

Photo: Linda Tammisto

University of Helsinki awarded the Aleksanteri Institute with the J.V. Snellman Public Information Award for the work the Aleksanteri Institute has done in promoting academic views and insights about issues related to Russia and Eastern Europe in the Finnish society. Read more on page 3.

NEW PATHS FOR STUDYING RUSSIA AND EASTERN EUROPE OPEN IN AUTUMN 2015

Since its early years, the Aleksanteri Institute has been actively developing courses, study programmes and new study modules to offer students from various disciplines relevant knowledge on its target countries based on top research. The latest innovation is the Russian studies programme starting in autumn 2015 at the Faculty of Arts, University of Helsinki.

[Read more on page 4](#)

SUBMIT YOUR PROPOSAL FOR THE ALEKSANTERI CONFERENCE BY MAY 17!

The 15th Annual Aleksanteri Conference *Culture and Russian Society* will take place at the University of Helsinki on 21 - 23 October, 2015. Call for panels and papers is open until May 17th on the conference website where you can also find the preliminary programme of this exciting three day event.

[Read more on page 3](#)

15th Annual Aleksanteri Conference

FACE OF THE MONTH: KATJA LEHTISAARI

Hanna Ruutu

Post-doctoral researcher **Katja Lehtisaari** from the Aleksanteri Institute is spending this spring term as a visiting research fellow at the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, University of Oxford. The Reuters Institute's research focus is on international and comparative research. While in Oxford, Lehtisaari is conducting a project on Russian media companies and their responses to challenges within the context of changes in the business environment and media convergence.

"The seminars and conferences I've attended here have been intellectually stimulating", states Lehtisaari. The Institute hosts a visiting programme for journalists and media professionals from the whole world, and their experiences are shared in the seminars. This also means that speakers from outside academia, such as editors-in-chief or CEOs of large media corporations, are given the podium. "For a researcher, this gives a welcome inside view on the British media field, as well as a possibility to network with professionals from various countries".

One of the visiting journalists is a correspondent in Moscow, and this contact provides a unique opportunity for an unmediated glance into the journalistic working environment in Russia. UK reporters, too, have given talks on the complex situation – for example, **Luke Harding** from *The Guardian* presented his views on contemporary Russia and his experience as a Moscow correspondent, and BBC Diplomatic Editor **Bridget Kendall** delved into the news coverage of the conflict in Ukraine. Comparisons between Finland and the UK offer plenty of food for thought. A change of scenery also widens perspectives for Lehtisaari's new role as the editor-in-chief of *Idäntutkimus* (Finn-

ish Review of Russian and East European Studies).

The theme in the upcoming public seminar series of Oxford's Russian and Eurasian Studies Centre will be Religion and Post-Soviet Society and Culture. Earlier this spring the theme was Outsiders in Russia, delving into marginal groups of the country. The conflict in Ukraine has naturally been central in the discussions at some of the IR and foreign policy-related seminars, as well as great power relations between the US and Russia. Even in the BASEES Annual Conference in Cambridge this spring, it was evident that the various UK universities each have their own profiles in regard to REES studies.

"In Oxford, research on Russia concentrates on the fields of political science, international relations, history, culture, literature and language. Our journal *Idäntutkimus* already has a long-standing position in the field of Russian studies, but perhaps we could provide more insights into the current discussion within Russian and Eastern European studies, all the while being more visible on the Internet and social media channels."

