Students and National Politics: A Comparative Study of the Finnish Student Movement in the Interwar Period*

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1. Introduction

The sociological study of student activism began in the mid-sixties. Its main focus has been on contemporary student movements, meaning that attention has been on leftist activism. Little attention has been paid to earlier movements, particularly rightist activism, which has even been ignored by most sociologists.

The student movement in Finland during the period between the two world wars was strongly nationalist and in the thirties fascist or semifascist. Its main organization, the Academic Karelia Society (AKS), was the main force in student politics after the mid-twenties and was of great national significance. In standard histories and analyses of Finnish right-wing radicalism, a great deal attention is given to AKS. Marvin Rintala has asserted that its 'distinction among interwar student organizations was undeniable. Few others were so well organized, so completely in control of their immediate surroundings, and so well on their way to capturing their whole national culture.'[1] This assertion provides the starting point for this essay, which focuses on student politics at the national level. AKS will be studied as representative of the young educated class in Finnish society

I shall compare AKS with the strong rightist student movement in Romania existing in the same decades. The Romanian movement was not selected only for its strength. According to Lipset's well-known analyses, the parliamentary political system in certain countries in Eastern Europe, such as Finland, Romania, Hungary, and Poland, had been unstable. The countries were more or less similar with regard to the level of wealth, division of labor, education, and urbanization.[2] Their fascism was similar in many respects and differed from the fascism in central or Western Europe as many observers have pointed out.[3] Both Finland and Romania, furthermore, belong to the countries that consolidated or re-emerged as fully independent states after the Russian Revolution and the end of World War I. Both

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of them bordered upon Russia and had gained territory at the expense of the weak Soviet state. The threat arising from the Russian Revolution was more real to the upper classes in Finland and Romania than to their counterparts in Western Europe, for example.

2. On Rightist Movements

Two types of right-wing extremist political movements are generally distinguished: the reactionary movements and the fascist movements. In sociology, probably the most familiar and explicit version of this distinction was presented by Lipset.[4] His basic idea is as follows: as the relative power or status position of the upper and middle classes declines, they react ideologically in different ways, i.e., there have been essentially two variants of right-wing radicalism, as far as social base and ideology are concerned.

Reactionary upper-class movements seek to preserve or restore the traditional, aristocratic political system. Generally they have been monarchist and strong in countries slowly industrialized. They have been backed by owners of large estates and industrialists, the managerial and the free professional strata, and partly by the Church along with the traditional aristocracy. The fascist mass movements, on the other hand, have been sharply opposed to the political left, but there have been anticapitalist and anti-industrial sentiments, too, among their mass supporters. Fascism has been backed particularly in countries characterized by both large-scale capitalism and powerful labor movements, i.e. in industrialized countries. The most willing supporters among the middle classes have been small, independent entrepreneurs and small farmers, who have been increasingly overshadowed both by the left and the capitalists. In other words, fascist movements have been backed by middle-class groups displaced or threatened by industrialization. As such, they resemble populist movements, both of them being backed by the same groups; characteristic of both is the idealization of the small entrepreneur and the exaltation of the peasant.

Lipset, among others, focuses his analysis on the reactionary tendencies of certain deprived groups. It is an important starting point when analyzing the ideology, i.e. consciousness, and national context, of the present student movements. But at the same time another emphasis is needed. Lipset overlooks the problem of how economic and political power in a society is divided between the groups supporting different rightist movements. He is interested in ways of reacting to deprivation and does not distinguish the mass support of a movement from groups controlling it or benefiting from it. Those approaching rightist reactions from this point of view have paid most attention to elites, especially to the economic elite groups. Barrington Moore is a case in point.[5] Student movements have varied at different periods but have depended heavily on the strength of the whole national rightist movement.

3. The Structural Context of the Finnish Student Movement

The Background of Right-Wing Radicalism in Finland

Right-wing radicalism arose in Finland, as elsewhere, after the Russian Revolution and the first world war. Nevertheless its roots lie deeper in the past — in the initial stages of industrialization in the latter half of the nineteenth century. A new industrial and commercial elite, which had sprung from the old commercial bourgeoisie, developed then, with the transition to industrialization backed by the state, i.e. by the high bureaucracy of the Grand Duchy of Finland. Later, at the end of the century, the interests of industry were treated preferentially compared to those of agriculture, particularly in tariff policy.

On the other hand industrialization benefited the independent and wealthy landowning peasantry. With the rise of the lumber and pulp industry, the value of forests increased rapidly, and the increase in the wealth of the landowning peasantry was sharper than ever before. This development created an upper class among peasants that obscured the gap between estate and peasant farm. The money and market economy intruded upon the countryside. One of its social consequences was a strong polarization within the agrarian population: the rise of wealthier peasants at the expense and consequent relative decline of small farmers, tenants, and laborers. In the conflict of interests over agriculture and industry, the latter had the advantage. The peasants were not satisfied with the tariff policy, as can be seen from the position of the representatives of the peasant estate in the Diet and in the history of the Bank of Finland.[6]

This conflict is included as a point of cleavage in the nation-building model developed initially by Lipset and Stein Rokkan. They distinguish two processes, the National Revolution and the Industrial Revolution, in terms of which they describe the central stages in the nation-building histories of European countries. Both processes are characterized by two cleavages. The National Revolution consists, first, of the conflict between the central nation-building culture and the increasing resistance from the ethnically, linguistically, or religiously distinct subject populations in the provinces and the peripheries. It also includes the conflict between the Nation-State and the Church. The second cleavage is characterized by the conflict between the landed interests and the rising class of industrial entrepreneurs, and the conflict between owners and employers on one side and tenants, laborers, and workers on the other. These are products of the Industrial Revolution.[7]

Rokkan has pointed out that in the Nordic countries the central elite controlling the machinery of the state was allied with the urban commercial and industrial entrepreneurs. This alliance thrust the landed interests into opposition in the first conflict of the Industrial Revolution. As a result, 'the peasants felt exploited in their dealings with city folk and wanted to shift the tax burdens to the expanding urban economies. These economic cleavages became more and more pronounced as the primary producing communities entered into the national money and market economy.'[8]

In the Nordic countries this conflict of the Industrial Revolution was reinforced by the center-periphery conflict.[9] The economic cleavage was connected with the cultural cleavage. This is an especially appropriate characterization of Finland. In Finland the language struggle was the most visible cleavage in the latter half of the last century, but it was also a struggle that followed economic boundaries. The peasantry and the Church stood against the commercial and industrial interests, and the high bureaucracy. The most important groups backing the Finnish party and movement were the wealthy peasants and the Church, whereas the strongest bases of the Swedish party were in business and the high bureaucracy.[10] The ideology of the Finnish movement had anticapitalistic and anti-industrialist characteristics, as has been the case elsewhere. 'Patriotic exaltation of peasant virtues, especially those virtues that profit the agrarian upper classes, is a characteristic of agrarian societies suffering from the inroads of commerce,' as Barrington Moore has pointed out.[11] Other elements in the ideology of the Finnish movement were the emphasis on the national community, a social reformist orientation, national tradition, national culture, and religion.

Barrington Moore has remarked that fascist ideas in Germany and Japan developed initially in the landed upper classes in the second half of the nineteenth century after the increasing intrusion of market relationships into an agrarian economy. Later, in 1920's and 1930's these ideas found response in the peasants' and small farmers' suffering from the Depression, a reflection of a deep and general crisis of the market economy.[12] It seems that the developments in Finland were similar in certain respects. The nationalism of the Finnish movement in the nineteenth century was an ideology of upper classes and wealthy peasantry.

