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From allies to opponents. Conservatives facing fascism in Finland in the 1930s

Vesa Yrjö Vares

ABSTRACT

In Finland of the 1930s, the conservatives were often disappointed with parliamentary democracy after the heritage of the Civil War of 1918 and because of the threat of communism and the Soviet Union. In 1930 Finland faced an anti-communist populist uprising, and the conservatives eagerly championed its cause. However, they began to have doubts when the movement started to show fascist features. In the end, they fought against it.

I ask what was the relationship between conservatism and fascism in Finland? Was the Finnish case unique or just comparable to other European countries? I answer these questions by using critically first-hand sources, bearing in mind the wide international research on fascism. The emphasis is on the sources of the conservatives.

I argue that the right wing radicalism proved a disappointment to the conservatives. Instead of becoming an easily controlled junior partner the movement became a political party with leanings towards fascism that challenged the conservative National Coalition Party. The conservatives stuck to their traditional policies, to a conservative ideology and to British and Scandinavian democracy, and became the first bulwark against right wing radicalism in Finland – an essential if somewhat grudging co-belligerent in the defence of democracy.

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The political concepts and terms

The relationship between conservatives and fascists in Europe between the World Wars was in many senses highly problematic. On the one hand, they had some similar features and goals and especially common enemies. On the other hand, the differences were essential, and these had their roots in the very foundations of both orientations. Moreover, conservatism and fascism often ended up opposing each other in politics, both in public and, even more frequently, behind the curtains.

Antifascism has been a rising theme in research lately. Is it possible to speak about conservative antifascism? This is problematic in many senses. It has been challenged by many left wing and liberal interpretations, and for the conservatives, the wide application of any term related to fascism has always been a minefield, especially in the public debate, being employed as accusations, labels, vague stereotypes or abuse by fervent opponents.

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This is also due to the fact that the debate on what can and cannot be considered historical fascism has continued for decades, and even academics are far from any permanent consensus. One can find at least two main streams. The strict interpretation qualifies as fascists only those who actually called themselves so and advocated a corporate system for society. The wider interpretation concentrates on the similarities between fascism and national socialism and often sees 'fascist elements' in, for example, ultraconservative, populist and religiously motivated right wing movements.¹

In practice, historians usually accept that neither model is clear-cut and that historical circumstances always have to be taken into account. The old classics of the field, such as *Fascism: A Reader's Guide*,² and *Who were the Fascists?*,³ include articles of both interpretations. Some scholars categorize *either* national socialism or authoritarian conservatism as fascism alongside fascism in its original sense, some all three. Some do not categorize even national socialism as fascism because of the differences – usually because of the racial ideology and especially violent anti-Semitism.⁴ The anthology *Fascism, Critical Concepts in Political Science*, edited by Roger Griffin and Matthew Feldman, referred to a 'new consensus', the key criterion for recognizing a fascist movement is by its sense of *palingenes* – a rebirth or a new birth, a striving for a total cultural revolution.⁵ The reluctance to use the term 'fascism' as a wide concept has mainly been left to the older generation, for example Stanley Payne or Klas Åmark.⁶

Especially during recent years, the young generation of scholars has made the interpretation very wide and been interested also in antifascism as an ideology of its own right.⁷ The new interpretations – often using the expression 'rethinking' – see fascism as a cultural, even anthropological, revolutionary and alternative branch of modernity. They try to prove its wide influence by claiming that its success also encouraged many conservative circles and caused – as Aristotle Kallis calls it – 'dynamics of political hybridization' in circles that were not actually or originally fascists. These authoritarian regimes are called 'parafascist'.⁸ Bauerkämper and Rossolinski-Liebe write of 'fascistization' of the authoritarian elites.⁹ Should, then, the Finnish conservatives be approached as a Finnish version of antifascism or parafascism?

The author of this article does not wholly agree with the wide interpretation, nor with the dogma of crucial, clear-cut differences. Nor do I believe that there exists any 'universal' fascism or antifascism or that antifascism should be considered an ideology as such any more than, say, anti-communism. Hindsight always exaggerates – maybe not the historical importance of fascism, but certainly the importance that the contemporaries attached to it. In this paper, the term 'fascism' describes what the contemporaries considered as such. Most European conservatives sought to tame the fascists in order to use them as a plebeian façade to cover their own, still highly ultraconservative values and goals. Some succeeded in this, some had to fight against the fascists/Nazis actively, some were swallowed up or even destroyed by the latter.

In the Finnish case, the conservative policy led to active denunciation of both fascism and national socialism on ideological grounds. The Finnish case was in many ways peculiar; however, at the same time it was a question of a general European trend.

Open fascism in the margins in Finland

The reputation of the Finnish right wing between the World Wars is generally not very positive. The right wing is considered to have been pro-German, reactionary, illiberal, only in limited sense democratic, and generally old-fashioned. Even though the conservative right wing was allowed to live on after 1944, it was effectively prevented from holding any position of power.

The academic world in Finland, previously very patriotic, also moved clearly to the Left in the 1970s. Simultaneously, right wing radicalism became by far the most studied and researched political orientation of interwar Finland – the example of everything that had been wrong in Finnish politics between the World Wars. Research has been highly critical of right wing radicalism.¹⁰ Compared to this, the quantity of research carried out on other political parties – social democrats, agrarians, conservatives, liberals – who by far outnumbered right wing radicalism right and totally controlled the Government and all state institutions, has been almost miniscule. Only research on the extreme left can compete with the research on right wing radicalism.

This is the case even though open, self-confessed fascism or national socialism barely existed in Finland. As *Ekberg* has shown in his doctoral thesis, the national socialist ‘parties’ were small splinter groups that were established, soon split up, only to be founded again under new names – all the while remaining completely marginal. When they took part in parliamentary elections in 1936, they gained – as a total of all these parties – about 2000 votes in the whole country.¹¹ For a short time, there existed a small Finnish daily the name of which was *Fascisti*, but it was totally marginal.

During the 1920s, no group of right wing radicalism ever took part in the parliamentary elections, and even though individual extremists had some significant posts in the Civic Guards, some also in the army and quite a number in the leading student organization *Akateeminen Karjala-Seura* (Academic Carelia Society), practically nobody considered or called himself a fascist. The word was used only pejoratively in Finnish political discourse during the 1920s, by the Left and partly by the liberals in order to label the most extreme conservatives – in the same manner as these used the words ‘Marxism’ and ‘Marxists’ as abuse.

In the 1930s, however, the situation was different. First, there emerged a movement which began to demand the abolition of all communist organizations involved in public life. After the Red defeat in the Civil War of 1918, the Communist Party (founded in Moscow the same year) was outlawed, but the Far Left, using other names, still controlled the trade union movement and had more than 10% of the MPs in the Finnish Parliament. The anti-communist ‘Lapua Movement’, as it became known according to its place of origin, resorted to violence and became the most serious open threat against Finnish democracy after the Red coup in 1918. During the summer of 1930 the fate of democracy hung in the balance when it seemed that the government could not control the ongoing violence of the Movement. This included (at the grassroots level) three political murders, 250 deportations, made for the purpose of terror and intimidation, the illegal closing down of workers’ halls and purges of far-left representatives from municipal councils.¹²

However, as the movement became more violent, and especially after the Parliament decreed new laws which prevented any communist activities, support for the Lapua movement evaporated. By early 1932, it had become a frustrated extremist avant-garde

and attempted a coup in the small rural county of Mäntsälä about 100 kilometres north of the national capital, Helsinki. The rebels managed to gather about 500–600 supporters at Mäntsälä, but were surrounded by the Civic Guards and the army and capitulated without bloodshed in about a week.¹³ The revolt has remained in public memory mainly for a non-political reason: its leaders were drunk most of the time.

