Archaeology at the University of Helsinki today

Mika Lavento

Introduction

The aim of this essay is to describe the development of archaeology at the University of Helsinki from the 1990s to the year 2020. This time period was a versatile and successful one for the Faculty of Arts. However, today the situation is quite different; the Department of Cultures at the University of Helsinki encompasses altogether ten individual faculties, all different and partly competing with each other.

I reflect on the major changes that took place through the lens of my personal experience, from when I began my undergraduate studies in 1981, to finishing my MA studies in 1988, to assuming the position of assistant in 1991, university lecturer in 2001, and finally professor of archaeology in 2004.

The University of Helsinki as a working environment – The changing standards of administration and evaluation at the university

Since the University was established as the Royal Academy of Turku in 1640, the administrative structure had mostly been based on the decisions of the professors. In 1991, the university administration faced a revolutionary change: democratic elections for administrative offices. Employees such as assistants and lecturers received the right to elect their representatives to the administrative board, and so did the students.

This tripartite system is still in use today. However, according to the University Act of 2009, a minimum of 40 % of the board members must represent expertise from outside the university staff and students (Finlex.fi). This speaks to the influence of business perspectives and politics in an institution that had its roots in the freedom of science. At the same time, the portion of state funding for higher education became dependant on the size of the purse that a university could earn on its own; universities are expected to search for finances from anywhere they can, and business contacts and donations can now sometimes be fruitful. This model of funding created an unstable and biased foundation for the economy of the university, and for this reason it should be considered a threat to education and science as a whole.

Competition is about comparison. The University of Helsinki is no exception to this rule in its thirst for high international rankings, and quantitative factors count very much. A credit system was introduced to university studies in Finland already in the 1980s (one study week = 40 working hours), and the ETCS credit system was introduced in 2013. The Finnish system is in accordance with the European system and assumes that one study point is 27 hours of workload. Moreover, the efficiency of a university is weighed by the quantity and quality of its publications, which in turn are assessed according to the standards set by the Publication Forum (Julkaisufoorumi), coordinated by the Federation of Finnish Learned Societies.

The many homes of the archaeology department

Throughout its existence, the department of archaeology has operated in different locations, all of which undoubtedly had their pros and cons. Although archaeology today has its own workplace, it is not very large. In practise, work is done in two different places, in different buildings that have nothing to do with archaeology. The good old times at Nervanderinkatu 13 may awaken roman-

tic dreams in some (Figure 1). I might add, though, that in those days the National Board of Antiquities (the Finnish Heritage Agency) had a strong influence on the research topics of archaeology at the University.

Today, the venue for archaeology is in the historical building of Topelia (Unioninkatu 38) at the City Centre campus of the University of Helsinki, just a few steps from the Senate Square and National Library. Much of the cooperation with geosciences and environmental sciences takes place in other campuses within easy reach by public transport.

The situation is satisfactory, but many of us perhaps miss the venue we had in Kruununhaka between 1988–1999. At Meritullinkatu 1, the professor and assistants, lecturers, and students, all worked together as an independent scholarly society. We had a library of our own, adequate space for everyone, a room for soil analyses and the like, and a photo lab.

In the early 1990s, at Meritullinkatu 1, the staff comprised six members: the professor, two assistants, two researchers financed by the Academy of Finland, and an office secretary (Figure 2). One important reason for the state government to favour archaeology at the time was its employment policy. Unemployed individuals were used in rescue excavations in northern and eastern Finland, where the level of unemployment was the highest. Each excavation, in turn, needs a professional archaeologist, and usually more than one.

Six full-time archaeologists employed at a university at any one time is a large number in Finnish circumstances. The individual interests of the researchers brought forth new research topics, specific fields of study, and theoretical viewpoints, which in turn provided inspiration for new projects and directed the professional paths of the students.

My predecessor as the professor of archaeology, Ari Siiriäinen, was keen on the study of Stone Age dwelling sites and shore displacement (Siiriäinen 1974), which are important topics in Finnish archaeology. In addition, he was also an explorer of exotic cultures in Africa and South America. His research and adventures abroad are further discussed in Oula Seitsonen's and Martti Pärssinen and Antti Korpisaari's articles in this volume. At Meritullinkatu 1, his office would stay empty for weeks, even months, during his travels. In the meanwhile, assistants Christian Carpelan and Marianne Schauman-Lönnqvist, and later Anne Vikkula and myself, took care of the teaching and seminar excavations. I feel very grateful for the freedom that Siiriäinen gave us; he relied on his colleagues and trusted us.

Figure 1. Between 1972 and 1986, the Department of Archaeology was located on the first floor of Nervanderinkatu 13. The National Board of Antiquities was also at the same address. Photo: Mika Lavento (16 June 2022).

Figure 2. Between 1987 and 1999, the Department of Archaeology was located on the first and fourth floors of Meritullinkatu 1. When the building belonged to the University of Helsinki, several other humanities departments were also working at the same location. Photo: Mika Lavento (2 June 2022).

