

## **A Few Remarks on Russian and East European Studies in Finland**

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Finland has a 1300 kilometer-long common border with Russia. Our country was for over a hundred years an autonomous Grand Duchy in the Russian Empire. Many Finno-Ugric peoples, closely related to us, live in Russia.

Due to these three factors, the study of Russia and Eastern Europe is partially contained within the study of our own country's geography, history, and ethnography, and includes even the study of linguistics. The following are a few examples.

The border between Finland and Russia has not been one of peace. It has been moved nine times in the course of about 700 years. The first changes resulted from wars between Russia and the Kingdom of Sweden (Finland belonged to Sweden until 1809 when it was annexed by Russia). The last two border changes have been a consequence of wars between the independent Finland and the Soviet Union. Annexation and secession of land has been, to a large part, common history between our two countries.

During the period Finland was part of the Russian Empire many Finns made a successful career in the Russian Imperial Army. Over 400 of them reached the rank of general or admiral. Best known are Casimir Ehnroot, Proconsul of Bulgaria and Admiral A.A. Etholen, who served as the governor of Alaska. Biographies of important figures in Finland's 19th century history often cannot be written without a sound knowledge of Russia.

Peter the Great founded St. Petersburg, the capital of the Russian Empire, on 'hostile lands'; in other words, on the Finnish-inhabited lands of Ingria. Finns became the second-largest linguistic minority in the city, after the Germans. In the 19th century, St. Petersburg was, in fact, a city with the second largest Finnish population after Helsinki. At that time, the number of Finns in St. Petersburg was about 25,000. So we can say that the history of St. Petersburg is, in part, also Finnish history.

Many Finnish scholars, particularly specialists in Finno-Ugric studies such as A.J. Sjögren and M.A. Castrén, received funding for their large expeditions from the Russian Academy of Sciences. They initiated a productive fieldwork tradition that was sorely interrupted by the Soviet Union but which we have now been able to continue, after the break-up of the Soviet Union and the removal of ideological barriers.

While Finland was a Grand Duchy of the Russian Empire, the library of Helsinki University received an obligatory free copy of all printed material published within the Empire. This provided the foundation for a huge collection of Russian books and periodicals, one of the most valuable in the world. This collection is housed in a separate wing with its own staff within the Helsinki University Library. It serves Finnish as well as foreign scholars.

Among foreign scholars who have worked in the Slavonic Library have also been Japanese scholars. Another valuable collection of materials in the field of Russian and East European studies is found at the Finnish Institute for Russian and East European Studies, which functions under the auspices of the Ministry of Education.

Three of Finland's presidents had personal experience of living in Russia. Our third president, Per Svinhufvud, had been exiled to Siberia for political reasons. Our sixth president, General Mannerheim, made his military career in the Imperial Army, and our seventh president, J.K. Paasikivi, had studied in Novgorod during his student years. Their knowledge of Russia is part of our political history.

At the opposite end, many Russian politicians have had a close relationship with Finland. For example, V.I. Lenin stayed in Finland before the Revolution on seven different occasions. During the Soviet period, our two countries had many common points of interest in politics.

Finland separated from Russia to form an independent republic in 1917. The following year our country underwent a bloody civil war, which the Whites won. Large groups of defeated Reds fled to the Soviet Union. An autonomous Finno-Karelian Soviet Socialist Republic was created. Later some of our leading communists returned to Finland. One of these was Poika Tuominen, who had been active in the Comintern leadership in the 1930s. In the 1950s he published several large works on Finnish underground activities and on the life of Finnish communists in the Soviet Union.

We could make a long list of similar examples. Finland's closeness with Russia and the resulting familiarity partially explain why the Finns have had no need to project their Russian and East European know-how into abstractions the way it has been done elsewhere in the West.

A field of Russian and East European studies that is separate and independent from the study of our own country was born in Finland relatively late, only in the 1980s. At that time, it became possible to conduct archival research in Russian archives thanks to the benevolent atmosphere created by Perestroika. The break-up of the Soviet Union and the disappearance of ideological controls in Russia have brought new possibilities also to the Finnish research community and the field of Russian studies as such.

