

Curriculum vitae

Dr. Kirill Ospovat

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Date and place of birth:

May 14, 1980
 Moscow, Russia

Academic employment:

Assistant professor of Russian, University of Wisconsin-Madison	August 2018
Research Associate, Institute of Slavic Studies, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin	2016–2018
Visiting lecturer, Princeton University	2015–2016
Research Associate, Dept. of Philology, Higher School of Economics St. Petersburg	2015
Research Associate, Freie Universität Berlin, (ERC-Project Early Modern European Drama and the Cultural Net -- DramaNet)	2011–2014
Research Associate, Institute for Advanced Studies on the Humanities, Russian State University for the Humanities (RGGU)	2007 to 2010
Assistant Professor, Smolny College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Saint-Petersburg State University	Sept. – Dec. 2007

Education:

Russian State University for the Humanities, Moscow
 Ph.D. in Russian Literature, May 2005
 Dissertation: “The Literary Disputes of Lomonosov and Sumarokov”
 Advisor: Mikhail Gasparov
 B.A. in Russian Literature, June 2002

Awards:

Labex Transfers Visiting Professor, École Normale Supérieure (Paris)	September 2017
Mellon European Visiting Scholar/Visiting Assistant Professor, University of Chicago	Jan. – June 2011
Newton Fellowship, British Academy (UK)	Sept. 2009 – Dec. 2010
Research Fellowship of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation (Germany)	2006 – 07
Research Fellowship of the Russian Ministry of Education	2004

Book:

Pridvornaia slovesnost': institut literatury i konstruktivnoi absolutizma v Rossii serediny XVIII veka [Courtly Letters: Russian Literature and Visions of Absolutism in the Mid-Eighteenth Century] (Moscow: NLO Publishers, 2020.)

Terror and Pity: Aleksandr Sumarokov and the Theater of Power in Elizabethan Russia (Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2016).

Edited volume:

Russkii realism XIX veka: Obshestvo, znanie, povestvovanie [Nineteenth-Century Russian Realism: Society, Knowledge, Narrative], coedited with Ilya Kliger, Alexey Vdovin, and Margarita Vaisman (NLO Publishers, Moscow, 2020). 564 p.

Dramatic Experience: Poetics of Drama and the Public Sphere(s) in Early Modern Europe (Leiden: Brill 2016; coedited with Katja Gvozdeva and Tatiana Korneeva). 328 p.
<https://brill.com/view/title/33861?language=en>

Selected articles:

“Sovereignty and the Politics of Knowledge: Royal Society, Leibniz, Wolff, and Peter the Great’s Academy of Sciences”, forthcoming in the *Oxford Studies in the Enlightenment*.

“Doublespeak: Poetic Language, Lyrical Hero, and Soviet Subjectivity in Mandelstam’s *K nemetskoi rechi* (1932)”, *Slavic Review* 78, no. 1 (Spring 2019), p. 126-148.

“Kazn' avtora: Delo A.P. Volynskogo, ‘absolutizm’ i problema politicheskoi slovesnosti v 1740 godu” [Execution of the Author: The Trial of A.P. Volynskii, Absolutism, and the Problem of Political Literature in 1740], in: *Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie* 151 (2018), p. 49-73.

“Kumir na bronzovom kone: barokko, chrezvychainoe polozhenie i estetika revoliutsii” [The Bronze Horseman: Baroque, State of Exception, and the Aesthetics of Revolution], in: *Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie* 149 (2018).

“Realism as Technique: Mimesis, Allegory, and the Melancholic Gaze in Gogol's *Old-World Landowners*”, forthcoming in: Yaraslava Ananka, Magdalena Marszałek (Hg.): *Potemkinsche Dörfer der Idylle: Imaginationen und Imitationen des Ruralen*. Bielefeld: transcript 2018.