The cleavage within the agrarian population, which was created by the economic changes in the preceding decades, was revealed after the parliamentary reform and the first elections under universal suffrage. In addition to the Social Democrats, another party, the Agrarian Union, was formed. It was to become a major party in less than twenty years. As Rokkan has pointed out, in certain Nordic countries, including Finland, the owners of large estates helped to consolidate the conservative establishments in the early phases of competitive politics, but the broad masses of the Nordic peasantry could not be brought into any such alliances with the established urban elites.[13] The peasant elements in the ideology of the Finnish movement were nevertheless natural sources for the ideology of the Agrarian Union. It had arisen in the Church and among wealthy peasants, and now it was backed by a variety of Agrarian Union supporters experiencing more and more clearly the intrusion of the market. As Barrington Moore puts it, this kind of ideology 'is not purely an upper-class mythology about the peasants, attributed to the peasants, but finds a response among the latter because it provides an explanation of sorts for their situation under the intrusion of the market. It is also quite clearly a body of notions that arises out of the life conditions of a landed aristocracy threatened by the same forces.'[14]

The real founder of the Agrarian Union, Santeri Alkio, took a very hostile stand against 'bourgeois society.' To him it was a society dominated by the so-called

bourgeois urban elements. 'Towns have become for the bourgeois society fortresses, from which the surrounding countryside is dominated.' The power of the towns had been made possible by big industry and big business. The Agrarian Union was also strongly anti-bureaucratic. Alkio's aim was to make the peasant population the central element in the society, and he defended small peasant farming on economic and social grounds (which was an ideological element not included in the heritage of the Finnish movement). In a word, Agrarian Union ideology was clearly populist.

In 1918, after gaining independence and after the civil war, the nationalist heritage with its strong ideological potential for right-wing radicalism was divided. The one heir was a more or less populist peasant movement. The other, conservative in nature, continued to exist in the upper classes.

The backbone of upper class nationalism, no longer only the Church and landowners, was reinforced by changes in its support groups and in its ideological characteristics; antibureaucratism and at least partly the anti-industrialist features disappeared. To understand the development of the nationalist ideology and its backing in the upper classes one has to remember the marginal position of Finland, first as an autonomous part of Russia, and then as a small neighbor of the first socialist state in history. From the early 1890's on, relations with Russia began to get strained.

The first signs were not very serious, but because of them disagreements within the Finnish elite and upper classes immediately softened. The elite groups and upper classes threatened by tsarist Russia and later by the Social Democratic movement tightened their ranks, subsequently strengthening the Church.[16] As the need for integration increased, the Church's function as ideological elite also gained in importance.

The language battle was also running at the turn of the century. This was due partly to the developments in relations with Russia and partly to the emergence of Finnish as an accepted language in the bureaucracy. To be sure, the share of the Swedish-speakers was still considerable, but nevertheless the connection between nationalism and language (Finnish or Swedish) in the upper classes decreased substantially.

After the Russian Revolution and the Finnish civil war the threats posed by Russia and by the rebels had common characteristics. As has often been pointed out, right-wing radicalism in Europe began in the aftermath of World War I, particularly in reaction to the Russian Revolution and several other revolutions that failed. The fears these revolts inspired in bourgeois groups took the Russian Revolution as a watchword. It aroused 'nameless horror,' says Ernst Nolte.[17] This was particularly true, of course, in the new or re-emerged countries along the western border of Russia. In Finland reactionary tendencies were influential, at least latently, in the Church, among high levels in the bureaucracy, and among high-ranking officers. The business circles openly supported the conservative party, the National Coalition, which saw itself as the heir of the Finnish movement. The Coalition as well as the Swedish People's Party supported the monarchy in the

constitutional struggle after the civil war, and within them there was strong resentment toward the parliamentary political system.

The Situation of Students in the 1920's

To the students in institutions of higher learning, especially in the universities, the most significant of the upper-class groups was without doubt the bureaucracy. The students in the University of Helsinki – by far the most important center for student politics – saw themselves primarily as future civil servants. Those graduating to careers in the bureaucracy and state-supported institutions had traditionally been educated in this university, the largest and by the 1920's the only one in the country. The civil servants and the Finnish educated class formed the backbone of society in the nineteenth century and a status group in the Weberian sense of the term. But by the turn of the century the intrusion of the Finnish language and structural developments had broken its homogeneity. By the 1920's the status of the high bureaucracy had decreased in two important respects. First democratization of the internal political system, and independence, considerably reduced its power and influence. From then on it was under parliamentary control and met with the antibureaucratism strong in the Agrarian Union and Social Democratic Party.[18] In addition, the economic position of the upper-level officials weakened markedly in the first two decades of this century.[19]

Secondly, and more important to the students, the internal cleavage accentuated during the civil war had destroyed the illusions of national solidarity. The students at the University of Helsinki, because of the Finnish movement, had traditionally considered themselves as representatives for the Finnish people.[20] The breakdown was problematic, of course, both to the students and the whole educated class. The problem was particularly relevant to the civil servant: he was traditionally held to be the representative of the unifying whole, the state. Now the solidarity and consequently the status of civil servant had to be restored.

The latter problem was a part of a more general one facing the upper classes and elite after independence and the civil war. The question was how to restore and maintain the integration of society, how to make those groups now only loosely bound to the body politic solidaric with the political and economic system. There were two principal alternative solutions to this problem in the 1920's. The right, especially the National Coalition, demanded the use of force and stressed the need for strong social constraints. The center parties, on the other hand, the Agrarian Union included, took a more or less conciliating line: they wanted unity through national reunification. In other words, the elite and upper class nationalists with their supporters in the high bureaucracy differed clearly from the agrarian nationalists, as far as the means for maintaining solidarity were concerned. The image of the civil servant also differed according to group. Among the right, the image was aristocratic, and there was bitterness over civil servants' weakening economic position and status. In the Agrarian Union the image was marred by resentment

and moral indignation against the upper classes, especially the Swedish-speaking sectors.

Predictably it was within university circles that the role of the civil servant became an important issue. Just before and after the civil war a change in the curriculum of civil servant training was suggested: less law to be studied and the replacement of the lawschool by a department of social sciences.[21] To the students, the problem was of great importance, as it was intertwined with the status of the bureaucracy and the educated class generally. That the majority of students proved to be strongly nationalist is not surprising; the phenomenon has counterparts elsewhere in Europe. However, the heritage of nationalism was divided and the alternatives suggested to solve the integrative problems differed. In addition, the bureaucracy had grown rapidly because of the crisis and the increased importance of the state, with the newly created positions being filled largely by relatively young people. Consequently, 'academic unemployment' was a lively topic among educated classes. Later the situation was aggravated by the Depression. While academic unemployment was in reality only slight, the position of the graduate was nevertheless more uncertain than before.

The central problem to the students was the restoration of an integrated society and the strengthening of the status of civil servants and the whole educated class. The nationalist orientation was natural, but the position of students between two nationalist orientations was far from clearly structured. The developments in the 1920's and 1930's were to depend essentially on the constellation and action of other, more central social groups.

4. The Members of AKS

The dominance of AKS in student politics is indisputable: it controlled the elected organs of the student body in the University of Helsinki from 1926 until World War II. The most involved supporters were of course the membership cadres. It seems that of the Finnish-speaking male students registered at the University of Helsinki in 1921–1940, 20–25 percent were members of AKS. (Only male students were permitted membership.)

