

Christ vs. Communism: Communism as a Religious Social Problem in Finland's Proto-Fascist Lapua Movement in the 1930s

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Abstract This article traces the emergence of religious anti-communist discourse in Finland's proto-fascist Lapua Movement in the 1930s. Applying constructionist social problems theory, it discusses the constructions of communism as a religious social problem, Christian piety as a solution to the problem of godless communism, and the religious legitimization of violence. The article argues that by identifying Christianity with the Finnish nation the construction of communism as a religious problem—itsself an outcome of the influence of revivalist Lutheran ministers in the leadership of the movement—resonated with the broader audience, but that this indigenous religious nationalism lost support with the increasing belligerence of the movement.

At the end of the 1920s Finland was a divided country. The Civil War of 1918, fought between the socialist “Reds” and the bourgeois and agrarian “Whites” in the aftermath of independence from (now Bolshevik) Russia, was a cultural trauma on par with the Spanish Civil War.¹ The proportional death toll in the repression of the defeated Reds exceeded that of all other European civil conflicts in the inter-war era.² Yet, despite the victory and the official banning of the Communist Party, some factions on the White side saw the re-emergence and

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success of the parliamentary Social Democrat Party and the rumoured (and actual) Communist underground agitation as a sign of Finland becoming a ‘half-red’ country.³ The divisions caused by the destruction of the civil war continued to run deep both in national politics and in everyday life throughout the 1920s.⁴

Ostrobothnia in western Finland had been one of the most important bases of the Whites during the civil war. When young Finnish Communists attempted to organise an event in the Ostrobothnian town of Lapua on the 23rd and 24th November 1929, local people intervened, assaulting the Communists and tearing off their red shirts. A week later, over 2000 locals participated in a people’s assembly, discussing ‘growing Communist agitation’.⁵ In the following weeks similar assemblies were held all over Finland, giving birth to the Lapua Movement (*Lapuan Liike*), which caused the most significant post-civil war political crisis in Finnish history. After committing hundreds of kidnappings, physically assaulting Finnish communists, shutting down numerous workers’ halls, exerting strong extra-parliamentary influence in two national elections, threatening the state with a coup d’état (twice), and rising up in outright rebellion in the town of Mäntsälä in February 1932, the Lapua Movement was banned and dissolved by state authorities in November 1932.⁶

Following Pertti Ahonen, we have termed the Lapua Movement a “proto-fascist” movement.⁷ While it could be argued that the movement employed fascist ideas and symbolism, it was only its parliamentary successor, the Patriotic People’s Movement (*Isänmaallinen kansanliike*), that explicitly borrowed from its Italian and German counterparts.⁸ According to Vesa Vares, the fiercely nationalist-populist nature of the Lapua Movement made it unable to borrow from any foreign movements.⁹ Thus the movement had few coherent objectives apart from decimating the political left, and could hardly fulfil any

“fascist minimum” proposed by historians of fascism.¹⁰ The familiar themes of aggressive nationalism and opposition to internationalist Communism were, however, already present in the Lapua Movement. As we demonstrate below, their particular brand of nationalism emphasised the conception of Finland as a Christian nation opposing anti-religious Communism.

When Finnish society split into two warring camps in 1918, the split was not only class-based but also religious. Religion was one of the core values of the Whites and Communism was widely perceived as anti-Christian—regardless of the actual religiosity or “godlessness” of the Reds. Thus the clergy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland overwhelmingly supported the Whites in the civil war.¹¹ Some of these clergy later became leaders of the Lapua Movement in 1929 and 1930.¹² It was never a religious movement per se, but the revivalist theology—especially aspects of premillenarian eschatology that were often in tension with the mainstream Lutheran church—espoused by these leaders left an imprint on the rhetoric of the movement.¹³ Indeed, some historians consider the Lapua Movement the pinnacle of political interests and action within Ostrobothnian and Savonian revivalist circles.¹⁴

Yet, while the central role of ministers and preachers—and at least a tacit support from the majority of the clergy¹⁵—is often acknowledged, few studies have closely examined how Christianity and anti-Communism became intertwined in the discourse of the movement. The aim of this paper is to analyse, firstly, *how* the Lapua Movement constructed Communism as a social problem and, specifically, as a *religious* social problem. We shall examine three journals, *Aktivisti*, *Sinimusta*, and *Lapuan Päiväkäskey*,¹⁶ the “unofficial

mouthpieces”¹⁷ of the movement, using the lens of constructionist social problems theory, where social problems are conceptualised as outcomes of “claims-making” processes (see below). Because all constructions of social problems at least imply a solution to the problem, the Lapua Movement’s construction of Communism as an explicitly religious social problem led to proposing Christian piety as a solution. Hence, we will focus on three aspects of the claims-making: (1) Communism as a religious problem, (2) Christianity as a solution to Communist godlessness, and (3) the legitimization of Christian violence against Communists. Secondly, we will discuss possible explanations to *why* Communism became primarily pitted against Christianity in the movement literature. We argue that the prominent role of anti-religiosity and anti-Christianity in the constructions of Communism—a staple, although not uncontested position in Christian-Marxist relations since the *Communist Manifesto*¹⁸—was an outcome of the leading role of clergy in the movement. Further, we argue that the post-civil war identification of the church with the nation enhanced the Lapua Movement message of a Christian nation struggling against internationalist Communism.

Constructing Social Problems: Theory and Method

Looking at social problems course syllabi today reveals a long and relatively homogenous list of topics: crime, drugs, alcohol, violence, racism, and environmental problems, among others. But what about witchcraft, for example? It was certainly considered a significant social problem from the 14th to the 17th centuries.¹⁹ Today, however, the practice of witchcraft enjoys constitutional protection in many if not most countries of the world. If and when behaviour—or perceived behaviour, as in the case of witchcraft—itself seems to be insufficient to define a social problem, how do we recognise a social problem in the first place? An early formulation captures this tension well:

A social problem is a condition which is defined by a considerable number of persons as a deviation from some social norm which they cherish. Every social problem thus consists of an objective condition and subjective definition. The objective condition is a verifiable situation which can be checked as to existence and magnitude (proportion) by impartial and trained observers, e.g. the state of our national defense, trends in the birth rate, unemployment, etc. The subjective definition is the awareness of certain individuals that the condition is a threat to certain cherished values.²⁰

While early sociological research into “deviance” focused on the objective conditions (drug use, alcoholism, prostitution, etc.) without problematizing the “problematicness” of these conditions, later studies, especially from the 1960s and 1970s onwards, emphasised the subjective side. The argument was that looking at varieties of “deviance” ignores the processes where some behaviours become labelled “deviant” in the first place. As Blumer puts it: “a social problem does not exist unless it is recognized by the society to exist”.²¹ Indeed, Spector and Kitsuse’s classic *Constructing Social Problems* went as far as to say that “there is no adequate definition of social problems within sociology, and there is not and has never been a sociology of social problems”.²² Spector and Kitsuse argued that the focus of a proper sociology of social problems should be in analyzing the processes of subjective meaning-making—or “claims-making” as they put it:

[W]e define social problems as *the activities of individuals or groups making assertions of grievances and claims with respect to some putative conditions...* We

use the word [putative] to emphasize that any given claim or complaint is about a condition *alleged* to exist, rather than about a condition that we, as sociologists are willing to verify or certify. That is, in focusing the attention to the claims-making process we set aside the question whether those claims are true or false.²³