“Der Eherne Reiter: Politischer Barock und russische Revolution zwischen Puškin, Belyj und Benjamin” [The Bronze Horseman: The Political Baroque and the Russian Revolution between Pushkin, Bely, and Benjamin], in: *Le foucauldien*, 2(1), 12. DOI: <http://doi.org/10.16995/lefou.20>

"The Catharsis of Prosecution: Royal Violence, Poetic Justice, and Public Emotion in the Russian *Hamlet* (1748)", in *Dramatic Experience: Poetics of Drama and the Public Sphere(s) in Early Modern Europe*, edited by Katja Gvozdeva, Tatiana Korneeva, and Kirill Ospovat, Leiden: Brill, 2016. 189-219. [P]

“The Theater of War and Peace: The ‘Miracle of the House of Brandenburg’ and the Poetics of European Absolutism”, in: *Eutropes: The Paradox of European Empire*, ed. by John W. Boyer and Berthold Molden, Paris: The University of Chicago Center in Paris, 2014. 202-238.

“The (Dis)empowered People: Kingship, Revolt, and the Origins of Russian Tragic Drama,” in: *Acta Slavonica VI*. Tartu: Tartu Ülikooli Kirjastus, 2014. 38-58.

“*Vlastiteliam i sudiiam: Derzhavin i pridvornoe politicheskoe blagochestie*,” *Istoriia literatury. Poetika. Kino. Sbornik v chest' M. O. Chudakovo*, ed. by Ekaterina Liamina et al. Moscow: Novoe izdatel'stvo, 2012. 273-305.

“Oda Kantemira ‘O nadezhde na boga’ (K istoricheskoi anatomii literaturnogo didaktizma)”, in: *From Medieval Russian Culture to Modernism: Studies in Honor of Ronald Vroon*. Ed. by Lazar Fleishman et al. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2012. 39-58.

“Mikhail Lomonosov Writes to his Patron: Professional Ethos, Literary Rhetoric and Social Ambition”, *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, Vol. 59 (2011), № 2. 240-266.

“‘Gosudarstvennaia slovesnost’: Lomonosov, Sumarokov i literaturnaia politika I.I. Shuvalova v kontse 1750-kh gg.”, in: *Evropa v Rossii: Sbornik statei*, ed. Pekka Pesson and Gennadii Obatnin. Moscow: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2010. 6-63.

„Estetika Sumarokova: k sotsial'nym izmereniiam literaturnoi refleksii“, *A. Sumarokov. Ody torzhestvennyia. Elegii ljubovnyia. Reprintnoe vosproizvedenie sbornikov 1774 goda*, ed. Ronald Vroon. Moscow: OGI, 2009. Prilozhenie: Redaktsii i varianty, Dopolneniia. Kommentarii. 498-552.

“Gukovskii v 1927-1929 gg.: k istorii ‘mladoformalizma’“, *Tynianovskii sbornik 13*, Moscow 2009. 570586.