The Lapua movement was outlawed, but its political torch was picked up by a new organization, the People's Patriotic Movement (Isänmaallinen Kansanliike, IKL). This took part in parliamentary elections in the 1930s and gathered the support of 8% of the electorate at its peak. However, the party was ostracized by the other political parties and its existence hung in the balance throughout the decade.

Finnish historiography has never been unanimous concerning whether the Lapua movement and the IKL or a number of other organizations (such as the Academic Carelia Society) should be called fascist or not. In the case of the Lapua Movement, Juha Siltala's interpretation is probably the most credible: he did not identify the movement with fascism, but rather saw it as ultrareactionary.¹⁴

The case of the IKL is the most relevant. When it comes to analysing the antifascism of the conservatives, the IKL is the most important case and test point, because it was first their ally, but later their main opponent. Moreover, the Lapua movement had been a domestic affair, whereas the IKL clearly had foreign models and its foundation (the party in May 1932, as a parliamentary group in July 1933) coincided with the national socialist takeover in Germany. Therefore it could be seen as the Finnish branch of a European political trend.¹⁵

It can be argued that the IKL was semi-fascist, and the younger generation of scholars has lately been eager to label it altogether, even 'unquestionably' fascist – though usually only by pointing vaguely to some similarities without questioning their origins and failing to take into account the differences.¹⁶ It is difficult to detect many features that the researchers nowadays attach to ideological fascism in the Lapua Movement, in the IKL or in the student organization AKS: of as admiration of modernity and urbanism and technical culture or of being avant-garde (in society, arts etc). Far from this; the ideals of these movements and organizations were very conservative and the haven of traditional virtues and unspoilt Finnishness was supposed to reside in the countryside.¹⁷ If there was any sense of *palingenes*, this was supposed to come about as a rebirth of old-time values – and with no desire whatsoever to bring about a cultural revolution against the existing order. In this sense, Stanley Payne's definitions of 'right authoritarianism' and Lena Berggren's 'radical conservatism'¹⁸ seem a more valid point of comparison to the IKL than fascism (at least outright fascism).

However, the question of the exact ideological nature of the IKL is not the main focus here, nor to categorize Siltala's, Payne's or Berggren's definitions; that would be a theme for another study. It is more relevant to observe that the word 'fascism' is seldom adequate to describe even right wing radical movements. It was possible for the contemporary conservatives both to emphasize the potentially fascist features of the IKL or to pretend not to see them – and they reacted to what they thought they could see.

Conservatives and the 'non-interesting' fascism

The bulk of the Finnish right wing represented something other than fascism. Its parliamentary organ was the National Coalition Party, roughly the equivalent of conservative parties elsewhere in Europe. The party was very traditional and home-grown and its spirit was 'home, religion, fatherland'.

The party was not dominant in Finland between the wars in any way that would resemble even the British Conservative Party, let alone the dictatorial versions of authoritarian conservatism in Eastern and Southern Europe. It had less than 20% of the electoral vote, whereas the Agrarian Union enjoyed the support of about 25% and the Social Democratic Party 40%. The Agrarian Union was by far the most influential political party in interwar Finland; the National Coalition Party sometimes took part in the government, but only as a coalition partner and never at will.¹⁹

In the main, fascism was not an issue for the conservatives during the 1920s, because there were practically no self-confessed fascists, Nazis or any other challengers who would have been able to compete with them or to help them in the conservative pursuit for power. The extremists were grumbling and somewhat hot-headed isolated figures in the National Coalition Party, or they did not take part in party politics at all. It was easy to belittle 'fascism' as ghost propaganda driven by the Left. It is revealing that among the hundreds and hundreds of protocols of the National Coalition Party (party meetings and the central organs) throughout the 1920s there was exactly one speech in which fascism was recommended as a solution for Finland. Even this person, representing grassroots level, forecast that the Finnish people were not ready for it.²⁰ The press of the National Coalition Party felt able to give acceptance and credibility to some features of Italian fascism, and later German national socialism, such as quelling communism or reviving nationalism, but this did not extend to ideological praise. Any government of any political affiliation received the same praise if it drove such a policy. The British government received far more.

The emergence of the Lapua Movement did not change this attitude at first. The conservatives wanted to see the movement as a junior partner, as a patriotic, healthy reaction of the people against communism, and against petty party politics in general. As some conservative MPs expressed this in the Finnish Parliament: this was the 'eruption of the people's ' 'authentic and clear sense of justice', 'law, order and decent behaviour had to be restored', it was 'the pulsating vibration of the people's heart.'²¹ During the summer of 1930, there were some worries because of the ongoing violence, but mainly the conservatives wanted to believe that with the right kind of policy the rightful demands of the movement could be carried out peacefully.²²

The conservatives liked to make excuses for the movement because, in general, it had been very beneficial to them: it had frightened everyone else into concessions. In early 1931, the National Coalition Party had achieved several goals that had seemed totally out of reach only a year before: the communists were effectively outlawed; the National Coalition Party gained a handsome victory in the parliamentary elections of 1930 (42 MPs of the total of 200); the party returned to government and held the premiership; and even when the latter was lost in early 1931, this was because the person in question, P.E. Svinhufvud, one of the patriotic 'White' heroes of the years 1917–18, was elected President of the Republic. To top all this, the other national hero, the 'White General' of the victorious army in the

1918 Civil War, General C.G.E. Mannerheim, had returned to active life from what had effectively been a forced semi-retirement. It was very difficult to abandon the Lapua movement since it had helped the conservatives to gain such successes.²³

The clash between moderates and radicals

This sympathy did not die totally even after the abortive Mäntsälä coup. Granted, the party condemned the revolt, and the conservative President Svinhufvud forced the rebels to surrender by a famous radio speech. However, the reigning mentality in the party still maintained that the revolt had been the fault of others: social democrats and the non-socialist agrarians, liberals and the Swedish People's Party. It was claimed that these had deliberately provoked the patriotic but overzealous citizens to revolt because they wanted to return to the petty party politics of the 1920s.²⁴ The political views and values of the Finnish conservatives were based on the concept that the most 'patriotic' members of the society knew best how the society should be led – not even the other non-socialists were considered totally reliable.²⁵

The official leaders of the party knew better that the circumstances had become unfavourable, and they viewed the newly-born IKL with suspicion. The moderate wing of the party even blocked the election of one of the leading radical members (who was not even a member of the IKL) to the party council by threatening to resign themselves.²⁶ 'We have not had an equally split up party as the National Coalition Party for a long time. We have men who adhere strictly to the law and men who are for a dictatorship, no matter the means,' one of the moderate MPs of the party complained to the party chairman.²⁷ One of the other moderates wrote to a colleague, summing up the trends inside the party: 'The revolutionary right is strong, it has a strong leader and a determined leadership and its tactics are excellent. The moderate right is baffled. The centre [of the party] is morally defeated.'²⁸ Some of the old conservatives feared as early as 1932 that the National Coalition Party had supported the movement, but could not lead it, and this was a serious weakness in the party.²⁹

Even the term 'Hitlerite' was occasionally used in a positive sense by some of the radicals in the party. Some of them advocated that the party should adopt 'Hitler's tactics'. By this, they meant that the Finnish right wing should do as Hitler had done, or rather as they thought Hitler had done. The National Coalition Party should avoid all compromises even with other non-Socialists, bide its time, stay adamant in its demands and wait for the inevitable moment when things had gone so wrong that the others would be compelled to call the conservatives to their rescue. Then the right wing would be able to name its own terms.³⁰

