

Title: Mikhail Kuzmin and Dmitry Kuz'min as Love Poets

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Abstract:

Aside from their names, the *lozhnyie odnofamil'tsy* Mikhail Kuzmin and Dmitry Kuz'min have some obvious similarities. Both are known for their pioneering roles as openly gay Russian poets; both are recognized for their work as translators. These authors are also notable for their focus on love poetry. They treat love as *universal* theme, drawing on one of lyric poetry's most established traditions, even as they distinguish themselves by depicting same-sex romance. This is the tension I propose to explore, and it is one that is complicated by the fact that social understandings of homosexuality were changing rapidly during their lives . In addition, I will also draw on the field of affect studies to examine the way Mikhail Kuzmin and Dmitry Kuz'min construct the emotion of "love" in their writings and fashion themselves as "love poets" – a role that goes far beyond the category of "gay poet."