Together at the city campus

Archaeology's current location at Topelia might have the potential to grow as a spot for scholarly interaction. It has a nice courtyard, and before the pandemic there used to be a lunch cafeteria. Regrettably, the Department of Cultural Studies, which was established in 1998, never had any true inner gravity. Its four disciplines – archaeology, ethnography, folklore studies, and anthropology – were too far from each other to find proper motives to interact on the grassroots level. The small fields of maritime history and museology made good connections, but anthropology felt it was sensible to leave the Faculty of Art and found its place in the Faculty of Social Sciences.

In fact, each of the individual disciplines lost crucial resources and funding. The small departments lost their own positions as individual departments. The professors of each discipline and their teams were no longer able to make any budget decisions without consulting a higher administrative level first. Somewhat ironically, my first years as the professor of archaeology were coloured by a contradiction: I was appointed as the acting professor in December 2003, but Head of Department only in January 2004.

This department of four (later only three) disciplines did not have a long life. The next step for archaeology was to become a part of the Department of Philosophy, History, Cultures, and Arts in 2010. In this department, teaching positions were available for 13 academic subjects as major studies and seven as minor. The number of master's level students was approximately 2100, and PhD students as many as four hundred.

Slightly later, the number of teaching staff was reduced. By 2012 there were only 22 professors, and all assistant positions were eliminated in 2016. Larger achievements had been made by pursuing publications and presentations given in conferences and seminars. Several hundred research fellows and administrative personnel were additionally forced out of the University in 2017. Today there is a Department of Cultures (Kulttuurien osasto) again, now bringing together 15 disparate disciplines such as African studies, gender studies – and archaeology.

Cultural Heritage Studies as an academic discipline is fairly young in Helsinki. Dr Vesa-Pekka Herva, an archaeologist, was chosen for a tenure track post to develop the subject teaching and start the first courses. The definitions and framing of questions were quite open in that phase so that Herva had free hands and a heavy load of responsibility. He left the post to take over the professorship of archaeology at the University of Oulu in 2014. Dr Anna Wessman, also an archaeologist, brought the structure and contents of Cultural Heritage Studies forward in 2014–2016, followed by Dr Visa Immonen, also an archaeologist, in 2016–2017. Anna Wessman became an adjunct professor at the University of Turku between 2015–2021, and the pro-

fessor of Iron Age studies at the University Museum of Bergen in Norway in 2020. Immonen worked at the Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies in 2011–2014, at the Getty Research Institute in 2016–2017, and in Helsinki as an adjunct Professor of Cultural Heritage Studies in 2016–2017. He became the Professor of Archaeology at the University of Turku in 2017, and the Professor of Medieval Archaeology at the university of Bergen in 2022.

Today, students can apply to study programs at either the candidate level or the master's level. At the candidate level, several disciplines are together in the Cultural Studies. This means that, for their Bachelor of Arts, students can choose a study subject according to their interests.

Archaeology is included in the Candidate Program of Cultural Studies and the master's program of Cultural Heritage. Other disciplines included in the curriculum of these programs are folklore studies, ethnography, art history, and theology, museology, and heritage studies. The first-year students have introductory courses to introduce them to the wide scope of available studies. In other words, there is no entrance examination for archaeology in particular – you would have one year of general studies and time to think about what to focus on next. So, from the viewpoint of each discipline, there is a competition for second-year students. Is it necessary for archaeologists to advertise their strengths and future perspectives according to the law of business marketing?

Looking at the employment of our students in museums, I am seriously concerned about museology in Helsinki. The discipline was developed here by university lecturer Marja-Liisa Rönkkö from the year 2003 until 2013 when she retired. Dr Suzie Thomas, a British archaeologist, held the university lecturer position from 2014–2021. She considerably added to the knowledge about the interaction and cooperation between scholarly research and citizen science. Together with Anna Wessman, she worked with amateur archaeologists and metal detectorists, whose role is growing very quickly in numerous countries, Finland being no exception (Wessman *et al*. 2019a; 2019b). Thomas left Helsinki for a university position at the University of Antwerp. Now, the Faculty of Arts refuses to fill the empty chair for financial reasons, as the explanation goes.

Archaeological studies in the Saimaa area

Let us now turn our gaze to the various research projects and excavations that have been important for the Department of Archaeology during the most recent decades. Some of them are also featured in other articles in this book. Stone Age excavations were carried out at Sätös in Outokumpu during the early 1980s, and the large Iron Age project at Salo was carried out by the Department of Archaeology in 1978–1982 (Uino 1986; Schauman-Lönnqvist 1988). They were continued in Häme by the Iron Age project *RASI* (Lavento 1993). Anne Vikkula (later Wikkula) took over as assistant in 1990, and I began in a similar position in 1991. Professor Siiriäinen managed to secure adequate financial support from the University of Helsinki to launch the four-year project *Ancient Lake Saimaa* (1991–1995). Together with students we excavated the Stone Age site of Pörrinmökki in Rääkkylä parish (1991–1993) and the Early Metal Period sites at Kitulansuo D in Ristiina (now Mikkeli) (1994–1995). While conducting archaeological surveys, we determined that a university course on surveying should be added to the study programme.

