

War as a State-Building Process: Strategic Border Warfare in Eastern European Empires

Battle of Riga, the first major battle of the Swedish invasion of Poland, 1701



***Summer School Programme -University of Eastern Finland
August 10th–21st, 2026 - Joensuu – Finland***

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Lecturers at the 2-Week Summer School

Prof. John Hutchinson (London School of Economics) <https://www.lse.ac.uk/people/john-hutchinson>

Professor Hutchinson is one of the leading scholars of nationalism and war studies. His lecture will examine how wars and border conflicts shaped cultural nationalism and collective identities in multi-ethnic empires. Drawing on historical and theoretical perspectives, he will discuss how intellectuals, civil society, and cultural movements contributed to nation-building processes in imperial contexts. He will provide students with a conceptual framework linking to broader debates on nationalism and borders.

Prof. Siniša Malešević (University College Dublin) <https://people.ucd.ie/sinisa.malesevic>

Prof. Sinisa's work on nationalism and organised violence offers a sociological lens through which imperial wars can be understood as processes shaping modern political communities. His lecture will address the relationship between warfare, state capacity, and the formation of national identities, connecting historical cases from Eastern Europe with wider theoretical debates. This will enable participants to critically analyse how wars transformed social structures and political imagination across imperial societies.

Prof. Rasmus Glenthøj (University of Southern Denmark) <https://portal.findresearcher.sdu.dk/en/persons/rasmusg/>

Prof. Glenthøj's research on nineteenth-century warfare and imperial transformations offers a crucial comparative perspective on the Crimean War and its broader European consequences. His lecture will explore how military conflicts reshaped state structures, national mobilisation, and regional political cultures, highlighting parallels between Scandinavian and Eastern European imperial borderlands. By situating the Crimean War within a wider transnational context, his contribution will deepen students' understanding of warfare as a catalyst for political and social change across Europe.

Prof. Pasi Tuunainen (University of Eastern Finland) <https://uefconnect.uef.fi/en/pasi.tuunainen/#publications>

Prof. Tuunainen points out that although technology and surveillance capabilities relating to the northern regions have evolved over the decades, geography still matters in warfare. "My research has and will continue to provide insight into how challenging the northern military theatre is, how terrain and weather conditions still need to be taken into account in warfare, and how these can be turned to one's advantage." He says that "Studying past crises helps us understand the causes of new wars, and warfare itself."

Dr. Manna Satama (University of Eastern Finland) <https://uefconnect.uef.fi/manna.satama/>

Dr. Satama is experienced information specialist on teaching and supporting in research data management, she is part of UEF Data Support services coordinated by the library. "Researchers would benefit from clearer data paths and better opportunities to use data after the research. The more complex the project, the more important it is to plan data management. A data management plan should be integrated into higher education studies and if someone is studying, say, 19th-century", says Dr. Satama.

Dr. Jaakko Björklund (University of Helsinki) <https://researchportal.helsinki.fi/fi/persons/jaakko-bjorklund/>

Dr. Björklund's research lies in the field of early modern military history, with a particular focus on military entrepreneurship within the Swedish army during the Ingrian War (1609–1617). Their work contributes to a deeper understanding of the organization, financing, and social dynamics of early modern warfare. In addition to his research, he has extensive teaching experience in higher education. He has led small group teaching, delivered lectures, and coordinated courses on topics such as the Thirty Years' War and early modern military history. He has also served as a teaching assistant at King's College London, lectures on conflict simulation.

Dr. Sebastian Schiavone (University of Eastern Finland) <https://uefconnect.uef.fi/en/sebastian.schiavone/>

Dr. Schiavone is a historian specializing in early modern military history, with a particular focus on military networks, recruitment, and the organisation of warfare in the Baltic region. His research examines how states attempted to control and utilise transnational military networks, shedding light on the relationship between warfare, state formation, and governance. His lecture will explore the dynamics of military organisation and cross-border recruitment in early modern Northern Europe, offering participants insights into how war economies and military structures contributed to the development of state power.

Doctoral Researcher Aytac Yurukcu (University of Eastern Finland) <https://uefconnect.uef.fi/en/aytac.yurukcu/>

Mr. Yurukcu is specializing in imperial warfare, collective memory, and national identity formation in nineteenth-century Eastern Europe. His research focuses on the Russo-Ottoman War (1877–78), examining how peripheral populations—particularly Finns within the Russian Empire—experienced, interpreted, and communicated imperial conflict through newspapers. His contribution will enable participants to critically analyse how war experiences were mediated, contested, how imperial warfare functioned as a state-building process, and embedded in broader processes of nation-building across Eastern European imperial contexts.

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Week 1: Foundations & Early Modern Border Warfare

Sunday, 9 August Sunday – Arrivals 19:00 – Informal get together Meeting in front of the UEF Library

Monday, 10 August –Opening & Conceptual Foundations: Aurora A Seminaarisali-Seminar Rooms AU112-AU111

Instructors: Dr. Sebastian Schiavone (UEF) & Doctoral Researcher Aytac Yurukcu (UEF)

Morning Session (10:30–11:30) – Dr. Schiavone & Doctoral Researcher Yurukcu

Welcome and course introduction: Participant introductions & networking

- Guided discussion on assigned readings: Key concepts: war, borders, and state-building

Afternoon Guest Lecture (13:30–14:30)

- *Prof. John Hutchinson* (London School of Economics, online)
“Imperial Warfare, Borderlands and Contested Nationhood: The Case of Ukraine”

Tuesday, 11 August – Aurora A Seminaarisali-Seminar Rooms AU112-AU111

Morning Session (10:00–11:30) **Early Modern Warfare I**

- *Schiavone & Yurukcu* Border warfare in the 16th–17th centuries: Military organisation and dynamics

Afternoon Guest Lecture (13:30–14:30)

- *Prof. Rasmus Glenthøj* (University of Southern Denmark).
“Strategies of Survival: Scandinavian Security Policy from the Great Northern War to the Present”

Social Event (17:00–19:00) Welcome & informal networking [SOOSI Joensuu](#), Cocktails & Pizza - Suvantokatu 2.