- “Iz istorii russkogo pridvornogo teatra 1740-kh godov,” in: *Memento vivere: sbornik pamiati L. N. Ivanovoi*, ed. K. A. Kumpan et al., Saint-Petersburg: Nauka, 2009. 9-36.
- “Tragediia Sumarokova ‘Khorev’: k semanticheskoi strukture pridvornoj dramaturgii,” in *Russian Literature and the West: a Tribute for David M. Bethea. Stanford Slavic Studies* 35, ed. Lazar Fleishman et al. Stanford 2008. 13-40.
- “O kontseptsii ody u Tynianova: zametki k teme,” in: *Pushkinskie chteniia v Tartu 4*, Tartu: Tartu Ülikooli Kirjastus, 2007. 408–419.
- “Poeziia i patronazh: ob odnom poslanii Lomonosova,” in: *The Real Life of Pierre Delalande: Studies in Russian and Comparative literature to Honor Alexander Dolinin. Stanford Slavic Studies* 33, ed. Lazar Fleishman et al. Stanford 2007. 13-37.
- “Lomonosov i *Pis'mo o pol'ze stekla*: poeziia i nauka pri dvore Elizavety Petrovny,” *Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie*. 87 (2007): 148-183.
- “‘Sublime misanthrope’: Lomonosov v 1760—1761 godakh,” in: *Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie*. 69 (2004): 144-178.
- “O ‘liricheskom besporiadke’ u Lomonosova (k postanovke problemy),” *Lotmanovskii sbornik* 3, ed. L. Kiseleva et al. Moscow: OGI, 2004. 912-917.
- “‘Stikhotvorets i filosof’ (k osnovam kul'turnoi reputatsii Lomonosova), in: *Jews and Slavs. Vol. 14. Festschrift Professor Ilya Serman*. Jerusalem and Moscow: Gesharim, Mosty kul'tury, 2004. 61-76.
- “Nekotorye konteksty ‘Utrennego...’ i ‘Vechernego razmyshleniia o bozhiem velichestve’,” in: *Study Group on Eighteenth-Century Russia Newsletter*. 32 (2004). 39-54.
- “K literaturnoi pozitsii Lomonosova,” in: *Tynianovskie chteniia* 10, Moscow 2002. 13-29.
- “Ob ‘odicheskom diptikhe’ Pushkina: *Stansy i Druz'iam* (materialy k intertekstual'nomu kommentariiu),” in: *Pushkinskaia konferentsiia v Stenforde, 1999: Materialy i issledovaniia*, ed. by David Bethea et al., Moscow: OGI, 2001.
- “Eshche raz o poetologicheskikh oksiumoronakh Trediakovskogo,” in: *Ruskaia filologiia* 13. *Sbornik nauchnykh rabot molodykh filologov*. Tartu: Tartu Ülikooli Kirjastus, 2002. 41-46.
- “Iz istorii akademicheskoi polemiki 1753 g.: ‘Satira na Samokhvala’,” in: *Ruskaia filologiia* 12. *Sbornik nauchnykh rabot molodykh filologov*. Tartu: Tartu Ülikooli Kirjastus, 2001. 36-41.
- “K opredeleniiu literaturnykh funktsii rannei barkoviany,” in: *Ruskaia filologiia* 11. *Sbornik nauchnykh rabot molodykh filologov*. Tartu: Tartu Ülikooli Kirjastus, 2000. 24-32.
- “Quisquis Pindarum studet aemulari: zametki o ‘literaturnom napravlenii’ Lomonosova” // *Ruskaia filologiia*. 10. *Sbornik nauchnykh rabot molodykh filologov*. Tartu: Tartu Ülikooli Kirjastus, 1999. 28-35.

Selected papers and presentations:

“Inventing the Lower Classes: Compassion and the Politics of Representation in Dostoevsky’s *Poor Folk*”, conference “Russian Realism”, 7 November 2017, New York University

“Reforming Subjects: Poetics and Politics of Reading in Early Eighteenth-Century Russia,” conference “Towards a History of Reading in Russia”, Gargnano sul Garda, 3-6 May 2017.

“Realism as Technique: Mimesis, Allegory, and the Melancholic Gaze in Gogol’s Old-World Landowners”, conference “Potemkinsche Dörfer der Idylle: Imaginationen und Imitationen des Ruralen”, Potsdam, 1-3 December 2016.

"Theater of Power: Hamlet and the Poetics of Autocracy in Early Modern Russia", 7 April 2016, Center for Russia, East Europe, and Central Asia, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Roundtable “History of Reading in Russia”, ASEEES Annual Convention, Philadelphia, November 2015.

“Afanasii Fet’s *Shepot, robkoe dykhan’e*: On the Semantics of Poetic Language”, The 15th International Tynyanov Symposium, Rezekne (Latvia), August 2012.

“Lomonosov, Gentleman Scholar: Social Ambition, Aristocratic Ethos, and the Legitimation of Science”, ASEEES Annual Convention, Los Angeles, November 2010.