Who joined the ranks of AKS? As a preliminary hypothesis, perhaps the AKS students came largely from the educated class and the peasantry, i.e. from the two nationalist milieus, and furthermore from ranks of the future civil servants, the law students.

From the viewpoint of the national significance of AKS, these two factors, social background (by the occupational level of father) and subject of study seem to be the most important ones. The information presented here was collected not on the basis of the whole membership but rather the most involved part of it, the so called oath members, 3156 persons altogether. These members, the huge majority of the whole membership, had sworn under oath to work for the realiza-

tion of the goals of AKS. Our analysis includes 93 percent of these. More than 95 percent of all oath members were registered in institutions of higher learning.[22]

Both strongholds of the different nationalist traditions were well represented in the membership of AKS, as can be seen in Table I. One quarter (24.7 percent) came from the educated class, and a fifth (20.1 percent) were sons of farmers. These groups are the largest in the category. This fact has some significance, independent of the relative strength. The sons of functionaries and of small entrepreneurs and so forth are well represented, too. Taken together, these two middle-class groups are by far the largest.

Table I. Percentage Distribution of Oath Members of AKS by Occupation of Father (N = 2920)

Father's occupation	%
Professional and governmental, civil servants (higher education)	24.7
Functionaries, etc. (vocational training)	19.7
Managerial and proprietary	7.9
Small entrepreneurs, artisans, etc.	19.1
Farmers	20.3
Workers, transportation, custodial, etc.	7.5
Unknown	0.8
Total	100.0

A more detailed picture of the membership may be seen by comparing it to the groups from which the members were recruited. Because the support for AKS varied in different institutions (an interesting fact in itself), the structure must be examined institution by institution. The most important is certainly the University of Helsinki, the largest and in regard to national traditions unparalleled institution of higher learning in Finland (74.1 percent of the AKS members under scrutiny studied there). In Table II the occupational background of members registered in 1921–1940 has been compared to the background of all male students and, separately, of Finnish-speaking male students registered in the same years. The struggle against the so-called Swedish-speaking upper class soon became a dominant theme in AKS, and therefore the male Finnish-speaking students are the most important group for comparison. First, one may notice that the occupational background of the members was, roughly speaking, rather similar to the background of all male students and particularly of the Finnish-speaking ones. The home milieu does not seem to have affected strongly the decision to join or not join: generally, the largest groups among the students were the largest also in AKS. It seems that the explanation may be found, partly at least, in the fact that AKS strongly dominated student politics. It may be suggested that the outbreak of nationalism among the students was so overwhelming that the other factors were only of secondary importance. Being a student was, as such, a fact of utmost significance.

*Table II. Percentage Distribution of Oath Members of AKS and Male Students at the University of Helsinki by Occupation of Father**

Father's occupation	Oath members of AKS (N = 1975)	Finnish-speaking male students† (N = 10,334)	All male students† (N = 12,908)
Professional and governmental, civil servants (higher education)	24.8	22.4	24.9
Functionaries, etc. (vocational training)	18.6	17.3	15.8
Managerial and proprietary	7.9	16.8	19.4
Small entrepreneurs, artisans, etc.	18.2	16.0	15.4
Farmers	22.3	18.4	16.0
Workers, transportation, custodial, etc.	7.4	7.9	7.3
Unknown	0.7	1.1	1.2
Total	99.9	99.9	100.0

* Only students registered from 1921–1940 are included.
† From Heikki Waris' unpublished study on the social composition of the students in the institutions of higher learning in Finland.

However, the background was not insignificant. What is most noteworthy in Tables II and III is the underrepresentation of the sons of managers and other business and industrial upper classes. While 19 percent of all the Finnish-speaking

*Table III. Proportion of Oath Members of AKS among Finnish-Speaking Male Students at the University of Helsinki by Occupation of Father**

Father's occupation	Oath members of AKS (%)	Total number of Finnish-speaking male students
Professional and governmental, civil servants (higher education)	21.2	2315
Functionaries, etc. (vocational training)	20.1	1788
Managerial and proprietary	9.0	1737
Small entrepreneurs, artisans, etc.	21.8	1654
Farmers	23.2	1904
Workers, transportation, custodial, etc.	17.9	821
All Finnish-speaking male students	19.1	10,334†

* Only students registered in 1921–1940 are included.
† The proportion has not been presented with regard to the Unknown group (N = 115). Source: Heikki Waris' unpublished study on the social composition of the students in the institutions of higher learning in Finland.

students were oath members, the same can be said only of 9 percent of the other group. Apparently, the result is in keeping with the picture outlined above of the basis of Finnish nationalism and right-wing radicalism. The ideological arsenal of right-wing radicalism was created in the upper class and big peasantry threatened by the industrializiation and commercialization.

It may seem contradictory to emphasize how removed industry and business were from the right-wing radicalism, since these circles supported the rightist National Coalition and the Lapua movement somewhat in the 1920's and 1930's. However, one has to distinguish the reaction to threat and other deprivating circumstances in certain social groups and the benefits drawn from mass movements by the powerful economic elites. Here we are considering the former phenomenon.

Both bases of nationalism are, also relatively speaking, well represented; the peasant students particularly seem to have been susceptible to the message of AKS. But the differences compared to the two middle-class groups are almost nonexistent. If the farmers are considered as belonging to the middle class, the relatively strongest groups in AKS were the sons of the middle- and educated-class families, and the relatively weakest group the sons of entrepreneurs and managers. On closer inspection a rather large share of the educated class are sons of the clergy. Of the Finnish-speaking sons of clergymen registered in 1921–1940, 34 percent were oath members, the corresponding share being 18 percent of the remaining students from the educated class. The peasant and generally the middle-class base are emphasized to some extent.

When examining the situation at the University of Helsinki we had data on all students registered. This is not the case with the other institutions – the University of Turku, the Institute of Technology, and the Helsinki School of Economics – that have data for comparison. The data have been collected only for certain years, and consequently the results remain inconclusive. The main results (not presented here) seem nevertheless to be similar in all institutions. The sons of peasants, the middle class, and clergymen seem to be more strongly represented, relatively speaking, than any other group. On the other hand, there is some variation as far as the mutual strength of the other groups is concerned. Thus in the two latter institutions the occupational background of members seems to differ from the background of students more than in the University of Helsinki; the differences are more marked in them. This may of course be due to the insufficient data, but it may also reflect the strength of AKS in the University of Helsinki. Table IV seems to support this possibility. In the University of Helsinki the involvement in AKS was stronger than elsewhere – with one exception – and the background seems to have had less effect there than elsewhere.

The exceptional case was the small Jyväskylä Institute of Pedagogics. It was founded in the 1930's for training students as primary school teachers and was *per se* indicative of the above-mentioned problem of 'academic unemployment.' The fact remains, however, that the important stronghold of AKS was the University of Helsinki. As often noted, the nationally central universities are generally also the most outstanding centers for student activism.[23]

*Table IV. Proportion of Oath Members of AKS by Field of Study among Finnish-Speaking Male Students at the University of Helsinki and other Institutions of Higher Learning**

Father's occupation	Oath members of AKS belonging to the group in question (%)	N
University of Helsinki	19.1	10,334
Theology†	35.1	994
Law	15.7	3129
Humanities	17.8	1552
Science and Medicine	15.3	2805
Agriculture and Forestry	22.1	1841
Physical Education	17.3	104
Pharmacy	6.5	31
University of Turku	13.2	759
Institute of Technology	14.0	2143
Helsinki School of Economics	5.6	1403
Military Academy	16.1	868
Jyväskylä Institute of Pedagogics	23.8	210

* The students registered in 1921–1940 at the University of Helsinki, the Institute of Technology, and the Helsinki School of Economics, in 1922–1940 at the University of Turku, in 1921–1933 at the Military Academy, and in 1934–1940 at the Jyväskylä Institute of Pedagogics are included. The differences are due to the founding of the University of Turku in 1922 and the Jyväskylä Institute of Pedagogics in 1934, and the exclusion of cadets and officers from AKS in 1934. The comparison of institutions separately in 1922–1933 and 1934–1940 does not change the above picture.