Much ink has been spilled since Spector and Kitsuse's radically subjectivist definition on what role the world outside the claims-making process should be granted. For the purposes of this article, it will suffice to say our approach falls within a moderate constructionist frame that is referred to as "contextual constructionism" in the social problems literature.²⁴ This means that instead of focusing solely on the linguistic features of the claims-making discourse, we will situate the claims-making within the historical and social context of its production. Hence, for us it is important to examine not only *what* is being said and *how*, but also *who* is doing the saying and *why*. Communism in 1920s and 1930s Finland was not a figment of people's imaginations (like late modern witchcraft), or a conspiracy theory with only a strained reference to reality (like modern "moral panics" about Satanism, for example).²⁵ Communist action—especially the conscious attempt to increase their visibility in Finnish society in 1928-29²⁶—was integral in lighting the spark that led to birth of the Lapua Movement. Also, many people on the left *were* critical of established religion and had been so already during the Civil War of 1918.²⁷ Nevertheless, the movement could have constructed Communism only as an economic, or a political problem, for example. The contextual constructionist approach allows us to ask both how and why they ended up constructing Communism also as a religious problem.

Constructionist sociology of social problems has not made great inroads into detailed methodological discussion. Some have advocated a focus on “rhetoric”, but the field has been almost completely ignorant of developments in sister constructionist endeavours, especially discourse analysis.²⁸ While we acknowledge this ignorance (or indifference), our approach is guided first and foremost by our questions, rather than an elaborate methodological toolkit. Hence our close reading of the texts consists of thematising the claims about Communism into (a) representations of the problem, (b) representations of solutions, (c) legitimations of action. This is mostly done through the analysis of (lexical) semantics, especially word choice, which influences the understanding of (in this case) Communism as a particular type of problem. We will also look at the rhetorical aspects of the texts, especially in terms of metaphor.

While the three journals of the movement provide a little-studied primary source, we acknowledge the interpretive limitations of such media. We do not presume to claim that our sources unproblematically reflect the beliefs of the masses of the Lapua Movement. Most of the activities of the movement consisted of direct interventions in the form of political violence, rather than political debate. (It was only the successor of the Lapua Movement, the Patriotic People’s Movement, that had to refine its discursive capabilities in parliamentary work.) Yet, the fact that the journals were directed at movement “insiders”, instead of engaging in broader social debate, gives us a sense of the audience and the discourses that the audience was assumed to be receptive to. The articles in the journals themselves provide some evidence of this resonance, in the form of responses to earlier pieces that echo the original ideas. Furthermore, most of the leaders of the movement contributed to the journals, and the ways in which they constructed their anti-Communism in the journals were also repeated in mass meetings.²⁹

Communism as a Religious Problem

The roots of Finnish anti-Communism were “indigenous” in the sense that at the time of the eruption of the Lapua Movement, its explicit mission was to salvage the White order—institutionalised in the expression “home, religion and fatherland” (*koti, uskonto ja isänmaa*)³⁰—of 1918, rather than simply mimic the international fascist movement.³¹ A particular form of revivalist Lutheranism had been associated with the Finnish nationalist project since independence, both by contemporary historians and the broader public.³² Quite soon after the consolidation of the movement religion became a prominent interpretive repertoire offered to supporters for understanding *what kind* of social problem Communism was. Religion was not the *only* aspect of the Communist “problem”, but the discourse of the movement journals leaves no doubt that it was seen as a significant factor—indeed, according to Risto Alapuro, the whole Lapua Movement was characterised by a sense of a counter-attack against Communists who mocked the sacred values of the religious peasantry.³³ This religious aspect was strong enough to make Ernst Nolte argue that Christian sentiment played such a dominant role in few other extremist movements.³⁴

Firstly, Communism was a religious problem because it was, according to the journal authors, explicitly anti-religious, and anti-Christian in particular. The articles and editorials expressed this both by statement and through metaphor. In the more matter of fact style reminiscent of broader European discourses, K.R. Kares—one of the clergymen leaders of the movement—claimed that Communist Soviet Union was the source of anti-Christianity.

Soviet propaganda, Kares claimed, was spread to Finland in the form of blasphemous Marxists and liberals, who wanted to separate religion from education.³⁵ According to an unnamed author in *Lapuan Päiväkäs* in 1931, Christianity was the first obstacle on the course to a Socialist utopia. Despite Socialists' statements that religion should be a private matter, the movement discourse claimed that Socialists were actively working towards weakening the status of Christianity.³⁶

The wording is important here: It was not just Communism in the Soviet form, but all “Marxism” that was seen as incompatible with Christianity. Following the broader pattern of splits on the European left,³⁷ Finnish Communists saw the Social Democrats as their “social fascist” enemies.³⁸ But for the Lapua Movement they were all the same. Socialism would inevitably lead to communism, and the Social Democrats were the intellectual heirs of Communism.³⁹ Social Democrats possessed the same anti-Christian worldview as Communists and any claims that a Christian could be a socialist were met with mockery and disdain by the journal authors.⁴⁰ Instead, true Christians should stay vigilant in the face of increasing Communist influence—as one *Aktivisti* author put it—lest Christianity, the religion so dear to the Finns, be destroyed by the godless Communists.⁴¹

A variation of the anti-Christian theme was the claim that Communism/Marxism was a religion in itself: Karl Marx had founded the socialist religion,⁴² the god of which was Lenin.⁴³ Abandoning one's Socialist convictions meant that one had to abandon his or her old Marxist gods.⁴⁴ Thus Communism/Marxism/Socialism became a *heresy* rather than an example of atheism or anti-religion, and the political enemy became a spiritual enemy.

This rather fluid definition of communism as something ranging from anti-religious to a religion itself was not unique to the Lapua Movement but rather common in the Finnish right-wing of the 1920s. Similar worries over the immoralities caused by "erotic bolshevism" and socialism being a trojan horse of communism were expressed already before the emergence of the Lapua Movement. For many Whites, communism was not an ideology but something ranging from an expression of humanity's savage instincts to a plot of the Antichrist.⁴⁵

Secondly, some of the articles in the movement journals took a more rhetorical, explicitly religious claims-making style. The editorial of the first issue of *Aktivisti*—written by the aforementioned K.R. Kares⁴⁶—is an example of this. He asserted that the Soviet Union was the "throne of Satan", and anti-Communism was a prime example of legitimate "holy anger".⁴⁷ For another author (identified only by his/her initials), Communism was the "horned head of the east", and joining the Communists in the hopes of better employment prospects was likened to pledging allegiance to Satan.⁴⁸ The Soviet Union, the land of the "horned head", was named "the satanic empire of the Lord of Darkness."⁴⁹ Vihtori Herttua—one of the leading "triumvirate" of the Lapua Movement and a revivalist minister⁵⁰—warned of the "beastly gaze of the Antichrist" that was directed towards Finland from this satanic empire.⁵¹ No compromise was possible between proper religious patriotism and Communism—between God and the Devil.⁵² In this rhetoric, the active members of the Lapua Movement were echoing the perception of Marxism as an instrument of Satan among the broader revivalist culture of Ostrobothnia.⁵³