"Mesto pamiati i istoricheskie epokhi v romannom povestvovanii: parizhskie glavy ‘Arapa Petra Velikogo’" [The Spaces of Memory and Historical Thinking in Fictional Narrative: The Paris Chapters of *Arap Petra Velikogo*], “Pamiatnye daty v russkoi kul’ture”, conference at the Higher School of Economics, Moscow, December 2009

"Jean-Baptiste Rousseau dans les traductions russes de l’année 1760 : les relations franco-russes et la politique culturelle d’Ivan Chouvalov", ‘Elisabeth, impératrice de Russie (1709-1761). Entre la francophonie et la francophilie. Colloque du tricentenaire’, Paris (France), December 2009

„National Identity, International Politics and Cultural Patronage in Eighteenth-Century Russia” (keynote lecture), Conference ‘On Russianness’, University of Helsinki (Finland), December 2009

“Kak byt’ pisatelem v pridvornom obschestve: Lomonosov, Sumarokov, Goratsii” [Being a Writer in Court Society: Lomonosov, Sumarokov, Horace], The 13th International Tynyanov Symposium, Rezekne (Latvia), August 2008.

“Zwischen Klassizismus und Futurismus: Jurij Tynjanovs Odenkonzeption.“ [Between Classicism and Futurism: Yuryi Tynyanov on the Ode], Abteilung für Ost-Mitteleuropa Studien, Universität Passau (Germany), June 2008.

“O neskol’kikh strofakh iz Lomonosova“ [On Three Sanzas in Lomonosov], The Lotman Conference, Tartu (Estonia), February 2008.

“Lingvistika i politika: *Predislovie o pol’ze knig tserkovnyh* Lomonosova i publitsistika Semiletnei vojny” [Linguistics and Politics: Lomonosov’s *Preface on the Use of Church Books* and the Political Debate of

the Seven Years' War], The International Conference "Russia in Europe /Europe in Russia", Helsinki (Finland), August 2007.

"O kontseptsii ody u Tynyanova: zametki k teme" [Tynyanov on the Ode], Pushkin Conference, Tartu (Estonia), September 2006.

"*Nashikh stran Malerb: Lomonosov i problema literaturnoi evoliutsii*" [*The Malherbe of Our Lands: Lomonosov and the Question of Literary Evolution*], VII International Conference of the Study Group on Eighteenth-Century Russia, Wittenberg (Germany), July 2004.

Languages:

Russian: native
 English: near-native
 German: excellent
 French: reading knowledge

Research interests:

Literature and politics; early modern Europe; eighteenth-century Russia; the Russian Golden Age; Russian Realism; Russian poetry; poetics of authoritarianism; Formalist and post-Formalist critical theory; cultural and political theory.

Teaching Experience

University of Wisconsin-Madison

The Empire of Fictions: Russian Literature in the Eighteenth Century (Spring 2018-2019)

SLAVIC 702 LEC-001

In this seminar, we will examine the major writers and genres of eighteenth-century Russian literature in their historical and political context. Secular literature was imported to Russia as an element of "Westernized" empire-building, a constant process of disciplinary and cultural reform initiated by Peter the Great and pursued by his successors throughout the eighteenth century. Considering literary texts and genres as a primary medium of reform, we will explore the complex relationship between politics and poetics from imperial panegyrics of the 1730s to the emergence of the "private" gaze in the 1790s. We will combine an emphasis on exemplary and influential texts which demand slow and attentive reading with a discussion of broader theoretical arguments relevant for our topic.

Tolstoy (Spring 2018-2019)

SLAVIC 424 / LITTRANS 224, 3-4 credits

In this course, we will read and discuss Tolstoy's lengthier and shorter masterpieces, from *War and Peace* to *The Strider*, alongside some of his nonfictional manifestoes. We will explore his techniques of representation and ethical stances and trace their evolution through Tolstoy's long literary career. What were Tolstoy's objections to sexuality and political reform? What is moral and beautiful? How does civilization and education relate to nature? What does death say about life? These are some of the questions that we will investigate while reading Tolstoy's manifold work.

The Evil Empire? Reading Putin's Russia (Fall 2018-2019)

SLAVIC 245 / LITTRANS 247, 3 credits

This seminar, situated between literary, political, cultural, and art studies, will address Putin's authoritarian Russia and the symbolic patterns that govern its erratic and seemingly irrational policies. We will draw on political theory and investigative journalism as well as contemporary Russian film, fiction, and art in order to explore the peculiar, yet not unprecedented cult of violence that underlies Putin's authoritarian regime. We will examine the origins of this cult in Russian imperial and Soviet culture and its implications for our understanding of current events.

