

Notes on the contents

■ The theme of the Historical Journal 1/2008 is religion as an obligation and a freedom from the middle ages to the present day.

Germans Friedrich Sunder and Heinrich Suso were exceptions among the mystics writing in the vernacular specifically because they were men, since Latin remained the main language for writings by male mystics for centuries after writing in the vernacular emerged. On the basis of books by Sunder and Suso, Meri Heinonen ponders the limits and the freedoms that the expression of mysticism placed on the writers, and she also highlights the importance of gender in drawing up these boundaries and breaking them. (*Sukupuoli ja ilmaisen rajat myöhäiskeskiajan kristillisessä mystiikassa. Miesmystikot Friedrich Sunder ja Heinrich Suso*; 'Gender and the limits of expression in late medieval Christian mysticism. Male mystics Friedrich Sunder and Heinrich Suso').

The post-Reformation period has often been referred to as a period of orthodoxy and confessionalism, hallmarked by mandatory membership of the state church and, along with that, a monolithic culture in terms of both religion and society. Päivi Räisänen challenges this view by analysing the tensions between Lutheran norms and laymen's interests in Württemberg in southwestern Germany in the late sixteenth century and early seventeenth century (*Luterilaisen tunnustuskunnan rakentaminen ja maallikoiden uskonnol-*

lisuus uuden ajan alun Saksassa; 'Construction of the Lutheran faith and the religiosity of the laity in early modern Germany').

Although this was often assumed in older research on the eighteenth century, Enlightenment and Christianity are not necessarily opposites. In the article by Pasi Ihalainen (*Taivaan filosofiaa ja alkuperäistä demokratiaa. Claude Fauchet'n vallankumouksellinen kristinusko 1789–1791*; 'The philosophy of heaven and original democracy. The revolutionary Christianity of Claude Fauchet 1789–1791'), the case of Claude Fauchet shows that it is possible to talk of Christian Enlightenment in the history of France. In France, as elsewhere, a new genre of political sermons emerged in the late eighteenth century, moulding Christianity to the needs of nationalist ideas and the redefinition of democracy.

The revivalist literature that spread to rural Finnish communities in the early nineteenth century focused on the importance of obeying religious duties and generally practising religion. On the other hand, revivalist movements demanded that people place their conscience before the rules of the community. In order to find out how revivalist movements were perceived in their own day, we must examine the values and norms of both village communities and the revivalists. Anuleena Kimanen deals with this topic in her article *Pakko ja vapaus pohjoiskarjalaisessa kylässä. Rääkkylän Oravisalon herätys 1820-luvulla* ('Coercion and freedom in a North Karelian village. The revival of Oravisaalo in Rääkkylä in the 1820s').

Nina Timosaari has contrib-

uted the article *Edvard Westermarckin ja Erkki Kailan käsitteet kristillisestä sukupuolijärjestelmästä 1900-luvun alussa* ('Edvard Westermarck and Erkki Kaila's views on a Christian gender system in the early twentieth century'), dealing with the views of Westermarck, a sociologist, and Kaila, a theologian, on a Christian gender system as part of the debate on the relationship between the state and church, and the changes in the Christian gender system in the early twentieth century.

As women have emerged as a research topic in the history of missionary work, researchers are faced with the challenge of how to write about women's work in religious communities. Should they be regarded as having been subjects in patriarchal societies or heroic pioneers in traditionally male spheres of activity – or something in between these two? Seija Jalagin poses the question in her article *Lähetystyön sukupuolisulkeiset* ('Women in missionary work').

The Christian new right wing of the US is spontaneous popular movement emerging from the cultural change of the 1960s, which has freed the religious conservatives of the US from an artificial isolation that had lasted for decades. In his article *Kristillinen uusoi-keisto amerikkalaisen demokratian elävöittäjänä* ('The Christian new right wing as a revitalising force for democracy'), Markku Ruotsila examines interpretations put forward in the latest American historical research, whereby the rise of the new Christian right has put the social debate in the country on a sounder footing and reinforced American democracy.

(Translation: *Valtasana Oy*)