† The numbers given with regard to different departments are slightly (about 1 percent) too large because the numbers have been given by department and the students changed from one department to another are included at least twice. This bias is lacking in the total N (10,334) from Waris' data mentioned in Tables II and III.

On the other hand, the differences described in Table IV may also result from the subjects studied in respective institutions. It has been suggested that the University of Helsinki was important because the educated groups with traditionally highest status were educated there. In Table IV it can be seen that the most AKS-oriented were the theology students, and also the future agronomists and forestry graduates. It might be noted that these two departments were those most favored by sons of clergymen and sons of peasants, respectively, in the data. Conversely, the relative share of law students is not at all as large as expected. They are nevertheless the largest single group because of the central position of jurisprudence as a subject of study (Table V).

The results on the occupational background have in some respects been in accordance with the hypothesis presented above. The strength of the middle-class students was not suggested in advance but it is not opposed to the hypothesis. Instead, in contradiction to the hypothesis, the educated class's representation was rather law as to the background and subject of study (clergy excluded). These results seem to be connected. Generally there was a correlation between the occupation of the father and the son. For example, the relatively weak representation of law students in AKS was, partly at least, due to the relatively weak rep-

*Table V. Percentage Distribution of Oath Members of AKS and Male Students at the University of Helsinki by Field of Study**

	Oath members of AKS (N = 1975)	Finnish-speaking male students (N = 10,456)	All male students (N = 12,988)
Theology	17.7	9.5	8.3
Law	24.9	29.9	30.1
Humanities	14.0	14.8	15.2
Science and Medicine	21.8	26.8	28.7
Agriculture and Forestry	20.6	17.6	16.3
Physical Education	0.9	1.0	0.9
Pharmacy	0.1	0.3	0.4
Total	100.0	99.9	99.9

* Only students registered in 1921–1940 are included. The numbers of Finnish-speaking male students and all male students in different departments and the total sums are slightly (about 1 percent) too large because the numbers have been given by department and the students changed from one department to another are included more than once.

resentation of the students from the educated class, where the law students very often came from. The opposite seems to be true as far as theology students and students from agrarian strata are concerned.

The main results can be summarized as follows. First, where the nationalist student movement was really important, i.e. in the University of Helsinki, the occupational background seems to have been of secondary importance in comparison to the institutional factors, including the subjects of study. Second, the peasant and the middle-class students (along with the clergymen's sons) were more susceptible to the nationalist movement than other students. Third, the students of subjects most familiar to the clergymen and the peasants were more susceptible to AKS than other students. Fourth, it was nevertheless the students from the upper classes and the law students who set the tone within the AKS.

5. Ideology and National Significance of AKS

In the examination of the ideology of AKS two themes essential in the national context will be emphasized. Both of them, the so-called national reunification and the language struggle, were attempts to solve the problematic situation facing the young educated class after independence and the civil war. The relative emphasis and meaning given to these themes varied during the interwar period.

My presentation is somewhat schematic, presenting only the most essential differences between the periods; the fact that different stages partly overlapped will be ignored. One must remember, incidentally, that despite the differences the nationalist tenor was always strong.

The Founding of AKS and the First Years: 1922–1923

AKS was founded in 1922 by students who had participated in the intervention expeditions in Eastern Karelia. Thus, its beginning is associated with the efforts to create Greater Finland, at that time backed by certain bourgeois, particularly rightist circles. AKS arose after the expansionist expeditions had failed; it cherished the idea of Greater Finland at a time when the birth of Greater Finland seemed to be postponed thanks to the failed intervention and the peace treaty with Soviet Russia. Its exaltation of Greater Finland was not different from the common rightist orientation. The basic idea in the pronounced anti-Russian and anti-Soviet ideology was the awakening and uniting of the Finnish people to make sacrifices for unity, for the fatherland, and against the asserted threat from Soviet Russia. The members were recruited both from the Finnish-speaking and the Swedish-speaking students at the university of Helsinki. AKS was only one of the many organizations in the student circles committed to the ethnically related groups on the Russian side of the border.

The Populist Period 1924–1927

Of importance for the future years was the ideological reorientation that occurred in AKS in 1924. From that time on its strength increased rapidly and from the beginning of 1926 the whole (Finnish-speaking) student body was under its control. Soon its influence increased in other institutions of higher learning as well.

The ideological redefinition was brought forth most explicitly by an AKS leader, Niilo Kärki, in a speech published under the title 'National Finland.' Greater Finland was the ultimate goal in Kärki's speech, but it remained altogether peripheral. The essential problem was *how* to attain the 'great future of the Finnish race.' The first condition was 'national reunification.' This expression (in Finnish *kansamme eheytyminen)* was to have a strong positive connotation and significance in the twenties not only in AKS but in bourgeois circles generally. Kärki stated that until now 'there are only two hostile classes of people, only bourgeois and workers, exploiters and exploited.'

Class struggle cannot lead to reunification said Kärki. Instead, social conditions had to be improved so that misery and deprivation could be eliminated, and the cleavages within society bridged. Society had to change to make independence advantageous to everybody. This could be possible, and it could be realized by the students, the educated youth. To it 'the class interests are strange and unknown' and it was its 'duty to show how fragile is the base on which Finnish society stands even today.'

The second condition was attached to the first. Through national reunification the enlightened part of the student youth wanted to create a 'high Finnish culture.' This defined the boundary between the Finnish-speaking and the Swedish-speaking groups. The Finns (= the Finnish-speaking) had to create Finnish culture. In addition, reunification was possible only through a Finnish-speaking educated class:

'Raising the standard of living and the cultural standard of the lowest strata can be carried out only by an educated class, Finnish by language and by spirit, whose relations with the people are not full of arrogance and disdain, but who feels bound to it with bonds of blood.'

The main points in the speech by Kärki were soon dominant in AKS, and the Swedish-speaking students left. On the other hand, the original ideological potential was retained, too, although it remained secondary for the time being. Kärki's speech had both a class aspect and a status aspect. An integrated society had to be restored through reunification (as defined by Kärki), i.e. by reforms. The idea had similarities with the line of the centrist parties in coping with the aftermath of the civil war. Kärki himself belonged to the liberal National Progressive Party.

But national reunification had above all a status aspect: reunification might be carried out only by the rising Finnish educated class, which alone could express solidarity with the 'people.' In the civil war the educated class had lost much of its status; the illusions of 'the students as a miniature of the people'[25] had broken down. Now the whole educated class and especially the Swedish-speaking sectors came under attack. Sometimes it was said that 'the educated class which had separated itself from the people' was partly responsible for the civil war. The aim of the efforts to reunite the nation and create a 'nationally-minded educated class' was to create the body, from which 'only the people can find the real leaders.'

