

Notes on the contents

■ In his article, 'The Agrarian Party has to be crushed?', Tapio Bergholm deals with the 1953 breach in the economic policy of the Socialist-Agrarian government. The significance of personal conflicts and party intrigues has been emphasised, and the economic policy disputes that brought down Kekkonen's third government have been minimised, when describing the 1954 parliamentary elections. However, the rift of the Agrarian Party and the Social Democrat's economic policy led to the break-up of parliament.

Kimmo Rentola asks in his column 'Does political history have a future?' One of the great strengths of political history has been its ability to speak to both citizens and state leaders.

Petri Hakkarainen and Katri Tanni study the history of America and Australia. In his review, 'Young Americans and old Europe', Hakkarainen sees that especially during George W. Bush's first presidential period, the political gulf between Europe and the United States felt from time to time to tear noticeable wider than the Atlantic. In the field of historical research, the transatlantic crisis has, at least not yet, disturbed communication across the ocean. On the contrary, the new generation of American historians has enthusiastically clung to the immediate past of the old continent.

Tanni has headlined her article 'The tyranny of distance: Australia in the geopolitical context of the Cold War.' She considers what historical reasons and similarities can be found in Australia's participation in the war in Iraq and in the earlier wars of the Cold War, which did not take place on the Australian continent. The thematic context is offered by the atmosphere of the Cold War in the Pacific Ocean and the temporal main emphasis is on the time immediately following the Second World War, mainly in the 1950s.

Pekka Masonen's main character is Leo Africanus ('My name is Lion. The individual and mobility between cultures in the beginning of the new era in the Mediterranean.'). There are not many individuals whose fate is connected to equally significant historical events and people like the life of the Moroccan adventurer known as Leo Africanus. Even though we only know for certain about the period he spent in Italy from 1518 to 1527, his life offers a splendid panorama of a new era of a Mediterranean world, where the boundaries between cultures were anything but insurmountable.

Osmo Kivinen and Petri Poikus examine the 800-year history of universities (The privileges of the learned and the authorisation of universities. Charters from the 1200s to the 2000s'). In the charters, almost the same arguments throughout history have justified the existence of universities. Fostering academic freedom and demonstrated loyalty to those wielding authority

are two themes which appear in the documents related to each other at all times.

Janna Kantola's and Hanna Korsberg's subject is the presentation of historical figures by artistic means. In their article 'The poet written anew – the biography of a historical person as a play and on the stage', they consider the relationships of the fictitious and historical interpretations based on the play and theatrical presentations relating to the poet Pentti Saarikoski. How is a fictitious interpretative subject presented or not presented in the framework of a real personal history in the case of Saarikoski?

The multi-volume *Suomen kansallisbiografiaa* (The national biography of Finland) is presented in the journal. Kalevi Koukkunen writes in his review, 'From Aaku to Österman – great Finns in the biography of the 2000s', that the national biography of Finland is in its presentation modern and even outspoken. In its choice of people, it is as all embracing as one could wish for. It is progressive in two ways in particular: women are more plentiful than in similar previous works both as subjects and even as writers, and secondly representatives of popular culture finally get the place they have earned in Finnish cultural history. Georg Luther explores the national biography from the point of view of a genealogist ('Should one even know some family history?')

(Translation *Valtasana Oy*)