After the *Ancient Saimaa Project* was completed, we continued to organize field schools in the area (see Heinonen & Ilves, this volume for a comprehensive history of teaching excavations in our department). Petri Halinen followed Wikkula as the assistant from 1997. The multi period site complex of Multavieru in Polvijärvi (now Joensuu) was chosen for teaching excavations in 1996–1997, the Early Metal Period sites at Martinniemi in Kerimäki in 1998–1999, and Ruokolahti in Karoniemi in 2000–2001. Teaching surveys was conducted at Ristiina in 1996, Kesälahti in 1997, and at the northernmost edges of the Saimaa water basin by Lake Pielisjärvi in Nurmes in 1998. All of these surveys were planned together with students, and special attention was paid to shore displacement.

The Saimaa studies were very fruitful indeed. A few results are published in the two volumes of the book series Helsinki Papers in Archaeology (Kirkinen & Tusa 1996a; 1996b). In addition, much of the material has been used in PhD theses (Lahelma 2008; Mannermaa 2008; Wessman 2010; Mökkönen 2011).

Cooperative projects in the Karelian Isthmus

After the work in the Saimaa region, we wished to continue eastwards to Lake Ladoga, and a new project started in 1998 in cooperation with the Institute for the History of Material Culture of the Russian Academy of Sciences in St. Petersburg (IIMK RAN) and the Peter the Great Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography (Kunstkamera). Those were inspiring times (Lavento *et al.* 2001); the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991 had unlocked many doors. Pirjo Uino defended her PhD thesis on Iron Age Karelia at the University of Helsinki in 1997 (Uino 1997), and Aleksandr Saksa his thesis on the Iron Age burials of Karelia at the University of Joensuu in 1998.

Field excursions and surveys at Räisälä, Kaukola, Kurkijoki, Koivisto, Kuolemajärvi, and Johannes took place over altogether six seasons, until 2003 (see Nordqvist & Uino, this volume). Archaeological research had not been conducted in those areas since World War II. Sakari Pälsi (1915) wrote his PhD thesis on the Stone Age material from the Kaukola parish material, and A.M. Tallgren carried out excavations in Räisälä. We focused on shore displacement and Stone Age dwellings on the Russian side of the state border, just as in the Saimaa area. For the interesting similarities and differences between these studies, see Halinen & Mökkönen (2009). More results of the Saimaa-Ladoga project were published in the book *The Karelian Isthmus – Stone Age Studies from 1998–2003* (Lavento & Nordqvist 2008).

In June 2002, we excavated a Mesolithic and Neolithic dwelling site in Räisälä. The name of the site in Finnish is Juoksemajärvi, and Bol'šoe Zavetnoe 4 in Russian. There were also finds from the Early Metal Age, as well as traces of medieval activity. This field school in Russia was a once-in-a-lifetime experience for 15 students, a few of whom became very interested in the archaeology of Karelia. The excavation was led by Petri Halinen. There were some slight language problems, issues with travel costs, and other practical considerations (Halinen *et al.* 2008.). Oula Seitsonen and Kerkko Nordqvist later returned to the Russian sites. Afterwards, we had many possibilities for cooperation with Russian colleagues and for work in Russia; later it became more and more difficult, and after Russia's attack to Ukraine, impossible.

Personally, I miss the field seasons in Russia. I had the pleasure to represent the University of Helsinki in the Norwegian–Swedish–Finnish–Russian project in 2004–2007 at Lake Onega and in the Archangelsk Oblast.

Field work after the Karelian Isthmus

After the field work on the Karelian Isthmus, the focus of research at the department has concentrated on the Iron Age and medieval periods in Lapland and southern Finland.

Teaching excavations were carried out at Nukkumajoki 5 in Inari during 2007, led by Docent Petri Halinen. Excavations were also conducted at Kiellajoenkangas in Inari. The field excavations in Vantaa, at the Mesolithic and early Neolithic site of Brunaberget, were carried out in 2011–2012. All other field school excavations were carried out in the Uusimaa and Kymenlaakso areas, until 2017. After that, field school was conducted in excavations at Tursiannotko in Pirkkala, and after 2020 at Bartsgårda in Åland. The excavated sites were usually dated to the Iron or Middle Age.

The southernmost survey was carried out in the Repovesi national park, where the work was done at the request of Metsähallitus (the Finnish Forest and Park Service), and a small book aimed at the larger public was published on the work (Lavento & Lahelma 2007). Other surveys were conducted in southern Finland.