Those advocating this strict line thought that Hitler was succeeding in this tactic, since his party's popularity had vastly increased. However, the recommendation had applied to tactics; the radicals did not refer to the ideological contents of national socialism as a model. In fact, the term 'Hitler's tactics' was used far more often by the moderate conservatives in a pejorative sense, as a warning example, than it was by its champions in an approving manner.³¹

It became clear in the autumn of 1932 that the grassroots were not ready to follow the moderate leaders. In November, the majority of the leading organ of the party accepted a resolution, according to which 'the vast majority of the party consists of convinced

supporters of the people's patriotic movement, and the policy of the party will be driven with this taken into account'.³² The term 'people's patriotic movement' was exactly the same as the official name of the IKL. Therefore, the party seemed to have adopted the political line of the IKL.³³

The result was that the moderate party leadership resigned, and radical elements took their places. The National Coalition Party has never been more far right than it was between November 1932 and July 1933 – that is, until the parliamentary elections. The new, radical leadership expected to gain a great election victory, and the party concluded an electoral union with the IKL. It was expected that this union would continue after the elections and that the two partners would form a single parliamentary group.³⁴ A parliamentary interpellation was made to suggest that the Social Democratic Party should be outlawed because of its 'international dependency' – meaning its membership of the Socialist International.³⁵

It is difficult to analyse the political mood of the grassroots of the party; the archives are very scarce. However, the sources that exist indicate that the local party officials favoured this radical approach in spring 1933 and considered the IKL as simply a brother-in-arms, a patriotic organization with good intentions guarding the heritage of 1918 as the conservatives did. They did not see it as any sort of 'fascist' alternative. The IKL was considered a useful asset in a practical sense as well: an electoral union would bring more votes, and it was taken for granted that the conservatives, being the 'older brother', would gain the most benefit from this.

In a sense, this was the same prediction that the German conservatives had entertained about Hitler and the National Socialist Party. However, the Finnish conservatives had much more reason for confidence. They were dealing with radicals too, but these were far less powerful than those the German conservatives faced. Hitler alone already had more than a third of the votes in Germany, all the Finnish right wing had less than 20%, and the IKL was expected to be a minority even within that minority.

The new, radical National Coalition leadership did not shy away from certain international comparisons. The leading paper of the party, *Uusi Suomi* published very ostentatious pictures and articles about Hitler, Göring and Rosenberg only about a week before the Finnish elections.³⁶ Further, the conservatives had previously put in good words for Hitler and the national socialists in spring 1933, commending him for destroying communism in Germany.³⁷

However, even the quite radical leading newspaper of the National Coalition Party, *Uusi Suomi*, did not grant all the credit for international anti-communism to the national socialists. When it tried to prove how global the success of right wing policy was, it also referred to the massive election victory of the British conservatives in 1931, to the rise of Japan against the Soviet Union and even to the victory of F. D. Roosevelt in the U.S. presidential elections in 1932. Conservatism was the only political ideology that even *Uusi Suomi* and the party conference of the National Coalition Party identified with.³⁸ Moreover, the general party conference of the National Coalition Party did not request the outlawing of the Social Democratic Party.³⁹ Similarly, when *Uusi Suomi* wrote about the candidates of some national socialist splinter movements it stated: 'It is no use to sacrifice even one thought to these lists.'⁴⁰

The election result was a bitter defeat of unforeseen proportions. The National Coalition Party had previously had 42 MPs. It lost 10 seats in the elections, and to its

surprise, 14 MPs who had represented the IKL decided not to join the National Coalition Party's parliamentary group but to form a separate group. The National Coalition Party therefore had only 18 MPs left – far less than half of the amount they had had before the election.⁴¹

It could hardly be a surprise that after such a catastrophe the party's policy was re-evaluated – and the guns were now turned on the warning examples of fascism and national socialism.

The return of a conservative chairman – fascism becomes an enemy

Opposing fascism and national socialism was by no means unheard of in the National Coalition Party. The general indifference towards fascism during the 1920s showed that there was little concrete sympathy in the conservative mind towards right wing radicalism, when this flirted with socialist ideas and seemed to represent something other than traditional conservative values. Even so, fascism had not been treated with hostility nor had it been considered even an issue, because it had offered nothing to conservatives' interests nor had it threatened them. It had been far away and harmless, and at least it had had the right enemies.

Now this changed. *Uusi Suomi* was slow to react to the election disaster of 1933, but an influential conservative newspaper *Karjala*, published in the town of Viipuri, started to attack the IKL at once, using Germany in particular as a warning example. The newspaper warned of the totalitarianism, militarism and economic socialism of the New Germany, of the disappearance of the freedom of the press and religion, etc.⁴² Actually, *Karjala* did not even have to adopt a new argument – it just returned to the anti-Nazi criticism it had already expressed back in 1932.

Simultaneously, the paper pressed for a change of the party leadership. It was typical of its mood that one of its editors was already planning a separate co-organization for the moderates inside the party, because, in his opinion, the IKL was now nothing but an enemy, and a mortal one, 'a revolutionary party which uses revolutionary methods according to German models'. Such an enemy could be fought only by a fist, loud noise and uncompromising attitude.⁴³ Lauri Ingman, a former strongman of the conservatives, twice Prime Minister and during the crisis Archbishop, agreed: the National Coalition Party was in ruins and had no political weight anymore, because the IKL had destroyed it.⁴⁴

The conduct of J. K. Paasikivi, who had been Prime Minister and unsuccessfully advocated a German monarch for Finland in 1918,⁴⁵ is perhaps the most illuminating – and most influential – case in this sense. He had been one of the leading conservative politicians in Finland for a long time and was to become even more important in this sense in the 1930s when he had to deal with the challenge of the right wing radicals. He became chairman of the National Coalition Party in May 1934,⁴⁶ remaining so until late 1936. He was also actually the first right wing politician in Finland who began to use conservatism as an ideological weapon, against both socialism and right wing extremism. Later, in 1946, he became President of the Republic as well – although the circumstances were completely different then.

In an occasional moment of frustration, even Paasikivi had privately been able to see fascism as a potential remedy. In the 1920s, he was a disappointed banker, politically on the sidelines. In 1932, he noted in his diary that democracy had gone so astray that society

was in chaos and only incompetent politicians could advance their careers. He noted that this was bound to lead to fascism and maybe that would be the best solution for the misery.⁴⁷ In summer 1933 – again in his diary – he speculated that fascism and national socialism might even succeed in increasing the happiness of the people if they placed ideals at the forefront rather than material gain.⁴⁸

However, Paasikivi kept his diary mainly for psychological relief, to give an outlet to his outbursts in the hours of frustration. His diary is full of criticism and outright condemnations of other politicians, political parties, practically all Finnish professional classes and the Finnish nation itself. Actually, he did not even state whether the two ‘fascist’ conclusions in his diary applied only internationally or to Finland as well.

It is possible to make a comparison to Winston Churchill. As is often cited, during the 1930s Churchill not only warned about the rise of national socialist Germany, but also stated that should ever such calamities fall upon Britain in the same way as upon Germany, Britain might need a man like Hitler to recover.⁴⁹ Churchill also made appreciative, even admiring remarks about Mussolini during his career.⁵⁰

The Finnish conservatives did not go even this far, but Paasikivi’s two remarks mentioned above resemble this logic. However, there was the difference that the British conservatives were easily strong enough to neutralize Oswald Mosley and the BUF (even the electoral system helped in this).⁵¹ The Finnish conservatives had to fight against an opponent that was originally only slightly weaker and that could easily get a parliamentary group of respectable size on its own.

