

**CHARLES UNIVERSITY IN PRAGUE**  
**Faculty of Social Sciences**  
**Institute of International Studies**

**PROTOCOL ON DIPLOMA THESIS ASSESSMENT**  
**(Supervisor)**

Name of the student: **Luca Zucchetti**

Title: **Russian LGBTQ+ activism in times of war and repressions: the experience of activists in emigration**

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Supervisor: Dr. Dmitry Dubrovskiy

## 1. TOPIC AND OBJECTIVE

The thesis titled "Russian LGBTQ+ Activism in Times of War and Repressions: The Experience of Activists in Emigration" aims to explore the transformations in Russian LGBTQ+ activism following the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022. The primary focus is on understanding the experiences of Russian LGBTQ+ activists who emigrated, analysing how the war and repression reshaped their strategies, priorities, and roles in activism. The research objective is to outline the key changes in Russian LGBTQ+ activism, particularly in the context of emigration, and provide insights into how activists continue their work abroad.

## 2. CONTENT

The thesis provides a comprehensive and original approach by focusing on Russian LGBTQ+ activism in emigration, a topic of growing relevance due to recent political developments in Russia after beginning of the full-scale aggression in 2022 and seriously increased level of ant-LGBT repressive legislation.

The structure is well-organized, starting with theoretical backing through social movement theory, followed by a literature review and discussion of LGBTQ+ rights in Russia. The analysis seeks to integrate Hirschman's Voice and Exit theory and concepts like homonationalism and acts of citizenship.

The argumentation is clear, with the author effectively linking the broader political context in Russia to the personal experiences of LGBTQ+ activists. The research methodology, which involves interviews with activists, adds qualitative depth to the study. The thematic analysis of interview data provides rich insights into the personal and political consequences of migration on activism. The thesis also includes a structured literature review, addressing both activism in exile and LGBTQ+ migration. The work utilizes a wide range of sources, including academic literature, media reports, and legal documents, reflecting careful source engagement.

## 2. FORMAL ASPECTS AND LANGUAGE

The language quality of the thesis is high, with precise academic expression and clear communication of complex ideas. The citation style appears consistent and follows academic standards, incorporating references from diverse fields such as political science,

sociology, and LGBTQ+ studies. The graphics and annexes, including the table of contents and interview details, are appropriate and contribute to the clarity of the work. However, ensuring uniformity in citation formatting and more detailed annexes (if applicable) could further enhance the formal aspects.

#### 4. STATEMENT ON THE ORIGINALITY OF THE THESIS

The thesis was checked using anti-plagiarism software (Turnitin) and no substantial issues of plagiarism were detected (3 percentage, follow system report). The research is original, based on primary data collected through interviews with Russian LGBTQ+ activists in emigration, offering new insights into the adaptation of activism in response to political repression and war.

#### 5. SHORT COMMENTS BY THE REVIEWER

The thesis makes an important contribution to the study of LGBTQ+ activism in Russia, particularly by focusing on activists who have emigrated due to repression. The author demonstrates a deep understanding of both social movement theory and the specificities of the Russian political context. The strengths of the work lie in its timeliness of the research topic, given the ongoing political challenges in Russia, and qualitative method of its investigation.

The weaknesses are methodological rigor and theoretical grounding. The theoretical part, although detailed and thorough, unfortunately has no connection to the analysis of the interview, as was pointed out by the supervisor. This may be due to the fact that a clear research question was not formulated, resulting in the work taking on a distinctly descriptive character. What is referred to as "analysis" in the work is interesting, but it has almost no connection to the theory described in the first part of the work.

The relatively minor comment is a limited sample size (12 interviews), which restricts the ability to generalize the findings to the entire population of LGBTQ+ activists in Russia or in emigration. Despite of the supervisor' recommendation, the questionnaire wasn't added to the text of the MA, as well as full data on the important sociological characteristics of the respondents.

Overall, the thesis not fully achieves its research objective. Despite providing a well-described situation with LGBT-activism in emigration, based on the interesting and nuanced interview, it failed to connect it with the theoretical part of the paper, which diminished its quality in general.

#### 6. COOPERATION WITH THE SUPERVISOR

The cooperation with supervisor was good in general, but the last version of the text, unfortunately, demonstrated that the student not fully responded to the supervisor' recommendations.

7. QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS THAT SHOULD BE ADDRESSED DURING THE DEFENCE:

What was change in the strategy of Russian LGBT activists after 2022? How exactly did the transnational LGBT network transform after 2022, both outside and within Russia?

8. (NON-)RECOMMENDATION AND SUGGESTED GRADE:

**C**

(on A-F scale)

Date: 04/09/2024

Signature: Dmitry Dubrovskiy