Vårt maritima arv – Merellinen perintömme was a research project that aimed to understand the environment of the coastal zone during the Iron Age. It was carried out by Henrik Jansson and Georg Haggrén in 2000–2003, with Professor Ari Siiriäinen as PI. The aim of the research was to find and research new Iron Age and medieval sites in the western Uusimaa area. As a result of the project, the book *Maritime Landscape in Change: Archaeological, Historical, Palaeoecological, and Geological Studies in Western Uusimaa* (Haggrén & Lavento 2011) was published, as well as a CD ROM on the research results (Jansson 2005).

Classical archaeology and archaeology in the Near East

Professor Ari Siiriäinen particularly wanted to carry out archaeological field work in Africa. He conducted field work in Suez, Egypt, already in the early 1960s (Siiriäinen 1984). Later, he investigated water collection systems in Kenya and Tanzania (and also rode a camel in the hot desert). He was also keen to explore the secrets of the jungle of the Amazon, and had visions of research projects in South America together with Professor of Latin American Studies Martti Pärssinen. The latter also acted as the supervisor of two PhD theses in archaeology (Korpisaari 2006; Saunaluoma 2013).

Excursions, field work, and projects around the Mediterranean and in the Near East have traditionally been an essential part of the archaeological work at the University of Helsinki, although the academic path to Classical archaeology differed from other studies in archaeology. Minna Silver (then Lönnqvist) wrote her PhD on the Bronze Age in Levant (Lönnqvist 2000). I also want to mention the PhD theses of Eeva-Maria Viitanen (2010), Paula Kouki (2012), Lena Hakulin (2013), Pirjo Hamari (2019), and Mikko Suha (2021).

Dr Björn Forsén, a historian and Head of the Finnish Institute in Athens (2004–2007 and 2018–) has invited his Finnish and Swedish colleagues as well as students from the University of Helsinki to participate in projects in Greece. I personally took part in surveys in the Peloponnese in the late 2000s. Other field studies have taken place in Thessaloniki and Epirus (Forsén *et al.* 2003).

Several young archaeologists participated in the *Expeditio Pompeiana Universitatis Helsingiensis – The Pompeii Project of the University of Helsinki* (EPUH), led by Professor Paavo Castrén and at first supported by the Finnish Academy between 2004–2006. After that, the financing came from the Finnish Cultural foundations, and finally from the Emil Aaltonen foundation (Castrén *et al.* 2008). From the University of Helsinki Department of Archaeology, the most important participant was Eeva-Maria Viitanen, and her PhD dissertation topic was on the Roman Villas in the vicinity of Rome.

Another large Finnish archaeological project was carried out in the Near East (Lahelma, this volume). The *Finnish Jabal Hārūn Project* in Jordan was led by Professor Jaakko Frösén from 1998 to 2008. Probably the most famous part of this huge effort is their work on the Petra papyrus. Together with an international team of archaeologists, Frösén conducted a thorough research of the early Christian Monastery of Jabal Hārūn, dated to the 4th–7th centuries. The excavations were led by adjunct professor Zbigniew T. Fiema. I myself was responsible for an intensive archaeological survey of the close surroundings of Aaron´s Mountain, where the oldest stone artefacts date to the Palaeolithic. Altogether, eight MA theses and three PhD dissertations were written about the excavated and/or surveyed materials from this project (Holmqvist 2010; Kouki 2012; Miettunen 2013). The project publications, Petra I–III (Fiema & Frösén 2008; Fiema *et al.* 2016; Kouki & Lavento 2013), are several hundred pages each. Holmqvist prepared her thesis in London; the others were written in Helsinki.

Carrying out field work in Jordan is one of the goals of the ongoing project *Ancient Near Eastern Empires*, financed by the Academy of Finland and nominated as a Centre of Excellence at the University of Helsinki. The project was scheduled for the years 2018–2025 under the leadership of assistant professor Saana Svärd. Dr Antti Lahelma, university lecturer in archaeology, carries the main responsibility for the archaeological part of the research.

In the study programmes of the University of Helsinki, courses in Classical archaeology are optional study choices in the field of Greek and Latin philology. Classical archaeology was advanced by university lecturer Leena Pietilä-Castrén for over a decade (2005–2018). After she retired, the post of university lecturer has stood empty. Again, the Faculty of Arts gives no promises about the future of this post, or the field in general.

Methodological development

Computers changed the university in the 1990s. For the archaeologists, one of the first true steps forward were programs for using and making maps, such as MapInfo. Geographical Information Systems (GIS) created very promising opportunities for the study and understanding of the environmental challenges in the north in prehistoric

times and the human adaptations to these changing topographies, vegetation, etc. Modelling became easier and visits to the field could be planned by testing various parameters.

Taking GIS measurements is often time-consuming, and the equipment is heavy to carry. The total station may not solve the latter problem, but it saves time. It multiplies the measurement data by a thousand times, more than was ever possible without digital technology. It is accurate – or as accurate as the users are. The first total station in Finland came into use at Mikkeli (Ristiina) Kitulansuo D in the Saimaa project in 1994.