As the new party leader, Paasikivi adopted a line diametrically opposed to the previous, radical leadership and identified himself with anti-fascist arguments. His priority was to oust all right wing radicals from the party and make it respectable in the eyes of the other non-Socialist parties. Previously it had been possible to belong to both the National Coalition Party and the IKL, because it had been assumed that the IKL would not actually become a political party, but rather a citizens’ movement, as its name suggested. Now this was made impossible. Further, the financiers of the party ensured that funds would not be available to anyone who was considered too radical.⁵²

Conservative freedom against fascism

The rhetoric also changed, or rather returned to the old model of 1932. As the new chairman, Paasikivi gave numerous public speeches about the political situation in his party and in Finland. They all bore the same message: fascism and national socialism were not models that the conservatives should follow, quite the contrary. Again and again he employed national socialist Germany and fascist Italy as warning examples, as political systems that were dangerous to the Finns, and especially to conservatives.⁵³

Paasikivi clearly regarded fascism and national socialism as elements of the same phenomenon, usually mentioning both. Later in the 1930s, both he and the National Coalition Party began to refer mainly to ‘fascism’ in their anti-IKL propaganda, only occasionally adding ‘national socialism’. It is difficult to say whether this was because the IKL indeed used Italy as a positive example more often than Germany, or because it was easier to use one term in party declarations and press debate.

In any case, it was not due to any inhibitions towards Germany. As already mentioned, the party press, especially *Karjala*, had no hesitations in using harsh language concerning

the events in National Socialist Germany or regarding national socialism as an ideology. The short period of appreciation that was shown towards Hitler and the German national socialists was not based on sympathy towards the ideology. It was based on his anti-communism and on the hope that once in power, Hitler and his party would be converted to traditional German politicians and the new system would actually mean the return of the 'Second Empire' rather than the birth of a Third. As Hiedanniemi has pointed out, the pro-German Finns had learned to appreciate Imperial Germany for many reasons: for the help received in 1918, for being the leading nation in the field of science, for being the country of Luther and Hegel, and quite often because of personal experience. It was quite customary for educated Finns to visit and study for some time in Germany. Furthermore, German was the first foreign language they had learned at school. It was this Germany they longed for, and in the spring of 1933 they thought that the hour of deliverance had come, although in a somewhat surprising form.⁵⁴

These illusions were soon shattered by the violence and totalitarianism of the Nazi dictatorship. Even the virtue of anti-communism did not excuse everything.

Paasikivi's arguments followed traditionally conservative, but also liberal paths. He maintained that the IKL had become a totalitarian party that followed fascist and national socialist models uncritically, in essence, form and outlook. Thus, the IKL had in some senses lost its national character. He admitted that there had been and still were some sympathetic features in the IKL; after all, it was a very nationalistic and patriotic movement, which opposed communism and eagerly supported the armed defence of the country. Even according to Paasikivi and his followers, the heritage that the IKL had inherited from the Lapua movement was not entirely bad.

Then again, Paasikivi argued, the IKL had changed. It had now started to follow paths that were alien to Finnish traditions and to the Finnish national character. Even its support for national defence and the army had degenerated into glorifying militarism and thus headed in an unsound direction.⁵⁵

Two major points made by Paasikivi were actually liberal in nature. He maintained repeatedly that fascism and national socialism were totalitarian systems that suppressed the individual and deprived individuals of their rights. He appealed to the Scandinavian tradition of freedom: the Finns had always fought for their freedom, they had never been serfs, the peasants had had parliamentary representation for centuries, and the Finnish peasant had saved the nation's freedom when he defeated Bolshevism in 1918.⁵⁶

The other liberal point was equally important for Paasikivi as a banker: fascism and national socialism believed in collective planning of the economy and suffocated individual initiative. This was totally abhorrent to Paasikivi and also to other conservatives, especially if they had positions in or links to industrial and commercial circles. In economics, the conservatives had adopted a line that might be called a reincarnation of 19th century classical liberalism. They especially disapproved of the IKL's far-reaching social policy programme, which they widely considered too collectivistic and detrimental to a sound economy – in the conservatives' eyes, such programme was essentially Socialist.⁵⁷

Therefore, Paasikivi, his entourage and the loyal party newspapers sometimes used the argument that the IKL was actually a left-wing party. This, of course, would help the hesitating conservative grassroots members to reject the IKL and to stay in the National Coalition Party. One could hardly have made a remark that would have irritated the IKL more – a movement that glorified patriotism and nationalism to the extreme.⁵⁸ In the

party council Paasikivi even claimed that the leading newspaper of the IKL, *Ajan Suunta*, represented 'pure Marxism'.⁵⁹

Paasikivi's message was thus that if the conservatives were to make common cause with fascism and Nazism, these would destroy not only Finnish freedom, but the conservatives themselves as well – as had happened in Italy and Germany.

It is illuminating that even the person who had suggested the 'people's movement' clause in November 1932, an MP and a Professor of Roman literature at the University of Helsinki, Edwin Linkomies, now attacked the IKL and used German national socialism as a warning example. So much so, that the leading newspaper of the IKL, *Ajan Suunta*, reacted angrily and emphasized that the IKL was a Finnish party, it was not the same as German national socialism.⁶⁰

Paasikivi's speeches echoed the previous arguments of the Viipuri newspaper *Karjala*, which also was the main champion of Paasikivi as the chairman of the party and put things even more bluntly. The message was perhaps the clearest in a leading article in *Karjala* in June 1934: 'The position of the political right wing in Germany is a warning example that shows how the destiny of any political right wing will develop if it does not remain true to its own programme, but starts to worship alien gods. The meaning of that kind of political right wing will be destroyed, and when one finally notices what is happening it is too late to wake up.'⁶¹ In the election campaign of 1936 it spelled out extremely clearly that it was fascism that now had to be defeated by all those who supported a free society. Everything connected to fascism had to be rejected.⁶²

It is also interesting that this argumentation reflected the sentiments of some Swedish-speaking conservatives in Finland who had already been very critical of the Lapua Movement back in 1930.⁶³ They had been quick to react because of their very constitutionalist past and for fear of the Finnish-speaking ultranationalism that a fascist movement in Finland might impose on them.

Paasikivi did not need to worry about the reactions of the grassroots level either anymore. The most radical members of the National Coalition Party had fled to the IKL, and even many old sympathizers were now bitter against the old ally for its 'defection' in 1933. It was not unusual that many local party activists who had advocated cooperation in 1933 were later urging for a break-up with the IKL.

In the words of Paasikivi and the conservative newspapers, fascism and national socialism could be only a kind of counter-poison system – maybe necessary in some extreme circumstances in some countries in order to remedy the situation, to avoid an even worse destiny, Bolshevism. Even Paasikivi thought that a fascist dictatorship would be a lesser evil than a Marxist one.⁶⁴ However, such systems were not something to be desired – in all cases it was crystal clear that he and the conservatives considered that it would be political suicide to advocate fascism in Finland.

During the years 1935–36, the National Coalition Party officially denounced its 'people's movement' decision of November 1932; 'the degradation and the Babylon imprisonment is over', as the party secretary wrote to a former party chairman.⁶⁵ The conservative newspapers wrote about the IKL in almost as hostile a way as did the liberal ones. After all, the conservatives felt that they were fighting in the front – the liberals, the agrarians and the social democrats only shouted from a distance.

