

ALEKSANTERI NEWS

20.10.2008 ■ Issue 1

ALEKSANTERI CONFERENCE 2008

WELFARE, GENDER, AND AGENCY IN RUSSIA AND EASTERN EUROPE

The Aleksanteri Institute will host the 8th Annual International Aleksanteri Conference, December 10-12, 2008. The conference will bring together researchers of society, culture and history to examine the interrelationships between welfare, gender and agency in Russia and Eastern Europe during the transitional period. The approach is more multidimensional than usual, because in addition to economic and social problems the agenda also includes bodily and sexual issues. They are viewed from an inter-sectionalist perspective, taking into account gender and, moreover, class and ethnicity. The integrating theme is discussion on post-socialist welfare models.

Read more: www.helsinki.fi/aleksanteri/conference2008/



FORTHCOMING RESEARCH TRAINING COURSE

FROM COLD WAR TO THE BRONZE SOLDIER: CHANGING IDENTITIES IN NORTHERN EUROPE

The Aleksanteri Institute is organising a research training course "*From Cold War to the Bronze Soldier: Changing Identities in Northern Europe*" funded by NordForsk. The course will take place in Vilnius, Lithuania, in June 7-13, 2009. The course is aimed at students from the Nordic and Baltic countries and north-western Russia who are doing research on identities with a focus on Northern Europe/Russia. Lecturers include renowned scholars from Finland, Sweden, Norway, Estonia, Lithuania, Russia and the UK.

The research training course is organised in co-operation with the Institute of International Relations and Political Science at Vilnius University in Lithuania. The course is part of the activities of the NERU- network comprising the Aleksanteri Institute, Södertörn University College/Centre for Baltic and East European Studies and the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs/Department for Russian and Eurasian Studies.

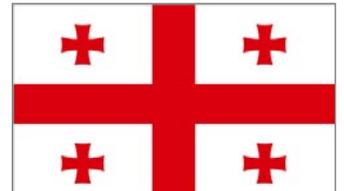
More information: www.helsinki.fi/aleksanteri/neru

FORTHCOMING SEMINAR

CRISIS IN THE CAUCASUS; RUSSIA, GEORGIA AND THE WIDER WORLD

Seminar organised by the Aleksanteri Institute on Wednesday, October 29 at 12.30-15.30
Location: Auditorium Arppeanum, Snellmaninkatu 3
Chair: Markku Kangaspuro

Speakers: Thea Kentchadze, Jelena Obradović, Mikko Palonkorpi, Hanna Smith, Jeremy Smith



Registration at

<https://elomake.helsinki.fi/lomakkeet/12425/lomake.html>

See the interview with Mikko Palonkorpi on the next page

RESEARCH NEWS

NEW VISITING SCHOLAR PROGRAMME

A new programme brings 15 visiting fellows to the Aleksanteri Institute

The Aleksanteri Institute Visiting Scholar Programme is a new programme launched in spring 2008. The first call was a huge success and received 95 excellent applications. As the first Aleksanteri fellows, fifteen scholars from eight different countries were selected. Three of them arrive in the autumn, and the rest during the spring term. A new call for applications for the 2009-2010 academic year will be announced in January–February 2009.

Full list, see

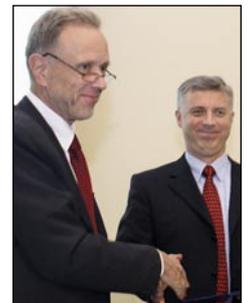
www.helsinki.fi/aleksanteri/english/news/visitors.htm

NEW STUDY PROGRAMME

UKRAINIAN STUDIES IS AN OPPORTUNITY

Thomas Wilhelmsson, the Rector of the University of Helsinki, emphasised the need to develop an increased awareness of Ukraine as a large and important country. "We need to learn more about it. One day it will perhaps be a member of the European Union and Finland will need experts on Ukraine in the future", Wilhelmsson stated in the opening seminar of the Ukrainian Studies Programme.

Read more about the new Ukrainian Studies Programme on page 3



FACE OF THE MONTH: MIKKO PALONKORPI

by Anna-Maria Salmi

Mikko Palonkorpi, researcher at the Aleksanteri Institute and postgraduate student in the Finnish Graduate School for Russian and East European Studies, had a relaxing and peaceful summer holiday full of fishing and country life. When Georgia attacked South Ossetia on August 7th and Russian troops stormed in the next day, Mikko's phone started ringing and has been doing so ever since. Since the beginning of the conflict, Mikko has given over twenty interviews for the media.