Finally, in addition to actively seeking the eradication of Christianity, Communist godlessness was constructed as leading to a broad breakdown of morals and social institutions. In an article titled "What is Communism?" Matti Jaakkola, a clergyman and an integral figure of central Finland's violent radical nationalism,⁵⁴ revealed to the reader the horrors of the Soviet Union, including a complete collapse of morality, decency and family values. This catastrophe was caused, said Jaakkola, by a lack of religion. Communists had no conscience or respect for humanity. Because God's word was not heard any more in the Soviet lands, all good personal qualities like discipline, diligence and honesty had disappeared.⁵⁵ Another author claimed that the harassment of priests and general mockery of religion in the USSR had resulted in alcoholism, violence and overall degeneration among the youth.⁵⁶ Without religion, phenomena detrimental to the nation, such as hatred between the classes and class consciousness, would flourish.⁵⁷ Thus Communism should be opposed by a wide, unanimous front of Christian decency.⁵⁸ For Jaakkola and some others, the problem of godless politics was intimately connected to antisemitism: Communism was invented by the Jews and Stalin – a Jew himself, according to the author of the article – attacked the Orthodox church and its property because "he was born with Jewish greed".⁵⁹ Nothing represented Communism better than a Communist Jew.⁶⁰ Although antisemitism never became a mass phenomenon in Finland,⁶¹ among the anti-Communist crusaders it was fuelled no doubt by an awareness of the high number of Jews in the Soviet and European Socialist elite.⁶²

The same opening issue of *Aktivisti* that featured Jaakkola's analysis of Communism also carried an article by Vihtori Varpio (yet another clergyman), aptly titled "Communism does not have the right to live". His construction of Communism follows a now-familiar Manichean pattern: There was no possibility of rapprochement between Christianity and

Communism. Communism was rabidly anti-Christian and materialist, offering nothing more than mere temporal pleasure to its adherents. While Christianity was powered by love, and respect for private property and the fatherland, Communism was fuelled by pure hatred and lacked all respect for "human life, private property and marriage."⁶³ Varpio was not the only one to claim that Communism went against all God's laws with its materialism and opposition to capitalism.⁶⁴ In this discourse, capitalism joined the key conservative values of home, religion and fatherland—although this only applied to Finnish capitalism: international capitalism was under suspicion due to its perceived connections with the Jews.⁶⁵

Christianity as a Solution to the Problem of Communism

The discourse of the Lapua Movement's journals constructed the solution to anti-Christian Communism in two ways: by reminding the Finnish people of the intimate connection between religion and nation, and by legitimating the movement's mission with a divine mandate.

Firstly, the heritage of 1918—home, religion and fatherland—was the backbone of the Finnish nation, and had to be preserved. In the tellingly titled "The Creed of White Finland", the author stated that in order to be a proper "White Finn", one had to believe in God and the Holy Trinity.⁶⁶ A good patriotic peasant was also a God-fearing one, and fought for God and the fatherland.⁶⁷ Gustav Arokallio, a pro-Lapua minister, emphasised the importance of Christianity for the survival of Finland and the Finnish nation.⁶⁸ This intimate intertwining of religion and nation was demonstrated pointedly in articles discussing the plight of the Ingrians, the Finnish-speaking sister people left behind in the USSR. The Ingrians

maintained, the articles claimed, their “Finnishness” by remaining Lutheran despite Russian and Soviet oppression.⁶⁹ Indeed, Lutheran Bibles and hymnbooks were called “Finnish books”, and their possession could allegedly lead to imprisonment by the Soviet authorities.⁷⁰

The Lapua Movement had a keen sociological eye for the reproduction of their idealised Christian Finland. Socialising the youth into this Christian heritage became paramount and, consequently, education a central battleground. “Communist infiltration” of Finnish elementary schools had to be stopped in order to prevent them from imposing their godless views on the youth of the nation.⁷¹ Karl Olsson, a Lutheran canon, demanded changing the freedom of religion legislation so that children of non-religious parents would still have to undergo compulsory religious education, even against the wishes of their parents.⁷² Moreover, religious education in grammar schools was considered essential, and the textbooks in all levels of education were to be infused with “the right quality and spirit”.⁷³ Indeed, the preliminary political programme of the movement, drafted in November 1930, included increasing the amount of religion in school curricula as one of its aims.⁷⁴

K.R. Kares extended this concern over Finland’s Christian future from education to public life in general. His article “The Public Life of Our Nation Must Not be Paganised” was published in *Lapuan Päiväkäskey* in September 1931. Already as a parliamentary representative of the right-wing Coalition Party, he had led the conservative Christian front against the 1922 Freedom of Religion Act and retained the idea that Finland was “paganising” its public life.⁷⁵ Aspects of this “paganisation” included, for example, allowing parents to opt their children out of religion classes in schools, supporting “unchristian” family values by providing welfare for divorced mothers, and portraying abortion in a positive

manner.⁷⁶ Kares' language resonated with its audience: an anonymous author in the first issue of *Lapuan Päiväkäs* in 1932 dreaded the possibility of the social democrats removing Christian influences from Finland and "paganising" the nation.⁷⁷ The mission of the Lapua Movement, said Kares, was to force members of parliament to make initiatives to counter this "paganisation".⁷⁸ The same message had been voiced even before Kares: Karl Olsson, writing in *Aktivisti* in 1930, argued that only Christianity could offer a solid moral base for a country. Europe without Christianity would be a wilderness akin to Asia or Africa.⁷⁹ All countries that were not Christian, were pagan.⁸⁰ Having established the intimate connection between the Finnish nation and Christianity, constant vigilance was required to uphold the patriotic legacy.

Secondly, the Lapua Movement journals constructed a special relationship with God and the Finnish nation. God created the Finnish nation, and carried it through good times and bad times, including the Civil War in which He had given strength to the Whites to win the war.⁸¹ He continued to direct the Finnish nation for he was "the commander of the journey of our nation."⁸² One author even proposed that God had taken the Finnish nation under His special tutelage, (temporarily) abandoning the Jews as the chosen people.⁸³ It was fairly common for Finnish radical nationalists to promote a teleological view of history. In their opinion it was Finland's destiny to expand into territories inhabited by Finno-Ugric peoples, and beat communism and the Soviet Union. These incredible feats were possible as God was considered to be on Finland's side.⁸⁴

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the claims made in the journals accredited the Lapua Movement with carrying on this divine guidance, thus embodying the special relationship

between God and the Finnish nation: God was on the side of the Lapua Movement;⁸⁵ he had blessed the Movement, who were working for the benefit of God and the fatherland, attempting to impose God's law on earth.⁸⁶ Only a fool could not realise that it was God who was behind the Lapua Movement: “If the doubters do not realise that the power in the movement comes from above, they have deaf ears and blind eyes”.⁸⁷ K. R. Kares had already pronounced that Vihtori Kosola—the man most often identified as the leader of the movement—had been chosen by God to lead the Finnish nation.⁸⁸ Kosola too stated in his memoirs that he was directed by the voice of God.⁸⁹ A telegram sent to *Aktivisti* by two female supporters praised the Lapua Movement for its anti-Communist action: “We thank the ‘people of the plains’ [a reference to Ostrobothnians] who have risen up in this noble fight, urged by their consciences and God. ‘From God this has come and it is great in our eyes.’”⁹⁰

For others, the Lapua Movement was also a vehicle for an even greater divine mission: Kai Donner, the movement's main conspirator, wanted to launch “a crusade” against the Soviet Union.⁹¹ Donner’s choice of words points to a similar dualism between statement and metaphorical language that could be found in the constructions of Communism as satanic. In an *Aktivisti* article titled “Fatherland’s Christmas” the author describes the Christmas of 1929. He paints a dreamlike picture of a bleak Christmas ruined by, for instance, communist agitation and desecration of churches: “We saw Golgotha on our way to Bethlehem!” Although it was, of course, the Communists who allegedly ruined Christmas, the readers were not spared either: Communist agitation had caused them too to lose their faith in Christianity. However, those who stayed firm in their belief were rewarded in the end. “The people rose up. The peasants of Southern Ostrobothnia, the revivalists, the fatherland’s own people rose up. They came *for the second time*.”⁹² The “second time” is both a biblical and a historical reference: the first time refers to the life of Jesus on the one hand and the

Civil War of 1918 on the other; the second time refers to the second coming of Jesus on the one hand, and the birth of the Lapua Movement on the other. Not only was Christianity the best solution to the problem that was Communism, but the Lapua Movement had a divine mandate to carry out its anti-Communist mission.

