethnic relations as the core premise of the construction of national identity. Thus, the main argument of the thesis is that Russia as a subaltern empire uses the homophobic discourse as the means of subverting the domination of West through the means of biopower, where this confrontation with the Western world is an integral part of the Russian national identity, which has been developed through decades, if not centuries of self-colonization. In order to prove this argument, I use the Critical Discourse Analysis in the analysis of Dugin's works, because he has been one of the prominent ideologists of the Putin's regime, and is very vocal about the issues on gender and queer politics.

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INTRODUCTION

The fact that the Russian LGBTQ+ community are exposed to multiple human rights violations and are excluded from the national narratives is not something that would surprise anyone these days. However, the underlying reasons behind that have been vastly overlooked up until recently, and thus allowing academia, activists, and LGBTQ+ members to take the status quo for granted. Whereas the Western world has been known for its tolerance, and even embracement of the LGBT rights, Russia is becoming more and more dangerous for queer people. The so-called ban on propaganda of homosexuality that was passed by the state in 2013 contributed to the general homophobia among people, and led to the increase in the hate crimes against LGBT people. In this light, the recent news about the persecution of gay people in Chechnya by the local authorities raised strong concerns about the lives of homosexuals in Russia on the international level.

There is a tendency both in the academia and the media to oversimplify the issue of the homophobic discourse in Russian politics, connecting it merely to the authoritarian and illiberal regime of Putin's presidency. After the review of the available literature on the issue of political homophobia in Russia, I noticed a gap in the works of scholars who write about the contemporary politics of Russia. The main problem is that most of them look at Russian domestic politics from a single perspective, and such an intricate topic of nation-building and nationalism in Russia is studied only through an outdated prism of nation-state as based on ethnic groups. Thus, regardless of whether the discussion of nationalism in Russia is centered on the notions of civic nationalism or ethnic nationalism, they still cannot overcome the boundaries of ethnic group as the basic component of a nation-state, and therefore, all the debates and discourses are around the issue of ethnic composition of Russia and how it deals with its ethnic and religious heterogeneity.

At this point, this thesis offers a new perspective on the nation-building process in Russia and its connection to homophobia and heterosexism. My aim is to answer a simple at the first sight question of why queer people of Russia are not excluded from the official national narratives. Despite its deceiving simplicity, the answer to this question is not as straightforward as one might think.

In the search for an answer to the posed question, I developed a theoretical framework that incorporates the post-colonial theories, feminist theories on nationalism and sexuality, and the theory of biopolitics by Foucault. This multidimensional approach to the heterosexism of Russian official discourse is believed to contribute to a more in-depth understanding of current politics of Russia in its relation to the Western world and its own nation. In order to prove the hypothesis suggested in the theoretical framework, I use the Critical Discourse Analysis set up by the representatives of Viennese School of Discourse Analysis, Ruth Wodak and Angelika Hirsh in their book *The Discursive Construction of National Identity*¹, in the analysis of Dugin's discourse.

One might question my choice of Dugin and his ideological position as the source for discourse analysis. As the promoter and the self-proclaimed leader of the Eurasian movement, Dugin is a very interesting figure in the Russian politics. His path to the political and intellectual spheres is full of controversies and opportunistic maneuvers. Yet, his alliance with the current regime has proved to be stable and mutually beneficial. Thus, he is known as one of the political ideologists of Putin's regime, promoting the completely distorted version of Eurasianism from its original one that was developed in the twentieth century. At the core of Dugin's Euraisanism are the ideas about the revival of Russia as a great power, or empire that unites all the post-Soviet countries and Eastern Europe under the strong leadership of Russia as a state that has a

¹ Ruth Wodak and Angelika Hirsch, eds., *The Discursive Construction of National Identity*, 2. ed., and extended, reprinted (Edinburgh: Edinburgh Univ. Press, 2010).

unique mission to save the civilization through “conservative revolution”². Despite the fact that his ideas might sound radical and as a random mix of neo-fascism with some occult elements in it, Dugin managed to be recognized both by the political and intellectual elite. Thus, he became a Professor and the Head of the Department of Sociology of International Relations in the Department of Sociology at Moscow State University where he taught a course on Structural Sociology and Sociology of Gender. Two lectures from these courses will be analyzed to dismantle his anti-liberal and anti-Western nationalist discourse. Another text that I will analyze is *The Fourth Political Theory*, his last and one of the most important ones, where he presents his ideological views.

The second chapter will provide a background information on the issue of homophobia in the political discourse in Russia. It will discuss the periods of nation-building and ingrain the concepts of sexuality and gender politics into the history of the development of state’s politics and its official discourse. The fourth chapter will give an overview of the methodological approach, i.e. the Critical Discourse Analysis, and its advantages in analyzing the texts and relations of power established by the government. Also, it will demonstrate the common strategies and linguistic tools, on which the analytical part will concentrate. Finally, in the fourth, analytical chapter, I will show how Dugin’s discourse fits into the theoretical model that I have built up in the framework chapter.

² Dugin Alexander, *The Fourth Political Theory* (Moscow: Eurasian Movement, 2012).

CHAPTER 1. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.1 Russia as a Subaltern Empire

One of the central concepts that I will use in my thesis is the concept of Subaltern Empire, which is used by Morozov³ in his book regarding Russia. According to him, one should perceive Russia not merely as a country which was a colonizer in the past, but also as a subaltern state. He argues that the common understanding of the dynamics of the Russian policy both at domestic and international levels is corrupted by a Eurocentric view of politics. Thus, Morozov asserts that both the field of IR and Russian politics in particular will win from the usage of the post-colonial theory, which was developed by scholars such as Spivak⁴, Chakrabarty⁵, Bhabha⁶, etc.

The main argument that Morozov suggests, or one can say the main conceptual framework that is newly introduced by the author is the concept of subaltern empire. Thus, as Morozov maintains, Russia fully falls into the category of subaltern empire. Its subalternity is dictated by the fact that it is still dependent on the West both economically and ideologically. However, with regards to its own population it is considered to be an empire that constantly silences its own citizens.

I believe that applying this concept to my own research question of why queer people are excluded from the national narratives by the Russian government will assist me in

³ Viatcheslav Morozov, *Russia's Postcolonial Identity : A Subaltern Empire in a Eurocentric World*, Central and Eastern European Perspectives on International Relations (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire : Palgrave Macmillan, 2015, 2015).

⁴ Spivak Gayatri Chakravorty in C. Nelson, and L. Grossberg, "Can the Subaltern Speak?," in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Education, 1988).

⁵ Chakrabarty Dipesh, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton, Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2000).

⁶ Bhabha Homi, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 2005).

understanding the nature of Russian politics and the reasons for the aforementioned question. Thus, I will treat this concept as central and crucial, but not the only for my research.

In his deep analysis of Russian history in both the retrospective and the trends in current politics of Russia, Morozov engages into an interesting discussion of post-colonial theory and how it is applicable to contemporary Russia. He writes that one might be surprised to use the term subaltern with the Russian case, given that for centuries it was one of the world's biggest empires. However, Morozov remarks that Russia has never been colonized but by itself⁷ both internally and externally. For him, Russia is a clear subaltern in relation to the West, because it is deeply embedded into the capitalist system, and has been so ever since the Empire was created. He asserts that even after the Bolshevik Revolution and during the decades of communism, Russia has never been an independent entity in this structural space of capitalism, and even more, since it could not provide any meaningful alternatives and was playing by the rules set up by the Western world, it has been in the periphery of this structure. In his book, Morozov pays attention both to material and normative dependency of Russia on the Western world. Since my thesis is about identities and nation-building process, I will concentrate on the ideological and normative unsustainability and insufficiency of Russia regarding the West.

First, before proceeding with the discussion of normative dependency, it is important to look at the core concepts of post-colonial theory. The term 'subaltern' was first introduced by academics who developed and participated in Subaltern Studies Group. The main research agenda of this group was to initiate and enhance studying the experience of dominated groups during the colonial period. Despite the fact that the most prominent analysis of the subaltern was offered by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak⁸, the original idea of the subaltern traces back to

⁷ Morozov, *Russia's Postcolonial Identity*.

⁸ Spivak Gayatri Chakravorty in C. Nelson, and L. Grossberg, "Can the Subaltern Speak?"

Antonio Gramsci⁹. The first time he used this concept was in his works in political theory. Following from this, the term subaltern is defined as the group that has no voice over their choices, or in other words, ‘has an insufficient access to the modes of representation’¹⁰, and because of this inability to raise its voice, this group has a limited agency in the given social structure. Not only this, but their “agency” itself is constructed by the discourse as limited, such as in Orientalist discourse for example. Therefore, as Gramsci states¹¹, a subaltern group is ‘completely excluded from the popular in a relationship of domination’ and its interests are represented by the hegemonic group, thereby rendering it subject to distortion and not responsive to its needs¹². Hence, as Morozov stresses, the most important fact in the definition of the subaltern is that since the dominant group has a hegemony over representation, it mistakenly mixes up two ways of representation: ‘speaking about the subaltern’, which is more about describing their position and situation, or “re-presenting” the subaltern group; and ‘speaking for subaltern’, which is ‘having them ‘voiced over’ by intermediaries who do not share their experience and hence silencing them’¹³. For Spivak¹⁴, the main distinctive feature of the subaltern is the second, i.e. being spoken for, however, the problem of it is situated within the concept of re-presenting of such a group. This definition of the subaltern is crucial here, because it will show later in my thesis how accepting Russia as a subaltern enforces its domestic politics of nation-building and how it handles ethnic heterogeneity in its path of creating the Russian identity.

While Morozov admits that it is impossible to apply the concept of the subaltern to the entire state, which has sovereignty defined by the Westphalian state system, he also maintains

⁹ Gramsci Antonio, *Prison Notebooks* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1971).

¹⁰ Chattopadhyay S. and B. Sarkar, “Introduction: The Subaltern and the Popular,” *Postcolonial Studies* 8, no. 4 (n.d.): 359.

¹¹ Gramsci Antonio, *Prison Notebooks*.

¹² Morozov, *Russia's Postcolonial Identity*, 10.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Spivak Gayatri Chakravorty in C. Nelson, and L. Grossberg, “Can the Subaltern Speak?”

that if viewed from the structural perspective of post-colonial theory, Russia can be a good example of the subaltern in its relation to the Western world. Thus, as it was mentioned before, Russia is economically dependent on the “global capitalist core”, and if to follow the ideas of Gramsci¹⁵, economic subordination is one of the most important criteria to be considered as a subaltern group. Moreover, as will be discussed further, not only economically, but also normatively Russia is in a position of dependency and subordination to the West. Thus, as Morozov¹⁶ claims, even when Russia tries to oppose its Western opponents, it still uses the Eurocentric language, and by this strengthens the position of the dominant group as a hegemonic one. I will talk about this normative insufficiency in the discussion of the issue of nation-building in Russia after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Before moving any further, it is also important to provide a definition of what is meant by Russia within the framework of the subaltern empire. I will use the definition that Morozov himself uses regarding Russia, stating that it is ‘an identity and the corresponding political community, which is produced by the forces of identification and antagonism, socio-economic practices and power – including, but not limited to, the power of the Russian state’¹⁷. At the same time, he emphasizes that to consider Russia as a monolithic unit also leads to misunderstanding of the phenomenon. Thus, he writes that the mere existence of Russia is dictated by the existence of the idea of the Westphalian nation-state order. A further factor of its existence is the idea of Russians as people who engage in everyday identification as such, or in Ernest Renan’s words, participate in a “daily plebiscite”¹⁸ in their daily routine. Using this pattern, one can infer that Russia itself can take the role of the agent of the capitalist core, and acts as the colonizer of its own periphery, which is considered to be anything outside of the

¹⁵ Gramsci Antonio, *Prison Notebooks*.

¹⁶ Morozov, *Russia’s Postcolonial Identity*.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 11.

¹⁸ “The Nationalism Project: Ernest Renan Defining the Nation,” accessed May 20, 2017, <http://www.nationalismproject.org/what/renan.htm>.

capital city Moscow. Hence, in this perspective, the subaltern on the domestic level is the Russian people, who are constantly silenced and voiced over by the state that plays the role of the empire in this dialectic relationship.

The concept of the “subaltern empire” is especially helpful for understanding Russia’s relationship with the Western world and itself at the same time. One might argue that since Russia has never had the experience of being a colony, it cannot be classified as a subaltern. However, as Morozov clearly puts it, ‘Russia has never been colonized by anyone by itself; more than that it created a vast and powerful empire’¹⁹. This self-colonization, he continues, gave birth to the unending dependence on the West not only in material terms, but also in its search for unique identity, which was constituted within the Orientalist framework, the product of the Western tradition. This phenomenon is even more vivid in modern-day Russia, and its process of nation-building.

Before proceeding to a more detailed discussion of the nation-building process and the exclusion of the queer community, it is also important to include the other crucial concept of ‘hybrid subjectivities’, which originates in the relationship between the colonizer and colonized. As is argued by major scholars in the field of post-colonialism such as Spivak²⁰ and Bhabha²¹, it is erroneous to look at the phenomenon of a post-colonial relationship as a clear-cut division between the colonizer and the colonized, and their identities. It is rather the interaction of these two that should be taken into consideration, because their identities do not exist separately, but are rather mutually constitutive. Thus, the present-day identities of the states are the result of this interaction and interrelationship. What one can derive from this is that a colonized entity never exists in an isolation, but lives in the framework of Master-Slave

¹⁹ Morozov, *Russia’s Postcolonial Identity*, 12.

²⁰ Spivak Gayatri Chakravorty in C. Nelson, and L. Grossberg, *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward a History of the Vanishing Present* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999).

²¹ Bhabha Homi, *The Location of Culture*.

relationship²², where it aspires to take over the role of the Master, and therefore, enacts the same pattern of behavior and logic as its colonizer. Consequently, the colonized is involved into the process of mimicking the discourse of the colonizer, and this in its turn makes the entire dynamics of dominance and subversion an ambiguous phenomenon. This idea of ambiguity is best explained by looking at the postcolonialism not as the act of confronting the colonizer, but rather deconstructing and re-structuring the entire discursive order in which the domination has been manifested. Therefore, this brings up the notion of the hybridity of the colonial relationship. Inspired by Derridean concept of hybridity²³, Bhabha²⁴ offers his view on it in the context of colonialism, where instead of explicit opposition to the culture and identity of the colonized, the colonizer uses the discourse of prioritizing and/or delegitimizing “the mother culture and its bastards, the self and its doubles”²⁵ This creates a situation of hybridity, where the colonial relationship dictates the identities of both the colonizer and the colonized, and restricting them to the boundaries of this relationship, where the attributes of the authority can be seized and appropriated by the colonial unit. As Bhabha puts it, ‘hybridity is a problematic of colonial representation and individuation that reverses the effects of the colonial disavowal, so that other “denied” knowledges enter upon the dominant discourse and estrange the basis of its authority – its rules of recognition’²⁶. This means that not only can the colonized engage in mimicry of the authority by reproducing its way of dominance or in other words, the discourse of the Master, but can also distort and pervert it, and by doing so, challenges and denies the power of the colonizer.

²² Ibid.

²³ Derrida Jacques, *Limited Inc.* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1988).

²⁴ Bhabha Homi, *The Location of Culture*.

²⁵ Ibid., 159.

²⁶ Ibid., 162.

1.2 Self-colonization of Russia

Thus, by now the outline of this part of the theoretical framework should be visible. By applying the concept of “subaltern empire” to Russia, I follow Morozov’s stance, arguing that Russia is ‘an empire in relation to its own population, and...a subaltern in the context of the global capitalist system²⁷’. In addition to this, it is essential to give an explanation for the aforementioned statement that Russia has been colonized by itself. The term of “internal colonization” is used by Morozov in his book with the goal of explaining the paradox of Russia. This concept of “internal colonization” is mostly used by historians, and defined by Etkind *et al.*²⁸ as ‘the use of practices of colonial administration and knowledge within the state’s political boundaries’, and due to this process, Russia has in certain periods been ‘both the subject and the object of orientalism’²⁹. What is remarkable in the Russian case, according to Etkind³⁰, is the fact that usually the main characteristic of the colonial relationship is the presence of the cultural difference between the colonizer and the colonized. However, in Russia this line of cultural demarcation was not between Russians and non-Russians, but between the Westernized elite (the aristocracy, political elite, and intelligentsia) and the masses, whose crucial element was the peasant population³¹. At this point, Uffelman³² further develops the idea of internal colonization of Russia, emphasizing the mirrored essence of the phenomenon, where both inside and outside are tied together in a complex relationship. Thus, the attempts of Russia and the West to create the Other from each other lead to two discursive developments that are

²⁷ Morozov, *Russia’s Postcolonial Identity*.

²⁸ Etkind, A., D. Uffelman, I. Kukulin (eds), “Vnutrennyaya Kolonizatsiya Rossii: Mezhdru Praktiki i Voobrazheniem,” in *Tam, Vnutri: Praktiki Vnutrennei Kolonizatsii v Kulturnoi Istorii Rossii* (Moscow: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2012), 12.

²⁹ Etkind Alexander, *Internal Colonization: Russia’s Imperial Experience* (Cambridge: Polity, 2011), 251.

³⁰ Etkind Alexander, “Russkaya Literatura, XIX Vek: Roman Vnutrennei Kolonizatsii,” *Novoe Literaturnoe Obozrenie* 59 (2003): 111.

³¹ Etkind Alexander, *Internal Colonization: Russia’s Imperial Experience*.

³² Uffelman Dirk in A. Etkind, D. Uffelman, I. Kukulin (eds), “Podvodnyie Kamni Vnutrennei (De)kolonizatsii Rosii,” in *Tam, Vnutri: Praktiki Vnutrennei Kolonizatsii v Kulturnoi Istorii Rossii* (Moscow: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2012), 62–67.

reflexive of each other. First is the external Orientalization of Russia by the Western world, and self-Orientalization of the elites³³. The outcome of the latter is the self-colonization, under which the elite internalizes the norms of Europe and accepts them as universal, and at the same time looks at the masses as an alien group. This results in an even wider gap between the elite and the masses, and ends up in a continuous process of self-colonization and Orientalization of the masses by the elites.