However, the latter could argue – and did so – that the conservatives had been the slowest to recognize the enemy. Moreover, some leading politicians in the National

Coalition Party still found it difficult to mention an antifascist struggle as part of the party's election manifesto in 1936, before they surrendered to Paasikivi's fit of anger in the crucial meeting. According to Paasikivi, the IKL represented 'pure fascism', and it was the eleventh hour to get clarity.⁶⁶

It is true that the Finnish conservatives flirted with ideas that in retrospect seem to have a fascist element in them. For example, in the early 1930s even the moderate leaders of the National Coalition Party had advocated a parliamentary reform that would have limited the power of the Parliament considerably and introduced some sort of corporatism or another chamber in the parliament. This chamber would consist of representatives that were to be elected by their professions, mainly by the educated middle class. Practically all leading conservatives agreed that the prerogatives of the President should be strengthened and the number of the MPs diminished.⁶⁷

However, the conservatives had never needed any fascist models for these thoughts. Finland had had an Estate Diet as late as 1905, after which it took one leap to a single-chamber Parliament. The conservatives had entertained the same idea of a reform of Parliament in 1918 (although they did not dare to try to implement it) when they tried to introduce a monarchy to Finland.⁶⁸ Ideas about corporate MPs or a second chamber were very familiar long before anyone had heard of a person called Mussolini. These plans belonged to traditional meritocracy and were partly based upon the estate system of the past – not on fascist corporatism. That became the IKL's theme.⁶⁹

Besides, it could be argued that there was nothing fascist or national socialist in the idea of a second chamber that was going to be more conservative than the first chamber. Many countries had two chambers – and of these, Britain, the United States and Sweden were considered beacons and bastions of democracy.

Was the Finnish case unique in Europe?

Lately, historical research has been very interested in transnational fascism and an international aspect in general. Was this Finnish conflict between conservatives and fascism transnational in the same sense?

The conflict was transnational in the sense that the conservatives had made abundant use of the events occurring elsewhere in Europe. It does not seem to have been transnational in the sense that the conservatives had contacts with other conservative parties in Europe. Neither did the Finnish radicals have any effective contacts outside. Bauernkämpfer and Rossolinski-Liebe list quite a number of examples of transnational fascist cooperation in Europe, but there is very little concrete evidence of this in the Finnish case during the 1930s.⁷⁰ This was probably due to the fact that Finland was small and peripheral; nevertheless, it had not prevented the Finnish IKL from looking for models.

However, the Finnish case was transnational in the sense that it can be compared to other nations, especially to other Scandinavian countries. These had their right wing radicals and fascists as well.

Sweden had at least three national socialist movements,⁷¹ Norway had Vidkun Quisling's Nasjonal Samling, Denmark had the DNSAP. Actually, the Scandinavian right wing radicals had advantages that their Finnish brethren lacked. They had the advantage of being able to pose as truly 'Germanic' and 'Aryan'. These movements quite often saw the German national socialists as their role model, rather than Italian fascism.⁷² The racial

principle was an embarrassment for Finnish national socialists, because all racial theories considered Finns an extremely low race – lower than Slavs, the same level as Eskimos, Indians and Mongols.⁷³ Furthermore, how could they make a convincing case of a Jewish danger in Finland without diminishing their own nationality, given that the Jewish minority numbered about 2000?

However, there was a major difference in the size of the challenge from the radical right in Finland and in Scandinavia. Because of the heritage of 1918, the experience of a Red Revolution and the threat of the Soviet Union, the number of the Finnish right wing radicals was much higher in Finland than in Sweden, Norway and Denmark. There had been a wide anti-leftist and anti-trade union movement in Norway, and the founder of the organization, Joachim Lemkuhl, represented the interests of the business class and saw a corporatist parliament as an option. However, the Norwegian conservative party, *Højre*, defeated the radicals as early as in the 1920s.⁷⁴

Radicals remained a meagre force in Denmark as well. As Bohn points out, Denmark lacked a basic fascist incentive: land considered *terra irre-denta* Denmark had already regained its lost national territories in Northern Schleswig after the First World War. The democratic conservatives preserved their upper hand compared to the radicals.⁷⁵ Besides, national socialism was the system of the country which was seen as the only threat, Germany. It was the natural enemy also in the eyes of conservative nationalists.⁷⁶

Not even one fascist, national socialist or right wing radical was elected to the Swedish or Norwegian Parliaments between the World Wars, and only three to the Danish Parliament (1939). In Sweden, the national socialists could never gather even 30 000 votes in an election. Hirdman explains this as stemming from their racism and anti-Semitism; she maintains that it was possible to find anti-communism, corporatism and anti-modern attitudes in other groups as well, but no such fervent anti-Semitism. It did not appeal to the Swedish political culture.⁷⁷

One of the similarities in all Nordic countries was that the rightist youth seemed very anxious to adapt a more radical stance than the actual party. For example, in Sweden, the youth league of the right wing party, *Högern*, actually became national socialist – and was duly kicked out of the party.⁷⁸ Torstendahl emphasizes the importance of the economic programme of the youth organization, which now rejected liberalism and favoured a state-controlled, collective economy; Nilsson refers to both political and economic reasons and sums the process up as the final phase of the democratization of the Swedish right wing.⁷⁹

The National Coalition Party in Finland, on the other hand, had no worries about its youth organization. However, the reason for this was bitter: when the IKL founded a youth organization of its own, *Sinimustat*, the right wing youth rallied to it, not to the National Coalition Party.⁸⁰ There was little youth to be disciplined in the National Coalition Party.

It could be maintained that the ideological development of Finnish conservatives and their final rejection of fascism became a Scandinavian feature in essence as well. Nilsson refers to the fact that the conservatives had very strong leaders in all Nordic countries: Paasikivi in Finland, Christmas Möller in Denmark, Carl Hambro in Norway and Arvid Lindman in Sweden, and all had to fight against right wing radicals.⁸¹

The Norwegian case in particular bore similarities with the Finnish case; some similarities being also surprisingly simultaneous. As in Finland, in Norway there were originally conservative circles that wanted to have some cooperation with Vidkun Quisling's

Nasjonal Samling and who appreciated Hitler's anti-communism. Several arguments in the Norwegian right wing press, cited by Knut Dörum, resemble those of the Finnish conservative press in spring 1933. It was claimed in the conservative press in both countries that Hitler was to be congratulated for defeating the imminent threat of a communist revolution; that the local social democrats in one's own country were not to be trusted; that Hitler had gained power quite legally. The terror aspect in Germany was not totally denied, but it was downplayed, especially by making comparisons to the brutality in the Soviet Union.⁸²

Quisling even accused the social democrats and communists of treason and of receiving money from the Soviet Union during the same spring that the National Coalition Party was questioning the legitimacy of the Finnish SDP. Moreover, some non-socialist parties considered permitting local electoral alliances with *Nasjonal Samling*.⁸³

However, the conservative press had already turned against *Nasjonal Samling* during the summer of 1933 and accused it of being undemocratic, with not only fascist, but also socialist tendencies. In the end, electoral alliances were forbidden and the reason that was given was that *Nasjonal Samling* was fascist.⁸⁴ The circles that had advocated cooperation suffered a defeat – the same reaction was starting in Finland.