The ideas presented by Kärki resembled the peasant nationalism of the day. Significantly, Santeri Alkio had published a booklet two years earlier in which the task of reunification was presented much in the same way as Kärki presented it, but in which the central role was given to the peasants and not to the young educated class.[26] The book was not unknown in AKS and many of its leading figures in the 1920's joined the Agrarian Union. By 'the people' were meant in AKS terminology above all the peasants, and in the twenties AKS had better relations with the Agrarian Union than with any other party. The party was naturally sympathetic, in principle at least, to the idea of 'the nationally-minded educated class.' However, the working class was not excluded from the Finnish people. In 1924 in the AKS journal it was suggested that Social Democrats enter the cabinet, a situation unknown in post-civil war Finland until then.

How pronounced status politics was in AKS can be seen from the fact that the central theme in action from the middle of the twenties was the struggle against 'the Swedish upper class.' It was defined as a national and cultural struggle, not a dispute over the language. This conflict was to be the most significant cleavage in Finnish cultural life in the interwar period. What was at stake was an entire way of life. AKS acted to enhance the dominance and prestige of a certain style of living throughout society. The central issue in the confrontation was the question of the language used in teaching at the University of Helsinki; AKS demanded that it be made a totally Finnish university, 'in language and in spirit.' In a sense the central issue was not 'rational.' It was a status issue, and as Joseph Gusfield has remarked, status issues indicate, by their resolution, the group, culture, or style of life to which society is publicly committed. They can be labeled as status

issues precisely because what is at issue is the position of the relevant groups in the status order of the society.[27] It was not the first time in the history of Finland that the cultural conflicts centered upon the central educational institution in the country. The arguments for this struggle were heavily drawn from the earlier struggle, i.e. from the Finnish movement, the main figure being J. W. Snellman.

Depression and AKS up to 1932

During the Depression a right-wing movement arose in Finland as elsewhere in Europe. The peasants, dependent on the market economy, reacted at first with populist overtones, but they were not the only active ones. The Depression united the reactionary elements in the elite and the peasants for a while. The front was nevertheless different from that in 1918 in many respects. It seems that the right-wing radicalism of the elite and upper classes was derived from sources other than the peasants. Through the so-called Lapua movement, the communists were excluded from all political action, and the trade unions were crushed at the same time. Their strength remained small until the end of the thirties. Wages went down during the Depression in Finland more, for example, than in Scandinavia, which essentially was due to the weakness of trade unions. In the mid-thirties the wages were on the average less than half the wages in Sweden or Great Britain. It has been concluded that industrial expansion was so strong in the interwar period thanks to the low wage rates which enabled the export industries to maintain competitive prices. It seems that at least in this sense the economic elite succeded in taking advantage of the mass movement.

However, there was another aspect of upper class right-wing radicalism, too. The coercive nature of the upper-class proposals has been emphasized above. The upper classes felt the threat stronger than the peasants, as can be seen in the reactions of the respective groups after the civil war. The threat from below was intertwined with the fear of Soviet Russia, alive through the twenties and not surprisingly surfacing when the mass movement gained momentum. (It makes no difference that the communist party in Finland was in fact without strength at that time.) The Soviet Union was recovering, and the aggressive declarations by the right in the early twenties were set aside by the statements hinting at fear in the upper classes.

The reactionary circles soon took the lead in the mass movement, and its goals were altered. The origin of the anticommunist stance was to be found in the belief that something precious and holy to the peasant people had been disgraced. The communists were held to spoil the moral base of the nation. Already in 1930 the movement, however, concentrated its efforts on demands to reduce the parliamentary system and strengthen the executive organs. Similar demands had been suggested by the monarchist parties in the constitutional struggle about a decade earlier. In addition, the movement attempted to exclude the Social Democrats from national politics.

The new demands were not accepted by the Agrarian Union. It dissociated it-

self from the movement in 1930, and the only party openly supporting the Lapua movement from this time on was the National Coalition. The Agrarian Union had been backing the parliamentary system in the constitutional struggle and had become a strong party within the existing system; the exclusion of the Social Democrats greatly weakened the position of the Agrarian Union. The movement did not decline immediately, however. Only when the peak of the Depression was over did the movement break down. During its existence it retained its peasant style as a mode of legitimation. The image collapsed, finally, in 1932.

How did AKS react to the rise of right-wing radicalism? The first reaction was, generally speaking, common exaltation. The movement was seen as a sudden upsurge of national solidarity, and provided a profound experience for the students. The contemporary documents describe it very eloquently. The peasant, the heart of the Finnish people, had arisen, and now the peasants and the young educated class were side by side in the ranks of the popular movement. Very soon, however, two fronts took shape within the society. The cleavage had its counterpart in the rightist seizure of the Lapua movement and the consequent withdrawal by the Agrarian Union.

The AKS ideology was altering in certain respects thanks to changes within society. First, the language struggle declined markedly. The Depression had generally made issues of status secondary to economic and class issues. The change was reflected in AKS as all major changes on the national level (and especially where the peasantry was concerned). On the other hand, the problems of reunification gained importance. The meaning given to that term had already changed before the Depression. For Niilo Kärki it had social import. The struggle for Finnish culture and nationality was not for reunification as such; rather, it was considered a precondition for such an event: the (new) Finnish movement was democratic in essence, replacing the undemocratic Swedish educated class, which meant that the people would have an educated class willing to make social sacrifices for national reunification. This was Kärki's idea. His young disciples, instead, saw reunification in terms of the success of the new Finnish movement and of the creation of Finnish culture as such. They thought that to bring the people and the educated class nearer to each other by Finnicizing the latter was in itself reunification.

But reunification often had another meaning as well. It was also understood as ideological indoctrination: the people had to be made to give unanimous support to the national program to be reunited. These views were not explicitly differentiated. However, during the Lapua movement this latter meaning of indoctrination became dominant. The predominant line had its origins in peasant right-wing radicalism, but it also brought AKS nearer to reactionary nationalism. This is partly confirmed by the recovery of the Greater Finland ideas in the same years; they were characteristic of upper class right-wing radicalism. Sometimes the emphasis was held as a return to original ideals and goals.

The change in the ideological line and activities divided AKS. Opposed were, roughly speaking, two traditions in AKS. The experience of having been held back

was characteristic of the leaders in the Finnish period. The principal enemy t them was 'the Swedish upper class.' They envisioned themselves as rising an 'breaking through.' To the representatives of the other branch, the belief that th country was 'threatened' by Russia the archenemy was decisive. But this fe also included those Finns who were 'without a fatherland,' i.e. the communis and more and more the Social Democrats. The first group reacted more permi sively than the latter to the social conflicts in Finnish society, the latter demandin tightening of the ranks and unanimity and opposing all political differences. Sig nificantly, the seizure of a cultural organization that was to be of national sig nificance in cultural life in the thirties and forties was carried out by the repre sentatives of the first group, many of whose members belonged to differer parties, notably to the Agrarian Union.

Ideological changes took place. The rightist line won within AKS, and the lea ers of the Populist period resigned in 1932. The Depression had made issues c status secondary to class issues not only nationally but also within AKS.