Wednesday, 12 August – Excursion in Joensuu/Border Area - Learning Day I Tuunainen & Schiavone & Yurukcu

- **Field Trip:** Ilomantsi Fortifications or Bunker Museum: Theme: Border defence and local knowledge

Thursday, 13 August – Aurora A Seminaarisali-Seminar Rooms AU112-AU111

Morning Session (10:00–11:30) **Early Modern Warfare II & Skills Workshop**

- *Schiavone & Yurukcu* Gustav III and the Militarisation of border regions

Afternoon Guest Lecture (13:30–14:30)

- *Dr. Jaakko Björklund* (University of Helsinki)

“Military entrepreneurship, the Business of War & Swedish Expansion in the Eastern Baltic Sea Region 1600–29”

Friday, 14 August – Imperial Warfare in the 18th Century: Aurora A Seminaarisali-Seminar Rooms AU112-AU111

Morning Guest Lecture (10:00–11:30)

- *Prof. Pasi Tuunainen* (University of Eastern Finland)

“The Evolution of Tactics in Border Warfare: The Case of the Russo-Swedish Border Areas during the 18th and early 19th Centuries”

- Afternoon Session (13:30–14:30): Reflective learning task: discussions and synthesis of Week 1

Social Event (16:30–18:00) Joensuu Boat Trip <https://pohjoiskarjalanlaiva.fi/p/52/kello-1630-risteily-pyhaselalla>

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Week 2: Imperial Wars & State-Building Processes

Monday, 17 August – Wars and Society: Aurora A Seminaarisali-Seminar Rooms AU112

Morning Session (10:00–11:30)

- *Schiavone & Yurukcu* Finnish War & Napoleonic Wars

Afternoon Workshop (13:30–14:30)

- Academic skills session: analysing historical sources: (maps, military reports, and narrative materials)
- Optional: Afternoon Activity (15:00–16:30): Students' presentations and Essay-writing workshop

Evening Social Event (17:00–19:00) Summer School Dinner: Ravintola Aittaranta <https://www.raflaamo.fi/>

Tuesday, 18 August – War, Nationalism & Research Skills: Aurora Room A102

Morning Section (10:00–11:30)

- *Schiavone & Yurukcu* "Crimean War (1853–56) and Civil Society in the Baltics and Finland"

Afternoon Guest Lecture (13:30–14:30)

- *Dr. Manna Satama* (University of Eastern Finland)
"Research Data Management for Social Sciences and Humanities"

Afternoon Workshop (15:00–17:00)

- *Schiavone & Yurukcu* "Russo–Turkish War (1877–78): Imperial War and Identity Formation"

Wednesday, 19 August – Excursion/Field Joensuu/Border Area - Learning Day II *Schiavone & Yurukcu*

- **Field Trip:** North Karelia Museum - War and Memory: On-site discussion and reflective learning

Thursday, 20 August – Imperial Conflicts in a Global Perspective Aurora A Seminar Rooms AU112-AU111-A100

Morning Session (10:00–11:30)

- *Prof. Siniša Malešević* (University College Dublin)
"War, State Formation and Nationalism in the 19th and early 20th century South-Eastern Europe"

Afternoon Session (13:30–14:30)

- *Schiavone & Yurukcu* Russo–Japanese War 1905-06: National Identities and Imperial Crisis

Evening Film screening (15:30–17:00): *Turkish Gambit* (2005) - Discussion: War Narratives and Representation

Friday, 21 August – Synthesis & Closing: Aurora A Seminaarisali-Seminar Rooms AU112-AU111

Morning Session (10:00–11:30) *Schiavone & Yurukcu*

- Conclusions: Student Presentations - Integrative Discussion

Afternoon Session (13:30–15:30): Final Student Presentations

Farewell Day Certificates: Course wrap-up & feedback

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Travel to Joensuu

Getting to Helsinki (opens in a new tab) <https://www.myhelsinki.fi/visit-helsinki/plan-your-trip/getting-here/>

Arriving on campus (opens in a new tab) <https://kamu.uef.fi/en/tietopankki/new-students/arriving-on-campus/>

Joensuu Campus (opens in a new tab) <https://www.uef.fi/en/joensuu-campus#paragraph-3102>

Accommodation in Joensuu

Summer School Participants will have a possibility to book a room or shared apartment from the guest houses of the University of Eastern Finland. For booking please contact: tilavaraus-joensuu@uef.fi

Please quote the booking reference code **UEFSUMMER**

• Organizers of the summer school: Application is open until 1st of June 2026

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Department of Geographical and Historical Studies - University of Eastern Finland, Joensuu Campus.

Contact - Dr. Sebastian Schiavone, University of Eastern Finland sebastian.schiavone@uef.fi

Contact - Doctoral Researcher Aytac Yurukcu, University of Eastern Finland aytac.yurukcu@uef.fi

• Venue: Department of HIMA – UEF Joensuu Campus. Aurora A - Room A102

<https://www.uef.fi/en/uef-summer-school-courses>



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