It was also time for improvements in teaching by using sophisticated technology. Wesa Perttola was appointed as university teacher in archaeology in 2012. His special area of interest and responsibility is computer-aided technology, in addition to organizing the field schools and teaching the skills needed for fieldwork and documentation. From the 1990s onwards, the methods for archaeological fieldwork, as well as opportunities for conducting post-excavation analyses, have developed greatly and provided new data for research. These methods included geophysical, GIS, and the several methods to analyse minerals and elements (Holmqvist, this volume). All of this shows how much archaeological field methods have developed and how much new data has become available during field work as a result.

Microscopic analyses also demand special expertise. Some basic equipment was available in the small archaeological laboratory in the basement of Topelia. The most advanced expert on archaeological macrofossils was Santeri Vanhanen, who now holds a post as palaeoecologist in Lund, Sweden (Vanhanen 2019). In addition to Vanhanen, PhD Teija Alenius, a geologist, conducted many pollen analyses in Topelia, and Kati Salo was an important researcher focusing on human osteology (Salo 2016).

Dr Elisabeth Holmqvist was named the laboratory coordinator in 2018. She had previously acquired much knowledge and experience from abroad, mostly through her stay at University College London (Holmqvist 2010). She is currently managing our new laboratory at Unioninkatu 35, where the conditions for the handling of archaeological material are considerably better than those at Topelia were (Figure 3). The possibilities for analysis are many: soil, minerals, stone technology, metals and other elements, fibres, furs, textiles, and unburnt and burnt bones. Holmqvist worked in the Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies between 2019–2020 on the project *No (Viking) Man's Land? Materialising East-West Mobility on the Finnish Baltic Coast c. 800–1000 CE.* During her time there, Dr Krista Vajanto took over as the laboratory coordinator.

Figure 3. The new laboratory of archaeology at Unioninkatu 35, established in 2021. Photo: Mika Lavento (20 August 2022).

Osteological research methods have also been actively used in the archaeology department (Mannermaa, this volume). Several MA theses and some PhD dissertations have focused on the study of osteological material, both animal and human. Concentration on a particular methodology has proven to be important for these PhD dissertations. Kristiina Mannermaa (2008) concentrated on analysing the bird bones found in Neolithic contexts and Kati Salo (2016) on human osteological material from the Middle Ages.

Maritime archaeology has been taught at the University of Helsinki for decades (Marila & Ilves, this volume). Starting from the 1990s, maritime archaeology was suggested to be added to the curriculum, and for ten years, in 1997–2007, Anne Ala-Pöllänen took the main responsibility to incorporate maritime heritage into teaching. It was fairly obvious, though, that maritime issues would not suit the study programmes of the university after the so-called Bologna process was put into practice in Helsinki. And, alas! Cultural studies under the water level fell between the chairs, as it was expected (Ala-Pöllänen & Lavento 2002; Lavento & Ala-Pöllänen 2007).

The situation changed radically in 2014 when lucky coincidences brought the opportunity to launch teaching in maritime research at the University of Helsinki, but in Swedish language. At first, maritime archaeologist Marcus Hjulhammar was invited from Sweden, and the goal was to develop a multidisciplinary study programme. After Hjulhammar's relocation, since 2018, the teaching has been developed by Kristin Ilves, and the students now have the opportunity for specialized graduate-level courses in maritime archaeology at their MA-level studies. Lectures in maritime archaeology are constantly updated to reflect the ongoing research in Finland and beyond (Marila & Ilves 2023). During their maritime studies, students are introduced to a wide variety of current research themes and approaches from sailing modeling to the complex phenomena behind the establishment of maritime networks and from socioecological island studies to the questions of maritime archaeology's connection to contemporary societies, to name just a few. Available courses also incorporate affiliated maritime research projects, such as *The ports and harbours of Southeast Asia*, led by Veronica Walker Vadillo during 2020–2022 and *Re-imagining the use of traditional watercraft in the Aegean Sea for a sustainable environment and economy,* driven by Katerina Velentza in 2021–2024.

Current trends in teaching

Hardly any courses on prehistory are taught today, and archaeology seems to be about ways of finding out instead of knowing about. In my opinion this is a correct approach, but still very insufficiently developed. I do not consider it natural or efficient that an archaeology student should learn artefact typologies from books. Even less so, because textbooks about the different finds from Finland are all too few, are often very old, and usually cover only a restricted geographical area or a certain time period. Students come to the university because it is a place for learning! To meet today's standards, we should teach methodology – and yes, we do. Some lectures are given by specialists from different institutions, even from abroad. They share valuable knowledge and receive hardly anything back in return except thanks. The Faculty of Arts is often simply out of money – one of the many faculties and departments in Finnish universities facing the very same trouble.

The students are talented and hard-working. They use e-readers to access information, are fluent in English, and find their ways to other faculties and campuses and international fields. However, they are humans, and humans get tired. Frustration sometimes occurs, and a young person may give up after getting lost in the jungle of available information.