The Fascist Period 1933–1939

The mass movement having collapsed, a new organization, the People's Patrioti Movement (IKL), was founded to preserve its heritage. While IKL defined itse as the heir of the Lapua movement, it had a strong academic coloring. Right-win radicalism did not decline among the educated class as had been the case amon the peasants. The movement had initially been mainly peasant, but from 1932 o its stronghold could be found in the young educated class. Unlike the Lapua move ment IKL was a political party, as well. Up to the mid-thirties it worked in clos collaboration with the National Coalition, and it seems that it gained its votes mainl from the supporters of the latter party. IKL had 8–14 of parliament's 200 seat from 1933 on. Only two of the twenty-one representatives had no academic degre or an officer's rank, and seven of them were clergymen.

Of importance to the image of IKL was the close cooperation with AKS. Man of the IKL members of parliament as well as certain other leading figures in th party were older members of AKS, and the society supported the party in it electioneering campaigns.

It seems that the movement was losing support among industrialists and bi business and even in the conservative upper-class circles already before the fina collapse: the economy was recovering and the leading conservative figures had re established their authority through the Lapua movement. Consequently, the rela tive position of students in the rightist movement strengthened. When the rightis movement was strong in Finland, the students and the young educated class wer a relatively insignificant part of it; when the rightist movement as a whole de clined, the educated class became one of its main supporting groups.

When the backing of right-wing radicalism altered partly, the ideological natur was altered as well. In AKS, the interpretation of national reunification was fa from its original meaning during the Lapua movement. Since 1932 the term wa

almost completely withdrawn from the discussion. Sometimes it had a negative tone of compromise. Instead, the term 'national community,' a counterpart of the German term *Volksgemeinschaft,* was for the first time to play an important role in AKS ideology. The German original had its own role in the ideological arsenal of the National Socialists, but it was drawn from German nationalism. It might be noted that in Finland, aiso, the term (with a minor difference in spelling) had had its place in the ideology of the Finnish movement (see page 116 above), which had been influenced by contemporary German nationalism. Also, other concepts familiar in the National Socialist terminology were adopted by AKS.

So, the original idea of the national reunification was now superseded by the desire for organic unity. As evidence is the fact that the existing political parties and the political system came under vigorous attack. In 1924 it had been stated that 'the only political party AKS does not accept, are the communists.' At that time AKS accepted the idea of a party system. But in his speech on Independence Day in 1933 the leader of AKS, Vilho Helanen, said among other things that the so-called democratic system means that 'each of the ruling parties will be guaranteed that piece of the national body into which it has already sunk its greedy teeth.' This system cannot lead any nation to greatness: 'Only vigorous general will and whole-hearted submission of individuals to serve that which is above them, namely the greater whole, can lead to national strength. But the general will and submission of the individual preach a totally different political world view, diametrically opposed to the prevailing system . . .' The demand for 'national strength,' closely connected to the Greater Finland idea, was maintained by AKS after the collapse of the Lapua movement.

The language struggle was not insignificant in this period but, on the whole, was declining. In an extensive series of articles on this issue its justification was derived from the 'community' principle. Its nature as a cultural struggle was obscured and only secondary attention paid to it in the last years of the thirties. This was partly due to the strengthening of the position of Soviet Union.

In this period class issues were more pronounced than before: AKS was a fascist movement in the sense Lipset uses the term. It was supported by students whose situation in the interwar period had middle-class features, more marked in the thirties than in the twenties. Significantly, academic unemployment, a subject not known to their fathers, was discussed widely. But, AKS in the thirties can also be characterized as fascist ideologically. Anticapitalism, for example, was to have a significant role in this decade only. In addition, the ideology was directly inspired by National Socialism. Not surprisingly, the line taken by AKS was distinctly different not only from the line taken by the centrist parties, notably the Agrarian party, but also from the one taken by the right: in the mid-thirties the National Coalition dissociated itself from the IKL. However, IKL and AKS had better relations with it than with any other party.

Essentially two major periods with a critical one between can be distinguished in the history of AKS in the interwar period. The ideological potential derived es-

sentially from the earlier Finnish nationalism was broad enough to keep both periods in basically the same framework. In the twenties AKS centered its efforts upon the language struggle, i.e. status politics. On the left-right dimension the stand was not very clear, except for an antistand towards the communists. From the time the Lapua movement began issues of status were secondary to the class issue. After the breakdown of the mass movement AKS was to be one of the central strongholds of right-wing radicalism. At the same time the nature of radicalism changed from populist to fascist or semi-fascist.

Why did Finnish student nationalism develop this way? In the previous section the relatively strong representation of peasant and middle-class students in AKS was pointed out. Their share was nevertheless too small, particularly in absolute numbers, to be a valid explanation. More important, this state of affairs was really no reason for the peasant orientation in the twenties, but rather another expression of the same phenomenon.

An important factor, as far as the twenties are concerned is of course the heritage of Finnish nationalism as such. From this point of view there is nothing surprising in the exaltation of peasants. The language struggle in the twenties can be seen as a continuation of the cultural struggle in the previous century. Because of the threat from tsarist Russia and the class struggle before 1918, cultural conflict was displaced, but not solved. The Swedish-speaking minority was still relatively strong for example in the high bureaucracy. In the twenties the threat from the outside and from below was not felt too strongly. There may, perhaps, have been room for integration by non-coercive efforts and for cultural struggle connected with it. The Depression and the recovery of Russia were to break down this fragile balance.

It may also be noted that a return to ideological origins is characteristic of youth movements. Exaltation of the peasant was expressed by the upper classes as lipservice, halfhearted and lukewarm. Nationalist students took the ideals more seriously than their fathers, just as many American student activists in the sixties took their fathers' liberal principles more seriously than the fathers did themselves.[28]

Why did the nature of student nationalism change in the thirties? One might refer to the successful breakthrough of Finnish in the higher bureaucracy and in different cultural fields, and to the strengthening of the international position of the Soviet Union. But more important developments happened probably elsewhere. The Lapua movement seen as a peasant movement, gave the students the experience of identifying with the people and the solidarity prevailing between the people and the educated class. The developments after 1932 can be seen as attempts to maintain this enhancement in status. Soon after the final breakdown of populist radicalism, Hitler came to power in Germany. It may be suggested that the strengthening of fascist elements in Finland, was at least partly due to the decline of the indigenous movement. (This problem will be examined briefly in the last paragraph.) In addition, cultural and other connections with Germany had been close since the nineteenth century. But the transition away from the nationalism of the Finnish movement was apparently far from fully realized.

6. A Comparative Case: The Student Movement in Romania

The Structural Context

Along with the differences there were several similarities in the international position and social structure of Finland and Romania. Romania was a neighbor of Russia and had been a Russian protectorate in the nineteenth century. It had won independence in 1856, but nevertheless its international position was altered by the World War I and by the Russian Revolution: it doubled its territory and population and gained Bessarabia from Russia. However, relatively speaking, Romania was a small country. For the Romanian upper classes, maintaining integration was a problem of extreme urgency and importance. In the interwar period Romania – 'Greater Romania' – stressed its role as the European bulwark against bolshevism.[29] On the other hand, Romania was, like Finland, an essentially agrarian society. As has been noted above, according to Lipset, in these countries the parliamentary political system was unstable, and they were more or less similar regarding wealth, division of labor, and urbanization.

