



Wednesday Seminars

SOMMERSEMESTER 2018

Graham H. Roberts

Queering the Stitch: Fashion, Masculinity and the Post-Socialist Subject

Mittwoch 11.04.2018, 17.00, HS C, IKSA, NIG, Universitätsstraße 7, 1010 Wien, 4. Stock



Graham H. Roberts is Reader in Russian Studies and member of the CRPM research centre at Nanterre University, near Paris. The author of a DPhil on the Soviet avant-garde literary group OBERIU, has recently published a monograph on consumer culture in post-soviet Russia (Routledge 2016), and edited a volume on material culture in Russia and the USSR (Bloomsbury Academic 2017). His current research interests centre on fashion, costume, the body and identity, both in Russia and in France.

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...kommende Termine

18.04.2018 **Justin Stagl**

Karl Czoernigs 'Ethnographie der Oesterreichischen Monarchie' (1855-57), der 'Funktionalismus' und die Schranken des 'ethnographischen Blicks'

02.05.2018 **Steffi Grundmann**

Haut und Haar im klassischen Griechenland

My subject is the “queering” of masculinity in post-Soviet fashion. Russia’s President Putin has made heroic, heteronormative masculinity a central pillar, both of his own popularity and of Russian national identity. At the same time, many Russian fashion photographers and designers engage in a critical practice that radically challenges such masculinity.

As I have argued elsewhere, brands such as Gosha Rubchinskiy (Comme des Garçons) are as ideologically charged as any other. At the same time, the images many post-Soviet designers put into circulation can be viewed as aesthetic objects in their own right. As such, they inevitably emerge from within a particular art-historical tradition. I suggest that the work of Rubchinskiy, Demna Gvasalia (Vetements, Balenciaga), and the stylist Lotta Volkova in particular looks back to the Constructivist project of designers of the Soviet 1920s. At the heart of their respective projects is a fundamental challenge to conventional notions of gender in fashion, and the fashion industry. In both cases, the “queering” of gender norms, distinctions and hierarchies, both on and off the catwalk, is designed to produce a radical transformation of the relationship between the fashioned object and the fashionable, consuming subject. Far from being the antithesis of the Constructivist project, then, this post-socialist utopian body can be seen as constituting perhaps that project’s most spectacular realisation to date.