Lehtisaari's work at the Aleksanteri Institute has lately focused on the role of media in the semi-authoritarian transitional regimes of Central Asia as a part of a new Academy of Finland project led by Dr. **Jukka Pietiläinen**. "I have been looking into the coverage of the Crimea situation in spring 2014 in the Kyrgyz newspapers. Preliminary results show that the press followed the events after the Crimea annexation to a surprisingly small extent. The government-owned publications seemed to give moral support to Russia, while the private-owned publications offered more balanced views". ■

FACTS ABOUT KATJA LEHTISAARI

Postdoctoral researcher at the Aleksanteri Institute, in the project "The role of media in civic unity and unrest under semi-authoritarian transitional regimes in Central Asia (MESECA)"

Member of the Finnish Centre of Excellence in Russian Studies – Choices of Russian Modernisation

Member of research team in project "Facing the Coordination Challenge: Problems, Policies, and Politics in Media and Communication Regulation" (Faculty of Social Sciences, 2011-2015, funded by the Academy of Finland, project led by professor Hannu Nieminen)

Editor-in-chief of *Idäntutkimus*, The Finnish Review of East European Studies and co-editor-in-chief of *Aleksanteri Insight*, together with Hanna Smith

Member of editorial board of a scientific journal *Vestnik Moskovskogo universiteta, Seriya 10, Zhurnalistika* (published by Moscow State University) and co-chair of the working group on Post-Socialist and Post-Authoritarian Communication at IAMCR (International Association for Mass Communication Research)

Selected publications:

Lehtisaari, K. (ed): *Sanomalehti uudessa media-maisemassa*. Helsinki: TAT.

Lehtisaari, K.: "The concept of market in Russian media, and the question of modernization" in *Baltic Worlds* Vol VII:2-3, 2014, p. 75-82.

Lehtisaari, K.: The new rules for the advertising market in Russian TV. *Aleksanteri Insight* 1/2015.

Lehtisaari, K.: Markkinat ja muut voimat – talouslehdistö esimerkkinä venäläisen lehdistön muutoksesta. In: Venäjän palatseissa ja kaduilla, Helsinki: Gaudeamus, 2015, p. 110-116.

Lehtisaari, K.: Mediatilouden ja viestintäpolitiikan ris-teyskohtia. In: Kari Karppinen, Marko Ala-Fossi, Anette Alén-Savikko, Jockum Hildén, Johanna Jääsaari, Katja Lehtisaari & Hannu Nieminen: *Kenen media? Johdatus viestintäpolitiikan tutkimukseen*. Tampere: Vastapaino, 130-146. (Forthcoming in 2015)



15th Annual Aleksanteri Conference

CULTURE AND RUSSIAN SOCIETY - CALL FOR PAPER AND PANEL PROPOSALS OPEN UNTIL MAY 17TH

The 15th Annual Aleksanteri Conference taking place at the University of Helsinki in October 21-23, 2015 invites scholars from all fields in humanities, social and political sciences to submit proposals for panels and papers that focus on the cultural challenges and intellectual choices Russia and its diverse population face today. We encourage panel proposals with three presentations, discussant, and chair, but will also review individual paper proposals.

The deadline for proposals is May 17th, 2015. Proposals submitted after the deadline will not be reviewed. Detailed instructions and links to electronic submission forms are available at the conference site where you can also find the programme outline.

The keynote speakers of the conference are professors **Michael Gorham**, **Catriona Kelly**, **Vlad Strukov**, **Vera Tolz**, **Elena Vartanova**, and **Evert van der Zweerde**. The pre-conference roundtable includes such renowned authors of both fiction and non-fiction as **Kalle Kniivilä**, **Irina Prokhorova**, **Roman Sentshin** and **Artemi Troitski**. ■

www.helsinki.fi/aleksanteri/conference2015

THERE IS NOTHING MORE PRACTICAL THAN A GOOD THEORY!

The Centre of Excellence in Russian Studies has contributed to a comprehensive review of foreign policy theories, aimed at anyone interested in foreign policy and international relations. The book *Ulkopolitiikkaa norsunluutornista* ("Foreign Policy from the Ivory Tower", only in Finnish), authored by **Christer Pursiainen** and **Tuomas Forsberg**, will be published at the end of May, 2015.