Legitimizing Christian Violence

A final question remains: How did the God-fearing, patriotic Lapua Movement thinkers justify their violations of the rule of law? The movement turned from agitation to action in March 1930. A group of thirteen Lapua activists sabotaged a Communist printing press in Ostrobothnia on 28 March.⁹³ The court proceedings of the sabotage act were accompanied by a violent mob of two thousand Lapua men, assaulting four Communist witnesses in front of the courthouse. The Communists' solicitor was kidnapped and driven to Central Finland where he was then released.⁹⁴ This was the first of a total of 254 kidnappings in the summer of 1930.⁹⁵ In addition to attacking individuals, movement activists targeted Communist and Social Democrat workers' halls, and other such institutions like theatres and dancing halls. In total there were 399 such incidents between 1929 and 1932. In 292 cases the halls were closed down, in 47 cases nailed down, and in twelve cases burnt down.⁹⁶

Alongside direct illegal and violent action, the Lapua Movement put strong pressure on the parliamentary elections of 1930 and the presidential elections of 1931. In 1930 a member of the movement threatened the country with a coup on radio, if a non-socialist majority, needed to pass anti-Communist legislation (blocked earlier by the Social Democrats), was not achieved.⁹⁷ Voters responded by voting in a non-socialist majority government, which duly

enacted the anti-Communist legislation right after coming to power. In 1931 K.J. Ståhlberg, Finland's first president, ran against current Prime Minister Svinhufvud on the second round of the elections. The Lapua Movement sided with Svinhufvud, again threatening the country with a rebellion if their candidate was not victorious.⁹⁸ In this case too, the movement triumphed. Ståhlberg—although certainly no Socialist—was a special target of the movement.⁹⁹ He and his wife were victims of an apparently unsanctioned kidnapping in 1930, and the movement journal *Aktivisti* was closed down by the authorities in 1931 after an article was deemed to urge someone to assassinate the former president.¹⁰⁰

As the claims-making in the movement journals makes clear, legislation and legislative work should be based on Christianity. Vihtori Herttua, for example, said he could guarantee his obedience to the Finnish law only if such a Christian base was found.¹⁰¹ God was the sole and absolute legislator, and only he could set laws that went against the sense of justice of the common man. If a political party tried to do the same thing, it would inevitably fail.¹⁰² Thus all legislation had to be drafted with “a righteous mind” to ensure true legality. Indeed, the state had to be a servant of God, and not dispute his laws.¹⁰³ According to one *Aktivisti* author, all that the Lapua Movement wanted to do was to return “the peace and order of God’s law” to Finnish legislation.¹⁰⁴

The divine mandate constructed in the movement discourse and the justification of illegal action with a transcendent law led to what became known as the “Law of Lapua”—effectively, a legitimation of vigilante justice. This supreme law necessitated the defence of “White Finland” against the Communists even if direct action and illegal means had to be employed—it was the will of God that all Marxism be eradicated from Finland.¹⁰⁵ Listening

to the word of God was more important than obeying the secular law.¹⁰⁶ Or, to put it differently, patriotic illegality was preferable to unpatriotic legality.¹⁰⁷ The authorities' impotence did not mean that blasphemy and mockery of freedom should go unpunished.¹⁰⁸ Hence, fighting for the holiest values of the nation could not be a crime.¹⁰⁹ It is noteworthy, however, that in contrast to some other extreme right movements, the 'purifying' or ennobling aspect of violence was not highlighted. On the contrary, the movement's leader Vihtori Kosola wrote that "everyone of us knows that when the pious peasant of Ostrobothnia, the one who has faith in the God of our fathers and who has always deeply respected the law, when a part of the nation like this sees the conscious breaking of the law as the only way out, he does it with a heavy heart."¹¹⁰ Violence had no intrinsic value, but was justified in removing the social problem of Communism.

Once more, the claims-making style included both "secular" statements and justifications—secular in style, even when referring to the divine mandate of the movement—and more explicitly religious language. This religious rhetoric sometimes reached millenarian tones: God stood with the Lapua Movement in their struggle against godless Communism, blessing their weapons.¹¹¹ Although the empire of Satan would be beaten by God in the end,¹¹² Lapuans had to be patient and remain devout believers while fighting against Communism. Eventually, and inevitably, God would interfere, however: When the seven plagues of God were to appear, the empire of the Antichrist would be destroyed. The Soviet Union and other "pagan empires" would wage a war against "a league of nations", in which the Soviet Union would be crushed.¹¹³ After the forces of evil exhausted themselves and finally turned to God, he would bring peace on earth.¹¹⁴

Conclusion: Christian Claims-making in a Christian Nation

The kidnappings and attacks on the workers' halls in the summer of 1930 earned the Lapua Movement both notoriety and new supporters. They were also the beginning of the movement's disintegration. The media turned against the Lapuans, which in turn pushed the movement increasingly into the political fringe.¹¹⁵ By early 1931 it had renounced all political parties, claiming to be above their petty struggles—a line that the majority of the movement's earlier supporters were not ready to follow.¹¹⁶ This became apparent in 1932 when the movement went into open rebellion against the state on 27–28 February, demanding the White Guard to rise up in support. However, only four to five thousand people responded, while the vast majority of the 100 000 strong White Guard sided with the state.¹¹⁷ By 6 March 1932 the rebellion was at an end and The Lapua Movement was banned.

As the above analysis shows, invoking religion was central to the claims-making of the Lapua Movement. Communism was not just any social problem, but a cancer on the Christian body that was Finland. Communism was “the enemy that like a worm gnaws and sucks the roots of life of our nation and leaves stinking filth behind it. That plague germ of Communism ... had to be destroyed.”¹¹⁸ Where Communism was successful, blasphemy flourished to the detriment of the Finnish nation.¹¹⁹ It is worth pointing out that despite the hatred of *Communism*, some sympathy towards *Communists* could occasionally be found: as a nobleman Lapua sympathiser noted, Communists were tarnished by the filth of Communism, but they were still “good gifts of God.”¹²⁰ In other words, hate the sin, not the sinner. Occasional moments of understanding notwithstanding, Communism was a threat to religion, thus—since Finland was a Christian country—Communism was a threat to the

Finnish nation. The Lapua Movement had a divine mandate to combat Communism, and it was above secular rule of law in its struggle.

