Notes on the contents

The theme of *Historiallinen Aikakauskirja* 3/2013 is recent history. In his article "Miten Suomesta tuli japanilaisen auton maahantuonnin sillanpääasema Euroopassa vuonna 1962?" (How Did Finland Become the Bridgehead of Japanese Automotive Imports into Europe in 1962?), Juhani Sahi discusses the introduction of Japanese passenger cars to the Finnish car stock in the 1960s. The commencement of cooperation between Autokeskus Oy and Nissan Motor Company Ltd. in 1962 started the regular import of Japanese cars into Europe. Sahi discusses the commercial and commercial policy factors which led to the import of Japanese cars beginning – a snowball effect which can still be seen today.

Sakari Siltala's article "Puun ja kuoren välissä – Metsäliitto, puumarkkinat ja suomalainen yhteistyökapitalismi 1980-luvun alkuvuosina" (Between the Wood and the Bark – Metsäliitto, Timber Markets and Finnish Cooperative Capitalism in the Early 1980s) discusses the undercurrent of cooperation that steered the Finnish economy up until the 1980s. Cooperative capitalism limiting 'destructive' competition was evident in practice in cartels and more loosely connected business consortiums. The system had been built with political support from the central government in order to boost the country's economy. In forestry, which was significant to the national economy, the current of cooperation was so strong that it also pulled in those business areas which were meant to be kept out of it. However, this high tide had side channels and counter currents. In his article, Siltala sheds light on the dynamics of cooperative capitalism in forestry and timber markets. The focus is on the cooperative owned by forest owners, Metsäliitto.

In his article "Elinkeinoelämän yhteiskunnallinen aktivismi politiikan muutoksen taustavoimana 1970-luvulta 1980-luvulle" (Social Activism in the Business Community as a Force behind Political Change from the 1970s to the 1980s), Ville Olkkonen analyses the Finnish Business and Policy Forum EVA, founded in 1974, as a challenger of the welfare state. Even though the Finnish welfare state can without a doubt be considered a product of political consensus, Okkonen shows that there were strong political and ideological disagreements behind that consensus. This study of connections between party politics and EVA sheds new light on the nature of the political drift that took place in the 1970s and 1980s, as well as on social activism within the business community.

Mikko Kohvakka's article "Verkostot korkeakouluja ja niiden toiminnan skaaloja muokkaavana voimana Itä-Suomessa 1970- ja 1980-luvulla" (Networks as a Force Moulding Higher Education Institutions and Their Activities in Eastern Finland in the 1970s and 1980s) discusses how the density of the cross-municipal regional and local level network and the spatial rhetoric used by it affected the development and strategic choices of two higher education institutions established in 1969 during the turning point between 'welfare capitalism' and 'competition state capitalism'.

Tomi Mertanen's article "Kulttuurihanke aikansa kuvastajana – Suomalainen kulttuuriattasea Berliinissä välirauhan aikana" (Cultural Endeavour as a Portrait of Its Time: A Finnish Cultural Attaché in Berlin during the Interim Peace) delves into relations between Finland and Germany during the Interim Peace. The Interim Peace which followed the Winter War was a politically difficult time for Finland. Pressure from Soviet Union was feared. Germany was seen as the only security against the East, but it did not want to officially be in contact with Finland. Consequently, there was a concentrated effort to warm relations with Germany by means of culture. The object of Mertanen's study is a project aimed at getting a Finnish cultural attaché in Berlin to handle cultural relations while simultaneously working to create political rapprochement between the countries.

In his article "Johtajuus vai instituutiot? Lyndon Johnson ja Medicare -ohjelman luominen vuosina 1964–1965" (Leadership or Institutions? Lyndon Johnson and the Creation of the Medicare Program in 1964–1965), Markus Kantola discusses how much the leadership skills of the presidents of the United States affect what kinds of bills Congress submits for them to sign. By looking at the actions of Lyndon Johnson, Kantola argues that the fate of Johnson's bills was primarily decided by institutional matters over which Johnson had only limited influence.

Mika Kallioinen's article "Menestyksen avaimet? Instituutiot ja Euroopan nousu" (The Keys to Success? Institutions and the Rise of Europe) takes the current state of Europe as its starting point. The continent is burdened by an ageing population, the debt crisis and a loss of influence elsewhere. It is claimed that Europe is gradually turning into an outdoor museum which Asian or Brazilian tourists visit to wonder at the signs of lost power. However, in the 19th century, Europe rose to lead the way for the world, whether it was a question of industrialization, world trade or scientific advancement, and this this continued to some degree until the 20th century. Kallioinen discusses why Europe alone was capable of taking a decisive lead in technology or economics compared to the rest of the world and not, for example, China or the Islamic world.

In his review "Unkarin äärioikeistoliikkeet 1930-luvulla" (Hungarian Extreme Right Movements in the 1930s), Anssi Halmesvirta provides a background for the current political situation in Hungary. As the two-party system continues to increase polarisation, a new nationalistic extreme right has entered the political field, which increasingly clearly looks for its inspiration and operating methods to the politics of the streets and the violence of the 1930s and is giving rebirth to the historical myth of Hungary.