For more information, see www.chanpuma.com or contact info@chanpuma.com

J.V.SNELLMAN AWARD GRANTED TO THE ALEKSANTERI INSTITUTE FOR EXCELLENT SOCIETAL OUTREACH

The Aleksanteri Institute was presented with the **J.V. Snellman** Public Information Award by the University of Helsinki on the 22nd of April, 2015. The reasons for the award stressed how the Institute has successfully promoted academic views and insights on issues related to Russia and Eastern Europe. Researchers at the Institute are able to react quickly to questions and they present their comments and analysis in a way that serves the needs of the Finnish society. The Aleksanteri Institute works hard to establish and consolidate effective ways to contribute to discussions in politics, business and the society at large.

"It is the responsibility of researchers to give their views about current issues. Otherwise the floor will be filled with all kinds of extremist hubbub", said director of the Aleksanteri Institute, Professor **Markku Kivinen**. "It is, of course, important to make a clear difference between academically-proven knowledge and one's own opinions, but as scholars, we shouldn't be afraid of speaking aloud."

The J.V. Snellman award has been awarded by the University of Helsinki since 1981. ■



UPCOMING EVENTS

7.5.

Visiting Fellows Research Seminar with Christine Engel: The Lure of Eurasianism and its Traces in Recent Russian Films

TIME: 14.15

VENUE: Aleksanteri Institute, Unioninkatu 33 (entrance via the inner courtyard), 2nd floor Meeting room

More about the seminar series on page 6

18.-19.5.

Seminar: Moisei Kagan's Aesthetics and the Late/Post-Soviet Culture

VENUE: Aleksanteri Institute, 2nd floor Meeting room

5.-6.6.

Soviet Hegel. An International Symposium on the Hegel Reception in the USSR

VENUE: Aleksanteri Institute, 2nd floor Meeting room

4.-20.8.

Helsinki Summer School Course: *Challenges of Democratic Development in Eastern Europe*

Read more on page 4!

2.9.

Environment with borders. Seminar in cooperation with SYKE Merikeskus

VENUE: Small Hall, University of Helsinki Main Building, Fabianinkatu 33. See below for more information!

More events and updates available at:

www.helsinki.fi/aleksanteri/english/news

ENVIRONMENT WITH BORDERS - SPOTLIGHT ON THE GULF OF FINLAND

With over 1300 kilometers of joint border and shared, heavily-trafficked and fragile brackish water bay environmental cooperation between Finland and Russia is a necessity. But how should we continue the cooperation in this political situation?

On September 2nd, 2015 the Aleksanteri Institute and the Finnish Environment Institute invite you to join the conversation. What are the cooperation possibilities between the West and Russia at the moment? How do research and policymaking connect at the protection of the Baltic Sea? What kind of impact has the crisis in Ukraine had to Finnish and Russian environmental cooperation in the Gulf of Finland?

Besides the expert speeches the programme includes a panel discussion and time for questions from the audience. The event is opened by President **Tarja Halonen**. ■

www.helsinki.fi/aleksanteri/ajankohtaista/2015/suomenlahti.html



COUNTERING XENOPHOBIA

Daria Pritup

Hate speech and hate crime, but also “broadmindedness, solidarity and respect” - the RAGE research project covers the multi-threaded concepts of racism, othering, islamophobia and civic activism. One of the focus points of the research has been the both voluntary-based and institutional support for the Eastern European Roma community in Finland. Everyday activism also targets the anti-Roma discourse, which either victimises or criminalises the community, hampering the concretisation of the means of assistance needed, yet positioning the Roma in the grey area within the judicial system.

In a recent seminar, representatives of NGOs, foundations, the Foreign Ministry of Finland and the City of Helsinki brought forward the problematic nature of such concepts as ‘multiculturalism’ and ‘populism’, but also the need to weed out hate speech by remodeling the notion of freedom of speech. Cooperation between players within the private and public sector was stressed as being important in the battle against racism and hate speech.