There are similarities also compared to Britain. The British Conservative Party might carry the historical burden of appeasement, and it did not emphasize an ideological struggle against fascism or national socialism. However, as Philip Williamson points out, at the same time it was the most important bulwark against any fascist aspirations: its existence and power position deprived right wing radicalism of the momentum the latter might have gathered during the troubled times of economic depression, especially in 1931. The Conservative Party gained a position of power from which it could guarantee an anti-Socialist policy and be satisfied with the virtues of parliamentary democracy. It did not need to surrender to any demands from the far right.⁸⁵

The Finnish National Coalition Party was not equally powerful. Nevertheless, it became the first bulwark against right wing radicalism and recognized the same need to stick to parliamentary democracy as its British counterpart. Even Williamson's description of some British conservatives' 'lesser evil' arguments when comparing a fascist dictatorship to a communist one are practically identical to the Finnish conservatives' 'counter-poison' logic. So were also the denunciations of totalitarianism and violence of fascism and national socialism – and the conclusion that even though these were to be rejected in one's own country, it was not Britain's or Finland's business to advise the Germans and the Italians how they should govern themselves.⁸⁶

Perhaps it is thus not that surprising that when *Uusi Suomi* – which was not usually the most moderate newspaper in the National Coalition Party – honoured one European statesman in the 1930s in its leading article, this was not Hitler, nor Mussolini, nor Hindenburg, nor Franco, nor Miklos von Horthy, nor Jozef Pilsudski, nor Per Albin Hansson. It was Stanley Baldwin.⁸⁷

There might have been another reference group for the Finnish conservatives: their counterparts in the Baltic States and in Eastern Europe. After all, Finland had much in common with these countries: the principle foe was the same, the social structure was very agrarian, and most of these countries had become independent at the same time as Finland. Estonia was ethnically a 'brother' nation (the only one in the world), Poland was interested in military cooperation, and Hungary was believed to belong to the same

cultural sphere as Finland as a Fenno-Ugric nation. There were also similarities between Finland on the one hand and Romania and Bulgaria on the other: powerful peasant parties, disappointed conservatives and an extremely radical youth (Academic Carelia Society in Finland and Iron Guard in Romania). Moreover, because of Finnish history, it was possible to see President Svinhufvud or Marshal Mannerheim as a counterpart for the authoritative strongmen in respective countries.

The Finnish conservatives did resemble the Baltic and Eastern European conservatives, but simultaneously they did not, at least not sufficiently. The Finnish Right wing never had a real appreciation for the Baltic states or the vague 'Europe in between'. The moderate conservatives had always considered Scandinavia to be the real reference group for Finland. Compared to that, the Baltic states were weak and Eastern Europe was restless, unpredictable and undeveloped. Since Finland was finally attracting Swedish interest in a common security policy, there seemed to be no reason to search for a reference group elsewhere.⁸⁸

Besides, developments in the Baltic countries and Eastern Europe did not attract the Finnish conservatives either. The conservatives were not shocked to see these countries turn into dictatorships – according to them, this concerned only the nations in question, and the idea of a 'strongman' government was not abhorrent. It was widely believed that a Pilsudski, a Horthy or a Franco was probably needed to take a strong hand in these politically 'underdeveloped' countries.⁸⁹

Nevertheless, even the Finnish conservatives could not appreciate a regime that would resort only to police measures or military means. Such conduct would make any true national awakening and national cohesion impossible, and the Finnish right wing – or rather the moderate wing that dominated it – longed for these. Eastern Europe and the Balkans seemed something that was 'not good enough' for Finland. With the exception of Estonia, they did not appeal to the radical youth either – too far, too strange, too weak, too unstable, too anti-German.⁹⁰

Besides, the leading circles of the Finnish conservatives still belonged to the '1905 generation' that had experienced the Great Strike as their political, democratic awakening. Even though they had become disappointed with democracy, they still found extremely difficult to challenge it by any unlawful means. After all, they had always appealed to law and justice, both against Imperial Russia, against the 1918 Red Revolution and against the Bolshevik threat. Nor did they believe that they would have any success if they tried to defy the Parliament in an undemocratic way. The counterforces were too powerful: Finland was a country of democratic peasants and working-class. The Finnish conservatives knew that Pilsudski, Horthy or Franco could rely on that the army, the civil service and other institutions would follow them even against the Parliament and democratic principles.⁹¹ The Finns could not. As Paasikivi had commented to President Svinhufvud: 'I guess that it would be difficult for you to disregard the paragraphs [of the Constitution].'⁹²

The case of Finland thus presents a case in which the conservatives fought actively against a threat which they called fascism and which undoubtedly had elements of fascism in it. In this case, the conservatives won – in contrast to what happened in Germany or Italy. In the parliamentary elections of 1936, the National Coalition Party gained a slight victory, partly against its own expectations, whereas the IKL, expecting

a major victory, could do no more than maintain its 14 seats. 'The party is on its feet again and if the work continues, the future is not grim'; Paasikivi noted in his diary.⁹³

Paasikivi resigned in November 1936, but this did not turn the trend. In the parliamentary elections of 1939, the conservatives won further seats and the IKL lost six – it was now 25 against 8. Worse, the IKL had barely survived an attempt by the centre and left-wing Government to outlaw it the previous year.⁹⁴

Conclusion: was it antifascism, non-Fascism – or just tactics?

Was the Finnish case of conservative struggle against right wing radicalism a case of actual antifascism though? There are many arguments both for and against this.

The present-day mainstream definitions of antifascism tend to point out that antifascism requires more than just fighting and defeating fascism – it requires an ideology that strives for a new kind of society, more democratic and with social reforms. This mainstream also emphasizes the many similarities between the goals of conservatives and fascists. In this sense, the policy of Finnish conservatives does not qualify as antifascist because while rejecting fascism, they rather wanted to return to an *older* society – to one that the masses and socialism had not yet spoiled and where the educated class would have more influence.

If the Finnish conservatives fought against fascism, this did not necessarily happen in order to advance democracy. It can be argued that they had in some sense followed the Eastern and Southern European line. At least in Poland, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Spain and Portugal the conservatives had done the same thing: fought off the radicals, the 'fascists', and gained the upper hand. The same also applied to Austria between 1934 and 1938 against the Nazis.

However, these arguments do not hold all the water that can be poured into them. In the first case, it is true that the Finnish conservatives did not strive for the same kind of a new society that the left-wing and liberals had in mind. However, if they are expected to have had a duty to do so, that would no longer be an academic, but a political argument. Besides, there was a major difference between the Finnish conservatives on one hand and the Eastern and Southern European conservatives on the other. The Finnish conservatives did not turn the clock of the political system back or introduce undemocratic measures, nor did they even have a chance to do so, since they did not rule the country, and democracy prevailed.

The Finnish case somewhat resembles the definitions made by Michael Seidman in *Transatlantic Antifascisms*. Seidman lists many different branches of antifascism and also includes 'conservative antifascism' and 'counterrevolutionary antifascism'. The latter term in particular is problematic, since it defines an orientation by a double negation, rather than by stating what it actually stood for. However, there are similarities in content with the Finnish case. There was a yearning for a pre-1914 order in some form, a defence of individual liberty and economic freedom, partly an adaptation to the advance of democracy and pluralism, recognition that the nature of fascism was violent, and rejection of many fascist key ideas: the *Führerprinzip*, exaltation of youth, militarization of politics, absolute male dominance and the promotion of a political religion. Seidman sees Churchill and Roosevelt (whom he calls a social democrat) as the 'most consistent advocates' of this kind of antifascism.⁹⁵ This was like Paasikivi's manual for fighting against the IKL.

The anti-fascist and democratic role of the conservatives might be countered by the claim that the conservative democratic mind and their fight against fascism had been purely tactical – they had only lacked the opportunity. It is of course relevant to recall that for a short period in 1932–33 the conservatives had approached authoritarianism and had expected a major success in the July election. It was only the defeat in the election and the betrayal of the IKL that forced them to abandon the radical policy.

However, a stronger point is that the time before the 1933 election was exceptional. The moderates had been dominant in the party until November 1932, and the elections of 1933 proved that the phase of the radicals was a short-lived episode of a minority that had managed to snatch power in the National Coalition Party for temporary reasons. It was neither the rule nor the new mainstream. When this became evident in the elections and by the formation of the IKL, the real mainstream prevailed again. Besides, the conservatives did not have to invent antifascist arguments just for tactical reasons in order to fight the IKL – they simply had to return to the arguments that many of them had already expressed before.