École normale supérieure, Paris (Fall 2017)

Sovereignty as Practice and Manifestation: Terror, Reform, and the Poetics of Rule in Early Modern Russia and Europe

This lecture course addresses the cultural archeology of royal sovereignty enacted during the Westernizing reforms of Peter the Great (1672-1725) and his successors. Situated between political history, history of ideas, cultural semiotics and the Foucauldian archeology of politics, the course explores the foundational notions of the political which permeated and shaped the practices and symbolic visions of royal rule. Concentrating on a single period and a series of closely-related episodes and texts, I offer an in-depth historical hermeneutics erasing the boundaries between knowledge and power, action and representation, politics and aesthetics. I illuminate the mutual dependence of political authority, forms of knowledge, and modes of subjectivity. In doing this, I inscribe Petrine Russia into a broad picture of early modern visions of sovereignty (Machiavelli, Bacon, Hobbes) and knowledge (Descartes, Locke, Leibniz) as well as their interpretations in the work of twentieth- and twenty-first-century scholars and cultural theorists (Carl Schmitt, Michel Foucault, Giorgio Agamben).

Humboldt-Universität Berlin (Fall 2016)

Novel, History, Military Theory: Perspectives on Tolstoy's *War and Peace* (in German)

This seminar explores comparative contexts and theoretical implications of Tolstoy's epic. Its unique genre and narrative setup are explored through a series of diverging perspectives suggested by its historical frame of the reference, the Napoleonic Wars. The theory of guerilla warfare canonized by Tolstoy emerged in the 1800s in Germany as an influential cultural myth developed by military theorists (Clausewitz), nationalist publicists (Arndt), poets and fiction writers (Kleist) alike and was immediately adopted in Russia (Zhukovskii, Denis Davydov, Lermontov). Situating Tolstoy's text within this context, the seminar illuminates the implications of *narodnaia voina* as a cultural and narrative paradigm for Tolstoy's philosophy of history, visions of private existence and interiority, and the unprecedented revival of the epic as a narrative mode. Along with historical and literary sources, the seminar draws on political, cultural, and literary theory (Carl Schmitt, Georg Lukács, Michail Bakhtin, Yuri Lotman).

Princeton University (Spring 2016)

The Evil Empire: Reading Putin's Russia

This seminar, situated between literary, political, cultural, and art studies, will address Putin's authoritarian Russia and the symbolic patterns that govern its erratic and seemingly irrational policies. We will draw on political theory and investigative journalism as well as contemporary Russian film, fiction, and art in order to explore the peculiar, yet not unprecedented cult of violence that underlies Putin's authoritarian regime. We will examine the origins of this cult in Russian imperial and Soviet culture and its implications for our understanding of current events.

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The Empire of Fictions: Russian Literature in the Eighteenth Century

In this seminar, we will examine the major writers and genres of eighteenth-century Russian literature in their historical and political context. Secular literature was imported to Russia as an element of "Westernized" empire-building, a constant process of disciplinary and cultural reform initiated by Peter the Great and pursued by his successors throughout the eighteenth century. Considering literary texts and genres as a primary medium of reform, we will explore the complex relationship between politics and poetics from imperial panegyrics of the 1730s to the emergence of the "private" gaze in the 1790s. We will combine an emphasis on exemplary and influential texts which demand slow and attentive reading with a discussion of broader theoretical arguments relevant for our topic.

Humboldt-Universität Berlin (Spring 2015)

Russian Realist Drama from the Beginnings to the Present Day (in German)

The seminar provides an introduction to Russian realist drama from the comedies of Denis Fonvizin and Nikolai Gogol to Aleksandr Vampilov and contemporary documentary plays from Teatr.doc. Dramatic representation is taken as a point of departure for a general inquiry into cultural functions of literature and historical self-consciousness of various periods.

