

EDITORIAL NOTE: CHOOSING THE PATH TOWARDS A COLLECTIVE ETHOS

The winds are changing at *Suomen antropologi: Journal of Finnish Anthropological Society*! My service as editor-in-chief is coming to an end at the end of this year and I am proud to announce the appointment of the incoming editors-in-chief, Henni Alava and Tuomas Tammisto. To ensure a regular change in leadership, Henni and Tuomas are joining together for the next two-year editor-in-chief cycle. Henni has been a committed team player on the journal team over the past two-and-a-half years, serving as an editor. Her editorial work reflects the academic rigour required to keep this journal running. Tuomas' role in the journal dates back much further. He has served as a copyeditor, an editor-in-chief, an editor, and open access organiser, and knows the journal like the back of his hand. There have been numerous moments over the past two years when he has saved me, preventing the journal from sinking like a stone.

The know-how of both Henni and Tuomas, and their certitude in the institutional memory of this journal, is vital to keep the journal operating. Meanwhile, changes to journal's the leadership ensure that we maintain a dynamic journal team, one which reflects fresh perspectives.

Suomen antropologi is not only shifting to new leadership hands, but our team is also growing! We have established a new role within the journal, appointing Janette Lindroos to the role of editorial secretary, to assist in work in recent years which was delegated to the editor-in-chief. In addition, Jenni Mõlkänen and Jelena Salmi are joining the editorial team, which now consists of a six-person collective. Roman Urbanowicz joins our production team as copyeditor, working alongside our current copyeditor, Saara Toukolehto. And, finally, Jaanika Kingumets is taking on the role of assistant book review editor, alongside current book review editor, Pekka Tuominen.

By expanding our team, we are choosing a path towards a more collective ethos. This decision was made with the conscious awareness that, for a small journal like *Suomen antropologi* to remain afloat, it requires a collective ethos working together. It fills me with pride stepping down from my role knowing that a group of committed and talented individuals continue to work as a team, keeping the journal thriving. With this said, *Suomen antropologi* will carry on as a proud, independent, open access anthropology journal which does not bend to threats epitomised by the publishing industry's relentless cash extraction.

Over the past two years as editor-in-chief, I have overseen the publication of seven issues (including this one) of *Suomen antropologi*, each pieced together with timely and thought-provoking peer-reviewed articles, forums, book reviews, research reports, and essays. Throughout this time, I have learned how to manage an editorial team, consisting of individuals who have each inspired me and taught me something new along the way. Throughout my tenure, I have cherished working with a range of inspirational authors and reviewers to ensure that *Suomen antropologi* publishes the best quality work possible. All of this has been an enriching experience, and, as an early career researcher, it has taught me more than I could have imagined about academic journal publishing. It is a rarity and a gift to work as part of a journal team, to have the dark curtains of publishing lifted, and to be exposed to the intricate engineering of the academic publishing industry.

It is an honour to publish this collection of papers that make up the Winter Issue—issue number 49(4)—before I pass the torch on to the new team. This issue consists of three peer-reviewed articles, three essays, one research report, and a book review. Although all three peer-reviewed articles were submitted by individual authors, there is a shared theme across them: each text positions women’s lives as central within the text. I expand on this below.

The first of the peer-reviewed articles is Maria Vyatchina’s article, ‘Overcoming “Distinctive Backwardness”: Categorising Udmurt Women in the Soviet Biomedical Propaganda (1920–1932)’. Vyatchina’s fascinating article analyses early twentieth century Soviet biomedical propaganda disseminated through Udmurt literature. Drawing on rich archival material and detailed analysis, she examines the cultural exploitation of women’s bodies and the devaluation of Indigenous knowledge that positioned Indigenous women into idealised roles by Soviet officials.

The second peer-reviewed article is by Heidi Konttinen. Her article, ‘Visions for the Future of West Greenlandic Regalia and Knowledge on Seal Skins’, takes the reader into the world of Inuit knowledge on seal skin processing to consider the societal role of Inuit women’s labour vis-à-vis West Greenlandic regalia. Her article contributes to discussions on the broader impact of colonialism and coloniality; gender, racial, and class inequities; and economic challenges accompanying Greenland’s nation-building.

Zahra Edalati's article, 'Working With the Lights Off: Iranian Women's Equality-Seeking and Antifeminist Backlashes', marks the final peer-reviewed article in this Winter Issue. Edalati focuses on the resistance amongst women's rights activists who identify as Muslim in Iran, uncovering how they represented themselves prior to the emergence of the 2022 Mahsa movement. Her work reveals their reluctance in adopting the labels 'feminist' or 'Islamic feminist', and the broader strategies they employed to resist the patriarchy. Gender equality and 'equality-seeker' remain central in Edalati's analysis, rendering her work a timely contribution to broader discussions around feminism and the women's movement.

Beyond the peer-reviewed pieces, Tommi Kotonen and Aila Mustamo offer an essay under the Anthropologist's Toolkit series I introduced at the beginning of my tenure as editor-in-chief of *Suomen antropologi*. Their essay, 'Ethical and Methodological Dilemmas in Ethnographic Research Among the Far Right', examines how an ethically sustainable ethnography of the Far Right can be conducted, bearing in mind the risk of normalising both extreme ideologies and the points of view of participants.

This issue also includes two essays from the Finnish Anthropology Society Conference, 'Comparisons', held in Helsinki in June 2025. At that conference, Tom Boellstorff delivered the 2025 Westermarck Lecture, 'The Climate of Comparison', and Soumhya Venkatesan provided the conference's keynote address, 'Comparison in a World of Resemblances, Flows, and Proximities'. We are delighted to include both presentations, each of which explores comparisons in their own ways, in this issue.

Wang Yiyang and Sebastjan Jemec offer a fascinating research report on the informal financial economy amongst Chinese students in Russia during times of sanctions. 'Informal Currency Exchange Among Chinese Students in a Siberian City in Times of Sanctions' describes the limitations on transnational transactions students in Siberia face, and the informal online networks they create.

We also include in this issue of *Suomen antropologi* one book review, of 'The Invention of Tradition in China: Story of a Village and a Nation Remade', my own book, reviewed by Dayabati Roy.

Editors Tuomas Tammisto, Heikki Wilenius, and I collaborated with the authors featured in this issue, helping them shape their contributions to the most exacting standards (along with comments and suggestions from anonymous peer reviewers) in order to meet our journal's requirements. The hard work of Vanessa Fuller, Kevin Marples, Saara Toukolehto, and Roman Urbanowicz during the proofreading, and copyediting stages helped ensure the production process proceeded smoothly and efficiently,

enhancing the readability of this issue. Maija Räisänen, our layout editor, as always, completed the typesetting and formatting of this publication, giving *Suomen antropologi* its visual shape.

Before I close this editorial note and pass my editor's baton to Henni and Tuomas, I want to thank the authors and the reviewers who make this journal possible. Our authors, who submit their work to us, allow us to continue publishing the journal. In addition, we heavily rely on external experts to review submissions before publishing our scholarly submissions. All of our reviewers agree to take on that time-consuming role voluntarily, carefully reading and assessing manuscripts, a task which is particularly hidden since it is completed anonymously. Thank you so, so much to each and every one of you!

And finally, warmest wishes to all our readers this holiday season! Thank you for being part of our community and for all your support to keep our journal running. We look forward to sharing more inspiration with you in the year ahead.

Suvi Rautio

Editor-in-Chief

New York City

15 October 2025