Here, in my thesis, I will use the term “internal colonization”, “self-colonization”, and “self-Orientalization” as mutually interchangeable concepts. Thus, it is important to demonstrate how the process of self-colonization works, which was brilliantly described by Alexander Kiossev³⁴ in his article. As the term implies, self-colonization refers to the process when countries internalize the cultural dominance of the colonial power, which is the European culture, without actually being colonized in the physical sense of the word. According to Kiossev, the key element of the process of self-colonization is the social imagination, since all the process happened beyond the “colonial realities”³⁵, where social imagination is the

symbolic dimension of communal life... Supported and reproduced by everyone, such commonly shared notions encourage individuals in imagining participations in communities and processes beyond the limited horizon of their immediate experience, whereas primary groups are stimulated to perceive themselves as being a part of larger and sometimes unfathomable societies – nations, races, classes, historic periods, and even “humankind” acting upon “the world stage” and producing “world history.”³⁶

It is this social imagination that dictates how the colonized and the self-colonized differ from each other and from its colonizer, be it either one that is forcefully imposed or chosen.

³³ Khalid Adeeb, “Russian History and the Debate over Orientalism,” *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 1, no. 4 (2000): 691–99.

³⁴ “The Self-Colonizing Metaphor | Alexander Kiossev,” accessed May 31, 2017, <http://monumenttotransformation.org/atlas-of-transformation/html/s/self-colonization/the-self-colonizing-metaphor-alexander-kiossev.html>.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.; See also Castoriadis Cornelius, *The Imaginary Institution of Society* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1998); and Taylor Charles, *Modern Social Imaginaries* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2004).

Thus, colonized nations perceive European countries as colonial invaders, who enslaved them, and therefore perceive them as enemies, which should be resisted; conversely, the countries, which willingly accepted the dominance of Europe have another perspective on the hegemon. Thus, these countries internalized the role of the colonized, of the culturally inferior to the dominant West. This self-colonized identity then gave them the idea that they have to get rid of their “lateral” position – they no longer wished to stay in this position of unconsciously self-imposed inferiority, and at this point they started to fight for ‘visibility and recognition of their “civilization”, ownership of history and freedom’; and as a matter of fact, by merely following these desires, such countries already absorbed the ‘concepts, values, and symbolic hierarchies of the colonizers’³⁷. In sociological terms, the given process was mediated through the local elite, who received a Western education, and once back in their home countries assumed the role of political or intellectual elite, and tried to replicate the “Europe-centered colonial conceptual repertoire”³⁸, using only so-called soft-power such as education, media, political propaganda, and popular culture that reinforced the social imagination. As Kiossev puts it

These early patriots without nations, self-styled national utopians and visionaries, introduced the notion of the “sovereign nation” and invented, by dint of studied models, local “historical traditions.” Armed with these symbolic weapons they turned to various groups and strata envisioning them as a unified “imaginary community” (with horizontal solidarity among its members, synchronized coexistence in everyday time, and in a joint historical march toward the future). their powerful pro-European and modernizing rhetoric sculptured the imagination of their most zealous acolytes—students, youths, young intellectuals, new generations whose destiny it was to become the further builders of the new nation state and its homogenizing institutions.³⁹

Thus, the main element of self-colonization is the adoption of the cultural and ideological norms of the colonizer.

³⁷ “The Self-Colonizing Metaphor | Alexander Kiossev.”

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

This process of modernization or Europeanization created the asymmetrical relationship of the self-imposed colony with Europe. The self-colonized started viewing itself in an inherently uneven position with the culturally dominant and more developed West, and thus perceived it as the Big Other. This, in turn, meant that their own culture was void and their national existence is a “culture of absences” or a “culture of backwardness”⁴⁰. Stemming from this standpoint, it meant that their cultural and national identity was inferior, because of the “embarrassing” absence of everything that Europe had: economic development, technological and scientific progress, political and intellectual advancement, astonishing arts, manners, style, and glamor – everything in their minds that they lacked. This bitter realization of absences was coupled with the poignant need to fill up this emptiness by copying the European model, the model of the colonizer. In their attempts to basically become the version of the colonizer, they ‘rendered the politics of import of models and institutions; of “filling in” or “catching up” an incessant and doomed alignment/competition with the colonial center, a never-ending pursuit of recognition by the center.’⁴¹ This endeavor engendered a set of paradoxes.

The first paradox is connected to the place that the self-colonized assigns to the West in its self-colonizing imagination. For these self-colonized groups, Europe was the Big Other, ‘a peremptory cultural authority indispensable in their self-identification’⁴². This created the vision of Europe or the West from two sides. While the self-colonizers did engage in criticizing the hegemon, however, their criticism never reached a point of absolute and irreversible rejection of the domination of the West with its norms and ideologies, as was the case with the real colonies. Furthermore,

Since Europe was the “master signifier” in their symbolic and cultural order, a structure-defining constituent resembling an absent deity, it might not be rejected outright, just like an imperfect actual father might not revoke the

⁴⁰ Maria Todorova, “The Trap of Backwardness: Modernity, Temporality, and the Study of Eastern European Nationalism,” *Slavic Review* 64, no. 1 (March 2005): 140–64, doi:10.2307/3650070.

⁴¹ “The Self-Colonizing Metaphor | Alexander Kiossev.”

⁴² Ibid.

authority Jacques Lacan termed “in-the-Name-of-the-Father,” as it guaranteed the symbolic order and underlying values⁴³. This was how Europe was both the subject of criticism and a civilizational superego: for the self-colonizing imagination it was not only a primary character on the world scene, it was this *scene itself*, the recognition-granting gaze.⁴⁴

This means that a self-colonized country sees its own identity only within the framework of constant resistance and struggle for liberation from the domination of the colonizer, however, as this struggle is the most important, if not the most crucial part of its identity, it cannot exist without the presence of the antagonist – the colonizer.

The second paradox is linked to the first one, and is fundamental for understanding the behavior of the self-colonizing group. Thus, as the outcome of the process of imagined colonization by itself, the self-colonized reversed the symbolic order of “the Self” and “the Other”. As Kiossev asserts, ‘the dynamic of the constant signifying distinctions has been halted and ideologically “locked”, “quilted” into binary pairs aligned around a symbolic center, where “Europe” played the role of the peculiar “zero point” in the reference system.’⁴⁵ Unable to come up with the alternatives to its imagined colonizer, the self-colonized absorbed the idea that anything not “Western”, including the self, is imperfect, flawed and inadequate, that it ‘lacked universality and self-sufficiency’⁴⁶, and always found itself on the wrong side of the civilization.

This led to another paradox, where the self-colonizing nations imported not only the ideas, and stereotypes for mimicry, but also adopted the images of themselves constructed by the ideological hegemon, through which they had colonized themselves. According to Kiossev,

All this fostered a controversial nation-building process: one that borrowed models hand in hand with resistance against the models. Such borrowings were meant to “Europeanize” yet at the same time they stood in the way of actual cultural emancipation as they never failed to recycle the secondary, submissive,

⁴³ Lacan Jacques, *Ecrits, A Selection* (London: Tavistock and Routledge, 1989) cited in: “The Self-Colonizing Metaphor | Alexander Kiossev.”

⁴⁴ “The Self-Colonizing Metaphor | Alexander Kiossev.”

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

and opaque role of small peripheral nations on the world scene, thus failing to acknowledge their sovereignty, authenticity, and autonomy⁴⁷.

The implication of this is that the self-colonizer in its fight for recognition as an equal fell prey to the same logic of its master, unable to offer an alternative vision that would truly challenge the dominance of the colonizer.

From this description of the process of self-colonization, one can trace the pattern that Russia has been following for centuries, and this self-colonization has not ended yet. Moreover, one can say that it is presently in its fully-fledged stage.

I would also argue that the process of self-colonization of Russia is the integral part of the nation-building process in contemporary Russia for one important reason: self-colonization creates the boundaries of “the Self” and “the Other”. As Anderson famously states a nation is an imagined community

Because the members of even the smallest nations will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them; yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion, ... has finite, if elastic, boundaries, beyond which lie other nations. No nation imagines itself coterminous with mankind... It is imagined as sovereign because the concept was born in an age in which Enlightenment and Revolution were destroying the legitimacy of the divinely-ordained, hierarchical dynastic realm. ... The gage and emblem of this freedom is sovereign state⁴⁸

Here, not only does the self-colonization create boundaries for outsiders, but it also creates a sense of solidarity in face of the external “Other”, who is presented as a threat. As Anderson points out, it is impossible that every member of a nation will know each other, and the crucial part in the construction of a nation is the social imagination described above. In case of Russia, this need to unite people, who are not each other’s immediate family members, but members of the biggest political unit, as the Russian Federation, which is multi-ethnic and multi-confessional country, stands as the main point in the political agenda. Thus, the state is a part

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Benedict R. O’G Anderson, *Imagined Communities*. [Electronic Resource] : *Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, ACLS Humanities E-Book (London ; New York : Verso, c2006., 2006), 15–16.

of the global capitalist structure, and within this structure, it is a subaltern, i.e. in the periphery of the Western world. However, Russia is using its position by engaging into the victim discourse, who has been invaded by the West without its will and being colonized by it.

1.3 Normative dependency of Russia on the West as a Subaltern

In this part, I will move on to the discussion of the normative dependency of Russia on the West. According to Morozov⁴⁹, Russia has insecurities regarding its identity and position in the international arena. He writes that Russia's political behavior in most cases stems from the Russia's 'simultaneous belonging to and exclusion from Europe (understood as a political community)'⁵⁰. When it comes to internal situation, Russia is torn apart between different discourses on identity politics, which are in conflict with each other. Thus, one discourse tries to embrace the European identity, claiming that Russia is a part of Europe and has the same level of modernity, another one bears nostalgia for Soviet past, and therefore, tries to recreate this identity, and the third discourse tries to maintain that Russia has a unique standing in civilization, and should embrace it⁵¹. This whole identity search is driven by the desire to be recognized by the West as the legitimate actor in the international political world, and represent itself as a great power, as well as to offer a counter arguments and interpretations of universal values⁵². As Morozov puts it, Russia's identity insecurities that were only exacerbated after the demise of the Soviet Union are again best explained through the lens of its subaltern position combined with its imperial legacy.

⁴⁹ Morozov, *Russia's Postcolonial Identity*.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 41.

⁵¹ Hopf Ted, *Social Origins of International Politics. Identities and Foreign Policies, Moscow, 1955 and 1999* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2003); Vera Tolz, *Russia, Inventing the Nation Series* (London : Arnold, 2001); Kuchins, A. C., and I. Zevelev in H. R. Rau, and D. M. Ollapally (eds), "Russia's Contested National Identity and Foreign Policy," in *Worldviews of Aspiring Powers: Domestic Foreign Policy Debates in China, India, Iran, Japan, and Russia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

⁵² Morozov Vyacheslav, "Sovereignty and Democracy in Ontemporary Russia: A Modern Subject Faces the Post-Modern World," *Journal of International Relations and Development* 11, no. 2 (2008): 152–80.

Despite the fact that Russia has never been and probably could have never been considered as a liberal state, recently one can notice an even greater shift towards overt conservatism, which presents Russia as an opponent of the West for a place of hegemony in the global system. This increased conservatism is manifested both in Russia's foreign and domestic policies, where it is becoming more and more intrusive and pervasive of its citizens' individual lives⁵³. In terms of foreign policy, it is also noticeable how Russia is taking a more aggressive and less-cooperative stance, which is more evident after Putin came to power for his third term. This might create an image of Russia that finally gained an independent position in the Eurocentric world, however, as it will be shown further, this is not the case. The argument instead is that Russia's identity and nation-building today is the product of its subaltern position to the West. As Morozov asserts, even the post-communist transition of Russia has been the "subaltern experience"⁵⁴. One can see from the major discourse produced by the Russian authorities, the core of their self-identification is their relationship with the West. This notion must not be new for a nationalism scholar, where it is widely accepted that any identity is formed by creating the external group, the Other. However, in the Russian case, the externalization of Europe and simultaneous aspiration to be part of it extensively determines its politics domestically.

After the disintegration of the Soviet Union, Russia's normative dependency on the West has increased significantly. The revolutions that took place in the late 1980s and early 1990s revealed the bitter fact that Russia is far more behind in its economic and political progress, and showed its position as a periphery in the world system⁵⁵. This gave rise to a new

⁵³ Lipman Maria in M. Lipman, and N. Petrov (eds), "The Kremlin Turns Ideological: Where This New Direction Could Lead," in *Russia 2025: Scenarios for the Russian Future* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013); Laruelle Marlene, "Conservatism as the Kremlin's New Toolkit: An Ideology at the Lowest Cost," *Russian Analytical Digest*, 2012.

⁵⁴ Morozov, *Russia's Postcolonial Identity*, 104.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 105.

discourse, owing to which the state admitted its backwardness and showed its willingness and more importantly, the necessity of catching up with the “civilized world”. One can only imagine the dominance of the Western discourse and how it became the major one in order to leave behind the Soviet past and overturn the last remnants of communism and start the transition toward democracy and liberal economy. At this point, its subaltern position can be best explained by Dipesh Chakrabarty⁵⁶, who referencing Spivak⁵⁷, claimed that the postcolonial subject ‘can only be spoken for and spoken of by the transition narrative, which will always ultimately privilege the modern (that is, “Europe”)’.

Following from that logic and the idea of hybridity of the subaltern identity, one can observe that even in its ambiguity as a subaltern empire, Russia still tries to contest the Western hegemony on their terms, using their “universal” norms and conceptions of the rule of law, etc. However, in doing so, Russia tries to reinterpret the core values, and by doing this completely perverts the initial ideas, and when it comes to justifying its ever-more increasing conservative moves in the domestic politics, it gets away with stating that it follows the democratic values inherent to the Western civilization⁵⁸. Thus, as Morozov⁵⁹ argues Russia is normatively dependent on the Western world, but tries to use subservient tactics in countering Western hegemony. This idea was brought up by Bhabha⁶⁰ in his discussion of postcolonial countries. The dependency further led to the attempts of national identity building, which ranged from claiming that Russia is part of Europe, but recently shifted towards establishing an identity that is completely reliant on negating and othering the West, examples of which are different interpretations of the neo-Eurasianism, which has gained greater prominence throughout

⁵⁶ Chakrabarty Dipesh, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*, 41.

⁵⁷ Spivak Gayatri Chakravorty in C. Nelson, and L. Grossberg, “Can the Subaltern Speak?”

⁵⁸ Morozov, *Russia’s Postcolonial Identity*, 109; Viatcheslav Morozov, “Subaltern Empire?,” *Problems of Post-Communism* 60, no. 6 (December 11, 2013): 16–28, doi:10.2753/PPC1075-8216600602.

⁵⁹ Morozov, *Russia’s Postcolonial Identity*.

⁶⁰ Bhabha Homi, *The Location of Culture*.

Putin's third term. Moreover, in his latest article, Brubaker discusses the civilizational shift in the nationalist-populist movement in North and Western European politics, where they present tolerance towards LGBT, semiphilia, and Judaeo-Christian values as part of their civilizational identity and oppose it to the invasion of Islamic civilization brought by the immigrants and refugees from Muslim countries.⁶¹ The logic of Brubaker's argument can be applied to Russian nationalism, where the government is trying to create the discourse on the civilizational mission of Russia as the beacon of true Christian morality and traditions, and therefore use the opposite values in confronting the domination of Western world, which is in moral decay. This discourse is extensively produced and disseminated by the Eurasian movement in Russia today.

1.4 Neo-Eurasian movement in the context of the position of Russia as a Subaltern Empire

At this point, it is important to briefly go through the concept of neo-Eurasian movement as an identity building tool after the demise of the Soviet Union. Unlike the original idea of a Eurasian identity that was embraced by Lev Gumilev⁶², the contemporary version has gone through certain modifications, resulting in deliberate misinterpretations of the initial concept. What is interesting about the modified version of the Eurasian movement is how it deals with the multiethnic, multi-confessional nature of the Russian state. In the wake of the break of the USSR, Russia under the leadership of Boris Yeltsin tried to promote civic identity, where one's national identity would be defined as *rossianin*, i.e. tied to the state rather than his/her ethnic group⁶³. However, this attempt was not successful because of the rising nationalism among ethnic Russian people who had identity crises after losing the status of a great power⁶⁴.

⁶¹ Rogers Brubaker, "Between Nationalism and Civilizationism: The European Populist Moment in Comparative Perspective," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 40, no. 8 (June 21, 2017): 1191–1226, doi:10.1080/01419870.2017.1294700.

⁶² Mark Bassin, *The Gumilev Mystique : Biopolitics, Eurasianism, and the Construction of Community in Modern Russia*, Culture and Society after Socialism (Ithaca : Cornell University Press, 2016., 2016).

⁶³ Tolz, *Russia*.

⁶⁴ Bassin, *The Gumilev Mystique*, 219.

Consequently, new discourses came into existence, and one of them was the concept of identity of *russkiy*, the one that prioritizes the ethnic Russians and at the same time unites the entire federation. Thus, according to this notion, *russkiy* are people who share common past, culture based on this past, and language. What this implies is that under this concept, all the former colonies of the Russian Empire and later member states of the USSR should be considered as *russkiy*. Moreover, it is emphasized that although all the ethnic groups are included in this notion of a *russkiy* nation, the role of Russian ethnicity is the most crucial, since it serves the role of state-building ethnic group, which was also stated by Putin, saying that Russian self-determination comes in the form of a ‘polyethnic culture strengthened by the vital essence (*iadro*) of Russian culture’⁶⁵. In addition, as Putin claims, the whole nature of the Russian identity is built upon the “polyethnic and polycultural civilization”, which takes its origins from the “backbone” of the ethnic Russian people and Russian culture. Within this discourse, one can find certain references to longing for the restoration of the imperial identity of Russia. In turn, one can argue that by doing this, Russia is engaging into the pattern of behavior, which was described above as hybrid subjectivities. Thus, Russia’s full realization of the dominance and hegemony of the West in the international arena and its subaltern position in relation to it makes Russia try to re-define itself as a rival who is in an equal position, rather than a misfit finding itself in a constant race for the same position, but never reaching it. Therefore, the entire articulations that are becoming more prominent recently about transforming the Eurasian Economic Union into a supranational body such as European Union, which will be a counterpart to the West brings one back to the logic of mimicry dictated by the dependency on every level starting from the ideas. In this sense, as Chakrabarty⁶⁶ very convincingly puts it in his book

⁶⁵ Team of the Official Website of the President of Russia, “Greetings to International Academic Congress Honouring the Legacy of Lev Gumilev,” *President of Russia*, accessed May 20, 2017, <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/48079>.

⁶⁶ Chakrabarty Dipesh, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*.

regarding the subaltern position, even denying it is the indicator of the subaltern standing and is not the sign of liberation at all.