Mikko Palonkorpi's insightful and analytical comments are based on a decade-long interest in the Caucasus region. Georgia has been his number one scholarly interest following a research visit to the Georgian Foundation for Strategic and International Studies (GFSIS) in Tbilisi. In February 2006 he spent two weeks there conducting interviews among politicians, state officials and researchers. Since then, he has closely followed the events taking place in Georgia as well as the way they have been reported in Georgian, Russian and Western media.

Already on April 22, 2008 Mikko Palonkorpi wrote an opinion article in the main Finnish newspaper Helsingin Sanomat. There he argued that Finland as a neighbouring country to Russia should be cautious in joining NATO, as the membership contains more security risks than benefits. One of the risks is being part of a military alliance together with such states as Georgia that are potentially in open conflict with Russia. The op-ed received relatively little attention at the time but proved to be more relevant and prognostic than anybody would have wanted. Since then, Mikko has had few problems in getting his message through in the Finnish media.

As is often the case when Russia is part of the picture, Mikko Palonkorpi's comments have not only pleased the Finnish public. His insistence on arguing that Georgia is not the kind of ideal pupil of democracy portrayed by President Mikhail Saakashvili resulted in accusations of a biased attitude towards Russia. "In retrospect, I'm not



necessarily proud of putting forward the argument with so much force. Still, I felt I had the responsibility to increase people's awareness that this is not a conflict between oppressive and undemocratic Russia vis-à-vis small and democratic Georgia. Russian democracy is flawed, but so is Georgian."

After a hectic August, September has been a little quieter on the media front and it is possible to refocus on research – a PhD project on the energy security complex in the Caucasus region. Now is the time for deepening the analysis. The PhD thesis is to be expected towards the end of 2009.

Mikko Palonkorpi is one of the speakers in the seminar "Crisis in the Caucasus - Russia, Georgia and the Wider World" on October 29th 2008 at 12.30.

FACTS ABOUT MIKKO PALONKORPI

- Researcher at the Aleksanteri Institute
- Postgraduate student in political science at the University of Helsinki and in the Finnish Graduate School for Russian and East European Studies, coordinated by the Aleksanteri Institute
- Previous work experience in the Finnish Institute of International Affairs and as a visiting researcher at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland
- Expertise: Chechnya, Georgia, energy and security issues in Central Asia and the Caucasus, security theory

- Publications include "The Caucasus and Central Asia" in Pekka Sivonen & Henriikki Heikka (eds): *Predictions regarding international actors up to the year 2030*, Ministry of Defence, Helsinki, 2007 and "What's good for Gazprom... isn't that good for Georgia" *OSCE Review – European Security Vol. 14: 4/2006*, pp. 6-7.
- Ongoing PhD project entitled *The Energy Security Complex in the Caucasus Region*.

FOCUS ON

NEW ALEKSANTERI VISITING FELLOW CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE BALKANS

Jelena Obradovic from the University of Birmingham will visit the Aleksanteri Institute from September 23 until December 22. Her research interests include the Western Balkans and cooperation with ICTY, Serbia and nationalism, "Coming to terms with the past" and denial of war crimes in former Yugoslavia, ethnic conflicts of the 1990s, current political situation in the Balkans, socio-cultural legacies of the 1990s conflicts and human security issues. During her stay in Helsinki, she will carry out research on "Critical perspectives on "truth and reconciliation" in the Balkans". She will also teach on the Aleksanteri Institute study programme East Central European, Balkan and Baltic studies.

Read more about Jelena Obradovic in the next issue.

NEW OPENING THE UKRAINIAN STUDIES PROGRAMME LAUNCHED WITH A FESTIVE SEMINAR

The establishment of the Ukrainian Studies was motivated by growing interest and need for expertise on Ukraine both in Finland and globally, but most of all by the active students who had been hoping for the possibility to deepen their knowledge of Ukraine. The new multidisciplinary minor subject Ukrainian Studies has already proven to be popular among students, with its comprehensive curriculum including the Ukrainian language, the country's culture and history as well as current issues in its society and economy.

To celebrate the new study programme, the Aleksanteri Institute organised an opening seminar, *Ukrainian Perspectives*, in September 2008. Different views on Ukraine's past and present were presented by four keynote speakers: the writer Oksana Zabuzhko, and renowned scholars Margarita Balmaceda, Serhiy Kvit and Johannes Remy. The seminar attracted a large audience of students, academics, diplomats, officials and interested members of the public.

As a part of the opening of the seminar, an agreement of cooperation was signed between the National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy (NaUKMA) and the University of Helsinki by the President Serhiy Kvit and the Rector Thomas Wilhelmsson. Ukrainian Studies is carried out in cooperation by the Aleksanteri Institute and the Department of Slavonic and Baltic Languages and Literatures (University of Helsinki).