Simultaneously a set of literary techniques and a mode of social and political signification, realist drama provides a key to the evolving political languages and social norms of imperial, Soviet, and post-Soviet Russia. The positioning of the spectator, the central effect of the dramatic mode, can be seen as an establishment of an “imaginary community” – theatrical audience, public at large, society as a whole, the nation. Drama, thus, emerges as a medium where Russia constantly develops and refashions its own self-image.

Humboldt-Universität Berlin (Spring 2014)

German Models for Russian Poetry: Schiller, Heine, Rilke and the others (in German).

The comparative seminar explores the interaction between German poetic idiom(s) and Russian poetry from the Schiller and Zhukovskii to Pasternak and Rilke. Going beyond conventional translation studies, the course examines Russian appropriations of German poetic legacy as a process of cultural exchange and formation crucial for the revivals of Russian literature from the early nineteenth century to the modernist era. Detailed discussions of originals and translations are meant to serve as a starting point for a broader inquiry into the poetics and cultural functioning of lyric poetry as a literary mode.

Humboldt-Universität Berlin (fall 2013)

Pushkin and the Others: The Golden Age of Russian Literature (in German)

The undergraduate seminar traces the emergence and development of literary forms, poetic and prosaic, from Zhukovskii’s version of Gray’s *Elegy* to Gogol’s *The Overcoat*. The seminar uses close readings of individual texts to question the changing “essence” of literature, to investigate why and how different forms of emotional and social experience move into its focus, from lyric poetry to Pushkin’s verse novel and Lermontov’s prose novel. This perspective is complemented by an in-depth analysis of some of the theoretical concepts developed for the study of this age, primarily the formalist notions of *literaturnyj byt* and the literary evolution.

Humboldt-Universität Berlin (spring 2013)

Russian Political Poetry from its Beginnings to the Present Day (in German)

This undergraduate seminar traces the development of the Russian political discourse and the general notions of the political from the age of absolutism to the (anti)authoritarian present, as reflected in poetic language. The crucial issues of Russia’s historical self-consciousness – power and protest, nation and empire – were negotiated in diverse poetic idioms and in this form adopted by the collective imagination. The construction of the grand “myths of state”, begun in the panegyric poetry of the eighteenth century, firmly linked the political to the phantastic, and this link, revived in the twentieth century in works like Aleksandr Blok’s *The Twelve*, still informs contemporary voices of a Maria Stepanova or Kirill Medvedev, whose names stand for today’s renaissance of Russian political lyric.

Humboldt-Universität Berlin (fall 2012)

Russian Drama of the Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Century in Cultural Perspective (in German)

A graduate seminar on Russian drama from Sumarokov to Gogol, analyzing central dramatic works (including Fonvizin's *The Minor*, Griboedov's *Woe from Wit*, Pushkin's *Boris Godunov* and Gogol's *The Inspector General*) as key texts crucial for Russian cultural development of the era, questioning the nature of dramatic writing in Russia and the West and at the same time drawing on the notion of "theatricality" as a general cultural category, which was developed by the Russian school of cultural semiotics (Yuri Lotman) and corresponds to important findings of the Western cultural theory (Norbert Elias and his analysis of "court society", Stephen Greenblatt and the new historicism). I show how the central notions of Russian political and historical selfconsciousness, such as education (*prosveshcheniie*), duty and service, freedom and monarchy, are negotiated in texts that thanks to their dramatic form allow for a unique presence of dissident voices and divergent positions.

University of Chicago (Spring 2011)

Languages of Power: Court Culture in Early Modern Europe and Russia

Undergraduate and graduate course cross listed across humanities. Crossing the disciplinary boundaries between social, political, cultural and literary history, as well as the symbolic divide between Russia and Western Europe, the course explores early modern royal courts as crucial institutions of European and Russian culture drawing on historical sources as well works of art, philosophy and science, but primarily concentrating on literature.

Smolny College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (Fall 2007)

European 'Classicism': Literature Between Court and Salon (in Russian)

An undergraduate lecture course. A survey of early modern European court society and its culture, as illustrated by classical works of Graçian, Mme de Lafayette, Goethe, Lomonosov, and other early modern European authors.