1.5 Biopolitics, State, and Queer in Russia

In this part, I am going to move on to the discussion of the exclusion of the queer people from the national narratives by the Russian government through the framework of biopolitics and discourse on sexuality that was developed by Michell Foucault in the first volume of the *History of Sexuality*⁶⁷. In this volume, Foucault argues that how people have been considering the history of sexuality within the conception of “the repressive hypothesis” is not the right approach to understand the discourse on sexuality that has been developed in the 19th century. According to this hypothesis, during the Victorian era, there was a total suppression of human sexuality and anything related to that, and this suppression was overruled by the sexual liberation of the 20th century. Thus, any form of manifesting sexual behavior at that time period was limited and confined to the private space, waiting for emancipation to come to the surface. At this point, Foucault comes up with a new reading of Victorian-era sexuality, arguing that if one looks at the historical facts and developments, one can see that instead of being harshly suppressed, the discourse on sexuality was constantly produced and maintained by the state and its institutions, such as the church, medicine, pedagogy, etc. Moreover, for Foucault, sexuality itself was not something purely biological, but rather to a larger extent the product of social construction. He contends that the “image of imperial prude... emblazoned on our restrained, mute and hypocritical sexuality”⁶⁸ misrepresents the entire idea what that regime of sexuality strived for: its purpose was not to restrain biological instinct, a “stubborn drive” to be

⁶⁷ Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality* (London : Penguin Books, 1990).

⁶⁸ Ibid.

eliminated, nor was sexuality an “exterior domain to which power is applied”⁶⁹. What sexuality was, in fact, is ‘a result and an instrument of power design’⁷⁰. In this sense, he continues, since sexuality was the product of the social construction, sexuality is not incendiary or not against power; on the contrary, sexuality is a “dense transfer of point of power” which is exacerbated by “instrumentality”⁷¹.

At this point, I would like to turn to the rereading of Foucault in the colonial context introduced by Ann Stoler⁷². She argues that while Foucault’s work is in all senses groundbreaking, one of its lacunae is the fact that in his discussion of the Victorian period, he dismisses the colonial history of Europe, which was one of the most crucial part of the European history, and significant factor in the construction of sexuality and race. Thus, she concentrates upon how the discourse on sexuality was applied in the colonies and gave birth to the modern-day racism through the tools of bio-power or biopolitics. In her book, Stoler adds a fifth “object of knowledge that were also targets and anchorage points of the ventures of knowledge”⁷³ suggested by Foucault, which are the masturbating child, the “hysterical woman”, the Malthusian couple, and the perverse adult. She argues that it is important to add into this category a racialized body, asking if “any of these figures exist as objects of knowledge and discourse in the nineteenth century without a racially erotic counterpoint, without reference to the libidinal energies of the savage, the primitive, the colonized – reference points of difference, critique, and desire?”⁷⁴. Further, Stoler brings up a very interesting point, where she maintains that imperial discourses on sexuality of bourgeois society was not limited only to the colonizers, but also to their colonies. Thus, she continues, if one looks at the discourses on national identity

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 152.

⁷¹ Ibid., 103.

⁷² Ann Laura Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire : Foucault’s History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things* (Durham : Duke University Press, 1995).

⁷³ Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, 105.

⁷⁴ Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire*, 7.

and citizenship both in the metropole and its colonies from Foucauldian perspective, one can see that in most cases these identities were ‘emphatically coded by race’. Following on, the subsequent crucial point that she makes is that

Discourses of sexuality do more than define the distinctions of the bourgeois self; in identifying marginal members of the body politic, they have mapped the moral parameters of European nations. These deeply sedimented discourses on sexual morality could redraw the “interior frontiers” of national communities, frontiers that were secured through – and sometimes in collision with – the boundaries of race. These nationalist discourses were predicated on exclusionary cultural principles that did more than divide the middle class from the poor. They marked out those whose claims to property rights, citizenship, and public relief were worthy of recognition and whose were not.⁷⁵

This quote is very important for the theoretical framework of this thesis, since it demonstrates that there is a strong link between the nationalist discourse and the discourses on sexuality, and how the latter helps produce lines of delineation, which further develop into marginalization and even segregation.

One might wonder how the colonial history of Europe and discussion of racial sexualization is related to the case of contemporary Russia. In order to answer this question, it is relevant to first look at the conceptualizations of race. In relation to the Russian case, I argue that the queer community in Russia is vilified and excluded from the national discourse because they are considered to be a separate race. Not a race in its sense that we are used to perceiving it, but in the way sexuality is for Foucault, i.e. not in a biological sense, but as a social construct. In the *History of Sexuality*, Foucault addresses the question of race and biopolitics. For Foucault, what is of primary concern is not the universal history of racism that was engendered by the centuries of colonialism, but the “state racism”. He writes that racism is a state affair, which is reinforced by a set of scientific discourses⁷⁶. As he further claims, the primary goal of state racism is not to find external foes, but to create them from within. This process of vilifying

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, 147.

certain group of people within the state boundaries is connected to the notion of biopolitics. Although it is not biopolitics per se that explains the production of state racism, it is the “calculated management of life” which is centered around connecting the two “poles” of biopolitics that appeared in the nineteenth century. One of them was based on the notion of disciplining the individual, on the “anatomy-politics of human body”⁷⁷, and the second one is about realizing the “biopolitics of the population” through a set of “regulatory controls”. Consequently, Foucault mentions that there has been a major shift from the state function of ruling over the “right to death” to the “right to live”. The latter causes the normalization of racism instrumentalized through “the technology of power centered on life”⁷⁸.

Furthermore, coming back to my argument that queer people in Russia are marginalized through the racist discourse, I will now turn to the point that Susan Stryker made regarding the connection between race and sexuality, and one might say their inter-changeability. She brilliantly asserts that

race in Foucauldian terms, construed conceptually underpins the biopolitical division not only of color from whiteness but of men from women, of queers from straights, of abled-bodied from disabled, and of cisgender from transgender, to the extent that a body on one side of any of these binaries is conceptualized as biologically distinct from a body on the other side. The break that race introduces into the body politic allows the population to be segmented and selected, enhanced or eliminated, according to biological notions of heritability, degeneracy, foreignness, differentness, or unassimilability – all in the name of “defending” society and making it “pure”.

Hence, it is clearly seen from this quote how biopolitics is a form of racism, creating the groups of those who fit into the idea of society, and those who do not.

Here, regarding the othering of those considered as “sexually deviant” people in a national context, George Mosse⁷⁹ writes how in the case of modern Europe, the concepts of

⁷⁷ Ibid., 140.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 143.

⁷⁹ George L. Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality : Middle-Class Morality and Sexual Norms in Modern Europe* (Madison : University of Wisconsin Press, [1988], c1985, n.d.).

deviant sexuality and ethnicity (race) were contextually different. Thus, he gives an example of Germany in the late 19th and the first half of the twentieth century, when Jews were considered as sexually deviant, and therefore were not accepted as a part of the German nation. As Mosse argues in his work, there is an intrinsic link between nationalism and the idea of respectability. He writes that while nationalism has become one of the strongest and most powerful ideologies of modern times, it strengthened and at the same time was bolstered by the image of respectability, which is based on control of sexuality. Moreover, he claims that

In its long career [nationalism], it attempted to co-opt most of the important movements of the age, to absorb all that men thought meaningful and held dear even while holding fast to certain unchanging myths and symbols. It reached out to liberalism, conservatism, and socialism, it advocated both tolerance and repression, peace and war – whatever served its purpose. Through its claim to immutability, it endowed all that it touched with a “slice of eternity”. But however flexible, nationalism hardly waived in its advocacy of respectability’⁸⁰.

Here, I should also mention that for the purpose of cohesiveness of the argument of this thesis, I am using the terms ethnicity and race in the discussion and application of Mosse’s theory as the concepts that are interchangeable. In this sense, I agree with Brubaker that the theories of nationalism have been too much absorbed with the definition of concepts, instead of substantial analysis of them.⁸¹ Therefore, within this framework, the emphasis is put not on the definition of race and ethnicity, and whether they are different or the same, but on the logic of using these categories as tools of nation-building processes by the inclusion of certain groups and the exclusion of others.

Further, coming back to the discussion of Mosse’s work, within the mutual development of nationalism and respectability, nationalism helped control sexuality, and transform most of the “low passions” into respectability, which is manifested through “passionless” beauty of men

⁸⁰ George L. Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality : Middle-Class Morality and Sexual Norms in Modern Europe* (Madison : University of Wisconsin Press, [1988], c1985, 1988), 9.

⁸¹ Rogers Brubaker, *Ethnicity without Groups* (Cambridge, Mass. : Harvard University Press, 2004).

and women⁸². In order to do it, it was crucial to demarcate the lines between what is normal and abnormal; the failure to do this meant losing control over the security of the nation⁸³. By adopting these ideals of these standards, especially the ones that dealt with manliness, nationalism built stereotypes and criteria of an ideal member of the nation. Anything deviating from these standards were considered as “antisocial” and therefore a significant threat to a nation’s well-being. Going further, Mosse moves on to the discussion of race and sexuality. Here, for my argument, I will use his discussion of the link between racism and sexuality. However, I reiterate that race here does not mean a “biological” race, but rather signifies the idea of otherness and thus, implies homosexuality as a distinct race in the context of modern day Russia. As Mosse asserts, there is a direct link between racism and sexuality⁸⁴. He shows how the idea of an “inferior race” was exacerbated by the constructed image of those who belong to that race as savage, unable to control their sexual drives and lust. Mosse writes that ‘The stereotype of the so-call inferior race filled with lust was a staple of racism, part of the inversion of accepted values characteristic of the “outsider,” who at one and the same time threatened society and by his very existence confirmed its standards of behavior’⁸⁵. Hence, racism was one of the driving forces, which served the function of indicating the insider and the outsider, the self and the other based on the ideas of sexual perversion, which was negating the respectability of the bourgeois society, the core of the nation. As a consequence, homosexuals were perceived as a part of the “accursed race”.

After the discussion of works that I am using as the theoretical framework of my thesis, here is its main argument, which is based on re-reading and adding my own insight on the issue. I argue that it is Russia’s subaltern empire position that makes it exclude or at least marginalize

⁸² Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality*, 1988.

⁸³ Ibid., 10.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 134.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

queer people in national narratives and discourse. As discussed above, in its attempts to subvert the hegemon (which is the Western world) Russia engages in the mimicking the colonial or imperial behavior. Through carefully managed tactics of biopolitics, the state presents the homosexual community as representatives of the other “race”, the outsiders, who are morally corrupted and indecent. This state racism, as Foucault calls it, serves the function of delineating moral boundaries, which are crucial for Russian national identity building. The reason for this boundary setting, inspired by ideals of moral purity, is the need to affirm its identity as the savior of the European civilization, which in its turn, is a clear manifestation of its subaltern position to the West. It tries to separate itself from the Western world, which is the hegemon in the Eurocentric world, but at the same time endeavors to show itself as the “savior” of European civilization. At this point, accepting the queer community as part of the nation would threaten the image of an empire that Russia tries to create, but proves to do it unsuccessfully, because even the mere idea that one has to remind or in this case, re-imagine itself as an empire clearly indicates that it is not one. Moreover, accepting queer community as part of the nation is equal to choosing the sides in the civilizational confrontation, which is the integral part of the Russian identity. Hence, the point is not to win in this opposition, neither to give up, but to maintain the status quo as a subaltern trying to overthrow the domination of its colonizer, and in this game, the LGBT community has become the pawn in Russia’s political games of constructing the national identity.

CHAPTER 2. THE DEVELOPMENT OF HOMOPHOBIA IN RUSSIA

In the wake of the post-Soviet period after the collapse of the Soviet Union, a number of authors⁸⁶ showed their hopes that after the decades of sexual oppression during the Communist regime, the new Russia would be more tolerant and open to issues of gender and sexuality. The predictions were that with the wave of democracy and market economy, liberal values would also follow and flourish in Russian society. Thus, for example, Stulhofer and Sandfort wrote that a “brighter future” was awaiting the representatives of sexual minority groups⁸⁷. They present two reasons for this argument: first, international pressure would contribute to accepting international standards on human rights issues in Eastern Europe and Russia, and the second factor that could contribute to the better life of queer communities in this region was growing activism of the members of such groups enhanced by general development of civil society⁸⁸. But as time has shown, this turned out to be far from truth, especially for Russia and its relationship with queer citizens.

As similar view was shared by Igor Kon⁸⁹, who was one of the few authors in post-Soviet Russia who tried to defend the position of homosexual people in the country. He promoted an understanding attitude towards gay people in Russia⁹⁰. He also argues that despite

⁸⁶ Igor Kon in A. Stulhofer and T. Sandfort (eds), “Sexual Culture and Politics in Contemporary Russia,” in *Sexuality and Gender in Postcommunist Eastern Europe and Russia* (New York: Haword Press, 2005), 111–21; Aleksandar Štulhofer and Theo Sandfort, *Sexuality and Gender in Postcommunist Eastern Europe and Russia*, Human Sexuality (New York : Haworth Press, 2005); Hilary Pilkington, *Gender, Generation and Identity in Contemporary Russia* (London : Routledge, 1996).

⁸⁷ Štulhofer and Sandfort, *Sexuality and Gender in Postcommunist Eastern Europe and Russia*.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 14.

⁸⁹ Igor Kon in A. Stulhofer and T. Sandfort (eds), “Sexual Culture and Politics in Contemporary Russia.”

⁹⁰ Pilkington, *Gender, Generation and Identity in Contemporary Russia*, 105.

the fact that during the communist regime, homosexuality was taboo and treated as “virtually non-existent”, in terms of sexuality, Russia had not been any different from its Western counterparts⁹¹, by showing different statistics regarding Russian youth’s initiation to sexual life. In the section called “Antisexual crusade”, he asserts that after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the topic of sexual freedom was manipulated by different contesting political groups and elites, part of which were communists and nationalists⁹². Thus, for instance, the first wave of the crusade started with massive anti-pornography campaign by the Communist Party in 1991. This tactic of raising moral panic was used by the political leaders as a tool of diverting the attention of the masses from the economic and social problems that had been becoming increasingly apparent by the collapse of the USSR. As Kon argues, it was at this time when the government started building alliances with conservative and religious groups, which were also promoting nationalist discourse⁹³. What is striking is how these groups framed their discourse, arguing that pornography is the product of the western culture, brought by Jewish-Masonic groups aiming at corrupting the morals and minds of young people. However, Kon claims, this anti-pornography campaign failed and did not gain any popularity among common people. A further wave of anti-sexual crusade was the massive attack on any attempts of introducing sex education in school curricula. As Kon puts it, “[b]efore it was even born, the project came under fire and was labeled a Western ideological plot against Russian children”⁹⁴. The government’s shutting down of sex education was reinforced through appealing to the religious sentiments of the population, thereby, involving the Russian Orthodox Church. At a roundtable, where the issue of sex education was put on the agenda, the representatives of the Church claimed that there was no need for sexual education, because historically and culturally this function had

⁹¹ Igor Kon in A. Stulhofer and T. Sandfort (eds), “Sexual Culture and Politics in Contemporary Russia,” 111.

⁹² Ibid., 115.

⁹³ Igor Kon in A. Stulhofer and T. Sandfort (eds), “Sexual Culture and Politics in Contemporary Russia.”

⁹⁴ Ibid., 117.

always been carried out by the Church. They also stated that ‘up to 80 percent of the time spent during the sacrament of confession is dedicated to sexual matters.’⁹⁵

Furthermore, as Essig⁹⁶ argues, the queer community in Russia has failed in acquiring an exclusively gay/lesbian identity, and engage in political activism in the early post-Soviet period. She writes that the reason for the fact that the political activism that followed the Western model has turned out to be unsuccessful is because ‘Russians do not inhabit exclusive gay/straight identities’⁹⁷. Instead, as it is argued by Baer, the notions of homosexuality and heterosexuality are somewhat fluid and have less restricted boundaries. As a result of this fluid nature, Essig argues, the gay and lesbian community has failed to have a distinctive political activist movement, because the queer community does not identify as such. However, for Essig to import the notions of homosexuality that have been developed in the Western world, and the US in particular, to the Russian queer community is the manifestation of “colonization” of non-Western cultures with “Western notions of sex and its meanings”⁹⁸.

Despite the aforementioned statement, it is still unclear whether the unsuccessful gay identity politics attempts in Russia were because of the ‘rejection of exclusive sexual identities’ or just simply because of the potential dangers and consequences of coming out. Yet, what can be stated for sure is that as Baer puts it ‘Western observers must resist the temptation to project onto “other cultures a Western sexual landscape with its rigid sexual identities, its activist identity politics, and its visible gay and lesbian communities”⁹⁹. Following from this statement, Baer claims that it is best to look at the relationship between the homosexuality and what he calls the “cultural citizenship” or the idea of being a Russian. Within this framework, one can

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Laurie Essig, *Queer in Russia : A Story of Sex, Self, and the Other* (Durham, NC : Duke University Press, 1999).

⁹⁷ Brian James Baer in A. Stulhofer and T. Sandfort (eds), “The New Visibility: Representing Sexual Minorities in the Popular Culture of Post-Soviet Russia,” in *Sexuality and Gender in Post-Communist Eastern Europe and Russia* (New York: Haword Press, 2005), 194.

⁹⁸ Essig, *Queer in Russia*, 174.

⁹⁹ Brian James Baer in A. Stulhofer and T. Sandfort (eds), “The New Visibility: Representing Sexual Minorities in the Popular Culture of Post-Soviet Russia,” 194.

see how homosexuality has been articulated within the attempts of finding and maintaining the Russian national identity, the search of which has been of an acute urgency after the demise of the Soviet Union. At this point, there are three narratives of discussing homosexuality in post-Soviet Russia¹⁰⁰: first, ‘as a way of discussing Russia’s troubled relationship to its own past (in particular the decadent culture of the approximately three decades preceding the Bolshevik revolution)’¹⁰¹, second, Russia’s even more problematic relationship with the Western world and Western culture, and thirdly, as a way of discussing an embarrassing position of the post-Soviet male, the so-called crisis of masculinity.

Here, the notion of masculinity is very important for the analysis of the relationship between homosexuality and nationalism. The link between masculinity and nationalism has been widely discussed by authors such as Nira Yuval-Davis¹⁰², Joanne Nagel¹⁰³, George Mosse¹⁰⁴ and others. Thus, as it was shown by Riabov and Riabova¹⁰⁵, and Valerie Sperling¹⁰⁶, the masculine image of Putin has contributed to the overall re-construction of Russia as a masculine figure both domestically and internationally, and thus has become the source of the legitimacy for the regime. In other words, the macho image of Putin as intrinsically tied to Russia’s fate has been considered as the guarantee that Russia will no longer be an underdog that is disrespected in the international arena. This strong masculine image was used to assure the Russian nation that under Putin’s solid hand, they are safe and protected, and if there is any

¹⁰⁰ Brian James Baer in A. Stulhofer and T. Sandfort (eds), “The New Visibility: Representing Sexual Minorities in the Popular Culture of Post-Soviet Russia.”