However, the structure of agriculture in Romania differed markedly from that in Finland. An extreme concentration of land in large estates, excessive fragmentation of small holdings, and the insignificance of medium-sized properties were the most obvious elements of the Romanian agrarian problem in the beginning of this century. The landowning nobles, the *boyars,* were the central elite group in the country. Two political parties of significance, the Conservatives and the Liberals, obtained their support from the landowners, as Henry L. Roberts points out, and the principal distinction between them was that the Conservatives were usually the explicit spokesmen of the large agrarian interests, whereas the Liberals were increasingly interested in making Romania a strong commercial and industrial state and held the controlling positions in the growing financial institutions. The middle class was very small indeed. The Jews were relatively well represented in the commercial population of the cities and in the large estates the share of Jewish stewards was noticeable.[30]

At the turn of the century the condition of Romanian peasants was not far from serfdom, and the commercialization of agriculture had made their position even more difficult. With increased export of cereals, the landowners or stewards demanded more of the peasants. In 1907 the peasants arose in a revolt, which was suppressed. The economic background of the 1907 revolt lay not in peasant poverty alone, Roberts says, but in the protracted dislocating effect of commerce upon a previously 'natural economy' and a society involved in the ambiguities of neo-serfdom. On the other hand, the social background lay of course in the societal structure dominated by a boyar oligarchy. The peasant revolt, even though suppressed, had as a consequence some reformist efforts, too. They were due to the international position of Romania.

Socially and economically Romania resembled tsarist Russia in several ways, but the political and international positions of the two states were entirely different. The prevalent sense of insecurity in Romania made the ruling groups more

cautious in their exercise of power. But despite certain minor attempts the agrarian reform was not started until World War I, and the Russian revolution made the situation more difficult for the rulers of the country. The large private properties were partly expropriated, and new, notably small farms were created. Though economic and social tensions precipitated the 1907 revolt and unrest, the country's political and international position prevented it from becoming more than at most a social eruption.[31]

We have mentioned the idea presented by Barrington Moore, that the basic elements of fascist ideology appeared initially in the landed upper classes and were later to find a response among the peasants and in the middle class. The corresponding distinction can be made in the Romanian case, too.

Romanian populism, with strong nationalist overtones, originated within the upper class. Its most outstanding figure, Constantin Stere, was born in Bessarabia of a boyar family and was influenced by the Russian Narodnik movement. Stere denied the possibility of Romanian industrialization. The conditions in Romania demanded 'the organization of the whole national economy on a peasant foundation: a vigorous peasantry, master of the land on which it works, and for which – through the organization of a perfected system of cooperative societies – the advantages of small properties are united with all the technical advantages today available only to large property.' The only way to progress in a peasant society lay through strengthening the peasant economically by means of cooperation and by introducing a true 'rural Romanian democracy.' Stere's theory of progress was based upon a view of Romanian society as a cultural and historical entity with its own 'national genius' embodied in the Romanian peasant. He believed that Romania had its own particular destiny to fulfill. His organic nationalism saw the Jews as alien elements culturally and agents of 'vagabond capital.' In order to achieve the reforms, the handicapped peasants needed the help of other, more advanced, social elements – the wealthier peasants, the village petty bourgeoisie, and above all the intelligentsia. It has been asserted that a determining factor in this nationalist policy pursuing political harmony was the international position of Romania, especially the fear of Russia.[32]

The future Peasant Party, which was to be united with another party and in political power 1928–1930, followed a different ideological line in many respects. This can be seen from pronouncements of the peasant leader Ion Mihalache, a representative of radical agrarianism. Stere's populism was an intellectual's view of what the peasant wanted or ought to want rather than an authentic reflection of peasants' demands. Mihalache was at once more authentically peasant and more pragmatic than Stere. His thesis was the simple and straightforward one that the great majority of Romanian peasants had been deprived of land and kept out of power by the greed and the selfishness of the boyars. His aim was to correct that state of affairs by organizing the peasants to protect themselves (he admitted the assistance of intellectuals, but without the connotations of Stere's intelligentsia) by redistributing agricultural land, by establishing small peasant farms which he believed were more efficient than the large estates, and by increasing peasant cooperation. In pur-

suing this line he attacked the parties of 'social harmony' for their hypocrisy, and the socialists for their doctrinaire denial of the role of the peasantry. While a patriot and a monarchist, he displayed little of Stere's organic nationalism. But it has been pointed out that despite the differences Stere provided the basic inspiration for the Romanian peasant movement.[33]

This movement had many ideological similarities with its Finnish counterpart, but the most striking difference lies in the social structure and conditions laid down by it to the political system. Mihalache's Peasant Party was created after the critical years of World War I, when, along with the starting of agrarian reform, universal suffrage too had been carried through. Soon the peasant cause faded from the party program and action, however, and in 1926 the party united with another party as the National Peasant Party.

In Romania, the vast gulf between the peasant and his rulers still existed. 'Politics,' as Roberts puts it, 'was the art of taking advantage of the amorphous character of the peasantry.'[34] The peasants were not really included in the political life of the nation. Even the Peasant Party leaders were, in the main, professional men and intellectuals. Parliamentary politics, copied from the West in the nineteenth century by sections of the ruling groups, still functioned miserably; the election results, for example, were extremely untrustworthy. Basically, at those points where the new constitutional forms came into conflict with traditional institutions – above all with the oligarchic structure of society, in which the landed boyars held power over the mass of backward and long-subjugated peasants – the traditional relationship persisted within the new framework.[35]

The educated class in Romania was traditionally French-oriented, with imported Western liberal ideas influential within it. However, nationalism, in a romantic, traditional form was to prevail in student circles after the turn of century. The nationalism of the young educated class had connections with (upper class) populism: Romanian populism was also a literary movement reflecting growing national consciousness and a desire to create a national language and literature. On the other hand, the literary movement was also to influence ideologically the Peasant Party.[36]

The need for highly educated people in agrarian Romania was not urgent. They were employed in the bureaucracy and in business. On the eve of World War I the proportion of students to the total population was equivalent to the international average, but after that student enrollment rose abruptly, both in absolute and in relative numbers. The University of Bucharest can be cited as an extreme example. It had about 3500 students in 1913–1914, but in 1929 it boasted more than 20,500 students. The increase was a common phenomenon in the countries consolidated or re-emerged after World War I, Romania and Finland included. The sudden expansion of higher education corresponded to a real need: in all of these countries the bureaucracy enlarged as a result of crises or changes in political status. But after that time the available positions were filled largely by young people who had a long period of office or professional work ahead of them. The Depression was to aggravate the existing difficulties.

Characteristic of Romania, in addition, was that during the years 1921–1932 only eight percent of the students registered in the universities ever graduated. The conclusion presented by Eugen Weber is not surprising: 'Romanian students and graduates, facing the problems inherent in the growth of an educated class in an under-educated society, formed a chronically dissatisfied, disgruntled, revendicatory body of socially displaced and ambitious persons, constantly ready to express ambient frustrations in violent word and action.'[37]

Membership of the Iron Guard

While the data on membership cadres of the Romanian student movement are scarce compared to that used in the examination of AKS, they differed in one important aspect: the Romanian student movement was not concentrated in a pure student organization as its Finnish counterpart, and, consequently, the boundary between the student cadres and other members is a problem of its own. A number of fascist and antisemitic groups that appeared in Romania immediately after World War I appealed to students and schoolboys. Of greater importance was an organization existing under the name of the Legion of Archangel Michael, which later used other labels and is usually known as the Iron Guard.[37] It was founded in 1927 by Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, then a twenty-eight-year-old former student who had earlier, among other things, fomented student riots against Jews and communists and participated in antisemitic activities. The Legion was a political party and a fighting organization, which was to have strong national backing in the thirties.