Now all Finland's universities and colleges have their own research projects in the field of Russian and East European studies in addition to departments of Slavic philology. The Finnish Academy of Science has provided generous funding for research in social sciences in our field. An important development in Russian studies in Finland was the creation of the Finnish Association for Russian and East European Studies in 1989 as well as the creation of a separate school with a Master's and a PhD program within the University of Helsinki. This school, called the Aleksanteri Institute, has its own publishing label, the Kikimora Publications. Important research on Russia and Eastern Europe is carried out also at the Bank of Finland's Institute for Economies in Transition and at the Institute of International Affairs, funded by

an independent foundation.

It must be noted, however, that the break-up of the Soviet Union and the disappearance of the socialist bloc in Europe has also hindered research. Thus, the All-Nordic Committee, which was a member of ICSEES and was still quite active in the 1980s, has now dissolved simply for lack of funding. It was easy to obtain funding in our field during the Cold War. Now everything has become more complicated. The same can be observed everywhere in Europe.

Finally, I would like to note that one of the shining moments for Russian and East European studies in Finland was the ICCEES Sixth World Congress in Tampere in 2000, organized by our Association. We are now eagerly looking forward to the Seventh Congress, which is to take place next year in Berlin.

#### **Appendix: Russian and East European Studies in Finland: some recent titles**

Aalto, Pami: *Constructing post-Soviet geopolitics in Estonia: a study in security, identity and subjectivity*. Helsinki: University of Helsinki, Department of Political Sciences, 2001. 240 p., ill. (Acta politica, 19)

*Baltic security prospects at the turn of the 21st century*. Ed. by Atis Lejinš. Helsinki: Aleksanteri Institute, 1999. 148 p. (Kikimora Publications, B 8)

*Beyond the garden ring: dimensions of Russian regionalism*. Ed. by Markku Kivinen, Katri Pynnöniemi. Helsinki: Aleksanteri Institute, 2002. 264 p. (Kikimora Publications, B 25)

*Business entry in Eastern Europe: a network and learning approach with case studies*. Ed. by Jan-Åke Törnroos, Jarmo Nieminen. Helsinki: Aleksanteri Institute, 1999. 315 p. (Kikimora Publications, B 4)

*Estonian foreign policy at the cross-roads*. Ed. by Eero Medijainen, Vahur Made. Helsinki: Aleksanteri Institute, 2002. 166 p. (Kikimora Publications, B 26)

*Evald Ilyenkov's philosophy revisited*. Ed. by Vesa Oittinen. Helsinki: Aleksanteri Institute, 2000. 372 p., ill. (Kikimora Publications, B 13)

Forsstedt, Pekka: *Chelovek pered litsom zla: mir geroev romana Aleksandra Solzhenitsyna V krughe pervom*. Jyväskylä: University of Jyväskylä, 2001. 172 p. (Jyväskylä studies in arts, 73)

Hanhinen, Sari: *Social problems in transition: perceptions of influential groups in Estonia, Russia and Finland*. Helsinki: Aleksanteri Institute, 2001. 262 p. (Kikimora Publications, A 5)

Hansson, Leeni: *Networks matter: the role of informal social networks in the period of socio-economic reforms of the 1990s in Estonia*. Jyväskylä: University of Jyväskylä, 2001. 194 p. (Jyväskylä studies in education, psychology and social research, 181)