In strengthening the othered communities, interviews with the actors have shown that physical and symbolic spaces for encounters have been important factors. On a grassroots level, everyday differentiation and othering can be weeded out by using **Imam Hajjar’s** suggestion “Just knock on the [other’s] door.” ■

A NEW STUDY OPPORTUNITY IN RUSSIAN STUDIES IN AUTUMN 2015

How are politics and the Russian state being shaped? Who in effect runs Russia? Is there a civil society? What kind of identities are being forged? How is the economy working and what are the implications to the environment? How does Russia relate to its neighbours and its neighbours to Russia? If you are keen to know the answers to these questions and many more, join the new minor subject study block in Multidisciplinary Russian Studies beginning in Autumn 2015. The study block is open to all MA level students at the University of Helsinki. Individual courses are open to all students at UH and the Master’s Programme. More information coming soon to the Institute’s website! ■

Panelists Noora Pyörre, Anas Hajjar, Rauno Merisaari and Marko Stenroos expressed their views in a seminar by project RAGE - Hate speech and populist othering in Europe: Trough tha racism, age, gender looking glass, held at the University of Helsinki on April 23rd, 2015.



Helsinki Summer School is an international Summer School organised at the University of Helsinki for Master level students from all fields of study. In 2015 Aleksanteri Institute participates by offering a multidisciplinary course *Challenges of Democratic Development in Eastern Europe*. The course takes place from 4 to 20 August and the application deadline is 31 July.

The course offers an overview of the current challenges of social and political development in Eastern Europe. Taught by a group of area studies experts in history, political science, media studies and sociology, the course views Eastern Europe as including the former Eastern Bloc countries, i.e., the Baltic states, East Central and South-Eastern Europe, the Balkans and Ukraine.

The course provides students with new, multidisciplinary approaches to the study of politics and society with a focus on issues that hinder democratic conduct. Addressed will be questions of nationalism, populism, corruption, authoritarian rule, poverty, the Roma situation, politics of history, cultural policy, civil society and environmental problems. ■

To learn more and to apply, please see:

www.helsinki summerschool.fi/home/courses/democratic_development_in_eastern_europe

UKRAINIAN STUDIES REACHED AN ALL TIME RECORD IN ATTENDEES

The current events in Ukraine have had a huge impact on the interest in the Ukrainian study programme coordinated by the Aleksanteri Institute. The programme has been available as a minor subject since 2008 with a steady student population of 80-100 students per year. The academic year 2014-2015, however, witnessed a dramatic rise in the amount of interested students. “This didn’t really come as a surprise, as students generally are interested in topical issues that are widely discussed in the media and society”, says **Minna Oroza**, coordinator of the programme. “What surprised me was that suddenly there was much more interest from the teacher side as well, and we’ve been able to develop our programme to give our students even better tools than before to build their expertise in Ukraine.”

The study programme includes language studies and studies in Ukrainian history and culture as well as studies in the contemporary society and international relations of Ukraine. ■

www.helsinki.fi/aleksanteri/english/studies/ukraine

LOADS OF APPLICATIONS TO EXPREES

Antti E. P. Lehtinen

A total of 62 applications were submitted to Expertise in Russian and Eastern European Studies (ExpREES) during the application period that ended on the 31st of March. This means there was a 24% growth from last year. “We received many good applications. The applicants seem to be really motivated to study in ExpREES”, comments **Hanna Peltonen**, coordinator of the ExpREES studies. Peltonen believes that the rise in the amount of applications is due to active recruitment work done by student contact persons and other students who have spread the word.

Beginning from the autumn term 2015, some changes will have been made in the Exprees study structure: the amount of compulsory courses has been diminished in order to better suit the needs of individual students. Special attention is paid to anchoring the studies to the topical research conducted at the Aleksanteri Institute. One thing hasn’t changed: the chosen students still start their studies with the legendary summer school in Orilampi in August.