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 195.

¹⁰² Nira Yuval-Davis, *Gender & Nation*, Politics and Culture (London, England) (London : Sage Publications, 1997).

¹⁰³ Joanne Nagel, *Race, Ethnicity, and Sexuality*. [Electronic Resource] : *Intimate Intersections, Forbidden Frontiers*, ACLS Humanities E-Book (New York : Oxford University Press, 2003., 2003).

¹⁰⁴ George L. Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality: Middle-Class Morality and Sexual Norms in Modern Europe* (Madison : University of Wisconsin Press, [1988], c1985, 1988).

¹⁰⁵ O Riabov and T Riabova, “The Remasculinization of Russia? Gender, Nationalism, and the Legitimation of Power Under Vladimir Putin,” *PROBLEMS OF POST-COMMUNISM* 61, no. 2 (April 2014): 23–35.

¹⁰⁶ Valerie Sperling, *Sex, Politics, and Putin: Political Legitimacy in Russia* (Oxford University Press, 2014), <http://www.oxfordscholarship.com/view/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199324347.001.0001/acprof-9780199324347>.

attempt to undermine his position as a ruler, it will result in turbulence and uncertainty¹⁰⁷. Following from this logic, the tactic that opposition groups use against the regime of Putin, in this sense, does not provide any conceptual alternatives, rather it tries to undermine the current regime by questioning the masculine features of Putin and his supporters by effeminizing them and hence, presenting them as inferior, weak and subordinate¹⁰⁸.

At this point, homophobia is the manifestation of the same misogynist logic, which sees homosexuals as feminine, and therefore, the indicator of the inferiority of them. The usage of homophobic rhetoric as a way of undermining the political opponent's legitimacy lies within the idea that "the man in question is more female than male and hence inferior"¹⁰⁹.

In her analysis of the increased use of gender norms and sexualization as tools of political legitimations of Putin's regime in contemporary Russia, Sperling adopts a Multiple Opportunity Structure Model, which is a concept designed to explain social movements. Sperling justifies her borrowing this model for her own work by saying that 'just as social change movements do, political activists and politicians try to frame their ideas in culturally resonant ways, take advantage of the resources available to them, and strengthen their positions through networks of supporters'¹¹⁰.

The first element of this model in the context of Russia is the political opportunity structure, which means the changes in political structure in the system that allowed or conversely hindered the use of gender norms as a political tool. In this case, an integral part of the political opportunity structure is whether a women's movement that would be able to challenge the embedded social and political sexism is present or absent. It is a fact that there is an inverse correlation between the intensiveness and social and cultural acceptance of feminist

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 29.

¹⁰⁸ Riabov and Riabova, "The Remasculinization of Russia?"; Sperling, *Sex, Politics, and Putin*.

¹⁰⁹ Sperling, *Sex, Politics, and Putin*, 17.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 48.

movements and explicit use of misogyny in politics¹¹¹. Thus, as Sperling argues, the weakness of the feminist movement in the early post-Soviet period up until 2010, when a more or less new wave of feminist activism begun, has become a fertile soil for the development and rooting of sexist and homophobic agendas in the politics of Putin and his party¹¹². In addition, one of the reasons for this uncontested and to some extent endorsed state sexism and misogyny comes from the overall negative attitude towards feminism throughout the Soviet period and after. Thus, feminism was vilified during the seventy years of communism, and was argued to be the product of bourgeois societies, which was aimed at disrupting the social order by giving preference to women's interests¹¹³. The result was that after decades of negative portrayal of feminism and any notion of fighting for women's rights, it was difficult to challenge the status quo and infiltrate the feminist ideas into society.

The second reason for increased use of gender roles and suppression of women movements, surprisingly, is the relatively new political structure in the wake of the break of the Soviet Union that introduced the liberalization of media and removed the censorship and control of media and introduced the competitive voting for public officeholders in the beginning of the 1990s. Yet, the result was not in favor of gender equality, but instead solidified sexism even more. Within the framework of the new regime, the politicians, including those who are competing for the office of the president had to appeal to the public through the media in order to gain their votes. Despite the fact that first time Putin was appointed as a president after the resignation of Yeltsin in 2000, in the election campaign for his second term his team extensively used mass media as a channeling tool between Putin and the masses.

¹¹¹ Mala Htun S. and Laurel Weldon, "The Civic Origins of of Progressive Policy Change: Combating Violence against Women in Global Perspective, 1975-2005," *American Political Science Review* 106, no. 3 (2012): 548–69.

¹¹² Sperling, *Sex, Politics, and Putin*, 47.

¹¹³ Kovalenko Elena in Galina Mikhaleva (ed), "Sovremennoe Rossiskoe Zhenskoe Dvizhenie: Problema 'Nevidimosti,'" in *Zhenskoe Dvizhenie v Rossii: Vchera, Segodnia, Zavtra: Materialy Konferentsii* (Moscow: RODP "Yabloko," 2010), 89–93.

The second component that contributed to the increased use of sexism as a legitimization tool is the economic opportunity structure. The liberalization of market after the dissolution of the Soviet Union led to the emergence of commercial capitalism in the 1990s in Russia. This, in its turn, resulted in exploiting the highly-sexualized images of female bodies with the aim of selling products. Moreover, the flow of Western products to Russia's new market brought along the image of Hollywood glamor and new models of feminine and masculine ideals¹¹⁴. At this point, it is important to point out that whereas most of the images flooding the market of women's products were directed toward creating the hyper-sexualized feminine figure, and therefore, had the so-called "sexually liberating effect" on women, the market for male products had, in the opposite, the "demasculinizing" effect, as more men found out to be not falling into the newly-introduced standards of masculinity, and therefore, had to go through a crisis of masculinity¹¹⁵. This period of 1990s is referred by Goscilo and Strukov as the period of "crisis in gender identities, and particularly masculinity"¹¹⁶. The masculinity and the image of a successful man was portrayed in terms of a financially self-sufficient and stable man, and was described by the Russian word *krutoi*, which meant to emphasize the toughness and macho image of a man who has authoritative and leadership features in his character¹¹⁷. At this point, when it comes to Putin, Sperling argues that the traditional image of the ruler as the "father of the nation" was complemented by the sexualized images, which distinguished him from all his predecessors¹¹⁸. Furthermore, as the sociologist in gender studies Anna Temkina points out to Valerie Sperling in an interview¹¹⁹, the sexualization of Putin's image was not only about objectification and capitalism, but also had an anti-Soviet motif. She writes that

¹¹⁴ Goscilo H. and V. Strukov (eds), *Celebrity and Glamour in Contemporary Russia: Shocking Chic* (London: Routledge, 2011).

¹¹⁵ Kay Rebecca, *Men in Contemporary Russia: The Fallen Heroes of Post-Soviet Change?* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006).

¹¹⁶ Goscilo H. and V. Strukov (eds), *Celebrity and Glamour in Contemporary Russia: Shocking Chic*, 11.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 12.

¹¹⁸ Sperling, *Sex, Politics, and Putin*, 61.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 63.

Any product sells better if it's sexualized, especially after Soviet times. Everything has become more sexualized, more hedonistic. Since the state and capitalism have become one and the same thing, the government needs to be seductive – to not be like the Soviets; there was no profit there. Commodification and sexualization – this is also an anti-Soviet phenomenon. Putin is anti-Soviet, even if today's political structures are centralized and similar to [those of the Soviet era]. The Russian Orthodox Church, sexualization, capitalism – they're all in place now because they illustrate Putin's "anti-Soviet" perspective.

Therefore, one can claim that sexualization has not only been present in the political agenda of Russia, but has also served as an important means of breaking ties with the late-Soviet past marked by a weak state in the international and domestic levels.

The third element of the multiple opportunity structure that strengthened the use of gender norms and homophobia is a political history, which shows how the legacies of the previous state ideology affects the current one. This element demonstrates how there has been a shift after the collapse of the USSR from the collective party behavior under the Communist regime toward more individualist political behavior under the Putin's regime. Moreover, the new regime is distinctive for the introduction of sexuality and sexual issues into the politics. The overall loosening of the media took place during the Gorbachev period in the 1980s, which brought the massive influx of pornography to the state. As well as the acquaintance with the products of the pornographic industry, the previously silenced topics such as homosexuality entered the domain of public discussion and rethinking of political and legal norms¹²⁰. Thus, according to Sperling, 'following its political and economic departure with Soviet Communism, in 1990s Russia the public role of sex blossomed – in advertising, in the economy, and as a political commodity'¹²¹.

A further component of the opportunity structure is the cultural component of the successful utilization of sexism and homophobia. Authors such as Pilkington¹²², Essig¹²³,

¹²⁰ Ibid., 65.

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Hilary Pilkington, *Gender, Generation and Identity in Contemporary Russia* (London : Routledge, 1996).

¹²³ Essig, *Queer in Russia*.

Aswin¹²⁴, etc. clearly demonstrated sexism, misogyny and homophobia in different Russian, Soviet and post-Soviet contexts, be it either in the workplace or in the family widely spread both in public and private spheres, cultivated in politics and popular culture through essentializing the gender differences, which is aimed at maintaining the status quo of women as a weak and inferior sex. In the period of a decade after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the cultural context was highly favorable for the extensive use of gender norms, sexism and homophobia in the politics in Russia. In spite of an egalitarian ideology of a communist state, the Soviet period is known for unequal division of labor and unequal pay for men and women, alarmingly high rates of domestic violence, which in most cases stayed unreported¹²⁵. This trend developed during the Soviet times was not eliminated after the demise of the USSR, but only stayed perishing in the Russian society. The era of Putin's reign has become even more sexist and homophobic, articulating the distorted arguments of biological roots of gender division, and highly supported and promoted by the Russian Orthodox Church.

The homosexual community has also become the subject of massive hatred and aversion during Putin's regime, although its origins can be traced back to Tsarist and subsequent communist times. A number of authors show how the articulation of ban on homosexuality was used symbolically as a political tool throughout the history of Russia¹²⁶. The first time the so-called sodomy ban was introduced during the rule of Peter the Great copied from the Swedish model, and was supposed to discipline the military¹²⁷. This ban was removed after the Bolshevik revolution in 1917 as a remnant of the obsolete bourgeois morality, but then re-introduced again

¹²⁴ Sarah Ashwin, ed., *Gender, State, and Society in Soviet and Post-Soviet Russia* (London ; New York: Routledge, 2000).

¹²⁵ Sperling, *Sex, Politics, and Putin*, 68.

¹²⁶ Banting, M. et al. in Shepard D. and C. Kelly (eds), "Sexuality," in *Russian Culture Studies. An Introduction*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998); Healey Dan, *Homosexual Desire in Revolutionary Russia. The Regulation of Sexual and Gender Dissent*. (Chicago/London: The University of Chicago Press, 2001); Kon Igor, "Moonlight Love," 1998, <http://www.gay.ru/english/history/kon/index.htm>.

¹²⁷ Muravyeva Marianna in Muravyeva M. and R. M. Toivo (eds), "Personalizing Homosexuality and Masculinity in Early Modern Russia," in *Gender in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (London: Routledge, 2012), 205–24.

in 1934 by Stalin since he was afraid that undercover homosexual networks would turn into the agents of Western espionage web, and then the ban was removed again in 1993 after the collapse of the Soviet Union in order to become the member of the Council of Europe¹²⁸. During the Soviet time, the ban was directed towards gay men, where under Article 121 of the Criminal Code sexual intercourse between men was subject to punishment of a prison term of up to five years¹²⁹. Lesbian relationships were to some extent in the shadow, yet, there have been documented cases when after being discovered to be lesbian, such women were forcibly hospitalized in psychiatric wards and treated against their will with heavy medications, and registered as mentally ill, which would restrict their freedom in the future as for being a person incompetent to take responsibility of her own actions¹³⁰. As was mentioned before, the Soviet Union's queer community could not mobilize itself either before the dissolution of the USSR or after. Any attempts to organize a coherent activism failed, starting from the attempts to introduce sexual education at schools, which were opposed and suppressed by the Russian Orthodox Church with its blatantly homophobic stance¹³¹.

Nevertheless, as Sperling mentions, after the legalization of gay sex and by the end of the first term of Putin's presidency, the society has become more tolerant to homosexuals in comparison with the situation in the 1990s¹³². Thus, for example, if in 1990s, half of the respondents who were surveyed answered that homosexuals should be "isolated from society", this number dropped to 31 percent of respondents, and 49 percent believed that gays should be left alone (*predostavit' samim sebe*)¹³³. At the same time, the political and social attitudes did

¹²⁸ Emil Persson, "Banning 'Homosexual Propaganda': Belonging and Visibility in Contemporary Russian Media," *Sexuality & Culture* 19, no. 2 (June 1, 2015): 257, doi:10.1007/s12119-014-9254-1.

¹²⁹ Sperling, *Sex, Politics, and Putin*, 72.

¹³⁰ Gessen Masha, "The Rights of Lesbians and Gay Men in the Russian Federation: An International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission Report" (San-Francisco: IGLHRC, 1994), 7, 9, 17–18.

¹³¹ Sperling, *Sex, Politics, and Putin*; Igor Kon in A. Stulhofer and T. Sandfort (eds), "Sexual Culture and Politics in Contemporary Russia," in *Sexuality and Gender in Postcommunist Eastern Europe and Russia* (New York: Haword Press, 2005), 111–21.

¹³² Sperling, *Sex, Politics, and Putin*, 73.

¹³³ VTsIOM: Vserossiskii Tsentr Izucheniia Obshchestvennogo Mnenia, "Odnopolaia Liubov' - Normal'no, Braki - Rano," February 15, 2005, <http://wciom.ru/index.php?id=459&uid=1084>.

not match with the liberal treatment of homosexuals *de jure*. One study shows that as of mid-2011, 69 percent of the residents of the capital city Moscow, and 60 percent of the general population supported the government's bans on gay parades, with the young male respondents having the strongest feelings about that – 71 percent of them believed that it was right to ban the parades. Among women, the most opposed group was the fraction of women aged 25-34, and only 17 percent of this age group had an opinion that gay people should have right to free speech and assembly, i.e. one of the most basic human rights¹³⁴. The survey that was conducted in 2012 demonstrated that people have more negative feelings towards gay and lesbian people than towards the representatives of other nationalities or religious affiliations, and 45 percent of those who were surveyed shared that they “experienced negative emotions while interacting with homosexuals” (compared to 10 percent of such experiences with the people of other ethnic origins). Moreover, the vast majority of the Russian population (61%) believed that homosexuality is acquired rather than something a person is born to, and almost half of the participants of the survey (47%) thought that the reason for homosexuality is the exposure to mass media and other sources that propagandize homosexuality¹³⁵.

As it is known, the state embraced the general distaste for its population with a “non-traditional orientation”. In March 2012, the city government of Saint-Petersburg issued a homophobic law, which prohibits the propaganda of homosexuality to minors, this was a continuation of the series of similar laws passed in other Russian cities, which banned the gay rights rallies and the distribution of the literature about homosexuality¹³⁶. In January 2013, the Russian parliament passed the nationwide law on homosexual “propaganda” almost unanimously. In June that year Putin signed it into law after the final hearings resulted in 436

¹³⁴ Fond Obshchestvennoe Mnenie, “My zhe ne v Amerike,” FOM, (June 9, 2011), <http://fom.ru/TSennosti/123>.

¹³⁵ VTsIOM: Vserossiskii Tsentr Izucheniia Obshchestvennogo Mnenia, “Gomoseksualistami ne rozhdaitsia?,” May 17, 2012, <http://wciom.ru/index.php?id=459&uid=112769>.

¹³⁶ Bershidsky Leonid, “‘Curing’ Homosexuality in Russia and Ukraine,” *Bloomberg*, October 10, 2012, <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-10-10/-curing-homosexuality-im-russia-and-ukraine.html>.

votes for and one abstention¹³⁷. According to this law, the distribution or expressing an opinion that depicted “nontraditional” sexual relationships in a positive way or that put an equal value on them with heterosexual relationships and in doing so, exposed minors to such information was considered as an instance of breaching the law¹³⁸. Moreover, however ridiculously it sounds, but the infamous for her misogynist and homophobic statements Duma Deputy Elena Mizulina, one of the main sponsors and supporters of the law, mentioned that the draftsmen of the given law had to avoid the word “homosexual” in the text of the law, because, according to her, even the usage of the term would “involuntarily propagandize it – this homosexuality”¹³⁹. The Church did not lose its opportunity to endorse this homophobic and patriarchal rhetoric. Thus, Father (Igumen) Sergii Rybko showed his strong support to the attackers of a gay-friendly club in October 2012, by saying:

I understand the Russian people’s indignation. The Holy Scriptures command [us] to stone all of these people with a non-traditional [sexual] orientation. Until that trash has been cleared off the Russian land, I will fully share the views of those who are trying to cleanse our Motherland of it. if the state doesn’t do it, the people will.”¹⁴⁰

What this shows is the revival of the Orthodox Church as one of the main contributors and reproducers of the official homophobic discourse, and clearly demonstrates the intimate relationship between the state and the Church.

Finally, the international arena is the last component of the multiple opportunity model that facilitated the use of gender norms and homophobia in the process of political legitimization¹⁴¹. After the demise of the Soviet Union, Russia faced numerous problems. One

¹³⁷ David M. Herszenhorn, “‘Propaganda’ By Gays Faces Russian Curbs Amid Unrest,” *The New York Times*, January 25, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/26/world/europe/propaganda-by-gays-faces-russian-curbs-amid-unrest.html>.

¹³⁸ “Gay Pride Versus ‘Gay Propaganda,’” *The Nation*, June 28, 2013, <https://www.thenation.com/article/gay-pride-versus-gay-propaganda/>.

¹³⁹ Andrew E. Kramer, “Russia Passes Bill Targeting Some Discussions of Homosexuality,” *The New York Times*, June 11, 2013, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/06/12/world/europe/russia-passes-bill-targeting-some-discussions-of-homosexuality.html>.

¹⁴⁰ Sergii Rybko, “Igumen Sergii (Rybko) O Razgone Gei-Kluba: Sozhaleiu, Chto Kak Sviashchennik Ne Mogu Priniat’ Uchastie v Aktsii,” October 12, 2012, <http://www.pravmir.ru/igumen-sergij-rybko-o-razgone-gei-kluba-sozhaleyu-cto-kak-svyashchennik-ne-mogu-prinyat-uchastie-v-akcii/>.