- Heinonen, Jussi: 'Eto' i 'to' v povesti 'Staruha' Daniila Harmsa. Helsinki: University of Helsinki, 2003. <http://ethesis.helsinki.fi/julkaisut/hum/slavi/vk/heinonen>
- Hellberg-Hirn, Elena: Imperial imprints: post-Soviet St. Petersburg. Helsinki: Finnish Literature Society, 2003. 440 p., ill.
- Ihanus, Juhani: Swaddling, shame and society: on psychohistory and Russia. Helsinki: Aleksanteri Institute, 2001. 178 p. (Kikimora Publications, B 22)
- Jakobson, Valeria: Role of the Estonian Russian-language media in the integration of the Russian-speaking minority into Estonian society. Tampere: Tampere University Press, 2002. 136 p. (Acta Universitatis Tamperensis, 858; Acta Electronica Universitatis Tamperensis, 164)
- Kaski, Antti: The security complex: a theoretical analysis and the Baltic case. Turku: University of Turku, 2001. 224 p. (Annales Universitatis Turkuensis, B 242, Humaniora) <http://tiedotus.utu.fi/tiedote/tiedotteet/001177.html>
- Kerkkänen, Ari: Yugoslav Jewry: aspects of post-World War II and post-Yugoslav developments. Helsinki: Finnish Oriental Society, 2001. xiii+247 p. (Studia Orientalia, 93)
- Kononenko, Vadim: From Yugoslavia to Iraq: Russia's foreign policy and the effects of multipolarity. Helsinki: Finnish Institute of International Affairs, 2003. 49 p. (UPI Working papers, 42)
- Kostov, Heli: Mifopoètika Andreja Platonova v romane schastlivaya Moskva. Helsinki: University of Helsinki, 2000. 324 p. (Slavica Helsingiensia, 19)
- Könönen, Maija: 'Four ways of writing the city': St. Petersburg-Leningrad as a metaphor in the poetry of Joseph Brodsky. Helsinki: University of Helsinki, 2003. 340 p. (Slavica Helsingiensia, 23) <http://ethesis.helsinki.fi/julkaisut/hum/slavi/vk/kononen>
- Lallukka, Seppo: From fugitive peasants to diaspora: the Eastern Mari in tsarist and federal Russia. Helsinki: Finnish Academy of Science and Letters, 2003. 473 p. (Annales Academiae Scientiarum Fennicae. Humaniora, 328)
- Larjavaara, Ilmari: The institutional foundations of administrative development in Russia. Helsinki: Aleksanteri Institute, 2001. 61 p. (Aleksanteri papers, 2/2001)
- Larmola, Heikki: The 'Czechoslovak Path': a communist route to power monopoly in 1943-1948 within the framework of 'Mitteleuropa', great power setting, and the Soviet sphere of interests. A neorealist and historical approach. Helsinki: University of Helsinki, Department of Political Sciences, 2003. 440 p.

- Legal foundations of the Russian economy. Ed. by Juha Tolonen, Boris Toporin. Helsinki: Aleksanteri Institute, 2000. 418 p. (Kikumora Publications, B 14)
- Lonkila, Markku: Social networks in post-Soviet Russia: continuity and change in the everyday life of St.Petersburg teachers. Helsinki: Aleksanteri Institute, 1999. 237 p. (Kikumora Publications, A 4)
- Långström, Tarja: Transformation in Russia and international law. Helsinki: [ T.Långström], 2002. viii+ 298 p.
- Lõhmus, Maarja: Transformation of public text in totalitarian system: a socio-semiotic study of Soviet censorship practices in Estonian Radio in the 1980's. Turku: University of Turku, 2002. 287 p. (Annales Universitatis Turkuensis, Ser. B 248, Humaniora)
- Lähteenmäki, Mika: Dialogue, language and meaning: variations on Bakhtinian themes. Jyväskylä: University of Jyväskylä, Department of Russian, 2001. 211 p.
- Miklóssy, Katalin: Manoeuvres of national interest: internationalism and nationalism in the emerging Kadarist criticism of Romania 1968–1972. Helsinki: Aleksanteri Institute, 2003. 260 p., ill (Kikumora Publications, A 8)
- Models of self: Russian women's autobiographical texts. Ed. by Marianne Liljeström, ArjaRosenholm, Irina Savkina. Helsinki: Aleksanteri Institute, 2000. 247 p. (Kikumora Publications, B 18)
- Moshes, Arkady: Ukraine in tomorrow's Europe. Helsinki: Finnish Institute of International Affairs, 2003. 46 p. (FIIA report 2003, 4)
- Nystén-Haarala, Soili: Russian law in transition: law and institutional change. Helsinki: Aleksanteri Institute, 2001. 289 p. (Kikumora Publications, B 21)
- Paastela, Jukka: Finnish communism under Soviet totalitarianism: oppositions within the Finnish Communist Party in Soviet Russia 1918–1935. Helsinki: Aleksanteri Institute, 2003. 360 p. (Kikumora Publications, B 27)
- Palosuo, Hannele: Health and wellbeing in Moscow and Helsinki. Helsinki: Stakes, 2003. xii+114 [231] p. (Research report of National Research and Development Centre for Welfare and Health, 129)
- Pietiläinen, Jukka: The regional newspaper in Post-Soviet Russia. Tampere: Tampere University Press, 2002. 532 p. (Media studies; Acta Electronica Universitatis Tampereensis, 209)
- Rautio, Vesa: The potential for community restructuring: mining towns in Pechenga. Helsinki: Aleksanteri Institute, 2003. 166p., ill. (Kikumora Publications, A 9)