Luckily, there are projects! Certain shares of research grants can and must be used for teaching purposes. To give an example, we are privileged to have Kristiina Mannermaa, the expert in animal osteology, as the leader of a project financed by the European Research Council.

The quality of the thesis counts for much, of course. As far as the numbers are concerned, the 51 MA theses from the 1990s catches the eye. The target, set by the Faculty of Arts, was six per year for 2000–2010. Compared with the number of first-year students per year, nine students actually graduated with MA's during the period 2010–

2019. This goal was ambitious! I should point out, though, that the record of 20 theses was reached in 2018 because of a final deadline dictated by the Big Wheel that began as the result of Bologna process after 2005. This changed the organization of education at all levels of teaching in the University Helsinki, with the aim of getting the students to complete their studies more quickly than earlier and prepare for their degree examinations.

Nowadays, an MA degree in archaeology is required for most working contracts at the Finnish Heritage Agency and by private companies in the field of archaeology. The optimal length of a master's thesis is 60 pages, and the students should complete their studies within five years.

Seminar papers and MA theses written in English is a new feature of the 21st century. Twenty-two of the MA theses were written in English in the first decade, and the corresponding number for 2011–2020 was exactly the same. For comparison, the numbers of MA final work in Swedish were 3 and 7 respectively.

The growing interest in a PhD degree in archaeology is a delightful phenomenon. Instead of proceeding from a Phil. Lic. thesis towards the doctoral work, it is nowadays much more usual to concentrate on the latter only. Accordingly, it is fairly common to combine a few peer-reviewed articles together and defend the summarized results as a PhD dissertation. By doing so, the candidate can also more flexibly apply for their own funding – often a grant from a private foundation – towards this single target and crucial step for a future career in science.

The archaeological staff at the University of Helsinki has more researchers and teachers today than ever before in the history of the department. These include two professors, two tenure track professors, a university lecturer, and a university teacher, as well as a laboratory coordinator from the core staff, in addition to several postdoc and PhD researchers. The two professors are the author of this text, Mika Lavento, and Volker Heyd. Heyd is the PI of the international research project *The Yamnaya Impact on Prehistoric Europe*, financed by the European Research Council (see Heyd *et al.* 2019). Originally from Germany, Heyd started working in Helsinki in 2018, before which he was affiliated with the University of Bristol.

Final words

The last three decades have witnessed remarkable changes at the University of Helsinki. This is the situation in the discipline of archaeology as well. While the number of PhD dissertations was three during the last decade of the 20th century, it rose to nine during the first decade of the 21st century, and between 2010 and 2019 twenty archaeological PhD dissertations were written in Helsinki. This indicates how intensively the high-quality research has grown, mostly due to the large number of independent research projects. This has been possible because of good financing, effective post-graduate supervising, and the reorganization of doctoral programmes over the last ten years.

Though the role of archaeology in teaching and research at the university has grown, an interesting feature in relation to several other disciplines is that its material, methods, and interdisciplinary character have also strengthened. Archaeology is needed in rescue excavations and surveys organised by museums, commercial enterprises, universities, and private researchers. The Antiquities Act supervises that ancient remains should be excavated and studied before their destruction due to construction activities. This makes archaeological fieldwork of many kinds essential and requires that those who destroy the sites cover the costs of excavations. Ar-

Table 1. The number of MA and Phil. Lic. theses and PhD Dissertations in archaeology at the University of Helsinki.

	1990–1999	2000–2009	2010–2019
MA theses	51	76	91
Phil. Lic. theses	4	11	3
PhD diss.	3	9	21

chaeology thus produces new information that is of interest in many ways to people who are not archaeologists.

One aim of the discipline of archaeology at the university has been to develop new kinds of courses by organizing the students and researchers. There are courses of different types that may be useful for the students and of interest to the researchers, covering for example methodology, the classification and distribution of material, and dating in prehistory in an increasingly effective manner. Because research is being done in a more and more interdisciplinary manner, this creates new opportunities for researchers in these disciplines to study questions regarding past periods, their human cultures, and the changing environment.

Although archaeological research has concentrated mainly on the past, more topics have moved closer to our own time. The amount of and interest in conducting research with other disciplines have been constantly growing, and this has changed the future of the field as other sciences become a more active and growing part of archaeology. This has been observed by many students, too, who are pondering their own future within the discipline. These developments also create good opportunities for the advancement of contemporary archaeology itself – for its multifaceted ability to conduct research in unpredictable and successful ways.

References

Ala-Pöllänen, A. & Lavento, M. 2002. Merihistorian opinnot Helsingin yliopistossa – ajatuksia koulutuksen nykytilasta ja paremmasta tulevaisuudesta. *ICOMOS* 4/2002, 62–64.

