
Notes on the contents

■ The Historical Journal appeared for the first time in 1903. The editorial in the first issue described the role of the Journal as being to stimulate discussion of internationally significant trends in historical research, inform the readership about historical publications and research results, and awaken interest in history. This role has remained more or less unchanged for a hundred years. Whether it will remain the mission of the Journal in the new millennium is

the question asked by Pirkko Leino-Kaukiainen in her centenary article *Historiallinen Aikakauskirja 100 vuotta* ('100 years of the Historical Journal').

The present issue is the Journal's centenary number, and its theme is *Historiantutkimuksen tila ja tulevaisuus* ('The present state and future of historical research').

Pauli Kettunen has entitled his article *Historian poliittisuus ja kansallinen katse* ('History's political nature and national outlook'). In justifying their work, historians contribute to defining human agency and the ongoing changes in contemporary society. The strong link between history and the nation state has been reflected in the emphasis on national missions and the nation as actor. The durability of the national perspective is seen in how globalisation is interpreted as a challenge to national capacity that requires the therapeutic and identity-political input of historians.

According to Ilkka Niiniluoto in *Historia tiedeyhteisössä* ('History in the academic community'), the short answer to the question of history's position in the field of academic endeavour is: good, even excellent. The importance of history as a field of academic research and teaching is recognised by all. The relationship between history and other disciplines is, however, open to philosophical debate around issues such as time, change, causality, explanation, understanding, truth, narration and the drawing of reasoned conclusions.

History is a discipline which permits, or should permit, many different perspectives on the past. At the same time, history is a progressive discipline that can form an ever more accurate picture of the past. Historical knowledge is also intimately bound up with the world of values. In *Historiallisen tiedon kasvu ja edistys* ('The growth and progress of historical knowledge'), Juha Sihvola examines the requirements and theoretical foundations for growth in historical knowledge.

In her article *Kulttuurihistorian houkutus* ('The attraction of cultural history'), Anne Ollila asks: What is culture? This question has attracted hundreds of different answers, the very variety of which indicates the difficulty of defining culture. The concept contains so many different shades and nuances that it is impossible to grasp with just a single definition. Moreover, the definitions themselves are inevitably culture-bound, and thus reveal in themselves in various ways the multi-layered nature of the concept.

In *Suomalaisen naishistorian vuosikymmenet* ('The decades of Finnish women's history'), Pirjo Markkola notes the rapid growth of women's history. Around twenty research projects were granted funding at the end of the 1990s. Over twenty doctoral dissertations have already been approved, and more are in the pipeline. While ten years ago research still concentrated on work and organisation, the new issues raised more recently include sexual-

ity, masculinity, power, violence and the theoretical framework of women's studies.

Psychohistory is one of the 'new histories' that arrived in the field of Finnish historical research in the 1980s. Although psychohistory in Finland has already reached the age of confirmation, it is familiar only by name even to many professional historians. In *Psykohistoria suomalaisen historian tutkimuksen kentässä* ('Psychohistory in the field of Finnish historical research'), Marja Jalava offers her own interpretation of what psychohistory is all about, presents a number of psychohistorically oriented research studies completed or still under way in Finland, comments on the criticism directed towards psychohistory and discusses the future outlook for the discipline.

In her article *Minne menet historian tutkimus?* ('Quo vadis, historical research?'), Marjatta Hietala considers the outlook for Finnish historical research on the basis of her long experience of university life and research policy. She reviews the social status of history and demands quality and an international grasp from researchers and others active in the field of history, as this is the only way to ensure a credible future for Finnish historical research and the public image of history.

Comparison is one of the basic processes of historical research, but despite this it has been rather a neglected area in Finnish research in particular. In *Vertailu – jokapäiväistä vaan ei tuttua* ('Comparison –

an everyday process, but unfamiliar'), Päivi Mäkelä uses historiographical and practical research examples in arguing for the importance and value of the explicit use of comparison in historical research.

The quality of Finnish research into classical antiquity is recognised both at home and internationally. Our history departments can also lay claim to considerable achievements in this area. Even so, in *Antiikki ja tulevaisuus* ('Antiquity and the future'), Katariina Mustakallio takes the view that the status of classical studies within Finnish historical research is not what it might be. The greatest problem is that some history departments are not using the resources and opportunities at their disposal.

Western people have often sought to interpret and anticipate the problems of our own society by considering the decline and fall of the Roman Empire. In *Romaan valtakuunan rappio ja tubo* ('The decline and fall of the Roman Empire'), Antti Arjava draws on the most recent literature to present the current state of the debate.

What is the history of ideas really all about – and what does it look like in post-2000 Finland? In *Menneiden metsästäjät – aate- ja oppihistoriaa Suomessa* ('Hunters of past thoughts – the history of ideas in Finland'), Maija Kallinen first provides an overview of the history of ideas and then looks at the range of research topics and methodological approaches in the history of science.

Is economic history in crisis? This was the question posed by professor Herman van der Wee in his opening lecture at the International Economic History Congress in July 2002. The current criticism directed at the methods and theoretical models of the social and economic sciences also applies to economic history: if the social sciences are in crisis, then so is economic history, according to Jari Ojala in *Mitä nyt taloushistoria?* ('What now, economic history?')

In *Sosiaalibistoria ja nykyisyys* ('Social history and modernity'), Marjatta Rahikainen links the social history revolution to the exhaustion of the modernity project and the internationalisation of historical research. She presents the characteristic features of the new social history as the explicit inclusion of the present in historical interpretations, the central themes of research in the 1990s (e.g. the everyday) and historians' concern over the loss of the memory of those on the losing side in history.

In *Alaska Highwaylta Arkangeliin* ('From the Alaska

Highway to Archangel'), Maria Lähteenmäki examines research into Arctic areas, which in the past two decades has established its position as its own strong research genre, particularly amongst Canadian historians. In contrast, research into the northern areas of the Nordic countries and Russia has given surprisingly little attention to approaches that problematise the concept of the 'north'.

According to Henrik Meinander in *Historiantutkimusta Suomessa ruotsiksi* ('Finnish historical research in Swedish'), the future of Finnish historical research in Swedish appears bright in a number of ways. Contacts with the Finnish-language research community and with colleagues in Sweden are close and uncomplicated, and the funding situation is at the very least satisfactory. Even so, the basic problems of Finland's Swedish-speaking culture – smallness and lack of competition – can be expected to continue.

In *Lammin läpimurrosta Jobannesburgin haasteeseen* ('From the breakthrough at

Lampi to the challenge of Johannesburg'), Harri Siiskonen looks at how Finnish historical research has responded to the increased demand for knowledge on the environment. He concentrates on evaluating the achievements of modern environmental history in Finland and other countries.

In his column *Kirjoitetun Suomen historian pitkä linja* ('The long tradition of written Finnish history'), Heikki Ylikangas considers long-term trends in Finnish historiography. For this centenary issue we have also interviewed the leading Finnish historians Eino Jutikkala, Marjatta Hietala, Jukka Relander and Anu Lahtinen. The recent doctoral dissertation of the politician and author Lasse Lehtinen – *Aatosta jaloa ja albaista mieltä* ('Noble idea, humble mind') – has aroused animated discussion in the academic community. In *Kohtaaminen akateemisen maailman kanssa* ('Encounter with the academic world'), Lehtinen comments on the discussion so far.

(Translation: *Brian Fleming*)