ExpREES is a multidisciplinary joint program of 12 Finnish universities that is coordinated by the Aleksanteri Institute. ■

To learn more, please see:

blogs.helsinki.fi/vie-maisterikoulu/?lang=en

THE WORLD'S MOST REFERRED GEO-SCIENTIST JOINS RUSSIAHUB HELSINKI

Iiris Virtasalo

Tackling the grand challenges in the arctic and boreal regions of northern Eurasia requires a multidisciplinary approach. A new kind of interaction – both among researchers from different fields and between researchers and society – is a necessity in order to understand the links between environmental and societal change.

Several major academic projects, two Centers of Excellence and RussiaHUB Helsinki with its partners - universities, scientific institutions, businesses and policy makers - form a unique initiative that will have a world scale impact on combating the climate change and challenges of northern Eurasia.

The key actors in the new cooperation at the University of Helsinki are **Markku Kulmala**, professor of Aerosol and Environmental Physics, the world's most referred geoscientist; and **Veli-Pekka Tynkkynen**, professor in Russian Energy policy, an internationally renowned expert in energy and environmental policy. Professor Kulmala leads Pan Eurasian Experiment (PEEX), an international cooperative research programme between Finland, several other European countries, Russia, and China, that assesses global change in arctic and boreal regions. Professor Tynkkynen's team will provide knowledge on sociocultural and sociopolitical processes behind climate policies, land use, resource utilisation, environmental protection and social and demographic transformation in Russia. The cooperation makes it possible to generate knowledge on the impact that the utilisation of Russian natural resources has both on the development of the local society and global ecology.

The cooperation will be officially launched on 17th August, 2015 at the University's Think Corner (Porthania). More information available soon at the RussiaHUB Helsinki site. ■

www.helsinki.fi/russiahub

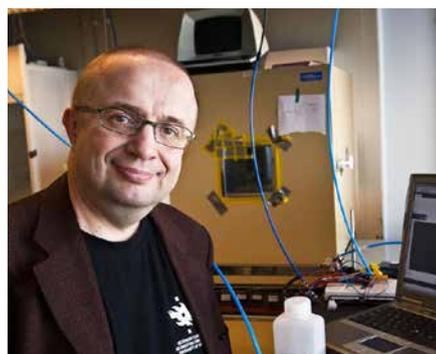


Photo of Markku Kulmala by Ari Aalto

ALEKSANTERI VISITING FELLOWS SPRING - SUMMER 2015



Christine Engel

“Eurasianism and Lev N. Gumilev's Heritage in Recent Russian Cinema”

Fellowship period: May–June 2015

Christine Engel is Professor Emerita at the University of Innsbruck, Department of Slavic Studies. She is specialised in Russian culture, first of all on the study of literature and film. Her first doctoral thesis was on the literary movement of the so-called Young Prose during the Thaw-period. In her Habilitation thesis, she explored the changes in the Russian literary system during the years of perestroika. She has published on the interconnections between literature, film, and film adaptations of literature and seeks to connect contemporary cultural discourses with the central key-discourses of Russian intellectual history. Currently, Dr. Engel is analysing the influence of Neo-Eurasian thought on Russian cinema. During her visit at the Aleksanteri Institute, she is working on an analysis of films that show the ongoing conglomeration of imperialism, patriotism and orthodoxy in Russia. Dr. Engel studies films by **Nikita Mikhalkov**, **Sergei Bodrov** and **Aleksei Balabanov**, as well as films depicting the relationship between the mediaeval Russian principalities and the Golden Horde, such as *Mongol* (2007), *Taina Chingis Khaana* (2009) and *Orda* (2012). Drawing on actor-network theory, her study looks into the relationships between cultural spheres and political Eurasianism, and the echoes of neo-Eurasianism and **Lev Gumilev's** writings on Russian cinema. ■



Sergey Glebov

“In Search of Russian Modernity: Jakobson, Lévi-Strauss and the Making of Structuralism”

Fellowship period: April–June 2015

Sergey Glebov is an Assistant Professor of History at Smith and Amherst Colleges in Massachusetts, USA. He is a founding co-editor of *Ab Imperio: Studies in Nationalism and New Imperial History in the Post-Soviet Space*. Dr. Glebov's research focuses on the intellectual history of the former Russian Empire and the USSR. He has published on the history of the Eurasianist movement, the history of Siberia and Siberian regionalism, and the history of describing diversity in imperial Russia. At the core of his studies is the question about how ethnic, cultural, linguistic and social diversity of the imperial state and society impacted Russia's transition to modernity.