In sociological terms, the Lapua Movement's identification with a divine mission is a good example of what could be called, following Berger and Luckmann, legitimation on a cosmic scale.¹²¹ This is the specific province of "religious social problems", that is, immanent social phenomena that are constructed as parts of a transcendental totality—or a "symbolic universe", as Berger and Luckmann put it.¹²² The extra-parliamentary politics of the movement were "populist" in the sense that they transformed immanent politics into a cosmic struggle, by literally demonising Communism. You didn't have to be even interested in politics, you just had to be a good Christian. This was a message that resonated in 1930s Finland.¹²³

This is not, of course, extraordinary in itself. Social movements from the German peasant rebellions in the 16th century to the Civil Rights Movement in the United States in the 1950s and 1960s have harnessed religion as an ally. They were not religious movements per se—they were looking for social change rather than religious reformation—but they legitimated their secular message with claims of divine mandate. But among comparable fascist movements, the Lapua Movement was in many ways different. Unlike Mussolini (and later, Hitler), who tried to construct a new secular religion,¹²⁴ the Lapua Movement was strictly Christian—or Lutheran revivalist, to be more precise.¹²⁵ Unlike in the Hungarian Arrow Cross, the movement's Christianity was not simply a front for rabid antisemitism, which, with its revisionist views of Christianity, ended up alienating Hungary's clergy.¹²⁶ Although traces of antisemitism could be found, as we have shown above, the Lapua

Movement was intimately attached to the national church. Finally, unlike Romania's Legionary movement, with its much more explicit millenarianism and frequent treatment of its leader as the personification of Christ,¹²⁷ the Lapua Movement's millenarianism was occasional at best and its leaders never claimed special status beyond divine inspiration. A closer comparison could be made with, for example, the Hlinka's Slovak People's Party, which was closely connected with the (Catholic) church and saw the protection of the nation as a divine mission.¹²⁸ So, the remaining question is: why did religion become such a central trope in the Lapua Movement's claims-making? In order to answer this question, we need to venture beyond the discourse of the movement journals and place the discourse in the social context (as in "contextual constructionism").

The first, and rather banal, conclusion is that religion achieved such a central role in the movement's claims-making because of the central role of revivalist clergy in the leading positions.¹²⁹ These were professional preachers who turned their skill into a political tool against perceived godlessness. They also knew each other personally, making them well-connected within the movement.¹³⁰ On the one hand, their formal position as ministers of the Lutheran national church gave them broad legitimacy to talk about matters of both faith and national identity. On the other hand, their revivalist credentials—even if sometimes in tension with mainstream Lutheran beliefs and practices—resonated especially in Ostrobothnia, the movement's birthplace. Both aspects explain the local and broader appeal of this politicised religion—or religionised politics.¹³¹

Secondly, the Lapua preachers did not invent Christian nationalism. In Post-Reformation Scandinavia citizenship was linked with religious affiliation. After secession

from Sweden in 1809, the new rulers in St. Petersburg encouraged Lutheran piety despite being Orthodox themselves. From that moment onwards, and especially since the late 19th century, with successive freedom of religion legislation, the Lutheran church became increasingly identified as the “folk” church instead of a state church. Similarly, important 19th century nationalist thinkers like Yrjö Sakari Yrjö-Koskinen and Sakari Topelius had emphasised the unity of patriotism and religion, of the Finnish nation and the Finnish Church.¹³² Furthermore, Lutheranism distinguished Finland from Russia in a much more obvious manner than Finland's autonomy did.¹³³ Hence, it was not just the revivalist Ostrobothnians that found the Lapua Movement's message attractive. In fact, the revivalist connection – perceived or actual – might have enhanced the effectiveness of the message in the eyes of the broader public. While in the 1870s the revivalists were considered to be deluded and mistaken, by the early 20th century they had become the representatives of a particularly Finnish mode of Christianity and the embodiment of the ideal of the tough, hard-working and heroic Finn.¹³⁴ The above historical developments, combined with pan-European opposition to Soviet Communism, an increasingly deteriorating diplomatic situation, and the ever-present legacy of the Civil War, goes some way towards explaining the tacit support of some non-socialist politicians as well.

This support—both among the masses, the media, and the conservative political elites—crumbled with the increasing belligerence of the movement. Although the movement's close connections with the church and its Christian base is widely acknowledged in existing research, few have interpreted the acceleration of violence in the summer of 1930 and especially in the Mäntsälä rebellion of 1932 as an outcome of millenarian apocalypticism. This is not an unthinkable interpretation in light of the discourse of the journals: the last issue of *Aktivist* was titled “The Resurrection Issue” and was full of

Manichean imagery. Gustav Arokallio, a clergyman, wrote that “Communists, the friends of enemies, the enemies of citizens, the plague of the fatherland, must be torn up by the root.”¹³⁵ Finland was, according to Vihtori Herttua, in danger of becoming a slave to either Jewish capitalism or Russian Bolshevism.¹³⁶ Artturi Vuorimaa, one of the leaders of the Mäntsälä rebellion, stated that “the road is clear. On one side there's the worldview that is Marxist, unpatriotic, against the society, and detrimental to Christianity and religiosity, on the other side the decent, Christian, patriotic worldview.”¹³⁷ In terms of action, the final days of the movement, the rise to open rebellion, might also be interpreted as millenarian. As Robbins and Anthony put it, millenarianism may encourage volatility and violence: “The perceived imminence of the last days may be expected to relativize conventional norms and rules”.¹³⁸ As we demonstrated above, some of the Lapua thinkers were not above disregarding the rule of law when it contradicted what they saw as the higher authority, God’s law, and clearly people who gathered at Mäntsälä thought that was the case as well.

Yet, explaining the violence with apocalyptic escalation would be giving the religious element too much due. Religion—indigenous revivalist Lutheranism in particular—was a symbol of the post-civil war White order, and as such resonated even among the less pious.¹³⁹ When the movement dissipated, it did so like a secular social movement, not a religious one. The masses did not turn into millenarian martyrs when confrontation with the state was imminent. Instead—and despite the fiery rhetoric of the leaders—most of them went home to their families when the President urged them to do so in a radio speech. Neither did the leadership become disillusioned cult leaders. On the contrary, Vihtori Kosola became the figurehead leader of the Patriotic People’s Movement, the movement’s parliamentary successor. K.R. Kares, Vihtori Herttua¹⁴⁰, and Arne Somersalo – the editor of the movement’s daily newspaper *Ajan Sana* – also featured in key roles in the new political party.¹⁴¹ In the

particular historical moment religion offered the Lapua Movement—in addition to the undoubted piety of the authors whose work the movement journals published—a transcendent legitimation of their construction of Communism as a social problem and, consequently, its solution through violent, but “righteous”, means.