¹⁴¹ Sperling, *Sex, Politics, and Putin*, 75.

of them that was most urgent at that time and is still haunting Russia is the problem of nation-building. After centuries of being a great power, Russia had to adjust to a new role of a state with an unstable economic situation, weak government, interethnic conflicts, and threats to the state's integrity. At this point, after the turbulent 1990s, the coming of Putin to power, who represented a strong personal character as a cold-minded ruler, who had a perfect past as a KGB agent, was seen by many as a new hope for the revival of the former empire both in the international arena and domestically¹⁴². As a political leader, Putin faced the task of bringing back the glorious days to Russia. The beginning of the 2000s was one of the most difficult for Putin, as he had to deal with the second Chechen War that he initiated in late 1999, but also had significant challenges in the international politics¹⁴³. Kimberley Williams, the women's studies scholar, claims that the image of Russia abroad after the break of the Soviet Union has become feminized, this image being promoted by US popular media culture and the political elite. Russia had an image of a woman falling behind the West in the development and desperately needing its guidance¹⁴⁴. Hence, one of the goals of the government of Russia was to restore its masculine image, the state masculinity. According to Riabov and Riabova¹⁴⁵, the construction of macho image of Putin pursued a higher purpose of "re-masculinizing" the country both internationally and internally, and Putin used this 'renewal of national dignity as unique business card'. This moves of Putin made a clear statement that from that moment on Russia had to stand for a set of 'traditionally masculine characteristics like independence and strength.'¹⁴⁶

¹⁴² Riabov and Riabova, "The Remasculinization of Russia?"

¹⁴³ Politkovskaya Anna, *A Dirty War* (London: Harvill Press, 1999), 91.

¹⁴⁴ Williams Kimberly A., *Imagining Russia: Making Feminist Sense of American Nationalism in U.S.-Russian Relations* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2012), 1–3.

¹⁴⁵ Tatiana Riabova and Oleg Riabov, "Nastoiashchyi Muzhchina Rossiskoi Politiki? K Voprosu O Gendernom Diskurse Kak Resurse Vlasti / Полис. 2010. № 5 С. 48-63.," *Polis* 5 (2010): 57.

¹⁴⁶ Sperling, *Sex, Politics, and Putin*, 77.

Thus, at this point, one can see that the notion of masculinity is relational, regardless of whether it is applied to individual masculinity or national masculinity. Therefore, just as individual state-leaders gratify their masculinity by demeaning the masculinity of their foreign adversaries, so can the whole nations employ the ideas of masculinity in relation to other countries. Within the concept of national identity, it is quite established that national identity as part of any social identities is based on the ideas of “us” against “them” or “the Self” and “the Others”. As Riabov and Riabova maintain, this division into insiders and outsiders is also a subject of gendering¹⁴⁷. Hence, as a rule, members of a nation tend to define themselves in masculine terms, whereas the non-members of a given nation are described through feminine metaphors, which implies their superiority over other groups¹⁴⁸.

This gendered relationship of Russia with other actors in the international arena is well demonstrated in the actions and behavior of Russia when it reasserted its position in the region after the sharp increase of the prices for oil, the main source of economic wealth for Russia. Those post-Soviet countries that made their attempts to break with their Soviet past and especially the alarming presence of Russia and its influence on the democratization of these countries, were presented as effeminate and subservient to the US, the instance of which is the image of Ukraine as America’s female mistress on the national television channel.¹⁴⁹

Furthermore, not only does the state apply the gendered images to ‘others’, but also to its own citizens, and by doing this engage into the politics of belonging. This concept is used

¹⁴⁷ Riabova and Riabov, “Рябова Т.Б., Рябов О.В. Настоящий Мужчина Российской Политики?”; Riabov and Riabova, “The Remasculinization of Russia?”

¹⁴⁸ Oleg Riabov, “*Rossia-Matushka*”: *Natsionalism, Gender I Voina v Rossii XX Veka*. (Hanover, Stuttgart: Ibidem, 2007), https://www.academia.edu/14697762/%D0%A0%D1%8F%D0%B1%D0%BE%D0%B2_%D0%9E.%D0%92._%D0%A0%D0%BE%D1%81%D1%81%D0%B8%D1%8F-%D0%9C%D0%B0%D1%82%D1%83%D1%88%D0%BA%D0%B0_%D0%9D%D0%B0%D1%86%D0%B8%D0%BE%D0%BD%D0%B0%D0%BB%D0%B8%D0%B7%D0%BC_%D0%B3%D0%B5%D0%BD%D0%B4%D0%B5%D1%80_%D0%B8_%D0%B2%D0%BE%D0%B9%D0%BD%D0%B0_%D0%B2_%D0%A0%D0%BE%D1%81%D1%81%D0%B8%D0%B8_XX_%D0%B2%D0%B5%D0%BA%D0%B0._Stuttgart_Hanover_Ibidem_2007._290_p._%D0%93%D0%BB%D0%B0%D0%B2%D0%B0_1.

¹⁴⁹ Riabova and Riabov, “Рябова Т.Б., Рябов О.В. Настоящий Мужчина Российской Политики?,” 59–60.

in their works by authors such as Anthias¹⁵⁰ and Yuval-Davis¹⁵¹, and ‘emphasizes the political in boundary-making, that the construction of communities is an inherently conflict-ridden process intimately related to the distribution of power in society’¹⁵². Moreover, as Nira Yuval-Davis asserts, ‘The politics of belonging involves not only constructions of boundaries, but also inclusion or exclusion of particular people, social categories and groupings within these boundaries by those who have the power to do this.’¹⁵³ Narratives of belonging, thus, affirm the power relations that are the by-products of social interactions, and transform these relations into communities, whose boundaries are not contested.¹⁵⁴ However, the politics of belonging is dictated not only by hegemonic powers, but are also subjects for constant contestation and resistance by different political actors¹⁵⁵. Therefore, belonging to a group is not limited to the common notion of citizenship or linguistic or ethnic belonging, but includes an “affective dimension”, which deals with both self-identification and recognition as a member of the group by other members. In other words, as Anthias puts it, ‘to belong is to be accepted as part of a community, to feel safe within it and to have a stake in the future of such community of membership.’¹⁵⁶ Further, any identity or belonging is intrinsically related to social categories such as ethnicity, sexuality and gender, and these categories are mutually-constructive, which is known as intersectionality.¹⁵⁷ At this point, Parker et al assert that since national and cultural belongings are social constructs shaped by the norms and standards of gender and sexuality,

¹⁵⁰ Anthias F. in Yuval-Davis N., K. Kannabiran, and U. Vieten (eds), “Belongings in a Globalising and Unequal World: Rethinking Translocations,” in *The Situated Politics of Belonging*. (London: Sage, 2006).

¹⁵¹ Yuval-Davis N., *The Politics of Belonging. Intersectional Contestations* (London: Sage, 2011).

¹⁵² Persson, “Banning ‘Homosexual Propaganda,’” 259.

¹⁵³ Yuval-Davis N., *The Politics of Belonging. Intersectional Contestations*, 18.

¹⁵⁴ Anthias F. in Yuval-Davis N., K. Kannabiran, and U. Vieten (eds), “Belongings in a Globalising and Unequal World: Rethinking Translocations,” 21.

¹⁵⁵ Yuval-Davis N., *The Politics of Belonging. Intersectional Contestations*, 20.

¹⁵⁶ Anthias F. in Yuval-Davis N., K. Kannabiran, and U. Vieten (eds), “Belongings in a Globalising and Unequal World: Rethinking Translocations.”

¹⁵⁷ Yuval-Davis N., *The Politics of Belonging. Intersectional Contestations*.

any person who does not conform with these norms can be out-defined despite their shared ethnic or national origins¹⁵⁸.

Hence, in this sense, it can be explained how homosexual people in Russia are denied membership in their own country. The state and state-controlled media uses certain tropes to justify and solidify the marginalization of queer people in Russia. One of the common tropes that has been adopted by the media and the state is depicting homosexuals as threatening the existence of the nation, ‘as the very antithesis of a prosperous Russian future, which excludes them from imagined community.’¹⁵⁹ President Putin has repeatedly made links between the problem of reverse growth rate of the population and the issue of representatives of alternative sexualities. Thus, for instance, during a press conference in the Netherlands, when asked about the law against propaganda of homosexuality, Putin made this connection, and as *Komsomol'skaya Pravda* (pro-regime media outlet) reports:

The president, not giving into political correctness, did not avoid answering but spoke candidly.

- (...) In both Europe and Russia we are struggling with a demographic problem. Of course, this could be solved by people coming from abroad, but I would prefer that the birth-rate in Russia grew primarily on account of the titular nations: Russians, Tatars, Chechens, Jews and so forth¹⁶⁰

Within this framework, homosexuality is presented as a symbol of infertility, and therefore, the epitome of nation's inability to strive and prosper. This logic underpinned the violation of the human rights of sexual minorities of Russia, all for the sake of the well-being of the nation¹⁶¹. As the notion of biopolitics importantly remarks, sexualized and gendered bodies are the subject of governing life itself, and thus, makes the bodies of men and women as not belonging to individuals, but to the whole population as the guarantor of its life or death¹⁶². Following from

¹⁵⁸ Parker, A., Russo, M., Sommer, D., & Yaeger, P. in A. Parker, M. Russo, D. Sommer, & P. Yaeger (Eds), "Introduction," in *Nationalisms and Sexualities* (New York/London: Routledge, 1992).

¹⁵⁹ Persson, "Banning 'Homosexual Propaganda,'" 262.

¹⁶⁰ Smirnov, D., "Vladimir Putin: 'Khorosho Khot' Gomoseksualisty Ne Razdelis'!'," *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, April 9, 2013.

¹⁶¹ Persson, "Banning 'Homosexual Propaganda,'" 262.

¹⁶² Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*.

this, the whole idea of nation lies within ‘a heterosexual matrix according to which the future of the nation is carried in the wombs of women, impregnated by strong and fertile men.’¹⁶³ Under these conditions, gays, lesbians, and transgender people have no place, and therefore, have to be eliminated. Additionally, it is interesting to see how the idea of a nation has transformed into the unit not based on ethnic differences, but on the allegiance to the goals and values of the state, by denoting the ethnic groups of Russia as ‘primordial’ Russian population, and implicitly leaving out from this notion of the nation those, who cannot procreate naturally, i.e. LGBT people.

Moreover, sometimes, non-heterosexual people are presented as the embodiment of the concrete threat to the national security, in most cases accompanied by ridiculous conspiracy theories about the seizing of mass media by hidden homosexual organizations¹⁶⁴. Also, for example, in a news article with a title saying: “Political experts predict a gay-revolution in Russia”, *Izvestiya* (another government controlled newspaper), made a report about the increased activity of LGBT activists, who are sponsored from abroad:

It is fully possible that we will see a kind of ‘sexual gay-revolution’, accompanied by the collapse of an already weakening societal morality. In that case Russia risks to fall into a new artificially created period of chaos comparable to the chaos of the 1990s¹⁶⁵

As one can see from such a discourse, which resembles ‘the classical anti-Semitic rhetoric, homosexuals are – implicitly or explicitly – described in the mainstream media as constituting a world-spanning elite wielding a power vastly non-proportional to their number’¹⁶⁶. Infamously known for countless homophobic statements, politician Vitalyi Milonov in his interview to *Komsomolskaya Pravda* claimed that “... the so called free press is concentrated

¹⁶³ Persson, “Banning ‘Homosexual Propaganda,’” 262.

¹⁶⁴ Thomas Lahusen and Peter H. Solomon, eds., *What Is Soviet Now?: Identities, Legacies, Memories* (Berlin: Lit, 2008).

¹⁶⁵ Podosenov S., “Politicheskie Eksperty Predrekayut Rossii Gei-Revolyutsii,” *Izvestiya*, June 24, 2013.

¹⁶⁶ Persson, “Banning ‘Homosexual Propaganda,’” 264.

in the hands of sodomites”¹⁶⁷, and another newspaper published an article that suspects the “homosexual propaganda” of hidden economic interests:

...there is a powerful industry working behind the homosexual subculture: clothes, accessories, show-business... This industry constantly needs new markets, and our country is precisely such a potential market. It is not a coincidence since the middle of the last decade, by hook or by crook the issue of ‘gay-parades’ has been rubbed into our minds.¹⁶⁸

Such quotes are the demonstration of the overall anxiety over the presence and visibility of the homosexual community that has become more prominent and appeared on the surface of the public discourse that constantly reminds of “the others” living within the same political boundaries¹⁶⁹. The outcome of this anxiety is that it is easy to infiltrate and exacerbate the presence of homophobia that is promoted by laws, such as the anti-homosexual propaganda law, and by popular culture. As Persson argues, it is this

peculiar story-telling strategy which is crucial for understanding how this anti-gay narrative became dominant in the Russian public sphere. That an entire society should crack down on a minority which already lacks all significant rights could be a story difficult to sell to the public: therefore, this minority has to be presented as a global elite encroaching upon the freedom of ordinary people. LGBT rights are narrated as undemocratic violation of popular sovereignty.¹⁷⁰

At this point, in addition, the state also exploits the idea that the West is reaping the consequences of its open tolerance towards LGBT people. During the period of preparing and passing the law abolishing homosexual propaganda, most of the media outlets started focusing on the international situation of LGBT rights and highlighted that, in fact, people were against accepting homosexual marriages and granting them equal rights¹⁷¹. Within this discourse, which uses Western countries as a mirrored reflection, Russia is then narrated as the last haven for traditional values, where the minds of people are still innocent and not corrupted by immoral

¹⁶⁷ Vorsobin V., “Vitalyi Milonov: ‘Priyatno, kogda rugayut ne za to, chto ty podonok i negodyai, a za tsitirovanie Biblii,’” *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, March 11, 2013, <http://www.kp.ru/daily/26043/2957813/>.

¹⁶⁸ Frolov S., “Rossia ne zhelaet ‘Golubet,’” *Trud*, June 12, 2013, http://www.trud.ru/article/01-03-2013/1290080_rossija_ne_zhelaet_golubet.html.

¹⁶⁹ Silverstone R., *Media and Morality: On the Rise of the Mediapolis* (Cambridge: Polity, 2007).

¹⁷⁰ Persson, “Banning ‘Homosexual Propaganda,’” 265.

¹⁷¹ Persson, “Banning ‘Homosexual Propaganda.’”

Western ideals. As stated by political scientist Pavel Danilin, who is also a state ideologist of Putin's regime

...the experiments of political correctness regarding sexual minorities, going on all over the world, provoke disgust and contempt. Russia could of course attain a high-profile position in relation to such progressive legislations, and become a landmark for many intellectuals who enjoy seeing the decadence in Western Europe (...) Thus, Russia could clearly and unambiguously delineate its position and become a moral leader.¹⁷²

Therefore, here one can see that there is a constant juxtaposition of Russia against the Western world. This re-emergence of anti-homosexual agenda is in this sense falls into the broader discussions of the place of Russia in the world order and its already centuries-long search for its own civilizational identity. The issue of LGBT rights has transformed from being ignored and silenced subject into a pawn in the middle of the battleground. Hence, in most cases, the rejection of LGBT rights has become a matter of choosing between two civilizational sides¹⁷³. Following from this, the progressive laws regarding the sexuality are not considered as the result of many years and even decades of political and social activists' struggles to gain equal rights, but as intrinsically Western values that have been there since the beginning. Therefore, what stems from this logic is that a set of illiberal values are carved out as "traditionally Russian" and therefore in need of protection¹⁷⁴. Further, as Wilkinson points out, these "traditional values" are used to justify the illiberal laws by raising the moral panic and creating the image of an acute necessity to defend the "moral sovereignty" of the country from the Western civilization.¹⁷⁵

At this point, one can trace back the struggles of Russia to find its own distinct civilizational identity, which has been oscillating between Occidentalism and Orientalism, the

¹⁷² Baev N., "Gomofoblnuyu Rossiya Khotyat Sdelat' 'Moralnym Liderom' Mira," *Gayrussia.ru*, June 8, 2013, <http://www.gayrussia.eu/russia/5800/>.

¹⁷³ Persson, "Banning 'Homosexual Propaganda.'"

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.; Cai Wilkinson, "Putting 'Traditional Values' Into Practice: The Rise and Contestation of Anti-Homopropaganda Laws in Russia," *Journal of Human Rights* 13, no. 3 (July 3, 2014): 363–79, doi:10.1080/14754835.2014.919218.

¹⁷⁵ Wilkinson, "Putting 'Traditional Values' Into Practice."

identity of the colonizer and the colonized in its subordinate position to the West. Thus, as it was stated in the theoretical chapter of my thesis, Russia can be considered both as an empire and as a subaltern¹⁷⁶, or as Morozov calls it the “subaltern empire”¹⁷⁷. This paradox of identity helps one understand the mainstream discourse on homosexuality by the state. As Healey argues

The tripartite ‘geography of perversion’ with its comparatively innocent Russia interpolated between a ‘civilized’ Europe and a decidedly ‘primitive’ or ‘backward’ East, permitted and permits Russians to imagine their nation as universally, naturally, and purely heterosexual.¹⁷⁸

Thus, following from this reasoning, one can observe how Russia falls into the description of the behavior of the subaltern empire. All of the tactics that Russia uses, which were discussed in this chapter demonstrate how Russia uses the notions of gender norms and homophobia for the strengthening its position both in the international arena and domestically as a subaltern empire. In relation to the West, Russia is a subaltern, and is fully conscious of its position. Thus, Russia tries to use the tactics of subversion of the hegemon by using the notions of “traditional values” as the core of human rights in Russia, the idea about the sovereignty of the state in the international relations, and the concept of popular sovereignty, as representing the voices of its nation, the indicator of “democratic values”, the exchange card with which Russia has become used to play an unfair game of subverting the dominance of the Western world. On the other hand, as an empire, it suppresses the voices of the queer community which it intentionally excludes from the borders of an imagined community, and hence, takes away from them the opportunity to speak for themselves.

The next chapter will proceed with the analysis of the lecture series on the sociology of gender by Alexander Dugin, a prominent Russian philosopher, infamously known for being one

¹⁷⁶ Olofsson K., “Introduction,” in *From Orientalism to Postcoloniality*. (Stockholm: Soderotr University College, 2008).

¹⁷⁷ Viatcheslav Morozov, *Russia’s Postcolonial Identity : A Subaltern Empire in a Eurocentric World*, Central and Eastern European Perspectives on International Relations (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire : Palgrave Macmillan, 2015, 2015).

¹⁷⁸ Healey Dan, *Homosexual Desire in Revolutionary Russia. The Regulation of Sexual and Gender Dissent.*, 251.

of the main state ideologists, and having political stances that are on the brink of the neo-fascist ideas. Thus, Dugin has developed and introduced the neo-Eurasian political movement, the modified version of the Eurasianism that was popularized by Lev Gumilev, a scholar of Turkology¹⁷⁹. The reason for choosing Dugin's lectures was driven by the fact that his ideology shares both the insights on the Russia's unique identity as the center of the new civilization, and therefore, vastly engages with the discussion of gender and sexuality.

CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

In my thesis, I will use the critical discourse analysis method in order to prove my hypothesis. Discourse analysis as a theory and a term is very complex and demands certain skills to look beyond of what is written or said. There are multiple approaches and perspectives on what discourse analysis is, but so far the more or less agreed minimum consensus is that discourse analysis has the aim of understanding culture not as an outcome of certain behavioral factors or objective structures of a society, but tries to understand culture from within, where the concrete object of analysis is the text¹⁸⁰. The discourse analysis as a unit of study took its basic premises from Wittgenstein's 'language games' and Foucault's theory of discourse, where both of them perceive language as the integral and constitutive components of the social world¹⁸¹. Thus, in a social world, a culture is formed by the sources of meaning-making processes, which are language and image. These sources are of common use for every member of a community or a culture, but they are peculiar in each historical and/or geographical situation, and their main function is to 'crystallize and to change social beliefs, relationships

¹⁷⁹ Mark Bassin, *The Gumilev Mystique : Biopolitics, Eurasianism, and the Construction of Community in Modern Russia*, Culture and Society after Socialism (Ithaca : Cornell University Press, 2016., 2016).

¹⁸⁰ Chouliaraki Lilie in Bennett, T. and J. Frow (eds), "Discourse Analysis," in *The SAGE Handbook of Cultural Analysis* (London: Sage Publications, 2008), 674–98, <http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/21564/>.

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

and identities in the form of texts'¹⁸². Therefore, as Hall defines it, the term discourse means the 'capacity of meaning-making resources to constitute social reality, forms of knowledge and identity within specific social contexts and power relations'¹⁸³, and in this sense, discourse analysis is a critical engagement with the culture in a broader and dynamic context, which was developed by the post-structuralist school of thought.

The major theorists of discourse analysis derive their theories from the Saussurian view of language as a system of meaning-making, i.e. where words and sentences - signifiers, which signify an object, the signified, serve as a material or medium for meaningful interaction testified by a system of language¹⁸⁴. However, post-structuralists look beyond the idea of language just as a systemic unit. They argue that the systems of language or its structures are the byproducts of historical and political relationships in which they are entrenched. For Foucault, one of the major theorists of discourse, linguistic relations are a part of specific systems of "power/knowledge relations"¹⁸⁵. At this point, in the Foucauldian sense, discourse is a two-sided mutual relationship between meaning and power produced by a social practice. Thus, any practice attempted at meaning-making comes from the position of power, and this power both forms and is formed by the social positions available within the practice; therefore, every meaning-making step is made with the purpose of gaining the right to constitute the truth from the position of power it stems from. This means that what comes as a product, a "truth" or a discourse, if to look at it not as a practice but as the final product, serves to maintain and re-establish power.

However, as Foucault argues, this does not mean that power and meaning are already in a pre-given condition as entities that exist in an inseparable relation and set up the existence of

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ Hall S., *Representation. Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices* (London: Sage & Open University Press, 1997).

¹⁸⁴ Chouliaraki Lilie in Bennett, T. and J. Frow (eds), "Discourse Analysis."

¹⁸⁵ Foucault Michael, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (Tavistock, London, 1972).

social practice, as pre-requisites of the social world. Instead, what he asserts is that power and meaning interplay and interact with each other within social practice, and all of them are the ontological *a priori*s of the social world. This approach allows then to study the social world, where power and meaning are the analytical units of the systematic study¹⁸⁶. Therefore, in the Foucauldian tradition, discourse analysis delves into the questions of power and the practices within which discourse is produced and articulated. At this point, it is crucial to point out that Foucault does not completely omit the agency of the receiver of the discourse, i.e. the subject of the discourse. Discourse analysis for him is not something deterministic and fatalistic for the agency of the receiver, he rather maintains that discourse itself is the two-sided social practice where power is acted out by both sides of it, and within which subjects still have space for agency by rejecting the discourse¹⁸⁷.

The next philosopher who dedicated his works to discourse is Derrida. For him, discourse is not something that is constituted by the strict language structure of signifying, but an open field of the relationships between the signifier and the signified. Thus, in a Derridean concept, discourse is ‘the condition of possibility for any speech situation, in so far as it is a loose quasi structure that enables the mobility of all linguistic signs in infinite combinations of text’¹⁸⁸. Following, as Derrida argues, all dominant systems of thought, or cultures, derive from discourse, and therefore they are ‘fragile constructions rather than absolute truths’¹⁸⁹. Thus, the aim of the discourse analysis is to deconstruct them. What deconstruction of the dominant systems means is to analyze how certain meanings are given more power at the expense of other meanings in a discourse, and therefore, how this discourse deduces the “truth” only to certain meanings. Derrida emphasizes that the production of meaning is never a context-free universal

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

¹⁸⁷ Foucault Michel in Dreyfus H.L and P. Rabinow, “The Subject and Power,” in *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982).

¹⁸⁸ Chouliaraki Lilie in Bennett, T. and J. Frow (eds), “Discourse Analysis.”

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

phenomenon, it always depends on historical processes, and therefore discourse is never complete and static¹⁹⁰.

The discussions of major perspectives on discourse leads to the question of the mediation of the text (text here used metaphorically, representing both speech, image, etc.) and the ways and potential challenges of analyzing it. One of the methodological approaches to discourse is the critical discourse analysis (CDA). As Chouliaraki puts it:

Difference outside the semiotic lies in the asymmetries of power that traverse the social world and in the historical and political relations within or between social groups. The principle of difference outside the semiotic is the multi-functionality of semiotic practice. Multi-functionality assumes that every semiotic mode, language and image, creates meaning that fulfils more than one social function at once¹⁹¹.

Thus, the primary goal of the critical discourse analysis is to analyze the mediation as the difference outside the semiotic. CDA sees the choices of media regarding visual and linguistic texts as indirect indicators of the power relations. As Wodak and Hirsch. explain it,

Critical Discourse Analysis centers on authentic everyday communication in institutional, media, political or other locations rather than on sample sentences or sample texts constructed in linguistic minds. Critical Discourse Analysis regards both written and spoken ‘discourse’ as a form of social practice. It assumes a dialectical relationship between particular discursive acts and the situations, institutions and social structures in which they are embedded: the situational, institutional, and social contexts shape and affect discourse, and, in turn, discourses influence social and political reality. In other words, discourse constitutes social practice and is at the same time constituted by it.¹⁹²

Therefore, from this quote, one can infer that different social actors can produce by the means of discourse not only the subjective knowledge, situations and delegate the specific social roles for different receivers of the discourse, but they can also constitute identities and set up the rules and norms for interactions between different social groups both within and without.

The discursive acts are socially constituted in different ways. First of all, one of the main goals of the discourse is to create a “particular social condition”. Secondly, they can serve as the tool for ‘restoration, legitimation, or relativization of a social status quo’. The third way the

¹⁹⁰ Derrida Jacques, *Of Grammatology* (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 1976).

¹⁹¹ Chouliaraki Lilie in Bennett, T. and J. Frow (eds), “Discourse Analysis.”

¹⁹² Ruth Wodak and Angelika Hirsch, eds., *The Discursive Construction of National Identity*, 2. ed., and extended, reprinted (Edinburgh: Edinburgh Univ. Press, 2010), 8.

discourse can be used is for maintaining the status quo.¹⁹³ Through linguistic means, the discourse then can determine the modes of social interactions, build the relations of power and dominance, and authorize them through concealing or presenting in a different, positive way the relationship between the social groups, genders, ethnic and religious, political, and cultural groups.¹⁹⁴ Consequently, as Wodak and Hirsch assert,

‘[t]he aim of Critical Discourse Analysis is to unmask ideologically permeated and often obscured structures of power, political control, and dominance, as well as strategies of discriminatory inclusion and exclusion in language use. In contrast to other types of discourse and conversation analysis, Critical Discourse Analysis does not pretend to be able to assume an objective, socially neutral analytical stance. Indeed, practitioners of Critical Discourse Analysis believe that such ostensible political indifference ultimately assists in maintaining an unjust status quo. Critical Discourse Analysis, which is committed to an emancipatory, socially critical approach, allies itself with those who suffer political and social injustice.’¹⁹⁵

Moving to the discussion of the relationship between nationalism and discourse, one can claim that a nation both as an “imagined community”¹⁹⁶ and as cognition¹⁹⁷ is the product of the discourse in the form of narratives of national culture. Hence, discourse constructs the national identity. For instance, Hall argues that nations are not only political units, but also ‘systems of cultural representations’¹⁹⁸ which dictate the perception of an imagined community. As Hall puts it: ‘People are not only legal citizens of a nation; they participate in the idea of the nation as represented in its national culture. A nation is a symbolic community...’¹⁹⁹ He further writes that

A national culture is a discourse – a way of constructing meanings, which influences and organizes both our actions and our conception of ourselves... National cultures construct identities by producing meanings about ‘the nation’ with which we can identify; these are contained in the stories, which are told about it, memories, which connect its present with its past, and imagines which are constructed of it.²⁰⁰

¹⁹³ Wodak and Hirsch, *The Discursive Construction of National Identity*.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁹⁶ Benedict R. O’G Anderson, *Imagined Communities*. [Electronic Resource] : *Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, ACLS Humanities E-Book (London ; New York : Verso, c2006., 2006).

¹⁹⁷ Rogers Brubaker, Mara Loveman, and Peter Stamatov, “Ethnicity as Cognition,” *Theory and Society*, 2004.

¹⁹⁸ Hall Stuart in Hall S., Held D., Hubert D., and K. Thompson (eds), “The Question of Cultural Identity,” in *Modernity: An Introduction to Modern Societies* (Cambridge, Massachusetts and Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, n.d.), 612.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰⁰ Ibid., 613.

Uri Ram²⁰¹ develops this idea further by paraphrasing Clifford Geertz²⁰²: ‘nationality is a narration, a story, which people tell about themselves in order to lend meaning to their social world’. Yet, these national narrations, as he calls them, do not exist exogenously, they are constantly produced, put into forms, go through desired transformations and spread by social actors in certain institutions with specific goals. As Ram²⁰³ reifies, the fact that a nation is a product of a discourse does not change its tangibility, its feasibility, because ‘myths are not mystifications’. At this point, Hall makes a critical point that the main goal of a national discourse is to unify different units that comprise the nation, or in other words, to represent the units as “unified” by the exercise of cultural power, so in this sense, according to him, national identities inherently bear the cultural element, or in his words, they ‘offer both membership of the political nation-state and identification with the national culture’.²⁰⁴

Following from the definition of nation that Hall provides, he suggests five ways in which the narration of national culture, i.e. nationalist discourse is constructed.²⁰⁵

1. First “strategy” as he calls it, is the “narrative of the nation”. It is channeled through literature, folk tales, the media and everyday culture, and it connects ‘stories, landscapes, scenarios, historical events, national symbols and national rituals, which represent shared experiences and concerns, triumphs and destructive defeats’²⁰⁶
2. The second part is the “emphasis on origins, continuity, tradition, and timelessness”. This aspect of discourse stresses the unchanging and unified feature of a national spirit.

²⁰¹ Ram Uri, “Narration, Erziehung Und Die Erfindung Des Jüdischen Nationalismus,” *Österreichische Zeitschrift Für Geschichtswissenschaft* 5, no. 2 (1994): 153.

²⁰² Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books Inc., Publishers, 1973).

²⁰³ Ram Uri, “Narration, Erziehung Und Die Erfindung Des Jüdischen Nationalismus,” 154.

²⁰⁴ Hall Stuart in Hall S., Held D., Hubert D., and K. Thompson (eds), “The Question of Cultural Identity,” 617.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 615.

²⁰⁶ Hall Stuart in Hall S., Held D., Hubert D., and K. Thompson (eds), “The Question of Cultural Identity” cited in Wodak and Hirsch, *The Discursive Construction of National Identity*, 24.

3. The third aspect that Hall ascribes to nationalist discourse is borrowed from Hobsbawm²⁰⁷, and is the “invention of traditions”. As Wodak and Hirsch summarize, ‘invented traditions (mostly of a ritual or symbolic nature) make historical confusion and defeats understandable; they transform disorder into community.’²⁰⁸
4. The fourth element of the nationalist discourse is “the foundational myth or myth of origin”, and it has a major importance in the invention of a national culture or national identity. Usually, in such discourse, the origins of a nation are allocated into unimaginably far away past that it is difficult to trace it back, yet they exist in the minds of the members of a nation. These references to mythical origins are critical not only in the officially dictated national narrations, but also in the nation-building process of new nations.
5. Finally, there is an idea of a “pure, original people or “folk”” that is adopted by nationalist discourse.

Thus, as Hall argues, these five aspects serve to hide the differences between ‘people’s class, gender, ‘race’, and so on and to construct a large ‘national family’²⁰⁹; but this national integrity, in fact, is a product of a certain discourse.²¹⁰ To this, Wodak and Hirsch add that:

The process of national identification is promoted by the emphasis on ‘national uniqueness’. By raising individuality, which is a prized value in modern societies, to the national level [...], the governing representatives of a political system mostly conceal their forcible act of homogenization and erasure of differences, which is manifested in the epithet ‘national’. In addition, national uniqueness, which is assigned entirely positive attributes, compensates for the unfulfilled need for individual uniqueness.²¹¹

²⁰⁷ Eric Hobsbawm and Terence O. Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge University Press, 1992).

²⁰⁸ Wodak and Hirsch, *The Discursive Construction of National Identity*, 24.

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

²¹⁰ Hall Stuart in Hall S., Held D., Hubert D., and K. Thompson (eds), “The Question of Cultural Identity.”

²¹¹ Wodak and Hirsch, *The Discursive Construction of National Identity*, 27.

Further, in order to analyze how nationalist discourse is realized, Wodak and Hirsch distinguish three aspects of analysis, which are ‘contents, strategies, and means and forms of realization’.²¹² For the analysis of the discourse utilized by Dugin in his lectures and ideological stances that he promotes, in terms of content, I will concentrate on the: (1) linguistic construction of common culture, (2) the linguistic construction of a ‘national body’, (3) the linguistic construction of the “West” and its relation to Russia, and finally (4) the construction of “gender” and its relation to nation.

Regarding the strategic part of the discourse of Dugin, I will concentrate on what Wodak and Hirsch call constructive strategies and strategies of justification. These strategies ‘attempt to construct and to establish a certain national identity by promoting unification, identification and solidarity, as well as differentiation’²¹³. The strategies of justification in Dugin’s case, as it will be seen in the analytical part, are used to advocate the Russian government’s position on the gender and sexual identity agenda by using the narratives of a national threat from the West.

In addition to these strategies, there are also strategies of assimilation and dissimulation, which are used linguistically to ‘create a temporal, interpersonal or spatial [...] similarity and homogeneity in reference to the various thematic dimensions’, whereas difference that is linguistically formulated in a discourse, ‘and which in reference to marginalized groups of others is frequently portrayed as deviance from a preferred norm, here does not usually introduce subtle distinctions, but, on the contrary, implies the affixing of undifferentiated and usually derogatory labels on the group concerned.’²¹⁴ Thus, the analytical part will look at how Dugin uses the dissimulation strategies to dissociate queer people from the nation.

Next, the analytical part will also include the discourse analysis of the means and forms of realization of the discourse used by Dugin in his speeches and works. For this analysis, I will

²¹² Ibid., 30.

²¹³ Ibid., 33.

²¹⁴ Ibid.

follow the model of Wodak and Hirsch that they used for the analysis of the national discourse in Austria. Particularly, the analytical part of this thesis will look at three important means of realization the discourse, which are

1. Personal reference (anthroponymic generic terms, personal pronouns, quantifiers);
2. Spatial reference (toponyms/geonyms, adverbs of place, spatial reference through persons, by means of prepositional phrases such as ‘with us’, ‘with them’);
3. Temporal reference (temporal prepositions, adverbs of time, temporal conjunctions, temporal references by means of nouns, semi-prefixes with temporal meaning)²¹⁵

Thus, an example of the first form of realization will be referring to one’s own nation as ‘we’, the spatial references may signify people by their cities or countries, for instance, “The entirety of Budapest protested”; and the temporal references can include the words such as ‘always’ or ‘post-modern societies’, etc.

To summarize, this chapter discussed the major definitions of the discourse and how national identities are formed through discourse set up by different actors, who hold power. The major methodological tool used for the analysis of the thesis will be the Critical Discourse Analysis, as it is an effective means of identifying the different relationships and dynamics of power between groups and actors, and is easily applied to a wide range of social situations and practices that produce discourse. In addition, as a tool for the analysis of university lectures, on which the next section will concentrate, the Critical Discourse Analysis has certain advantages, since it allows a better understanding of everyday interactions that are semi-formal such as this one.

²¹⁵ Ibid., 35.

CHAPTER 4. THE ANALYSIS OF DUGIN'S DISCOURSE

4.1 Dugin and the importance of his works in the nationalist and homophobic discourse

This chapter will make a discourse analysis of Dugin's ideological stance, the parts of *The Fourth Political Theory*, the book where he develops his theory, and lectures that he read in Moscow State University. There is a vast controversy whether the ideas of Dugin should be taken seriously and whether they are worth studying and analyzing. The opinions range between those, who claim that his ideological position is neo-fascist, and potentially dangerous²¹⁶, and another author such as Shlapentokh who claims that despite the fact that he might not be that important in the political decision-making of the government, he still has a significant influence in both the political and intellectual sphere and has a strong appeal to the masses²¹⁷. A similar opinion is shared by Laruelle, who writes that despite the fact that Eurasianism promoted by Dugin and other actors did not reach the claimed level of *Weltanschauung*, and political party, it should not be completely discarded because of its strong position among important people in Russian political and intellectual spheres. Moreover, as she further argues, this Eurasianism, propagated by Dugin is the revival of Slavophile ideology, which is aimed at representing

²¹⁶ Alan Ingram, "Alexander Dugin: Geopolitics and Neo-Fascism in Post-Soviet Russia," *Political Geography* 20, no. 8 (2001): 1029–1051; Marlène Laruelle, "The Two Faces of Contemporary Eurasianism: An Imperial Version of Russian Nationalism," *Nationalities Papers* 32, no. 1 (March 2004): 115–36, doi:10.1080/0090599042000186197.

²¹⁷ Shlapentokh Dmitry, "Dugin Eurasianism: A Window on the Minds of the Russian Elite or an Intellectual Ploy?," *Studies in East European Thought* 59, no. 3 (September 2007): 215–36; Laruelle, "The Two Faces of Contemporary Eurasianism."