Read more: www.helsinki.fi/aleksanteri/english/studies/ukraine.htm



RECENT DISSERTATIONS FOUR NEW DOCTORS

Recent Dissertations in the Finnish Graduate School for Russian and East European Studies:

■ **Sirke Mäkinen** (associate member of the graduate school) defended her PhD thesis *Russian Geopolitical Visions and Argumentation. Parties of Power, Democratic and Communist Opposition on Chechnia and NATO, 1994-2003* on February 23, 2008 at the University of Tampere

<http://acta.uta.fi/pdf/978-951-44-7220-6.pdf>

■ **Nina Tynkkynen** defended her PhD thesis *Constructing the environmental regime between Russia and Europe: Conditions for social learning* on April 4th, 2008 at the University of Tampere

<http://acta.uta.fi/pdf/978-951-44-7268-8.pdf>

■ **Katri Pynnöniemi** (associate member of the graduate school) defended her PhD thesis *New Road, New Life, New Russia: International transport corridors at the conjunction of geography and politics* on May 31st, 2008 at the University of Tampere

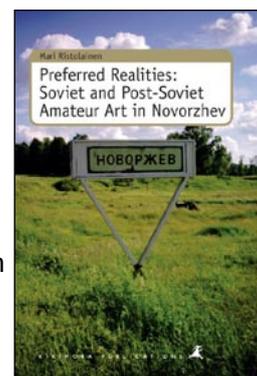
<http://acta.uta.fi/pdf/978-951-44-7316-6.pdf>

■ **Juha Väättäen** defended his PhD thesis *Russian Enterprise Restructuring - the Effect of Privatisation and Market Liberalisation on the Performance of Large Enterprises* on September 4th, 2008 at the Lappeenranta University of Technology

FORTHCOMING DISSERTATION AMATEUR ACTIVITY IN THE PROVINCE

Mari Ristolainen will defend her PhD thesis *Preferred Realities: Soviet and Post-Soviet Amateur Art in Novorzhev* at the University of Joensuu (Agora, Yliopistonkatu 4, hall AT100) on November 15th at 12 o'clock. The opponent is Professor Adele Barker from the University of Arizona. The dissertation is published by Kikimora Publications and is forthcoming in early November.

Read more from the Publication news section.



NETWORK NEWS

THE ALEKSANTERI ALUMNI ASSOCIATION AN ACTIVE COMMUNITY

The Aleksanteri Alumni Association began its activities in May 2007, ten years after the Aleksanteri Institute was established. Alumni activities are often thought of as an opportunity for the reunion of old students, activities that are entertaining but of little practical or professional benefit. The Aleksanteri Alumni Association, though, aims to create a dynamic operating environment by strengthening the relations between the Institute and society and also to increase publicity about the Institute and reinforce its networks. However, joining the Alumni Association does not mean promoting issues of only professional importance. It is also about spending time together in a rewarding and inspiring manner. We want to build an active community that engages in genuine dialogue, which keeps tabs on topical social and political issues and contributes to the Aleksanteri Institute's activities. Welcome to the Aleksanteri Alumni Association!

Katalin Miklóssy, Chairwoman of the Board, Aleksanteri Alumni Association

For further details and how to join the Alumni Association, please visit: www.helsinki.fi/aleksanteri/english/news/alumni (in English)

www.helsinki.fi/aleksanteri/alumni.htm (in Finnish)

Also read the article by Mila Oiva, an Aleksanteri alumna, discussing the position of experts on Russian, East and Central European issues in Finnish and global job markets (in Finnish): <http://www.helsinki.fi/aleksanteri/alumnikolumni.htm>



First meeting of Alumni Association

TEMPUS PREGO-PROJECT 2008-2010 EU-RUSSIA CO-OPERATION

The Aleksanteri Institute is a grant holder in the European Commission funded Tempus PREGO-project together with the European University at St. Petersburg, Petrozavodsk State University, Pomor State University in Arkhangelsk and the University of Genoa. The objectives of the project are to promote European governance principles within regional and local communities in the North-Western Regions of Russia and to educate students of European studies in more practice-oriented perspectives both from the North-Western Russia and the EU.

In the previous Tempus UNEG project with the same partners, Russian scholars from the European University at St. Petersburg and Petrozavodsk State University published following books in the framework of the curriculum development: Национальные государства в Европе (Мария Ноженко), Регионализм и трансграничное сотрудничество в Европе (Глеб Яровой), Армия и общество: принципы взаимодействия (Наталья Данилова), Политика высшего образования в Европе и России (Лариса Шпаковская), Семейная политика в Европе и России: гендерный анализ. The books are available also at the Aleksanteri Institute library.