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- ¹ 'A cultural trauma occurs when members of a collectivity feel they have been subjected to a horrendous event that leaves indelible marks upon their group consciousness, marking their memories forever and changing their future identity in fundamental and irrevocable ways'. J. Alexander "Toward a Theory of Cultural Trauma", in Alexander et al. *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 1.
- ² S.G. Payne, *Civil War in Europe, 1905-1949* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p.124–5
- ³ L. Hyvämäki, "Fascismin tulo Suomeen, 1922-1923", *Historiallinen aikakauskirja*, 66, 2 (1968), 124; Tuomas Tepora, *Sinun puolesta elää ja kuolla: Suomen liput, nationalismi ja veriuuhri 1917–1945*, (Helsinki: WSOY, 2011), 139.
- ⁴ L. Karvonen, *From White to Blue-and-Black: Finnish Fascism in the Inter-War Era* (Helsinki: Societas Scientiarum Fennica, 1988), 17.
- ⁵ R. Perälä, *Lapuan liike ja sanan mahti* (Rovaniemi: Pohjois-Suomen historiallinen yhdistys, 1998), 70–72.
- ⁶ For the most comprehensive English-language study of the movement, see M. Rintala, *Three Generations: The Extreme Right Wing in Finnish Politics* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press 1962).
- ⁷ P. Ahonen, "Domestic Turmoil and Diplomatic Isolation: The Lapua Movement in Finnish Foreign Policy, 1929–1932", *East European Quarterly*, 26, 4 (1992), 510.
- ⁸ D. Kirby, "A Scandinavian Erratic amidst the Ruins of Empire: The Finnish Case, 1918–44", in R. Haynes and M. Rady, eds, *In the shadow of Hitler: Personalities of the Right in Central and Eastern Europe* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2010), 149; M. Klinge, *Vihan veljistä valtiotalismiin: Yhteiskunnallisia ja kansallisia näkemyksiä 1910- ja 1920-luvuilta* (Porvoo, 1972), 168; L. Hyvämäki, "Fasistiset ilmiöt Baltian maissa ja Suomessa 1920-luvun lopussa ja 1930-luvulla", *Historiallinen arkisto*, 72, 1 (1977), 134.
- ⁹ V. Vares, *Vanhasuomalainen : Lauri Ingman ja hänen poliittinen toimintansa*, (Helsinki: WSOY, 1996), 413.
- ¹⁰ D. Kirby, "A Scandinavian Erratic amidst the Ruins of Empire: The Finnish Case, 1918–44", in R. Haynes and M. Rady, eds, *In the shadow of Hitler: Personalities of the Right in Central and Eastern Europe* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2010), 145.
- ¹¹ J. Siltala, "Lapuan liikkeen joukkokannatus", *Historiallinen aikakauskirja*, 82,1, (1984), 31; S.G. Payne, *Civil War in Europe*, 153; P. Haapala, "Kun kansankirkko hajosi", in I. Huhta, ed., *Sisällissota ja kirkko* (Helsinki: Suomen kirkkohistoriallinen seura, 2009), 21.
- ¹² See R. Perälä, *Lapuan liike ja sanan mahti*, 240; J. Bonäs, *Kommunistkräck, konservativ reaktion eller medveten bondepolitik? Svenskosterbottniska bönder inför Lapporörelsen sommaren 1930* (Åbo: Åbo Akademi Press, 2012), 168.
- ¹³ Most of the leaders came from a revivalist/neo-Pietist Christian background, prevalent in Ostrobothnia, the birthplace of the movement. 'Revivalism' in the Finnish context refers to movements *within* the national Lutheran church that argued for a stricter version of Christianity. While revivalist theology no doubt played a role in their political convictions, our analysis concentrates on the claims, which presented their Christianity as universal, not as a sectarian view. The premillenarianism evident in some of the rhetoric resembles other 20th century millenarian movements, yet as we argue later, it failed to translate into religious violence associated with movements such as Christian Identity or the Ku Klux Klan. J. Kaplan, *Radical Religion in America* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1997); P. Boyer, *When Time Shall Be No More* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992).
- ¹⁴ O. Silvennoinen, M. Tikka and A. Roselius, *Suomalaiset fasistit – mustan sarastuksen airueet* (Helsinki: Werner Söderström, 2016), 223.

- ¹⁵ J. Siltala, ”Lapuan liikkeen joukkokannatus”, 30.
- ¹⁶ *Aktivisti*, Kokkola, 1930: iss. 1–14, special Christmas issue; 1931: iss. 1–6; 1932: Special “Resurrection” issue. *Sinimusta*, Lapua, 1931: iss. 1–11. *Lapuan päiväkäskey*, Lapua, 1931: Sample issue, iss. 1–(7–8); 1932, 1–4.
- ¹⁷ R. Perälä, *Lapuan liike ja sanan mahti*, 58. Perälä also includes *Fascisti* among unofficial Lapua Movement journals, but we have omitted the journal in question from our analysis.
- ¹⁸ D.R. Janz, *World Christianity and Marxism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).
- ¹⁹ N. Ben-Yehuda, “The European Witch Craze of the 14th to 17th Centuries: A Sociologist’s Perspective” *American Journal of Sociology*, 86, 1 (1980); K.T. Erikson, *The Wayward Puritans: A Study in the Sociology of Deviance* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1966).
- ²⁰ R.C. Fuller and R.R. Myers, “The Natural History of a Social Problem”, *American Sociological Review*, 6, 3 (1941), 320.
- ²¹ H. Blumer, “Social Problems as Collective Behavior”, *Social Problems* 18 (Winter) (1971), 298–306.
- ²² M. Spector and J.I. Kitsuse, *Constructing Social Problems* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2001 [1977]), 1.
- ²³ M. Spector and J.I. Kitsuse, *Constructing Social Problems*, 75. Emphasis in the original.
- ²⁴ J. Best, “But Seriously Folks: The Limitations of the Strict Constructionist Interpretation of Social Problems”, in J.A. Holstein and G. Miller, eds. *Reconsidering Social Constructionism* (New York: Aldine deGruyter, 1993); T.Hjelm, *Social Constructionisms: Approaches to the Study of the Human World* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), chapter 6.
- ²⁵ N. Ben-Yehuda, “The European Witch Craze of the 14th to 17th Centuries”; D. Dunbar and S. Swart, “The Devil Rejoiced: *Volk*, Devils and Moral Panic in White South Africa, 1978–1982”, *Journal of Historical Sociology*, 28, 2 (2015).
- ²⁶ T. Tepora, *Sinun puolesta elää ja kuolla: Suomen liput, nationalismi ja veriuhri 1917-1945*, (Helsinki: Werner Söderström, 2011), 156–9.
- ²⁷ T. Tepora, ‘The Mystified War: Regeneration and Sacrifice’, pp.159-200, pp.178-9. In: Tuomas Tepora, Aapo Roselius eds., *The Finnish Civil War 1918 – History, Memory, Legacy* (Leiden: Brill, 2014).
- ²⁸ P.R. Ibarra and J.I. Kitsuse, “Vernacular Constituents of Moral Discourse: An Interactionist proposal for the Study of Social Problems”, in G. Miller and J.A. Holstein, eds. *Constructionist Controversies: Issues in Social Problems Theory* (New York: Aldine DeGruyter, 1993); T. Hjelm, *Social Constructionisms*, 8.
- ²⁹ See for example a speech by Lapua leader Vihtori Herttua from the first Lapua people’s assembly of 1st December 1929: Vihtori Herttua, “Pyhin valoin vannottu pyykki pysyy”, *Aktivisti*, 3, (1930), 8–9.
- ³⁰ S. Virkkunen, *Suomalainen fraasisanakirja* (Helsinki: Otava, 1981).
- ³¹ For example, see: Jorma Kalela, ‘Right-wing radicalism in Finland during the interwar period’, *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 1, 1 (1976), 108; Anssi Paasi, ‘The Rise and Fall of Finnish Geopolitics’, *Political Geography Quarterly*, 9, 1, (1990), 58; Aapo Roselius, ‘The War of Liberation, the Civil Guards and the Veterans’ Union: Public Memory in the Interwar Period’. In: Tuomas Tepora, Aapo Roselius eds., *The Finnish Civil War 1918 – History, Memory, Legacy*, (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2014), 316.
- ³² M. Siironen, *Valkoiset: vapaussodan perintö*, (Tampere, Vastapaino, 2012), 81-82; I. Huhta, ”Täällä on oikea Suomenkansa”: körttiläisyyden julkisuuskuva 1880-1918, (Helsinki: Suomen kirkkohistoriallinen seura, 2001), 225.
- ³³ R. Alapuro, *State and Revolution in Finland* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 211.
- ³⁴ E. Nolte, *Die faschistischen Bewegungen*, (Munich: DTV, 1966), 238.
- ³⁵ R. Perälä, *Lapuan liike ja sanan mahti*, 241; K. Immonen, *Ryssästä saa puhua: Neuvostoliitto suomalaisessa julkisuudessa ja kirjat julkisuuden muotona 1918–39* (Helsinki: Otava, 1987), 73.
- ³⁶ n.a., ”Sosialidemokraatteihin asti”, *Lapuan päiväkäskey*, sample issue, (1931), 12-13.
- ³⁷ A.S. Lindemann, *A History of European Socialism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), 296–297.
- ³⁸ R.E. Heinonen, “From People’s Movement to Minor Party: The People’s Patriotic Movement (IKL) in Finland 1932–1944”, in S. Ugelvik Larsen, ed., *Who were the Fascists? Social Roots of European Fascism* (Bergen: Universitetsförlaget, 1980), 687.
- ³⁹ T. Napue, ”Kommunismien psykologia”, *Aktivisti*, 5, 1930, 8–9; T. Huttula, *Nauloilla laadittu laki: Työväentalojen sulkemiset 1929–1932* (Helsinki: Suomalaisen kirjallisuuden seura, 2000), 431–33 [English summary].
- ⁴⁰ n.a., ”Sosiaalidemokraattiemme suhde uskontoon”, *Lapuan päiväkäskey*, 1 (1932), 8–9; X, ”Tää on viimeinen