Russia in a messianic way and call for the return to its imperial form, as it is its natural and the only possible form of existence; and in this sense, it is ‘the expression not of an ethnic nationalism, but of an imperialistic and state one.’²¹⁸ In order to be able to evaluate his popularity and influence, it is important to look at his personal evolution and political and intellectual career.

Dugin is well-known for his political and ideological stance as a supporter and the developer of the Eurasianism as a movement and political ideology in contemporary Russia. Despite the fact that he was inspired by the Eurasianist movement, which emerged in the 1920s among Russian emigres, his own understanding of the Eurasianism in the contemporary form differs significantly from what has been carved out and promoted by its most famous proponent, Lev Gumilev²¹⁹. Dugin’s vision of the Eurasianism is often referred to be neo-fascist²²⁰, and it is not without reasons. He presents a distorted version of traditional Eurasianism by adding to it a very right-wing concept of “conservative revolution”, the principles of geopolitics that were set up by German writers whose works are referenced to be the point of inspiration for the Nazi regime in the twentieth century, such as Carl Shmitt, Arthur Moeller van der Brück and others; and esoteric and occult narratives about the messianic national mission of Russia. Moreover, as Laruelle points out, he is the most popular Eurasianist in the mass media, and has the most access to political elite in Russia²²¹. Moreover, *The Foundations of Geopolitics*, one of his most important works, has become the cornerstone of the Russian academic sources today among the university students and has provided itself a solid position as part of the mandatory textbook in some higher education course curricula, such as political sciences, geopolitics, and cultural studies. In his own view, Dugin wants to be seen as an ideologist who forms the ideology, or what he himself would call it, a *Weltanschauung*, and he views himself offering solutions for

²¹⁸ Laruelle, “The Two Faces of Contemporary Eurasianism,” 115.

²¹⁹ Bassin, *The Gumilev Mystique*.

²²⁰ Ingram, “Alexander Dugin”; Laruelle, “The Two Faces of Contemporary Eurasianism.”

²²¹ Laruelle, “The Two Faces of Contemporary Eurasianism,” 126.

the political course that Russia has to follow, and aspires to be recognized as a political advisor.²²² Therefore, one cannot simply dismiss and demean the role Dugin plays in today's Russian politics both in the international arena and domestically.

He received ideological inspiration while he studied foreign languages and history, which allowed him to read and translate works on philosophy and geopolitics into Russian, but it was not until the 1980s when he entered the scene as an intellectual and an activist in *Pamyat*, a small but influential far-right movement which occurred with the apparent support of members of political establishment in the Soviet Union. In the 1990s, he started to be associated with the New Russian Right, which emerged under the strong ideational influence of the European New Rights founders and followers, such as Alain de Benoist and Robert Steukers, with whom Dugin arranged several events, such as a roundtable in 1992 where senior Russian military figures took part²²³. De Benoist, the founder of the “Nouvelle Droite” and who has been trying to revive the Third way ideology and to foster a European-nationalist identity, actually contributed to Dugin's ideological aspirations by helping him open *Elementy*, the Russian version of the European magazine *Elements* that endorses far-right views. This initiative of opening the mentioned magazine ended his connections with the patriotic magazines such as *Den* and *Zavtra* in which he published his works quite frequently, during his close relationship with the Communist Party. De Benoist was Dugin's main companion in his ideological stances, however, had to break ties with him after 1993 when major French and German media outlets and press started campaigning against the “red-brown threat”, closely associated with neo-fascist movement in Russia²²⁴. Apart from writing for *Elementy*, Dugin published the periodicals *Vtorzhenie* (Invasion)²²⁵ (stopped in 2000) and *Milyi Angel* (Dearest Angel)²²⁶ and

²²² Ibid.

²²³ Ingram, “Alexander Dugin,” 1031.

²²⁴ Laruelle, “The Two Faces of Contemporary Eurasianism,” 128.

²²⁵ “Vtorzhenie,” *Arctogaia*, accessed June 5, 2017, <http://arcto.ru/article/907>.

²²⁶ Dugin Alexander, “MILYI ANGEL,” *Milyi Angel*, accessed June 5, 2017, <http://angel.org.ru/2/>.

runs “the new philosophical portal” Arctogaia, which has stopped adding any new discussions as well as a publishing house with an identical name. On the official web-site of Arctogaia, it is stated that it is

the association of intellectuals who study religious traditions, cultures and history of world nations. The association’s activities are focused on the development of closer ties between each two world’s religions and nations on the background of one, pre-historic, all-human, primordial tradition, which is subject to reconstruction.

The special attention is paid to traditional being of the Eurasian continent.²²⁷

Arctogaia has ten branches in nine cities in Russia and one in Minsk. This publishing house prints his own books as well as the works of neo-fascists such as *The Crisis of the Modern World* by Rene Genon.²²⁸ Thus, one can see the origins of Dugin’s ideological views and position that he has been embracing, and, also, observe the scope of his ability to disseminate these ideas.

After Putin came to power and maintained his strong position as the president, the distinct position and importance of Dugin has increased, and Russia officially has adopted the Eurasianist direction in politics. As authors such as Ingram, Laruelle, and Shlapentokh mention, during the Yeltsin era, the figure of Dugin was not taken as seriously as in Putin’s, because Dugin’s ideas and strong beliefs about Russia’s *derzhavnost* (great power status) appealed to Putin and general public, and thus, became not just tolerated and accepted, but even endorsed as an integral part of the official discourse²²⁹. For example, in 2001 Putin himself referred to Russia as an “Euroasiatic country”²³⁰, and this statement was referenced by Dugin as a proof of validity of his ideology in his opinion piece in *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*.²³¹ Moreover, he had gained the acknowledgment by the regime and served as the director of a Center for

²²⁷ “ARCTOGAIA,” accessed June 5, 2017, <http://arctogaia.com/>.

²²⁸ Ingram, “Alexander Dugin,” 1032.

²²⁹ Ingram, “Alexander Dugin”; Laruelle, “The Two Faces of Contemporary Eurasianism”; Shlapentokh Dmitry, “Dugin Eurasianism: A Window on the Minds of the Russian Elite or an Intellectual Ploy?”

²³⁰ Nekhoroshev Grigoriy, “‘Evraziysy’ reshili Operet’sya Na Vladimira Putina,” *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, January 24, 2001, http://www.ng.ru/events/2001-04-24/2_support.html.

²³¹ Dugin Alexander, “Evraziystvo: Ot Filosofii K Politike,” *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, May 30, 2001, http://www.ng.ru/ideas/2001-05-30/8_philosophy.html.

Geopolitical Expertise, and was quoted in several publications of a state-run website Strana.ru²³². Since then up until recently, he has been a prominent figure in Russian intellectual and political spheres.

In 2008, he entered the academic sphere (before that he had attempted several times to establish his own university, and according to his own web-site, has taught courses at Independent Ecologico-Political University²³³) as a lecturer at Moscow State University named after Lomonosov, and from 2009 to 2014 held the position of the head of the department of sociology of international relations in the faculty of sociology. It is interesting to note that in his biography, he does not mention how he was fired from the university in 2014 for his notorious statement regarding the Ukrainian conflict in his interview to a media agency Anna-News, in which he said that Ukrainians “should be killed, killed, and killed.”²³⁴ Since he was fired from Moscow State University in 2014, he did not give up on his endeavors to disseminate his ideas. Currently, he is currently the director of the analytical center “Katehon”²³⁵, which closely cooperates with the Russian Institute of Strategic Studies (RISS), on the web-site of which Dugin published several analytical pieces, where he critically refers to western politics, and the politics of the US in particular²³⁶. Moreover, on the posts of the RISS, he is referred as ‘one of the famous Russian philosophers and publicists’ or “Russian philosopher, geopolitician, and the leader of the International Eurasian Movement.”²³⁷ It is important to note that, however,

²³² “Strana.ru,” *Strana.ru*, accessed June 5, 2017, <http://strana.ru/>?

²³³ “Biografiya,” *Alexander Dugin*, February 11, 2017, <http://dugin.ru/biography>.

²³⁴ “Dugin Uvolen Iz MGU Za Prizyv Ubivat’ Ukraintsev,” *Rosbalt*, June 27, 2014, <http://www.rosbalt.ru/moscow/2014/06/27/1285631.html>.

²³⁵ arctoweb and ru_neokons, “Dugin I Reshetnikov Predstavlyat Doklad v RISI,” *Tsentri Konservativnykh Issledovaniy*, February 17, 2016, <http://ru-neokons.livejournal.com/85622.html>; “Ideologicheskie Korny Amerikanskoi Vneshnei Politiki: Sovmestnyi Doklad RISI I Analiticheskogo tsentra ‘Katehon,’” *RISI*, February 20, 2016, <https://riss.ru/events/26949/>; “Aleksandr Dugin: Amerikanskaya I Russkaya Ideologii Absolyutno Nesovmestimy,” *RISI*, February 24, 2016, <https://riss.ru/smi/27051/>.

²³⁶ Dugin Alexander, “Amerikanskaya Ideologiya Na Primere Sovremennoi Frantsuzskoi Politiki,” *Russian Institute for Strategic Studies*, March 15, 2016, <https://riss.ru/analitics/28050/>.

²³⁷ “Ideologicheskie Korny Amerikanskoi Vneshnei Politiki”; “Aleksandr Dugin”; “Rossyisko-Pridnestrovskiy Vebinar Na temu ‘Amerikanskaya Ideologiya I Pretenzii SSHA Na Global’noe dominirovanie’ (Russian-Pridnestrovian Webinar on the Topic of “American Ideology and the Pretensions of the USA for Global Dominance),” *RISI*, April 8, 2016, <https://riss.ru/events/29087/>.

in the English version of the web-site of the RISS, there are no articles mentioning Dugin. In addition to above-mentioned activities, he is the chief editor of the TV channel “Tsargrad TV”²³⁸, ‘the first Russian conservative informational and analytical TV channel... The programs [of which] cover every day hot topics in the sphere of world economy, geopolitics, culture and religion’, and according to the information provided by the web-site, the audience of the channel reached twenty million in August 2016.²³⁹ Thus, despite the ousting from the official academic sphere, he is still regarded as the leading expert on the issues of geopolitics, and is still influencing the minds of people.

During his time at the Moscow State University, he organized the Center for Conservative Studies. On the official web-site of the center, it is said that it was opened in 2008 by the initiative of Dean Dobrenkov and Professor Dugin. The main reason for the creation of such center is the acute ‘need to overcome the negative impact of factors, threatening the maintenance of Russia’s fundamental social sciences and humanities in its education system, and to sustain the authentic national world-view’²⁴⁰. The choice of the word world-view is interesting here in terms of the connotation it has. The authors could have chosen the word “ideology” here, which according to English-Russian dictionary of political science terms, are synonymous²⁴¹. However, within the context of the given sentence, it would seem counter-intuitive to put the words “authentic” and “ideology” together. Therefore, the site already has implicated a discourse of truth that it brings to the reader of its studies, claiming that what they are fighting for is the only possible “authentic” truth. In terms of the influence of the Center of the Conservative Studies, it has affiliated branches in major cities in Russia, such as Saint-

²³⁸ “Biografiya.”

²³⁹ “Telekanal Tsargrad,” *Tsargrad*, accessed June 5, 2017, https://tsargrad.tv/pervyi_russkij.

²⁴⁰ “O TSKI - Tsentr Konservativnykh Issledovaniy,” *Tsentr Konservativnykh Issledovaniy*, accessed April 11, 2017, <http://konservativizm.org/about.xhtml>.

²⁴¹ Garnov K., and N. Inozemtseva, “Mirovozzrenie,” *Anglo-Russkyi Politicheskyi Slovar’ (English-Russian Political Dictionary)* (Moscow: Russo, 2005).

Petersburg, Nizhny Novgorod, Rostov-on-Don, Ekaterinburg, Chelyabinsk, and Nalchik²⁴². Moreover, the Center asserts having extended relations with international scholars and politicians, such as Alain de Benoist, the French philosopher and founder of the Nouvelle Droite (New Right) movement; Eduard Lozansky, the president of the American Institute in Moscow; Borislav Milosevic, the brother of Slobodan Milosevic, etc.

4.2 The analysis of lectures and chapters of *The Fourth Political Theory*

At this point, the mission of the courses taught by Alexander Dugin is what matters most for my analysis. The course of Structural Sociology, from which I analyze the lecture on gender, consists of eleven lectures and the lecture on gender is the tenth. Each lecture covers an extensive range of topics, which in most cases do not follow either historical or logical order. The main argument of the entire course is the periodization of human history into three periods of pre-modern, modern and post-modern by Dugin. All lectures are recorded and is openly accessible on the official web-site of the Center of Conservative Studies and its channel on YouTube. The lecture given on gender is divided into five parts: ‘gender and its role in society, gender in psychoanalysis, gender and regimes of unconscious, family and the structures of kinship, transformations of family and gender strategies in the historical syntagma’.

He starts his lecture by stating the difference between sex and gender. He maintains that gender is the product of the social experience, i.e. socialization. He starts his introduction to the lecture by giving definitions to these concepts and referring to the names of sociologists and psychologists. Thus, he makes statements appealing to the image of proficiency in the sphere without using any hedging words. This is noticeable from the very beginning where he states that “from the structural sociological view, and in full compliance with the Durkheimian tradition” sex as a category is already a social one, and therefore introducing the category of

²⁴² “Tsentr Konservativnykh Issledovanyi - Eto... Chto Takoe Tsentr Konservativnykh Issledovanyi?,” *Tsentr Konservativnykh Issledovanyi*, accessed April 13, 2017, <http://dic.academic.ru/dic.nsf/ruwiki/699155>.

gender is a “pleonasm”²⁴³. Here, it is important to mention that if to look at the definition of discourse, it is the interplay or one can say is a byproduct of three crucial elements such as ‘marking out a field of knowledge, conferring membership, and bestowing authority.’²⁴⁴ Therefore, from his lecturing style, one can see that he uses these flamboyant and grandiose phrases throughout the whole lecture, which is assumed to reinforce the veiled power relationship between the students and the lecturer, where the excessive usage of specific terms and metaphors and names of philosophers creates the sense of expertise and thus authority over the students, and at the same time it may feed their ego by creating a sense of being included in the exclusive group of prospective “philosophers”.

After briefly introducing the definitions of gender and sex, he moves on to his statement of gender as a primary status. According to him, every experience that an individual has is dictated by his gender. He states that gender differences and their different functions are the fundamental pillars of any societal organizations, and the duality of gender is the “fundamental form for taxonomy for all forms of societies”²⁴⁵. Thus, he continues, “gender serves as the primary fundamental and exemplary cultural code for all the dichotomies and contrapositions, such as yes-no, black-white, day-night”²⁴⁶. He develops this idea into the idea of gender as a “connotation”, where gender serves as a signifier of not only a biological sex, but as a substance of the society and the structure, and is given to an individual by the society “with the purpose of learning, reproducing and developing within the set-up gender contexts”. At this point he proceeds to the discussion of gender inequality. What is interesting and crucial to note is that he does not deny that there is structural gender inequality, however, what he argues is that this

²⁴³ Dugin Alexander, “Lektsiya #10 Sotsiologiya Pola (Strukturnaya Sotsiologiya) Prof. Dugin - Tsentr Konservativnykh Issledovanyi,” *Tsentr Konservativnykh Issledovanyi*, May 14, 2009, <http://konservatizm.org/konservatizm/sociology/140509120251.xhtml>.

²⁴⁴ Clive Seale, *Researching Society and Culture. Third Edition* (Sage Publications Ltd (CA), 2012), 45.

²⁴⁵ Dugin Alexander, “Lektsiya #10 Sotsiologiya Pola (Strukturnaya Sotsiologiya) Prof. Dugin - Tsentr Konservativnykh Issledovanyi.”

²⁴⁶ Ibid.

gender inequality is justified, and therefore should be maintained. He argues that gender inequality is the main prerequisite for the well-being of the society and its further sustainability. This is the common strategy employed by anti-feminist discourse²⁴⁷, introducing the dichotomy of men and women, with men as dominant and women as subordinate sex (and even less human than men), as the condition of sustainability. Following from that, in Dugin's discourse, there can be no possibility of the deviation from the binary of men and women. Any other variation is simply impossible and not known ontologically, as he claims further.

What I would like to pay a closer attention to is his discussion of gender from the perspective of psychoanalysis, or his own theory of gender based on the mix of psychoanalytical theories of the conscious and subconscious. By this point of the lecture, one can notice that he eagerly uses the strategy of intertextuality, inserting the theories of other scholars into his own lecture, which also serves as a tool for credibility of his discourse. However, what is more interesting in terms of the discourse that he produces is how he used the "synthesis" of theories of Jung and Duran, where he explains the differences between men and women using concepts of anima/animus and masculinoid/feminoid (which has two types)²⁴⁸. Thus, according to his lecture, men represent masculinoid (or the manifestation of Diurn), and here it can be derived that men, in his sense, is a universal singular term that covers every existing notion masculinity. Hence, a man as a masculinoid, is a member of aggressive and possessive ethnic groups, transformer of the chaos into order, the origin that transforms an ethnic group into a nation, the builder of the empire, and is devoted to logos and rationality. He further claims that masculinoid is not necessarily manifested in a human being, for example, a nation can be a masculinoid, an ethnic group can be a masculinoid, basically, every group that managed to be dominant is a masculinoid and vice versa, every group that is in a subordinate position is a feminoid.

²⁴⁷ Michelle M. Lazar, "Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis: Articulating a Feminist Discourse Praxis1," *Critical Discourse Studies* 4, no. 2 (August 2007): 141–64, doi:10.1080/17405900701464816.

²⁴⁸ Dugin Alexander, "Lektsiya #10 Sotsiologiya Pola (Strukturnaya Sotsiologia) Prof. Dugin - Tsentr Konservativnykh Issledovaniy."

The further the lecture goes, the more his ideas become radical. Thus, from the discussion of feminoid and masculinoid, he goes on to the connection between gender relations and the creation of society. As it was stated above, feminoid represented by women do not have their independent value. Dugin asserts that women acquire value only in relation to their market value in the system of exogenous marriage, which occurred first between families and then between wider societies. Further, he refers to Levi-Strauss, claiming that he got this idea from Levi-Strauss' works, where he states that the exchange of women was the early form of language exchange²⁴⁹. From this exchange of women appears develops a bigger and complex society that one sees today. These societies are patriarchal, where the role of men or masculinoid has a symbolic meaning of the father of the nation, who cares about his children, members of the nation, and therefore, in order to protect his children, the father is permitted to take harsh measures²⁵⁰.