Castrén, P., Berg, R., Tammisto, A. & Viitanen, E.-M. 2008. In the heart of Pompeii – Archaeological studies in the Casa di Marco Lucrezio (IX, 3, 5.24). P.G. Guzzo & M.P. Guidobaldi (eds.) *Nuove ricerche archeologiche nell'area Vesuviana (scavi 2003–2006): atti del Convegno internazionale, Roma 1–3 febbraio 2007*, 331–340. Studi della soprintendenza archeologica di Pompei 25.

Fiema, Z.T. & Frösén, J. (eds.) 2008. *Petra – The Mountain of Aaron I. The Finnish Archaeological Project in Jordan. Volume I. The Church and the Chapel.* Helsinki: Finnish Society of Sciences and Letters.

Fiema, Z.T., Frösén, J. & Holappa, M. (eds.) 2016. *Petra – The Mountain of Aaron II. The Nabataean Sanctuary and the Byzantine Monastery.* Helsinki: Finnish Society of Sciences and Letters.

Forsén, J., Forsén, B. & Lavento, M 2003. Catalogue of sites. Stockholm. *Skrifter utgivna av Svenska Institutet i Athen* 4(L1), 76–126.

Haggrén, G. & Lavento, M. (eds.) 2011. *Maritime Landscape in Change: Archaeological, Historical, Palaeoecological and Geological Studies on Western Uusimaa*. Iskos 19. Helsinki: Finnish Antiquarian Society.

Hakulin, L. 2013. *Metals in LBA Minoan and Mycenaean Societies on Crete: A Quantitative Approach.* Dissertation. University of Helsinki.

Halinen, P., Seitsonen, O., Seitsonen, S. & Nordqvist, K. 2008. Excavations at the Juoksemajärvi Westend Stone Age dwelling site in 2002. M. Lavento & K. Nordqvist (eds.) *Karelian Isthmus. Stone Age Studies in 1998–2003*, 235–265. Iskos 16. Helsinki: Finnish Antiquarian Society.

Halinen, P. & Mökkönen, T. 2009. Between lake and sea – Stone Age settlement by ancient Lake Ladoga on the Karelian Isthmus. *Fennoscandia archaeologica* XXVI, 107–161.

Hamari, P. 2019. *Roman-Period Roof Tiles in the Eastern Mediterranean: Towards Regional Typologies.* Dissertation. University of Helsinki.

Heyd, V., Kulcsár, G. & Preda-Balanica, B. (eds.) 2021. *Yamnaya Interactions: Proceedings of the International Workshop held in Helsinki, 25–26 April 2019*. Budapest: Archaeolingua.

Holmqvist, V.E. 2010. *Ceramics in Transition: A Comparative Analytical Study of Late Byzantine–Early Islamic Pottery in southern Transjordan and the Negev.* Dissertation. University College London.

Jansson, H. (ed.) 2005. *Merellinen perintömme – Vårt maritima arv.* CD-rom.

Kirkinen, T. & Tusa, M. (eds.) 1996a. *Environmental Studies in Eastern Finland.* Helsinki Papers in Archaeology 8. University of Helsinki Department of Archaeology.

Kirkinen, T. & Tusa, M. (eds.) 1996b. *Pithouses and Potmakers in Eastern Finland.* Helsinki Papers in Archaeology 9. University of Helsinki Department of Archaeology.

Korpisaari, A. 2006. *Death in the Bolivian High Planteau: Burials and Tiwanaku Society.* Dissertation. University of Helsinki.

Kouki, P. 2012. *The Hinterland of the City. Rural Settlement and land Use in the Petra Region from the Nabataean-Roman to the Early Islamic Period.* Dissertation. University of Helsinki.

Kouki, P. & Lavento, M. (eds.) 2013. *Petra – The Mountain of Aaron III. The Archaeological Survey.* Helsinki: Finnish Society of Sciences and Letters.

Lahelma, A. 2008. *A Touch of Red. Archaeological and Ethnographic Approaches to Interpreting Finnish Rock Paintings*. Iskos 15. Helsinki: Finnish Antiquarian Society.

Lavento, M. (ed.) 1993. *RASI: Interaction between Coastal and Inland Societies in the Iron Age I*. Helsinki Papers in Archaeology No. 5. University of Helsinki, Department of Archaeology.

Lavento, M. & Ala-Pöllänen, A. 2007. Näkökulmia meriarkeologian opetukseen ja tutkimukseen Helsingin yliopistossa – mitä Bolognan prosessin jälkeen? *ICOMOS* 4/2007, 14–19.

Lavento, M., Halinen, P., Timofeev, V., Gerasimov, D., & Saksa, A. 2001. An archaeological field survey of Stone Age and Early Metal Period settlement at Kaukola (Sevastjanovo) and Räisälä (Melnikovo) on the Karelian Isthmus in 1999. *Fennoscandia archaeologica* XVIII, 3–25.

Lavento, M. & Lahelma, A. (eds.) 2007. *Sama maisema, eri kulkijat – Repoveden kansallispuisto kivikaudelta 1900-luvulle.* Vantaa: Metsähallitus.