CIVPRO – CIVIL PROTECTION NETWORK TOWARDS CITIZEN SAFETY AND SOCIETAL RESILIENCE

CIVPRO – Civil Protection Network is an international group of civil protection experts and institutions fostering research and collaboration in risk management, emergency preparedness and civil protection. CIVPRO's activities expand from the Baltic Sea Region to European and global level and promote comparative perspectives and synergies between different regions.



Currently CIVPRO has 20 partners from 10 different countries. CIVPRO is constantly looking for new partners and welcomes all interested parties to the Network meetings and other events.

CIVPRO organises regularly conferences, seminars and discussions. The events bring together experts from different sectors and offer a great opportunity to meet the partners and make new contacts. This autumn CIVPRO organizes European Crisis Management Conference on 12-14 November at the House of the Estates.

www.helsinki.fi/aleksanteri/english/projects/other/bsr_research_network.htm

Ongoing projects:

- Project Poseidon – Preventing Terrorism in the Baltic Sea Region
- Municipal Responses to Climate Change Emergencies

PUBLICATION NEWS

RUSSIA'S NORTHERN REGION ON THE EDGE

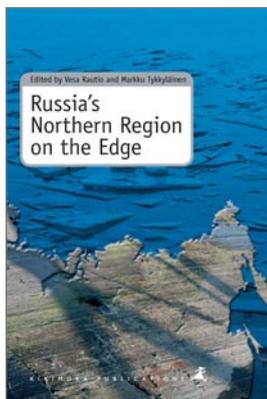
Communities, Industries and Populations from Murmansk to Magadan

Edited by Vesa Rautio and Markku Tykkyläinen

Highly readable, coherently structured, and full of interesting insights, *Russia's Northern Region on the Edge* will help geographers and other social scientists better sort out, as noted in the book's concluding reflections, to what extent that "edge" represents remoteness with all its contingencies and to what extent precipice.

—Andrew R. Bond
Managing Editor, *Eurasian Geography and Economics*

Kikumora Publications B 37, ISBN 978-952-10-4097-9
Appr. 300 p., maps, illustrations, 28 EUR + VAT
November 2008



RECALLING THE PAST – (RE)CONSTRUCTING THE PAST

Memorizing World War II in Russia and Germany
Edited by Withold Bonner

Memories and scholarly exploration on memory have become a significant part of contemporary cultural studies. Breaks in the cultural and political orders in Russian and German societies had a strong impact on the re-negotiation of cultural memory in both countries. Since World War II has been one of the most traumatic events and highly emotive topics in German as well as in Russian and Soviet history, more than 60 years after its termination, the recall of wartime experiences is gaining significantly in importance. A re-evaluation of wartime history, therefore, has emerged in both countries.

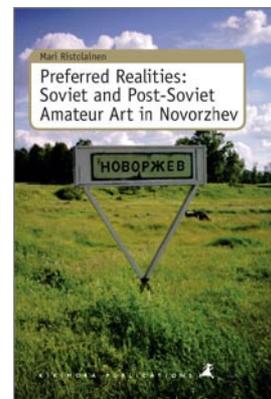
As a consequence it has been possible to discuss forbidden and "forgotten" subjects: for instance, the siege of Leningrad, the Holocaust, the fate of POWs, life and death at the front and the "home" front, female soldiers in the Red Army, and the rape of women as a mass phenomenon in the occupied parts of Germany. The aim of this multi- and interdisciplinary volume is to examine the fractures, interactions and intersections of private and collective memories in Germany and Russia and to facilitate understanding of how both recalling and forgetting play a significant role in constituting identities by individuals, communities and nations.

Aleksanteri Series 2:2008, ISBN 978-952-10-4098-6
Appr. 300 p., 28 EUR + VAT
December 2008

Mari Ristolainen: PREFERRED REALITIES: Soviet and Post-Soviet Amateur Art in Novorzhev

Highlighting the astonishing boom in amateur art activities on a local level in post-Soviet society, this research traces how different actors impact the reality construction process – in the case of the town of Novorzhev, Pskov Province – before and after 1991.

This book examines the relationship between Soviet and post-Soviet practices of amateur activity in a peripheral town of some 5000 inhabitants on Russia's western borderlands. The author shows how persistent Soviet models still are used today by powerful social forces. The study illuminates amateurs' creative potential and how it is used to convey some carefully selected themes. These themes are chosen to depict a preferred reality that show how the new Russian reality must look like.