During his fellowship period at the Aleksanteri Institute, Dr. Glebov is exploring the vision of a specifically Russian (Eurasian) modernity articulated in the writings of **Roman Jakobson** in the 1920s - 1930s and the ways in which this vision influenced the rise of structuralism. Dr. Glebov analyses Roman Jakobson's writings, his interactions with the participants in the Eurasianist movement, and the decades-long correspondence between Jakobson and **Claude Lévi-Strauss**. This study sheds light on the extent that the “systemic study of Eurasia” of the late 1920s and early 1930s influenced early works of Claude Lévi-Strauss and structuralism at large. ■

P.S. Did you know that experts from the Aleksanteri Institute appeared in the media 600 times in 2014? This and other fascinating figures available in the Annual report published in early May!

www.helsinki.fi/aleksanteri/vuosikertomus2014



Roman Krakovsky

“The Building of a Socialist Community. Social Ties in Czechoslovakia and Poland (1929-1989)”

Fellowship period: June, 2015

Roman Krakovsky is Associate Researcher at Centre d'études des mondes russe, caucasien et centre-européen at EHESS in Paris. He has analysed the mechanisms of social cohesion in Central and Eastern Europe under communist rule and investigated how the Czechoslovak communist regime shaped social frameworks of time and space. His PhD thesis (2012) on these topics was awarded several prizes.

Currently, Dr. Krakovsky is working on a project exploring social ties in Cold War Poland and Czechoslovakia. Shaped by shared rules, values and identities, these ties contribute to defining the individual's standing in society and the feeling of belonging to the community. By planning to create an alternative project of society, a new man and new kinds of interpersonal relations, the Soviet-type regimes sought to reinvent social ties. The analysis of these ties permits us to observe how an individual connected to others in an environment where he/she was strongly associated to the collective. It permits us also to study how citizens' community and common interests were defined in regimes where the principles of democratic dialogue were not respected.

At the Aleksanteri Institute, Dr. Krakovsky will work on a paper analysing how orphans were institutionally taken into care in Czechoslovakia and in Poland following the Great Depression and the Second World War. ■



Yuliya Zabyelina

“Functionality of Organized Crime and Corruption in Putin's Russia”

Fellowship period: May-June 2015

Yuliya Zabyelina is currently an Assistant Professor at John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York, the USA. Dr. Zabyelina's expertise covers topics in international politics and criminal justice, such as transnational organized crime, illicit markets, criminal justice policy, corruption, and crime in failed states and conflict-torn societies.

The research Dr. Zabyelina is going to undertake at the Aleksanteri Institute focuses on two overlapping but separate projects. The first one is dedicated to studying illicit alliances among public officials, the private sector, and organized crime in **Putin's** Russia. It is argued that the Putin administration has adopted a cost-and-benefit approach towards corruption and organized crime, whereby effective criminal investigation and adjudication of serious offenses are often carried out selectively and unwillingly.

The second project will be a chapter for the Routledge book entitled *Shadow Economy and Societal Transformation: Migrant Workers in the Russian Federation* edited by the Aleksanteri Institute's researchers Dr. **Anna-Liisa Heusala** and Dr. **Kaarina Aitamurto**. The objective of the chapter is to review the experience of migrant communities in the Russian shadow economy and to examine their involvement in various illicit activities, such as unauthorized trade, tax evasion, money laundering, and drug trafficking. ■

VISITING FELLOWS RESEARCH SEMINARS SPRING -SUMMER 2015

Thu 7 May at 14:15

Christine Engel

The Lure of Eurasianism and its Traces in Recent Russian Films

Thu 28 May at 14:15

Yuliya Zabyelina

Why Does Corruption Persist in Putin's Russia?