Lavento, M. & Nordqvist, K. (eds.) 2008. *Karelian Isthmus – Stone Age Studies in 1998–2003.* Iskos 16. Helsinki: Finnish Antiquarian Society.

Lönnqvist, M. 2000. *Between Nomadism and Sedentism: Amorites from the Perspective of Contextual Archaeology.* Dissertation. University of Helsinki.

Mannermaa, K. 2008. *The Archaeology of Wings: Birds and People in the Baltic Sea Region During the Stone Age.* Dissertation. University of Helsinki.

Marila, M.M. & Ilves, K. 2023. 'Perspectives in Maritime Archaeology': Challenging popular perceptions through online learning. *Public Archaeology* 0(0). DOI:10.1080/14655187.2023.2265189

Miettunen, P. 2013. *Our Ancestors Were Bedouin. Memory, Identity and Change: The Case of Holy Sites in Southern Jordan.* Dissertation. University of Helsinki.

Mökkönen, T. 2011. *Studies on Stone Age Housepits in Fennosscandia (4000–2000 CalBC). Changes in Ground Plans, Site Location, and Degree of Sedentism.* Dissertation. University of Helsinki.

Pälsi, S. 1915. *Riukjärven ja Piiskunsalmen kivikautiset asuinpaikat Kaukolassa.* Suomen Muinaismuistoyhdistyksen Aikakauskirja XXVIII. Helsinki: Finnish Antiquarian Society.

Salo, K. 2016. *Health in Southern Finland – Bioarchaeological Analysis of 555 Skeletons Excavated from Nine Cemeteries (11th–19th Century AD).* Dissertation. University of Helsinki.

Saunaluoma, S. 2013. *Pre-Columbian Earthwork Simes in the Frontier Region between Brazil and Bolivia, Southwestern Amazon*. Dissertation. University of Helsinki.

Schauman-Lönnqvist, M. 1988. *The development of Iron Age settlement in the Isokylä area in Salo. Iron Age Studies in Salo III.* Suomen Muinaismuistoyhdistyksen Aikakauskirja 89. Helsinki: Finnish Antiquarian Society.

Siiriäinen, A. 1974. Studies relating to shore displacement and Stone Age chronology in Finland. *Finskt Museum* 1973, 5–22.

Siiriäinen, A. 1984. *Excavations in Laikipia. An Archaeological Study of the Research Prehistory in the Eastern Highlands of Kenya.* Suomen Muinaismuistoyhdistyksen Aikakauskirja 86. Helsinki: Finnish Antiquarian Society.

Suha, M. 2021. *Late Classical-Hellenistic Fortifications in Epirus, Fourth to Second Century BCE.* Dissertation. University of Helsinki.

Uino, P. 1986. An Iron Age community at Ketohaka in Salo and other remains of metal period building in Finland. A. Hirviluoto, E. Linturi, M. Schauman-Lönnqvist & P. Uino (eds.) *Iron Age Studies in Salo I–II*, 25–201. Suomen Muinaismuistoyhdistyksen Aikakauskirja 89. Helsinki: Finnish Antiquarian Society.

Uino, P. 1997. *Ancient Karelia. Archaeological Studies.* Suomen Muinaismuistoyhdistyksen Aikakauskirja 104. Helsinki: Finnish Antiquarian Society.

Vanhanen, S. 2019. *Prehistorical Cultivation and Plant Gathering in Finland. An Archaeobothanical Study.* Dissertation. University of Helsinki.

Viitanen, E.-M. 2010. *Locus Bonus: The Relationship of the Roman Villa to Its Environment in the Vicinity of Rome.* Dissertation. University of Helsinki.

Wessman, A. 2010. *Death, Destruction and Commemoration: Tracing Ritual Activities in Finnish Late Iron Age Cemeteries (AD 550–1150)*. Helsinki: Finnish Antiquarian Society.

Wessman, A., Thomas, S., Rohiola, R., Kuitunen, J., Ikkala, E., Tuominen, J., Koho, M. & Hyvönen, E. 2019a. A citizen science approach to archaeology: Finnish Archaeological Finds Recording Linked Open Database (SuALT). C. Navarretta, M. Agirrezabal & B. Maegaard (eds.) *Digital Humanities in the Nordic Countries. Proceedings of the Digital Humanities in the Nordic Countries 4th Conference*, 469–478. Aachen: CEUR Workshop Proceedings.

Wessman, A., Thomas, S., Rohiola, R., Koho, M., Ikkala, E., Tuominen, J., Hyvönen, E., Kuitunen, J., Parviainen, H.M. & Niukkanen, M. 2019b. Citizen science in archaeology: Developing a collaborative web service for archaeological finds in Finland. J. Jameson & S. Musteaţă (eds.) *Transforming Heritage Practice in the 21st Century: Contributions from Community Archaeology*, 337–352. Chamonix: Springer.