Moreover, the theme of freedom – Scandinavian freedom, individual freedom, political freedom, economic freedom, academic freedom etc. – was not in any sense a novelty for the Finnish conservatives. It belonged to their long-term political philosophy. The idea of democracy had already been adopted in the 19th century, since, contrary to most other European conservatives, the Finnish conservatives had originally been a people's movement. It had had to rise from below, to fight for its position against the Swedish-speaking upper class. It was not easy to abandon this romantic self-image and identity, even though the practice of democracy had brought about many disappointments regarding the nature of the Finnish people. At the very least, it was taken for granted that democracy could not be overthrown by subversive measures. The political opponents were simply too powerful – and any sort of coup was not proper conduct for a freedom-loving, civilized Scandinavian and Western nation, nor for the self-image of the Finnish conservatives who felt that they had always defended the law.

The similarities between conservatives and fascists/national socialists actually very seldom referred to fascist or national socialist influence among conservatives; it is rather the other way round. Fascists and national socialists invented very little, if anything. Rather, they drove the innovations of others to irrational extremes. The Finnish conservatives did not feel any need to identify with fascism or to abandon their own values even though another force was now damaging the reputation of these values. After all, did the socialists abandon their beliefs just because the fascists had adopted many socialist ideas or because Stalin was a bloody dictator? The foreign dictatorships were often troublesome for the right wing radicals themselves. For example, the anti-religious side of national socialist Germany was extremely painful to a movement that emphasized the importance of religion, considered Finland 'the most Lutheran country in the world', and of whose MPs the largest group was the priests. The press of the IKL was openly critical towards Germany on this account.

It also became abundantly clear that in the long run the success of 'fascism' elsewhere did not give encouragement to Finnish conservatives nor rouse any appeal to imitate it, except briefly in the spring of 1933, and even then hesitantly. This remained the only potential time of 'hybridization' between authoritarian and fascist or semi-fascist tendencies, and it ended up in a fiasco for the Finnish conservatives. The time of the Lapua

Movement brought about many successes for the National Coalition Party, but it would be problematic to talk about hybridization in the same sense. The Lapua movement did not represent a new political alternative or a foreign ideology (in the sense that the IKL later did), and the conservatives did not need to adapt anything from it.

'Fascist' success abroad became a clear burden, not an advantage, to Finnish conservatives in Finnish domestic policy. Open fascism and national socialism were very unpopular in the Finnish political culture of the 1930s. When democracy fell and political systems became authoritarian in most European countries, Finland went to the Left – ending up with an Agrarian President and an Agrarian-Social Democratic-Liberal Government. The leading conservatives who dominated the National Coalition Party (in all other times than from November 1932 to May 1934) were convinced that the conservatives could get their share of power only in a non-Socialist coalition, not alone. The 'tactics of Hitler' would be a dangerous folly that would only strengthen the cooperation between the social democrats and the parties in the political centre.

In short: although not a democratic knight in shining armour in the eyes of the present day, nor even in the period in question, Finland represented in many senses a rare case of a successful conservative anti-fascist struggle in a democratic society.

Notes

1. Vesa Vares, *Fascism in Finland*, 177–95.
2. *Fascism: A Readers Guide*.
3. *Who Were the Fascists?*
4. Carsten, "Interpretations of Fascism," 427–31; Linz, "Some Notes Toward," 9; see also other important and often cited definitions by academic authorities, to name but a few, like Eric Hobsbawm, Geoff Eley and Wolfgang Mommsen (Hobsbawm, *Äärimmäisyyksien aika*, 172, 173; Eley, *Nazism and Fascism*; and Mommsen, *National Socialism*, 179–204).
5. See for example Gentile, *Fascism in power*, 403–18; and Kershaw, *The Essence of Nazism*, 47–69.
6. See, for example, Payne, *The Concept of Fascism*, 23; and Åmark, *Att bro granne med ondskan*, 23, 24.
7. As Nigel Copsey puts this: 'anti-fascism is probably best understood, in morphological terms, as a peripheral ideological concept that reacts to fascism as a phenomenon antithetical to core and adjacent (Enlightenment) conceptions of humanity and society. Whenever the threat of fascism becomes acute, this peripheral ideological component turns increasingly significant to the ideological core, not least because anti-fascism becomes essential to its very survival.' (Copsey, *Preface*, xx).
8. See, for example, Copsey, *Preface*, xv, xx. and Olechnowicz, *Historians and the Study*, 1–6, and Costa Pinto, *Introduction*, 1–9, and Griffin, *Fascism and Culture*, 85–109, and Costa Pinto – Kallis, *Introduction*, 1–9, and Kallis, *The 'Fascist Effect'*, 13–37.
9. Bauerkämper – Rossolinski-Liebe 2019, 5.
10. Cf. Ahti, Alapuro, Ekberg, Eskelinen, Huttula, Karvonen, Nygård, Ruuskanen Siironen, Siltala, Uola, Vares, Virtanen – to name but a few. The claim of the authors of *Suomalaiset fasistit* that the subject (the Finnish right wing radicalism) had been silenced and treated uncritically in Finnish research before their book is, to say the very least, unfounded and very strange. Moreover, the book's categorizations of 'fascists' is very diffuse.
11. Ekberg, *Führers trogna följeslagare*.
12. Siltala, *Lapuan liike ja kyyditykset*, 79–367; and Ruuskanen, *Viholliskuviiin ja viranomaisiin*, 78–200.
13. Ahti, *Aktivisterna och "Andersson"*, 225–365.