Tue 2 June at 14:15

Luca Anceschi

The Geo-Strategic Implications of the TAPI Pipeline Project

Thu 4 June at 14:15

Aziz Burkhanov

Media and Nationalism in Kazakhstan: Comparing Discourse of Kazakh- and Russian-language Newspapers

Tue 9 June at 14:15

Roman Krakovsky

Building Communities in Central Europe. Social Ties in Poland and Czechoslovakia

Wed 17 June

Nodirbek Salaev

Crime prevention: Issues of reforming the penitentiary system of Uzbekistan

Venue: Aleksanteri Institute, Unioninkatu 33, Meeting room 2nd floor

Please note that this programme may be subject to change. For an updated programme, see www.helsinki.fi/aleksanteri/english/news/events/2015/visitorseminars_spring_2015.html

FIFTEEN NEW VISITING FELLOWS SELECTED FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2015-2016

Aleksanteri Visiting Fellows for the academic year 2015–2016 have been selected. Altogether 177 applications were received by the deadline of February 20th. While the selection of proposals was based on academic excellence, it also strove to take into account a balance between the nominated Visiting Fellows' projects and the various research foci and regions covered by the Aleksanteri Institute.

Visiting Fellows for the academic year 2015-2016 are:

- Closson Stacy
- Cox Terry
- Denisova-Schmidt Elena
- Dimitrov Martin
- Ghodsee Kristen
- Leichtova Magdalena
- March Luke
- Navumau Vasil
- Obradovic-Wochnik Jelena
- Pinsky Anatoly
- Plets Gertjan
- Reeves Madeleine
- Sokhibov Akmal
- Steila Daniela
- Tarasenko Anna

CENTRAL ASIA FELLOWS SPRING-SUMMER 2015



Luca Anceschi

“The Geo-Strategic Implications of the TAPI Pipeline Project”
Fellowship period: May–June 2015

Luca Anceschi is Lecturer in Central Asian Studies at the University of Glasgow. His research has been mostly concerned with the politics and international relations of post-Soviet Central Asia, with particular reference to the region’s main energy exporters, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan. His articles have appeared on *Central Asian Survey*, *Europe-Asia Studies*, *Nationalities Papers*, and the *Journal of Arabian Studies*. His first book, *Turkmenistan’s foreign policy – Positive Neutrality and the Consolidation of the Turkmen regime* (Routledge 2008), represented the first book-length account of Turkmen foreign policy published in a Western language. Currently, he is completing a monograph on Kazakhstan’s foreign policy. During his visit at the Aleksanteri Institute, Dr. Anceschi will explore – against the background of Gazprom’s announcement to suspend purchases of natural gas from Central Asia – a number of critical questions related to the long-term energy strategy of post-Soviet Turkmenistan. In particular, his project will study the geostrategic implications of the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) pipeline – a major infrastructure project that aims to connect Turkmenistan’s Galkynysh field with the economies located on the Indian sub-continent. This project, ultimately, will attempt to investigate how the TAPI project would impact upon the geopolitics of Eurasian natural gas and the development of critical infrastructure in the region. ■



Aziz Burkhanov

“Media and Nationalism: National Identity and Language Discourse in the Media Outlets of Kazakhstan”
Fellowship period: June 2015

Aziz Burkhanov is an Assistant Professor at Nazarbayev University (Astana, Kazakhstan). Dr. Burkhanov’s PhD thesis (2013) dealt with national identity policies of post-Soviet Kazakhstan and the public discourse on identity and language issues in Kazakhstan’s Kazakh- and Russian-language newspapers. His areas of interest include national identity and language policies, theories of nationalism, and current political developments and governance in Central Asia.