- taisto”, *Sinimusta*, 8 (1931), 13.
- 41 Nais-Ajomies, 'Sopiiko kansanliike – naisille?', *Aktivisti*, 13, 1930, p.14.
- 42 Olavi Linnove, 1930, 'Yksityisyrittäjän ja työväen suhde Lapuan liikkeeseen', *Aktivisti*, 8, pp.6-8, p.6
- 43 M. Jaakkola, "Mitä kommunismi on?", *Aktivisti*, 1 (1930), 6–7.
- 44 n.a., "Sosialidemokraatteihin asti", *Lapuan päiväkäskey*, sample issue (1931), 12–13.
- 45 Mika Siironen, *Valkoiset: vapaussodan perintö*, (Tampere, Vastapaino, 2012), 64.
- 46 No author is given in the journal, but Kares later admitted to have written the editorial. J. Siltala, *Lapuan liike ja kyyditykset 1930* (Helsinki: Otava), 616, footnote #4.
- 47 K.R. Kares, "Lehtemme tarkoitus", *Aktivisti*, 1 (1930), 3.
- 48 P.V.K., "Köyhän sanat", *Aktivisti*, 5 (1930), 9.
- 49 I. Kallio, "Kevättä kohti", *Sinimusta*, 5 (1931), 12.
- 50 J. Bonäs, *Kommunistkräck*, 168.
- 51 V. Herttua, "Pyhin valoin vannottu pyykki pysyy", *Aktivisti*, 3 (1930), 8–9.
- 52 H. Riipinen, "Yli hajoitusyritysten eheyteen", *Aktivisti*, 10 (1930), 3–4.
- 53 L. Karvonen, *From White to Blue-and-Black*, 95. R.E. Heinonen, "From People's Movement to Minor Party", 690.
- 54 O. Silvennoinen, M. Tikka and A. Roselius, *Suomalaiset fasistit*, 116.
- 55 M. Jaakkola, "Mitä kommunismi on", *Aktivisti*, 1 (1930), 6–7.
- 56 I. I-la, "Kommunistien ihannemaasta", *Sinimusta*, 9 (1931), 14.
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- 60 A. Somersalo, "Mitä me odotamme?", *Aktivisti*, 1 (1930), 4-6.
- 61 J. Hanski, *Juutalaisvastaisuus suomalaisissa aikakauslehdissä ja kirjallisuudessa, 1918 – 1944* (Helsinki: University of Helsinki, Department of Social Science History, 2006), 291–292.
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- 66 J. Vuorinen, "Valkoisen Suomen uskontunnustus", *Aktivisti*, 3 (1931), 2.
- 67 n.a., "Kansannousu", *Aktivisti*, 5 (1930), 3–4.
- 68 G. Arokallio, "Valkeneeko Suomi?", *Aktivisti*, 11 (1930), 10–11.
- 69 Lakeuden ääni, "Onneton Inkeri", *Sinimusta*, 4 (1931), 4.
- 70 n.a., "Inkerin kansan kohtalo", *Sinimusta*, 5 (1931), 15.
- 71 Aimo Lahti, 'Isänmaallisuuden opetus kouluissa', *Lapuan päiväkäskey*, sample issue, 1931, pp.17-8.
- 72 K. Olsson, "Resepti", *Sinimusta*, 3 (1931), 6.
- 73 R. Perälä, *Lapuan liike ja sanan mahti*, 240; G. Arokallio, "Valkeneeko Suomi?", *Aktivisti*, 11 (1930), 10–11.
- 74 T. Huttula, *Nauloilla laadittu laki*, 210.
- 75 J. Talonen, "Vanhoillislestadiolaisuus ja vuoden 1922 uskonnonvapauslaki", *Faravid*, 3, 1, (1979), 157–8.
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- 77 n.a., "Sosiaalidemokraattiemme suhde uskontoon", *Lapuan päiväkäskey*, 1, 1932, pp.8-9.
- 78 K.R. Kares, 1931, "Kansamme julkinen elämä ei saa pakanallistua", *Lapuan päiväkäskey*, 3, p.7. For previous parts of the presentation, see *Lapuan päiväkäskey*'s 1931 issue 1, p.8-9, and issue 2, p.5-6.
- 79 Karl Olsson, "Inhoittava asema", *Aktivisti*, 3, 1930, pp.4-5.
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- 81 V. Varpio, "Me olemme meiltä", *Aktivisti*, 2 (1931), 11; n.a., "Rintamamies", *Aktivisti*, 3 (1930), 6–7.
- 82 n.a., "Julkilausuma kansalaisille", *Aktivisti*, 1 (1930), 8–9.
- 83 G.A. [most likely Gustav Arokallio], "Onko naisten ja nuorisonkin yhdyttävä kannattamaan Lapuan Liikettä?", *Sinimusta*, 10 (1931), 4–5.
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- 85 Vanha pappi, "Huliganismi alas!", *Aktivisti*, Ylösousemusnumero (1932), 15; n.a., "Suomen valkoiselle kansalle", 1932. [online] Available at: <http://histdoc.net/historia/1932-02-27_kapina.html> [Accessed 13

