Notes on the contents

This issue of *Historiallinen Aikakauskirja* presents topical archaeology of the historical era in Finland. The texts in the themed section shed light on the status of archaeology as a challenger of the study of history, promoter of new research directions and rectifier of old and dated interpretations, but also as a provider of support for outcomes gained. Not only are the writings a wider sample of the current field of archaeological study, but also a selection projects and research outcomes from a younger generation of researchers who have recently received or will soon receive their doctorate.

The subjects of the articles stretch geographically from northern Finland via Tallinn to Athens. The articles share with each other the fact they discuss historical phenomena from an archaeological perspective, while each has an individual view of the study of history. A recurring theme seems to be the relation between archaeological and written sources, which in practice is demonstrated, for example, as a division in the field and, consequently, between disciplines – an often entirely unnecessary and technical division. In fact, there are considerable similarities between archaeologists and more contemporary researchers oriented towards social history, if not with regard to source orientation and materials, then at the level of how they pose questions about society and answer them. For example, unlike what would be possible based only on written sources, archaeologists can discuss issues such as Christianity or sexuality in the Middle Ages as social, far-reaching and complex processes.

The theme issue starts with Panu Savolainen's article: "Haarautuvien polkujen puutarha: Historia ja arkeologia menneisyyttä määrittämässä" ("The garden of forking paths: History and archaeology defining the past"), which discusses archaeology as reaching ever closer to the present day while historians are increasingly looking at space, artefacts and everyday life phenomena. The themes and research subjects of these disciplines researching the past are increasingly convergent, but differing materials, practices and methods often stand in the way of a multidisciplinary approach and assimilation of research topics. Savolainen discusses the relationship between materials and theories of historical studies and archaeology from the perspectives of text and material culture.

In their article "Ruoanjätteitä, kariesta ja kemiaa: Mitä arkeologiset ja luonnontieteelliset menetelmät kertovat ruokapöydän antimista 1400–1700-luvulla?" (Food remains, caries and chemistry: What do archaeology and the natural sciences tell us about dining in the 15th to 18th centuries?"), Maria Lahtinen, Anna-Kaisa Salmi and Rosa Vilkama show how archaeology increases our knowledge of the past by studying the everyday material culture. The authors focus on the special features of food culture in northern Finland by using the methodologies of animal osteology, palaeopathology and isotope chemistry. The article particularly sheds light on the role of meat and fish dishes as well as carbohydrates in the diet.

Auli Bläuer and Mia Lempiäinen-Avci's article "Luita ja jyviä: Maatalouden historia arkeologisen eläinluu- ja kasvijäännetutkimuksen valossa" (Bones and grains: The history of agriculture in the light of archaeological animal osteology and plant residue research)

discusses the opportunities presented by archaeological animal bone and plant residue materials to the long-term study of the history of agriculture spanning thousands of years. Simultaneously, they demonstrate how combining archaeological and written source materials diversifies the research into the development of agriculture in the historical era.

In their article "Keskiajan suomalainen käyttökeramiikka: tuontitavaraa vai paikallista valmistusta?" (Finnish everyday ceramics in the Middle Ages: Imported or produced locally?"), Elisabeth Holmqvist-Saukkonen, Andreas Koivisto and Riikka Väisänen describe how the redware innovation of the time, lead-glazed pots and jugs manufactured on a potter's wheel, spread far and wide in the Baltic Sea region from the 13th century on. The manufacturing method of these useful vessels was quite easy to adopt, which led to the copying of exported artefacts in numerous workshops in different areas. In the article, the authors discuss the introduction of local redware manufacture and international contacts demonstrated by exported artefacts.

In her article "Kansalaismielipiteen jäljillä: Arkeologisen aineiston rooli aatehistoriallisessa ostrakismos-tutkimuksessa" ("In search of public opinion: The role of archaeological materials in historical-ideological ostrakismos research"), Suvi Kuokkanen discusses the *ostrakismos* voting used in classical Athens, which enabled the temporary expulsion of a person by a decision of the assembly. In contrast with a normal assembly, an ostrakismos ('ostracism') assembly did not debate the decision – vote was merely given against a person. There exist both written and archaeological sources on the subject. The written materials are largely later sources, while the archaeological materials comprise voting tokens representing the opinions of common voters.

In his article "Kiveen kirjoitettu: Ruotsin ja Venäjän väliset historialliset rajamerkit arkeologian valossa" (Written in stone: Historical boundary stones between Sweden and Russia in the light of archaeology), Ville Laakso discusses historical boundary stones between Sweden and Russia, which are typical fixed relics in eastern Finland. They contain writing and their origin has often been documented in written sources. Research into boundary stones has been primarily published by historians. In the future, application of archaeological research methods might engender new knowledge, for example, about the location, means of manufacture, authenticity and age of the stones.

In addition to the above, Visa Immonen's bulletin on a medieval seal found in Ulvila and Juha Ruohonen's article on Finland's oldest church (recently discovered in Kaarina) speak of the accumulation of new archaeological research materials and immense research potential. The articles clearly show that if study of history wishes to be of high quality, topical and renewing, it cannot afford to ignore the materials and research outcomes of contemporary archaeology. On the other hand, archaeology should not neglect the use of what has already been established, as well as the latest results and interpretations of the study of history. Dialogue between disciplines is a necessary condition of progress in research.

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