The central questions informing Dr. Burkhanov’s study include how the media shape and channel societal reaction to the government’s nation-building efforts.

At the Aleksanteri Institute Dr. Burkhanov will analyze media coverage of national identity policies and inter-ethnic relations in Kazakhstan. The aim of the study is to see how different attitudes towards the ‘Kazakhstani nation’ – an idea constructed by the country’s leadership, which highlights the civic-nationhood regardless of ethnic background to secure the peaceful coexistence of ethnic groups in the country – contributes to a notion of ‘Kazakhstani’ identity, understood as a supranational identity above ethnic identifications. ■



Nodirbek Salaev

“Crime prevention: Issues of reforming the penitentiary system of Uzbekistan”
Fellowship period: June 2015

Nodirbek Salaev is an Acting Associate Professor of the Department of “Criminal Law and Criminology” at Tashkent State Law University. In 2012, he defended his PhD thesis on “Violation of regulations of relations among military servicemen who are not directly subordinate to one another”. At an early phase of his studies he became interested in problems of criminal law and criminology, resulting in several scientific articles and monographs. For example, in 2005, he co-authored a monograph *Death penalty: in the past, today and in the future*.

At the Aleksanteri Institute, Dr. Salaev will examine the current problems of prison reform in Uzbekistan through a comparative analysis of theoretical and conceptual questions in Finnish and Uzbek prison legislations, as well as problems in the actual practices of implementation. In many countries, a high percentage of prisoners return to a prison after having served their sentence, thus reflecting difficulties in achieving the desired objectives of criminal punishment. The Finnish case is used to acquire new knowledge on combatting crime and on crime prevention, inside and outside of the prison environment. ■

What is the everyday life like in contemporary Russia? What are the forces behind president Putin? Is there opposition from the middle class? What about younger generation? Is there still hope for modernisation in the land of vast national projects? Is Russia building a new imperium in Ukraine, or is the whole country drowning in vodka?

A new volume *Venäjän palatseissa ja kaduilla*, edited by **Markku Kivinen** and **Leena Vähäkylä** gathers together leading scholars in Russian studies to ponder the realities of modern day Russia in a way that is both analytic and highly readable for the larger Finnish audience. It is a long-awaited cross-section of Russian studies in Finnish, encompassing economy, politics, welfare, culture and foreign policy.



You can order this book directly from the publisher for the special price of 25 € and without delivery costs. Send your order to tilaukset@gaudeamus.fi with the order code ALEKSANTERI and your address. You'll receive the book & invoice by mail within a week. For more information, see: www.gaudeamus.fi

ALEKSANTERI INSIGHT 2/2015, BY JEREMY SMITH: THE UNCLEAR HISTORY OF UKRAINIAN STATEHOOD

The history of Ukrainian statehood has always been closely interlinked with Russian statehood, contributing to Russia's attitude to Ukraine, writes Professor **Jeremy Smith**.

Aleksanteri Insight is a series of expert opinions, published by the Aleksanteri Institute. It presents in a short format analysis of specific issues, their underlying causes and implications in the Eurasian context. The expert views address different trends, grasp hidden agendas and provide context to popular media headlines.



The series is published online at helsinki.fi/aleksanteri/english/insight

ARTICLES

Aitamurto, K.: The Approved and the Disapproved Islam in Russia. In: *Religion, Politics and Nation-Building in Post-Communist Countries* by Simons, G. & Westerlund, D. (eds.). Ashgate, 2015, ISBN 978-1-4724-4969-6.

Aitamurto, K.: Russian Rodnoverie: Revisiting Eastern and Western Paganisms. In: *The Changing World Religion Map: Sacred Places, Identities, Practices and Politics* by Brunn, S.D. (ed.). Springer, 2015, 978-94-017-9375-9.

Forsberg, T. & Herd, G.: Russia and NATO: From Windows of Opportunities to Closed Doors. In: *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, Vol. 23, Issue 1, pp. 41-57.

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