At this point, returning to the genre of the given text, which is the lecture, in relation to what was written above, one can also trace the gendered discourse in a social practice. Thus, if to follow his logic of interchangeably using masculinoid and men, the setting of the class gives an important insight. The class is structured in the form of a lecture, where students cannot intervene in the process by asking questions or challenging his ideas. Therefore, one can notice that he imposes himself as a perfect masculinoid, the rational devotee of "logos" who organizes his students, but a graceful father who shares his wisdom with them and therefore, "brings chaos in their minds into order".

Further, if to expand his logic of masculinoid and feminoid into macro level, he himself states that Russia is without any doubts a perfect example of masculinoid. In this sense, if to look in a broader context of his discourse, and to recall that he is the ideological leader of the

²⁴⁹ Ibid.

²⁵⁰ Ibid.

idea of neo-Eurasianism, then it can be inferred that all the other members in this neo-Eurasian movement serve a symbolic image of feminoids. One can observe that this whole concept of masculinoid and feminoid in the context of nations that he develops have strong connotations of colonialism and appeals to the image of Russia as the imperial power. Moreover, here, one can also trace back the hyper-masculinized image of Russia and Putin, since these two concepts are becoming inseparable for many. As it is argued by many scholars, the masculinized image of Putin as a strong leader who is cold-blooded and smart, and hence reliable, is one of the main factors for his regime's legitimacy ²⁵¹.

Finally, in the last section of his lecture, he claims that in the structure of what he calls a "historical syntagma" which consists of pre-modern, modern, and post-modern, the gender dynamics have been stable, and it has always been patriarchal and the institute of family has not undergone any changes unlike all the other institutions. He maintains that there has not been and will never be any equality and not even a hint for the dominance of women. He uses very classical strategy of discourse, such as intertextuality, citing the works of major feminist and queer theory scholars, such as Foucault, Butler, Haraway and others, whose works he discusses also in his *The Fourth Political Theory*²⁵². However, he cites them out of a broader context so that these quotes served his own arguments. For instance, he claims that Michel Foucault ascribed sexuality as intrinsically feminine subject, and therefore has always been suppressed first by the bourgeois ideas of secularism and later by protestant ideas which have influenced capitalist world as it is today. Following from this suppression of sexuality as a manifestation of femininity, he continues, in the modern world the role of a woman has diminished to zero.²⁵³ In fact, a person who has read Foucault would know that this is the opposite of what Foucault has written in his numerous works, the most foundational of these being *The History of*

²⁵¹ Sperling, *Sex, Politics, and Putin*; Riabov and Riabova, "The Remasculinization of Russia?"

²⁵² Dugin Alexander, *The Fourth Political Theory* (Moscow: Eurasian Movement, 2012).

²⁵³ Dugin Alexander, "Lektsiya #10 Sotsiologiya Pola (Strukturnaya Sotsiologia) Prof. Dugin - Tsentr Konservativnykh Issledovaniy."

Sexuality²⁵⁴. Moreover, a very smart strategy exploited by him is to use as his own argument the main debate within the feminist scholarly works, where the main point of the debate is whether representing women as strong and powerful leaders is still androcentric²⁵⁵. Dugin uses this claim not as a proof of andro-centrism and male-oriented structure, but as a proof that women cannot create a separate discourse of power. It is very difficult to pinpoint the flaw in the logical structures of arguments that he created here, and I should admit, his arguments start to seem having at least some common sense by the end of his lecture.

In addition, in the section of the discussion of the development of gender in the post-modern era, Dugin rages about the sexual liberation of women, where they can openly talk about their sexuality in public, and thus the erasure of the private and public. He takes the normative stance of morality, which one could point out is against the rational feature of “musculinoid”, which he tries to present himself during his lecture. However, then he calms down by saying that this “sexual liberation” still does not give women any power since they serve the erotic desires of men. At this point, the last point that I would like to make regarding his discourse on gender and women in general is that the entire last part, which discusses the gender dynamics, is construed around the image of Western white heterosexual women. Despite the fact that he briefly touches homosexuality in his lecture, for him homosexuality is related only to gay men. Thus, this raises a number of problems. First, it is the heterosexism and heteronormativity of his discourse. Within the logic of heterosexism, it can be inferred that he views homosexuality as a flaw in the reproductive function of men and women, and in this sense homosexuality is a problem that affects only men, whereas women can still serve as the incubators for future children of the nation. Regarding heteronormativity, for him a homosexual is just a feminine man, who would like to give up his privileges as a “real” man. Second, turning

²⁵⁴ Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*.

²⁵⁵ Lazar, “Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis.”

back to the problem of complete omission of the discussion of women who do not fall into the category of white straight non-disabled upper-middle class women, his discourse reproduces and reinforces the ignoring of their mere existence, not even speaking of their role in the society, because, as we have already seen, for Dugin women are already sub-humans, and in this hierarchy then women of color, queer women, disabled women and all the others are sub-sub humans.

A further lecture that I will analyze is the thirteenth lecture in the lecture series on Sociology of Gender. This lecture series was taught in 2013 in Moscow State University and was open to public. All the lectures from the course are video-taped and are accessible online on the website of the Center of Conservative Studies and its channel on YouTube. The lecture dated the 27 November 2013 talks about gender as the manifestation of racism and fascism. The main argument of the entire lecture is that the concept of gender as we know it today is forcibly imposed by the Western culture. He starts his lecture by stating that the basis of Western society is individualism, where the society is decayed into individual members of society, who do not have any attachments to their families, religion, ethnic group and nation. In a post-modern world, then, an individual herself is decomposed into internal structures. He further says that Western ideology is based on extreme individualism, where it promotes the liberation of an individual from all kinds of social ties, including her/his gender. This, he states, where the gender politics, tolerance for homosexuality, the acceptance of the idea of being able for one's own gender take its origins. In this sense, therefore, the West considers the gender-related issues from its own anthropologically racist standpoint²⁵⁶.

According to Dugin, the post-colonial world order is still going on, as while having left its colonies physically, the West has not abandoned its normative subjugation of them. Western

²⁵⁶ Alexandr Dugin, *A. Dugin "Sotsiologiya Gendera" ot 27/11/13, 2013*, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9R--FioZGms>.

culture is based on ethnocentric view of itself, imagining that its culture and values are universal and inherent to all groups. Moreover, he states, Western society as an archaic society imposes its vision to everyone. He makes a very strong claim that Western-European culture is ‘the phenomenon of racism, of cultural racism’. He explains it by asserting that racism is the product of a modern culture, of liberalism to be precise. Then, he delves into the discussion of how Christian peasant societies, such as Russia were the first societies who stood up against slavery and abolished it. Nevertheless, colonialism is still going on, he warns. Under the image of advocating human rights, the West is demonstrating cultural racism by dictating norms. Thus, the notion of universal human rights is racism and colonialism, the Eurocentric expansionism. Within this framework of Eurocentric colonialism, the main problem of the sociology of gender is the individualization of the concept of gender as a matter of individual choice. Accepting gender as a social construct is correct, he admits, however, in his view, gender is a ‘collective social imagination’²⁵⁷. Hence, at this point, the starting point of seeing gender as a social construct is right, but the conclusions that the West draws from them is wrong – liberal conventions are imposed to the understandings of gender by force. As a result of individualization of the concept of gender, ‘gays go to rallies and demonstrations, liberals teach how to be a pervert through ideas of tolerance, transgender operations are universal rights, and all of these are the examples of colonial ideologies, of moral subjugation.’²⁵⁸ He reifies that ‘the structure of subjugation today is economic power, and the dominant ideology is postmodernism’, and in this sense, ‘queer feminist studies are a form of economically ideological colonization’.²⁵⁹

Following, he moves on to what he calls “collaborationism” with the colonialism of the Western world. He says that the phenomenon of collaborationism is not new, and existed during

²⁵⁷ Ibid.

²⁵⁸ Ibid.

²⁵⁹ Ibid.

fascism and the World War II, when Ukrainians and Belarussians collaborated with the Nazis. He says that the modern-day collaborationism is based on the idea and desire to be similar to Europe. These people choose cooperation with the enemies, the liberal groups, and by doing this, they offer “betraying our identity”, and this is the betrayal of their own nation. They are the mediators of the forces that occupy Russia by accepting the positions of the colonizers, i.e. liberals.²⁶⁰ He also emphasizes that in fact, these liberal values are not supported by the majority of the Western population.

Finally, in his pseudo-philosophical book *The Fourth Political Theory*, he dedicates a chapter on gender. He follows an already familiar style to the analyses of his works, where he lacks any structure and logical cohesion between arguments, refers to famous philosophers of post-structuralism and post-modernism, confuses the ideas and main arguments of different authors, and presents them in a very distorted perverted way. For example, he argues that Donna Haraway’s philosophical work *Cyborg Manifesto* is fascist, just as BDSM culture is, but does not bother to explain how and why it is the case. In one chapter, while he asserts that gender in *The Fourth Political Theory* is an androgen, based on the ideas of Plato²⁶¹, in the appendices he writes completely different thing, stating that in his paradigm, gender overcomes all the existing notions of traditional gender and biological sex. Furthermore, he presents post-modernity as the biggest threat to the existence of Russia. He reiterates that

having defeated its rivals, liberalism brought back monopoly on ideological thinking; it became the sole ideology, not allowing alongside itself any other... In post-modernity, liberalism, preserving and even increasing its influence, ever more rarely projects an intelligent and freely adopted political philosophy; it becomes unconscious, self-understood and instinctive... This instinctive liberalism...gradually acquires grotesque characteristics.²⁶²

²⁶⁰ Dugin Alexander, “Lektsiya #10 Sotsiologiya Pola (Strukturnaya Sotsiologiya) Prof. Dugin - Tsentr Konservativnykh Issledovaniy.”

²⁶¹ Dugin Alexander, *The Fourth Political Theory*, 111.

²⁶² Ibid., 190–91.

Thus, he again refers to the uncontrolled and dangerous nature of liberalism, which can be noticed in most of his works and speeches.

Here, I would like to demonstrate the common tropes and strategies that he uses in his lectures and his works to create the anti-Western and anti-liberal discourse. One of the strategies that Wodak and Hirsch²⁶³ indicate in their very useful table on the discursive strategies of construction of national identity and their means of realization is the strategy of blaming and shift of responsibility, of scapegoating and the use of victim-perpetrator dichotomy. From most of Dugin's discussions, his aversion towards West is strikingly noticeable, but he uses the tropes of the "innocent Russia" who is under the threat of being swallowed by the Western-European dominance. At this point, referring back to the concept of subaltern empire and how subalterns use the strategies described as hybrid subjectivities, it is easy to mark them in Dugin's discourse. Thus, as Morozov, with the reference to theoretical framework of Bhabha²⁶⁴, writes, Russia engages in the subversive pattern of actions in its relation to the West as its subaltern.²⁶⁵ Domestically representing itself as being in a periphery and being "morally subjugated" is masterfully articulated by the political and regime-loyal intellectual elite, such as Dugin.

Moreover, linguistically, Dugin is very vague and unclear in the logical and chronological sequence of his argumentation, leaving his listeners and readers entangled and left with no choice other than taking for granted his words without challenging them. In addition, this vagueness is accompanied by the emphasis on the national uniqueness of Russia, its great mission as the savior of the civilization, and at the same time raising the panic by using the topos ('explicit or inferable premises'²⁶⁶) of threat by warning against the possible loss of national autonomy and uniqueness, which in Dugin's discourse takes the form of scaremongering about the "moral subjugation" and ideological colonization of Russia by the

²⁶³ Wodak and Hirsch, *The Discursive Construction of National Identity*, 36.

²⁶⁴ Bhabha Homi, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 2005).

²⁶⁵ Morozov, *Russia's Postcolonial Identity*.

²⁶⁶ Wodak and Hirsch, *The Discursive Construction of National Identity*, 34.

West, and the subsequent loss of Russia's own spirit and sacred path. This, in turn is followed by the strategy of 'heteronomization or warning against heteronomy'²⁶⁷, which takes the form of an emphasis on extra-national dependence, both the warning and at the same time encouraging for Russia to cooperate with its neighbors, such as China in combatting the global dominance of Western culture.

On the other hand, Dugin exploits the technique of emphasizing the internal differences as another source of threat to the existence of Russia as an autonomous state in the post-modernist system. Thus, one of the linguistic means of realization is the exclusion of certain groups by spatial and/or personal reference. As Dugin discussed in his lecture, the collaborationists, one can notice that he used the personal pronoun "We", implying that these collaborationists cannot be included into the membership of the Russian nation, and following from his own logic, that the human rights and acceptance of homosexuality as a norm is a form of betraying the nation in favor of the colonizer. Moreover, it is interesting, but not surprising how Dugin is inconsistent in his own statements, where Europe is a colonizer, and therefore, portrayed in a negative way, but at the same time, he sees the future of Russia as an empire itself. This is again a clear reference to self-colonization and the attempts to overturn the master and seize its position. However, for the time-being, all this "resistance" to the Western domination, which is, in fact, subversion of it, has been built up on constant reproduction of stable binaries of West-Russia, man-woman, moral-immoral, etc; and this discourse has been masterfully inserted into a broader civilizational discourse, where the matter of homosexuality and whether to accept the LGBT people into the notion of nation not just in terms of citizenship on paper, but in its full sense, i.e. recognition by the state and the members of the state of queer people as part of "We", has become the matter of choosing the sides – a person is either straight,

²⁶⁷ Ibid., 40.

and therefore, moral, and therefore, Russian, or he/she/ze is a part of LGBTQI+ community, with all the subsequent features standing in the binary system of West against Russia.

Furthermore, representing Europe and the West in general on the one hand as a monolithic homogeneous unit, who has never-ending lust for power and domination, and on the other, claiming that, in reality, the majority of the population is against the liberal politics of gender and sexuality in Europe by referring to protests in France against same-sex marriage, for example, contributes to the general discourse of horizontal populism, described by Brubaker²⁶⁸, where populists manipulate the masses by appealing to them by the ideas that the political elite is detached from the nation, and fail to meet the wills of constituents. This is again an example of a discursive strategy, when the actor tries to demean the enemy by emphasizing the difference, even if this difference exists only in the discourse, as it is the case in Russia, where the true subaltern is the nation, silenced and voiced over.

In conclusion, this section demonstrated how Dugin uses the notions of gender both as an anti-feminist discourse, and in a broader discourse of neo-Eurasianism and the dominance of Russia as an authoritarian regime, which protects its children, both internally and regionally. This chapter used the Critical Discourse Analysis to dismantle the power relations that were scrupulously hidden in the labyrinth of the discursive strategies implemented by Dugin in his works. As a perfect example of a demagogue, Dugin perfectly knows how to mislead its listeners and readers and make them believe in his quasi-scientific and pseudo-philosophical discourse. However, it is discomfoting to point out that his speeches and works can be very convincing and hence dangerous especially for a general public who does not have deep knowledge in sociology or philosophy and may be unable to identify the manipulation.

²⁶⁸ Rogers Brubaker, "Between Nationalism and Civilizationism: The European Populist Moment in Comparative Perspective," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 40, no. 8 (June 21, 2017): 1191–1226, doi:10.1080/01419870.2017.1294700.

CONCLUSION

Russia has always been infamous for its illiberal position in the world and domestically. The violations of human rights that take place in Russia can hardly surprise anyone these days. Moreover, Russia consistently shows its unwillingness to adhere to universal human rights norms, and this absence of rule of law when it comes to the rights of its own citizens directly affects one of the most vulnerable segments of Russian population, the LGBT community. By introducing the anti-homosexual propaganda law in 2013, Russia made a clear statement to its Western counterparts on its position on the issues of sexual and gender identity.

This thesis provides an alternative view on the reasons for homophobic discourse of the state in comparison to oversimplified assumptions about conservative nature of the regime, which do not deconstruct these conservative and traditionalist values, but take them for granted and therefore, are not able to point out the true cause for the re-emergence of the traditionalism and conservatism in the first place. Moreover, most of the works on contemporary Russia do not look at the problem of nationalism and nation-building from a broader perspective. Almost all of the existing literature on nation-building in Russia after the dissolution of the Soviet Union has been focusing on the ethnic composition and political arrangement of the state, and hence, unable to step outside of the conventional theories of nationalism, which still sees ethnic

groups as the main factors in success or failure of a construction of a national identity. In this sense, this thesis challenges these ideas of traditional nationalist theories by using the concepts from post-colonial theories, feminist interpretations of nationalism and sexuality, queer politics and biopolitics.

To apply the concept of subaltern empire to Russia is not a new, but still an uncommon approach to explain its international and domestic political decisions. However, the use of the conceptual framework set up by the post-colonial studies scholars is fruitful in understanding most of the political actions that Russia takes. Thus, by viewing Russia as a subaltern empire, which is in the position of a subaltern in its relation to Western world in terms of materialistic and normative dependency, and of an empire to its own nation, who has been silencing and voicing it over in Spivak's terms, one can follow the patterns of political behavior that Russia holds. Hence, as a subaltern empire, who has been colonized by itself, Russia has been trying to subvert its master, the West by, on the one hand claiming that it is using the European values, but using a completely distorted version of it, and at the same time trying to introduce alternative traditionalist values, which stress the role of Russia as the last haven for conservative norms and standards. The latter strategy articulates the ideas of civilization and messianic role of Russia as the savior of the European civilization, and this is an apparent sign of the attempts of subversion of the colonizer by trying to take its place as a master. In this context, the issue of LGBT rights has become the matter of the dichotomy of master-slave, West-Russia, liberal-conservative, immoral-moral, etc. Therefore, to be of "non-traditional sexual orientation" is inherently non-Russian, and the only possibility in the unchanging dichotomy reproduced in the discourses of different actors, one of whom is Dugin, is either to be straight and Russian or non-heterosexual and out of the notion of Russian nation. This strong adherence to dichotomization of the world, and dividing it to binary opposites is the common trope of the discourse that Dugin uses in his works. Thus, by dismantling his discursive strategies, this thesis

demonstrated how homophobic ideas have been utilized in the construction of a Russian national identity.

APPENDICES

1. In the discussion of the Church as the main locale of the confessions about sex and therefore, as the sex educator, one can find similarities with the phenomenon that Foucault describes. Michel Foucault writes about this broadly in the first volume of *The History of Sexuality*, which was discussed in the theoretical section. To be specific, Foucault shows how Church was one of the main producers of the discourse on sex throughout the Victorian era. This argument was intended to counter the generally accepted belief that sex had been suppressed starting from the Victorian era, and was liberated only in the second half of the twentieth century. A similar argument is also quite common in the discussion of the sexuality during and after the Communist time.

Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality* (London: Penguin Books, 1990).

2. The only parliamentary who voted against the homosexual-propaganda ban later said that he mistakenly pressed the wrong button.

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