"Ristolainen finds a somewhat surprising continuity between the amateur productions of the two eras in form and method and in doing so raises important questions about the response to change and about the forces that held the Soviet state together on the local level. The scholarship in this dissertation is among the best I have seen in 25 years in academia."

– Adele Barker, Professor of Russian Studies,
University of Arizona, USA

Kikumora Publications A 19, ISBN 978-952-10-4096-2
366 p., illustrations in colour, 28 EUR + VAT
November 2008



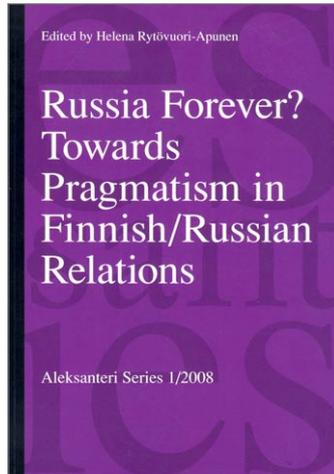
RUSSIA FOREVER?

Towards Working Pragmatism in Finnish/ Russian Relations
 Edited by Helena Rytövuori-Apunen

The eastern enlargements of the EU and NATO have highlighted change in Russian/ European relations, which at the present time are the primary context for Finnish foreign, security and defence policies. Russia's 'perennial dilemma' of contention and co-operation in her North-western rim again represents a trait of historical and conceptual continuity in Russian/ European relations. It is also the essential feature in the specifically Finnish tradition of political distinction and foreign relations.

This book argues that understanding the interplay of continuity and change in a long-term perspective is essential in the contemporary political constellation in which Finland is part of the EU and European cooperation and seeks to maintain good bilateral relationships with Russia. In the methodological sense, the goal is to develop the pragmatist study of international relations and Russian studies.

Aleksanteri Series 1:2008, ISBN 978-952-10-4095-5
 354 p., 25 EUR + VAT



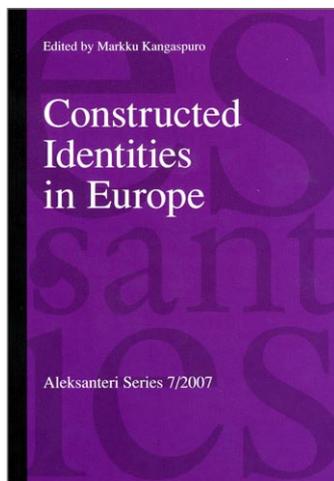
CONSTRUCTED IDENTITIES IN EUROPE

Edited by Markku Kangaspuro

When we speak about European values we often actually refer to political interests. In political debate European values and identity are constantly used to support several different and even contradictory policies at nation state and transnational levels. This book approaches Europe from different and in some cases also contradictory viewpoints.

The book is comprised of three parts: the first part discusses identities and the European Union; the second part concentrates on the Europe beyond the European Union. In this context there is Serbia anticipating the start of accession negotiations and Russia and Ukraine which are outside of the EU for the foreseeable future. The third part of the book focuses on the use of identity in international relations and foreign politics.

Aleksanteri Series 7:2007, ISBN 978-952-10-4096-2
 25 EUR + VAT



Aleksanteri Institute

Finnish Centre for Russian and Eastern
 European Studies

The Aleksanteri Institute is affiliated with the University of Helsinki and operates as a national centre of research, study and expertise pertaining to Russia and Eastern Europe, particularly in the social sciences and humanities. The institute co-ordinates and promotes co-operation and interaction between the academic world, public administration, business life and civil society in Finland and abroad.

The Aleksanteri Institute was founded in 1996. It has grown rapidly into a working community of around 50 people, including doctoral students in the Institute's Graduate School who work at their respective universities. The Institute has a board of trustees that represents the University of Helsinki and other interest groups. The Institute also has an international advisory board and is also guided in its various activities by the executive boards of the Master's programme and of the Graduate School and by an editorial board.

Aleksanteri Institute
 P.O. Box 42 (Unioninkatu 33),
 00014 University of Helsinki

aleksanteri@helsinki.fi
 Tel. +358 (9) 191 24175
 www.helsinki.fi/aleksanteri/english

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Editorial board:
 Esa Hakala, Elina Kahla

Writers:
 Elina Kahla, Eeva Korteniemi,
 Katalin Miklossy, Piia Nikula,
 Aino Saarinen, Anna-Maria Salmi,
 Iiris Virtasalo

Layout:
 Anu Pöyry