14. Cf. Alapuro, *Akateeminen Karjala-seura*; and Alapuro, *Mass Support for Fascism*; and Karvonen, *From White to Blue-and-Black*, 172–74; and Djupsund and Karvonen, *Fascismen i Finland*, 12, 13; and Kalela, *Right wing Radicalism*; and Siltala 1985, *Lapuan liike ja kyyditykset*, 109–34, 443–76.
15. The IKL did not openly declare that it considered itself fascist in the same sense as Mussolini's Italy was, and it emphasized that it would act only according to the law. However, the reasons might have been tactical: it was easy to see that the Finnish electorate did not approve of fascism. Besides, in domestic policies, the IKL openly advocated the corporatist system, admired Mussolini and sent its representatives to greet him in the 1930s. The social policy programme of the movement – a programme that infuriated the conservatives – represented the populist, plebeian features customary to fascist movements, and the movement attacked not only the political Left, but also the other usual target of the fascists: the plutocrats, capitalists and conservatives (Uola, *Sinimusta veljeskunta*, passim). In the press of the IKL, conservatism was described as a stagnated system, a lethal poison, which represented only the interests of the upper class. The IKL press maintained that the conservatives would never be able to resist socialism effectively due to their lack of key factors: dynamism, true nationalism and a link to the people. (See, for example, *Ajan Suunta* 15.7.1935 (leading article).
16. Cf. Silvennoinen et al., *Suomalaiset fasistit*, and Braskén and Lundin, *Introduction*, 8, and Kaihovirta and Wickström, *An anti-fascist minority?*, 66, 67.
17. See, for example, Alapuro, *Akateeminen Karjala-Seura*; and Eskelinen, "Me tahdoimme suureksi Suomenmaan".
18. Payne, "The Concept of Fascism," 23; and Bergren, *Blodets renhet*, 68.
19. Cf. Mylly, *Maalaisliitto 1918–1939*, passim; and Vares, *Kokoomus ja demokratian kriisi*, 12, 13.
20. Protocol, Neuvottelukokous Suomalaisella Klubilla 15.12.1929, PTA. (Archive of Bourgeois Labour).
21. Protocol of the Parliament 1929, 1199–204, 1212–4, 1227.
22. Siltala, *Lapuan liike ja kyyditykset*, 29–108; and Vares, *Kokoomus ja demokratian kriisi*, 13–48.
23. Siltala, *Lapuan liike ja kyyditykset*, 109–134; and Vares, *Kokoomus ja demokratian kriisi*, 53–80.
24. Vares, *Kokoomus ja demokratian kriisi*, 96–107.
25. Laamanen-Okkonen, *Kansallisoikeistolainen itseymmärrys*, 186–200.
26. Protocol, the central union of the National Coalition Party, 24.4.1932, PTA.
27. Moilanen to Haataja 30.5.1932. Haataja's archives, k. 1, OKK. (Library of the town of Oulu).
28. Reports 9/XI-32 ja 11/XI-32 (Privatim). Paavolainen archives, k. 1, NA. (National Archives).
29. Ingman to Koskimies 2.6.1932, draft. Ingman archives, VA Y 2367, NA.
30. Vares, *Kokoomus ja demokratian kriisi*, 116, 123, 126, 133, 147.
31. See, for example, Rantakari to Virkkunen 19.8.1932. Virkkunen archives, k.67, HYK; Vares, *Kokoomus ja demokratian kriisi*, 116, 123, 126, 133, 147.
32. Protocol, the central union of the National Coalition Party, 17.11.1932, PTA.
33. Uola, *Sinimusta veljeskunta*, 151, 152.
34. Vares, *Kokoomus ja demokratian kriisi*, 141–72.
35. Protocol, the parliamentary group of the National Coalition Party, 11.4.1933 and 19.4.1933, PTA.
36. *Uusi Suomi* 23.6.1933, 27.6.1933, 28.6.1933, 30.6.1933 (leading articles).
37. Cf. *Uusi Suomi* 31.1.1933 (leading article).
38. *Uusi Suomi* 3.7.1933, 4.7.1933 (leading articles).
39. Protocol of the general party conference of the National Coalition Party 7.-8.5.1933, PTA.
40. *Uusi Suomi* 30.6.1933 (leading article).
41. Vares, *Kokoomus ja demokratian kriisi*, 172–4.
42. See, for example, *Karjala* 15.7.1933, 26.7.1933, 3.8.1933, 17.8.1933, 21.8.1933, 2.11.1933, 12.11.1933, 12.12.1933, 24.12.1933, 5.1.1934, 12.1.1934, 28.1.1934, 13.4.1934, 22.4.1934, 25.4.1934, 13.5.1934, 16.5.1934, 31.5.1934 (leading articles).
43. P.M., Maltillisen kokoomuksen lähin taktiikka, s.a. Rantakari archives, k. 7, TYK. (Library of the University of Turku).
44. Hugo Suolahti's diary 28.3.1934. Suolahti's archive, k. 7, HYK.
45. Vares, *Kuninkaan tekijät*, 112, 113, 157, 158.

46. Of Paasikivi as the Chairman, see Polvinen, *J.K.Paasikivi*, 165–98.
47. "Olen tullut jo kovin kiukkuseksi", Paasikivi diaries 25.11.1933, 303.
48. "Olen tullut jo kovin kiukkuseksi", Paasikivi diaries 8.7.1933, 291.
49. Robert Rhodes James, *Churchill: A Study in Failure 1900–1939*. Penguin Books Ltd, Reprinted 1981, p. 405.
50. Rhodes James, *Churchill: A Study*, 329, 330, 405–9.
51. See Seidman 2018, *Transatlantic Fascisms*, 87–91.
52. Vares, *Kokoomus ja demokratian kriisi*, 203–49.
53. Vares, *Kokoomus ja demokratian kriisi*, 210–20.
54. Hiedanniemi, *Kulttuuriin verhottua politiikkaa*.
55. *Paasikiven linja*, 49–127. – *Paasikiven linja* is a collection of Paasikivi's speeches from 1923 to 1942. The arguments cited here were more or less repeated in all his major speeches as the Chairman of the National Coalition Party, 1934–36, although the emphasis was not always exactly the same.
56. *Ibid.*
57. *Ibid.*, for example, 203–8, 218, 229–32.
58. Vares, *Kokoomus ja demokratian kriisi*, 227–9, 235.
59. Protocol, the party council of the National Coalition Party, 4.4.1936, PTA.
60. *Ajan Suunta* 17.12.1933 (leading article).
61. *Karjala* 21.6.1934 (leading article).
62. *Karjala* 9.1.1936, 24.3.1936, 15.4.1936 (leading articles).
63. Kaihovirta-Wickström, *An anti-fascist minority?*, 59–61.
64. *Paasikiven linja*, 53.
65. Halminen to Haataja 8.5.1936. Haataja's archives, k. 1, OKK.
66. Protocol, the party cabinet the National Coalition Party 20.1.1936, PTA.
67. Siltala, *Lapuan liike ja kyyditykset*, 124–7.
68. Vares, *Kuninkaan tekijät* 85–105.
69. Uola, *Sinimusta veljeskunta*, 319–38.
70. Arnd Bauerkämper – Grzegorz Rossolinski-Liebe, *Introduction*, 2, 3. – There were some visits to Italy by the representatives of the IKL, but very little of anything that could be described as concrete cooperation, at least during the 1930s.
71. Berggren, *Blodets renhet*, 72–4; and Hirdman, *1933 – när vinden vände*, 248, 249.
72. See, for example, Berggren, *Blodets renhet*, *passim*.
73. About the Finnish image in race theories, see, for example, *Mongoleja vai germaaneja?*; and Kemiläinen, *Suomalaiset, outo Pohjolan kansa*, and Kemiläinen, *Finnns in the shadow*.
74. Furre, *Norsk historie 1905–1990*, 115, 116, 120–2; Dörum, *Conservative fascist sympathies*, 73; and Furre, *Norsk historie 1905–1990*, 115, 116, 120–2.
75. Bohn, *Dänische Geschichte*, 111, 112.
76. Nilsson, *Mellan arv och utopi*, 326.
77. Hirdman, *1933 – när vinden vände*, 248–51.
78. Nilsson 2004, *Mellan arv och utopi*, 81–4, 177–80; and Hirdman, *1933 – när vinden vände*, 248.
79. Torstendahl, *Mellan nykonservatism och liberalism*, 65–76, 197–203; and Nilsson, *Mellan arv och utopi*, 344.
80. Vares, *Kokoomus ja demokratian kriisi*, 310–9.
81. Nilsson, *Mellan arv och utopi*, 326, 327.
82. Dörum, *Conservative fascist sympathies*, 75–7; and Vares, *Viileää veljeyttä*, 256–61.
83. Dörum, *Conservative fascist sympathies*, 74, 78, 79.
84. *Ibid.*, 74, 79–82.
85. Williamson, *The Conservative Party, Fascism*, 73–91.
86. *Ibid.*, 78, 89, 90.
87. *Uusi Suomi* 28.5.1937. (leading article).
88. Vares, *Vieroksutut kohtalotoverit*, 321–9.
89. *Ibid.*
90. *Ibid.*

91. Ibid.
92. Hugo Suolahti's diary 19.7.1932. Hugo Suolahti archives, k. 6, HYK.
93. Paasikivi's diary 10.7.1936. Paasikivi archives, NA.
94. Mikko Uola, *Sininusta veljeskunta*, 339–65.
95. Michael Seidman, *Transatlantic Antifascisms*, 2–4.

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