- Religious transition in Russia. Ed. by Matti Kotiranta. Helsinki: Aleksanteri Institute, 2000. 368 p. (Kikumora Publications, B 15)
- Remy, Johannes: Higher education and national identity: Polish student activism in Russia 1832–1863. Helsinki: Finnish Literature Society, 2000. 380 p. (Bibliotheca Historica, 57)
- Rise and fall of Soviet Karelia: people and power. Ed. by Antti Laine, Mikko Ylikangas. Helsinki: Aleksanteri Institute, 2002. 285 p. (Kikumora Publications, B 24)
- Rosenholm, Arja: Gendering awakening: feminity and the Russian women question of the 1860s. Helsinki: Aleksanteri Institute, 1999. 659 p., ill. (Kikumora Publications, A 3)
- Rotkirch, Anna: The man question: loves and lives in late 20th century Russia. Helsinki: University of Helsinki, 2000. xxii+316 p., ill.
- Russia: more different than most. Ed. by Markku Kangaspuro. Helsinki: Aleksanteri Institute, 2000. 328 p. (Kikumora Publications, B 16)
- Russian crisis and its effects. Ed. by Tuomas Komulainen, Iikka Korhonen. Helsinki: Aleksanteri Institute, 2000. 238 p. (Kikumora Publications, B 9)
- Russian media challenge. Ed. by Kaarle Nordenstreng, Elena Vartanova, Yassen Zassoursky. Helsinki: Aleksanteri Institute, 2001. 292 p. (Kikumora Publications, B 20)
- Ruutsoo, Rein: Civil society and national building in Estonia and the Baltic States: impact of traditions on mobilization and transition 1986–2000: historical and sociological study. Rovaniemi: University of Lapland, 2002. 434 p., ill.
- Siilin, Lea: Otrazhenie grafiko-orfograficheskikh norm tserkoslavyanskogo yazyka russkogo izvoda v zhitinoj literature vtoroj poloviny XVI veka (na materiale Zhitija prepodobnogo Aleksandra Svirskogo). Joensuu: University of Joensuu, 2001. iv+401 p., ill. (Publications in the Humanities, 25)
- Snellman, Hanna: Khants' time. Helsinki: Aleksanteri Institute, 2001. 168 p., ill. (Kikumora Publications, B 23)
- The struggle for Russian environmental policy. Ed. by Ilmo Massa, Veli-Pekka Tynkkynen. Helsinki: Aleksanteri Institute, 2001. 180 p., ill. (Kikumora Publications, B 17)
- Strömpl, Judit: The K. School: residential management of troublesome girls in transition-time Estonia. Tartu: Tartu University Press, 2002. (Acta Electronica Universitatis Tamperensis, 215)

- Tampere, Kaja: Public relations in a transition society 1989–2000: using a stakeholder approach in organisational communication and relations analyses. Jyväskylä: University of Jyväskylä, 2003. 135 p. (Jyväskylä Studies in Humanities, 8)
- Tomusk, Voldemar: The blinding darkness of the enlightenment: towards the understanding of post state-socialist higher education in Eastern Europe. Turku: University of Turku, 2001. 311 p. (Koulutussosiologian tutkimuskeskuksen raportti, 53)  
<http://tiedotus.utu.fi/tiedote/tiedotteet/001074.html>
- Torsti, Pilvi: Divergent stories, convergent attitudes: study on the presence of history, history textbooks and the thinking of youth in post-war Bosnia and Herzegovina. Helsinki: Taifuuni, 2003. 418 p., ill.  
<http://ethesis.helsinki.fi/julkaisut/val/yhtei/vk/torsti>
- Vetenniemi, Erkki: Surviving the Soviet meat grinder: the politics of Finnish Gulag memoirs. Helsinki: Aleksanteri Institute, 2001. 263 p. (Kikumora Publications, A 6)
- Vihavainen, Timo: Vnutrennij vrag: bor'ba s meshchanstvom kak moral'naya missiya russkoj intelligencii. Sankt-Peterburg: Kolo, 2004. 414 p.
- Virkkunen, Joni: Discourses, boundaries and scales: Estonian territorial politics in the 'New Europe'. Tampere: Tampere University Press, 2002. 46(87) p. (Acta Universitatis Tamperensis, 856; Acta Electronica Universitatis Tamperensis, 162)
- Yanitsky, Oleg: Russian Greens in a risk society: a structural analysis. Helsinki: Aleksanteri Institute, 2000. 290 p. (Kikumora Publications, B 11)