

## Notes on the contents

■ The theme of the Historical Journal 2/2006 is Children and War. The articles shed light on a number of interesting aspects of wartime childhood. In her editorial "Lapset, sota ja historiantutkimus" (Children, War and Study of History), the editor Pirjo Markkola explores the theme from the perspective of historical study.

In their article "Lukittu näky – sota lapsen kokemuksena" (A Locked Sight – a Child's Experience of War), Seija Jalagin and Marianne Junila focus on the Finnish Civil War in 1918 through the experiences of children. They consider how the study of history could reach childhood, which is an elusive object of study. They suggest the experiences children have had in the past be interpreted by analysing feelings and emotions.

During the Winter and Continuation Wars, about 80,000 Finnish children were evacuated to Sweden, Norway and Denmark. These war-induced children's evacuations were a common phenomenon in the 20th century, explains Heikki Salminen in his article "Lapset sodankäynnin uhreina. Sotalapset ja lastensirrot 1900-luvulla" (Children as Victims of War. Wartime Children and Evacuations in the 20th Century). In their article "Lapsi myrskyn silmässä – sotalapsi silloin ja nyt. Suomen lähihistorian avaamaton lehti" (Chil-

dren in the Eye of the Storm – Wartime Children Then and Now. The Unopened Chapter in Recent Finnish History), Singa Sandelin Benkö, Nina Santavirta, Barbara Mattsson, Merja Keinänen and Silja Järventausta introduce an extensive research project at the University of Helsinki. Started in 2004, this project aims to explore the long-time effects of evacuation on the lives of wartime children.

In Finland, most of the discussion on children's wartime experiences tends to focus on the children evacuated to Sweden, says Pauliina Latvala in her article "Lapsuuteeni kuuluivat sota, siirtolaiset ja sankarihautajaiset. Suomeen jääneiden lasten muistoja sotavuosien arjesta" (War, evacuees and military burials were part of my childhood. Memories of wartime life by children who stayed in Finland). However, the great majority of children remained in Finland during World War II. In recent years, they have been remembering in different contexts how children and young people saw the war and how that period shaped their future. Transforming the experiences into a narrative produces images of the era, the home front and cultural models dictating everyday life.

The most popular children's and youth organisations in the 1930s and 1940s were Suojeluskuntaopijat (Civil Guard Boys) and Pikkulotat (Little Lotta Girls), both of which belonged to the volunteer defence movement. Was this youth work managed from the

top down, or did it really open a channel of influence for wartime youth? Seija-Leena Nevala-Nurmi's article "Nuoria maanpuolustajia vai suomalaisia lapsisotilaita" (Young defenders of the country or Finnish child soldiers) discusses the youth defence movement also from the angle of questions about gender and child soldier.

In her article "Isät, äidit ja isänmaan toivot – käsityksiä lapsista ja vanhemmista sotavuosien Suomessa" (Fathers, mothers and the country's future hopes – concepts of children and parents in wartime Finland), Ilona Kemppainen states that family relationships in wartime Finland were both a national and a private question. In the idealist image, the men were fighting on the front, defending the country they inherited from their fathers, while the women took care of the home front, raising a new generation. Childhood during the war was often full of work, but the children were seen as future adults, the continuers of their fathers' work, much more so than in times of peace. On the other hand, the soldiers were "sons of the nation", and the mothers of fallen soldiers, in particular, were seen as exemplary citizens.

Harri Siiskonen writes about the dire situation of AIDS orphans in his column "Häpeä ja syrjäytyminen Afrikan AIDS-orpojen painolastina" (Shame and alienation, the burden of Africa's AIDS orphans).

(Translation: *Valtasana Oy*)