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- ⁸⁷ V. Varpio, "Havaittakoon uskon isänmaallinen arvo", *Aktivist*, 5 (1930), 6–8.
- ⁸⁸ R. Perälä, *Lapuan liike ja sanan mahti*, 91.
- ⁸⁹ M. Rintala, *Three Generations*, 198.
- ⁹⁰ A. Annala and E. Isokauppila, [no title], *Aktivist*, 5 (1930), 16.
- ⁹¹ J. Siltala, "Lapuan liike ja kyyditykset 1930", *Historiallinen aikakauskirja*, 80, 2 (1982), 111; D. Kirby, "A Scandinavian Erratic", 146.
- ⁹² A-i A., "Isänmaan Joulu", *Aktivist*, Christmas issue (1930), 11–12.
- ⁹³ R. Perälä, *Lapuan liike ja sanan mahti*, 86–7.
- ⁹⁴ R. Perälä, *Lapuan liike ja sanan mahti*, 94.
- ⁹⁵ Siltala, *Lapuan liike*, 357.
- ⁹⁶ Tapio Huttula, *Nauloilla laadittu laki: Työväentalojen sulkemiset 1929-1932*, Helsinki, 2000, pp.431-33 [English summary].
- ⁹⁷ M. Rintala, *Three Generations*, 182; V. Vares, M. Uola and M. Majander, *Kansanvalta koetuksella* (Helsinki: Edita, 2006), 210–11.
- ⁹⁸ V. Vares et al., *Kansanvalta koetuksella*, 226.
- ⁹⁹ He had signed the Treaty of Tartu in 1920, which granted parts of Karelia to Soviet Russia. This was seen as an act of treason by the Lapua men. Isänmaalliset, "K.J. Ståhlberg – presidentiksikö?", *Aktivist*, 14 (1930), 6.
- ¹⁰⁰ J. Siltala, *Lapuan liike*, 231.
- ¹⁰¹ V. Herttua, "Lapuan miehen sana", *Sinimusta*, 3 (1931), 4–5.
- ¹⁰² E.E., "Kuinka paljon murheita ja vastoinkäymisiä me vielä tarvitsemme?", *Aktivist*, 9 (1930), 3.
- ¹⁰³ n.a., "Kansamme voiman lähde vaalitaan", *Lapuan päiväkäskey*, 1 (1931), 10.
- ¹⁰⁴ O. Linnove, "Keiden mielestä tarkoitus pyhittää keinot", *Aktivist*, 11 (1930), 15.
- ¹⁰⁵ M. Rintala, *Three Generations*, 165; P. Ahonen, "Domestic Turmoil", 508.
- ¹⁰⁶ H. Riipinen, "Yli hajoitusyritysten eheyteen", *Aktivist*, 10 (1930), 3–4.
- ¹⁰⁷ L. Hyvämäki, "Fascismin tulo Suomeen", 128.
- ¹⁰⁸ n.a., "Kirjapainorikkojen vastinekirjelmä", *Aktivist*, 2 (1930), 14.
- ¹⁰⁹ Kansanliikkeen kannattaja, "Sanomalehdistön suhtautumisesta kansanliikkeeseen", *Sinimusta*, 4 (1931), 11; V. Herttua, "Pyhin valoin vannottu pyykki pysyy", *Aktivist*, 3 (1930), 8–9; A. Somersalo, "Mitä me odotamme", *Aktivist*, 1 (1930), 4–6.
- ¹¹⁰ V. Kosola, "Lapuanliike", *Aktivist*, 9 (1930), 6-7.
- ¹¹¹ A-i A., "Isänmaan Joulu", 11–12; J. Bonäs, *Kommunistkräck*, 168.
- ¹¹² I. Kallio, "Kevättä kohti", *Sinimusta*, 5 (1931), 12.
- ¹¹³ The word used in the article is "kansainliitto", which was the Finnish name for the League of Nations. However, the word is not capitalised, making it unclear whether the reference is to the League of Nations or not; Y. Antero, "Taistelkaamme oikeuden puolesta!", *Lapuan päiväkäskey*, 2 (1931), 4.; J.R., "Kolmatta mahdollisuutta ei ole", *Lapuan Päiväkäskey*, 7–8 (1931), 10–11. Excerpts translated in R. Griffin, *Fascism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 213.
- ¹¹⁴ M. Jaakkola, "Rauha maassa ja ihmisillä hyvä tahto", *Lapuan päiväkäskey*, 7–8 (1931), 20–21.
- ¹¹⁵ Perälä, p.417. [English summary]
- ¹¹⁶ P. Ahonen, "Domestic Turmoil", 510.
- ¹¹⁷ R. Perälä, *Lapuan liike ja sanan mahti*, 266; V. Vares et al., *Kansanvalta koetuksella*, 236.
- ¹¹⁸ J.L., "L.L. ja kommunismi", *Sinimusta*, 10,(1931), 7.
- ¹¹⁹ Nuortenmiesten kerho, "Tervehdys Etelä-Pohjanmaan miehille", *Aktivist*, 4, (1930), 21.
- ¹²⁰ G. Wrede, "Parkanon paroonin' tervehdys Sinimustan lukijoille", *Sinimusta*, 11, (1931), 2.
- ¹²¹ P.L. Berger and T. Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality* (Garden City: Anchor, 1967), 93–95.
- ¹²² P.L. Berger and T. Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality*, 93. See T. Hjelm (ed.), *Religion and Social Problems* (New York: Routledge, 2011); T. Hjelm, "Religion and Social Problems: A New Theoretical Perspective", in P. Clarke, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of the Sociology of Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 933.
- ¹²³ J. Siltala, "Lapuan liikkeen joukkokannatus", 31–33.
- ¹²⁴ E. Gentile, "Fascism as a Political Religion", *Journal of Contemporary History*, 25, 2–3, (1990), 230–1.

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- ¹²⁸ Y.A. Jelinek, *The Parish Republic: Hlinka's Slovak People's Party* (Boulder: East European Quarterly, 1976).
- ¹²⁹ T. Nygård, *Suomalainen äärioikeisto maailmansotien välillä*, 91.
- ¹³⁰ O. Silvennoinen, M. Tikka and A. Roselius, *Suomalaiset fasistit*, 223.
- ¹³¹ "Politicised religion" in this context should be taken as an empirical observation rather than a conceptual positioning. We do not want to enter into definitional discussions about "political religion" or "clerical fascism", two apparently "essentially contested concepts".
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- ¹³³ I. Huhta, *"Täällä on oikea Suomenkans": Körttiläisyyden julkisuuskuva 1880-1918* (Helsinki: Suomen kirkkohistoriallinen seura, 2001), 166-67.
- ¹³⁴ I. Huhta, *"Täällä on oikea Suomenkans": Körttiläisyyden julkisuuskuva 1880-1918* (Helsinki: Suomen kirkkohistoriallinen seura, 2001), 16, 120, 215.
- ¹³⁵ Gustav Arokallio, "Pois se Luumäen herra", *Aktivisti*, Resurrection issue, (1932), 5.
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- ¹⁴⁰ For a description of a failed coup d'état attempt led by Herttua, see O. Silvennoinen, M. Tikka and A. Roselius, *Suomalaiset fasistit*, 270-276.
- ¹⁴¹ O. Silvennoinen, M. Tikka and A. Roselius, *Suomalaiset fasistit*, 236.