The student body was one of the strongholds of the Iron Guard from the very beginning. Its role was essential in politicizing the students and then mobilizing them in national political activities. Along with students its most active members were unemployed intellectuals, dismissed civil servants, and a number of the members of the old boyar families.[38]

According to Eugen Weber, the Legion's leadership came from the provincial, only just urbanized intelligentsia: sons or grandsons of peasants, school teachers, and priests. He refers to the Legion's strength in the theological seminaries and agricultural faculties, where most of the peasant students went, and to its popularity with village priests and those village teachers who did not lean toward the Peasant Party, and he points out the number of legionnaires who were country-born. The share of the educated class – the students particularly – is substantial in the two data on the Legion's leading cadres presented in Tables VI and VII. The groups are not representative but do give some indication of the make-up of the leadership and activists of the Iron Guard. Nearly 40 percent of the persons in the group presented in Table VI were under thirty in 1940.[39]

The Ideology and the National Significance of the Iron Guard

Not surprisingly, there were direct similarities and influences between Italian fascism and German national socialism in the Iron Guard ideology. However, its

Table VI. Percentage Distribution of Members of Iron Guard Interned in Buchenwald 1942–1944, by Occupation (N = 251)

Occupation	%
Professionals (higher education)	27
Students	24
Functionaries, etc.	15
Small entrepreneurs	9
Agriculture	2
Workers	12
Others and unknown	11
Total	100

Source: Eugen Weber, 'The Men of the Archangel,' in Walter Laqueur and George L. Mosse (eds.), *International Fascism 1920–1945*, New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1966, p. 108.

Table VII. Members of Iron Guard Executed at Vaslui, September 21, 1938, by Occupation

Occupation	N
Students	14
Highschool students	1
University graduates	5
Lawyers	4
Engineers	4
State employees	2
Officers	1
Journalists	1
Total	32

Source: Eugen Weber, 'The Men of the Archangel,' in Walter Laqueur and George L. Mosse (eds.), *International Fascism 1920–1945*, New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1966, p. 109.

roots and central ideological elements came from Romanian society. The fascism of the Iron Guard had its ideological origins largely in Stere's upper-class populism. Roberts points out that while in Stere these elements appeared in a reltively moderate and balanced guise, taken together and intensified they closely resemble the driving impulse of the Iron Guard. Characteristic of the Iron Guard were the strong religious (orthodox) emphasis, its cult of the primitive in contemporary Romanian peasant life, and last, a marked morbidity and cult of death. Fascism in Romania involved very strong anti-industrial feelings and exaltation of the peasantry, and therefore it had the closest affinity to the currents of pre-1914 Romanian populism.[40]

Romanian fascism developed in two phases. Before the founding of the Iron Guard and in its first years, fascism appeared principally among students (and the military). It was not an immediate reaction against poverty and oppression but was rather an almost esthetic reaction against the distortions of Romanian society. It took its most violent form and gained the first and most fanatical of its adherents from among those who had been uprooted from the old agrarian society but who lacked a secure place in the new, as Roberts puts it.[41]

In the thirties the Iron Guard became a mass movement. This can be seen from the development of its popular vote. In 1931 it received only 1.2 percent, by 1937 16.5 percent of the total vote. Apparently it benefited greatly from the Depression. The National Peasant Party had been in political power during 1928–1930. It failed to safeguard the peasants, who were deeply in debt, and it seems that this was the cause, in part at least, of the upsurge of support for the Iron Guard. An increasing number of peasant supporters were attracted to it. During its meteoric rise the Iron Guard superseded overwhelmingly another nationalist and antisemitic group that was by nature more aristocratic than the Legion. Ecologically it seems that while this party, the League of National Christian Defense, could retain only the purely antisemitic vote, the Iron Guard gained its votes from a more general dissatisfaction within the whole of Romanian public life. In addition, it seems that the Iron Guard was especially strong in the agricultural counties that were poorer and more isolated than the average. Where the typical stronghold of the League of National Christian Defense was poor because of the weakening financial situation, the typical Legion stronghold was poor because it had never been better off. In other words, possibly the Iron Guard could recruit supporters also from new, earlier passive strata of peasants.[42]

The Romanian student movement in the interwar period had certain characteristic and clearly distinguishable qualities of its own. First, its ideology, as the fascist ideology in Romania generally, was very strongly influenced by the nationalist and populist ideas of pre-1914 Romania. Second, the student movement was not a distinctly separate movement of students. It was inextricably involved in the national struggle. Third, the political success of the students and the young educated class in the thirties was exceptionally remarkable. It seems that the significance of students and the young educated class in Romanian fascism was more important than the significance of its counterparts in other countries of strong fascist popular support, notably Germany and Italy. This state of affairs had its roots in the structure of Romanian society. We will return to this matter in the next section.

7. Comparison and Conclusions

Barrington Moore has remarked how difficult it is to distinguish genuine peasant conceptions from those ascribed to peasants by urban conservative and radical thinkers for their own political purposes. To determine just which ideas have been current among the peasants is extraordinarily difficult because they have left so few records of their own and have had a great many ideas attributed to them by townsmen who had a political axe to grind.[43]

Both of the student movements described above attributed certain ideas to peasants in their respective societies. In both cases the students as such were a group without political strength of its own, and in both cases the students, and the

young educated class more generally, leaned on the peasants and sought support from them. Apparently, the possibilities of attributing ideas to peasants and benefiting from them vary according the nature of peasantry in the country in question. The students were not a strong group shaping the conditions in the society, but rather a group reacting to them. In these agrarian societies the pattern of reaction depended a great deal on the structure and social importance of the peasantry, particularly since the appearance of student nationalism as such is not a great problem.

When describing the background of Romanian fascism, Roberts examines several conditions and mentions, among others, 'The struggle to achieve an independent national existence, the prolonged insecurity as a small state, the effort not only to escape the shadow of the great powers but to maintain a position in the scrambling of the Balkan states – all these led to an intense political nationalism which easily boiled over into chauvinism.' This could be said of the upper classes in Finland, too.[44] In addition, it might be asserted that in Finland at least, industrial capitalism undermined not only the agrarian interests and the Church but also the academic community. In the 1920's its position was without doubt substantially lower than in bureaucratic, pre-industrial Finnish society more than a half century earlier.

The route to the twentieth century was not alike in Romania and in Finland. Barrington Moore, in his study of social origins of different economic and political systems, has analyzed different routes to modernity. An important condition for parliamentary developments appears to have been the conflict between the landed upper classes and the industrial bourgeoisie, which prevented an alliance strong enough to suppress the reformist impulses. In Germany as in Japan, where fascism was to rise to power, the commercial and industrial class could not free itself from the old ruling landed upper classes: capitalism was to develop allied with the latter. Therefore, the industrialization and commercializaton of agriculture could be advanced very far with repression and without basic changes in the traditional social structures. In this type of society, i.e. where the coalition succeeds in establishing itself, there follows a prolonged period of conservative and even authoritarian government, which, however, falls far short of fascism. Later followed the attempts to extend democracy, and eventually the door to fascist regimes was opened by the failure of these democracies to cope with the severe problems of the day and reluctance or inability to bring about fundamental structural changes. One factor in the social anatomy of these governments has been the retention of a very substantial share in political power by the landed elite, due to the absence of a revolutionary breakthrough by the peasants in combination with the urban strata.[45]

This seems to have been precisely the case with regard to Romania; it has all the characteristics described by Moore.

In Finland the commercialization of agriculture was realized otherwise. In Romania, with its strong and unified elite, the pre-existing peasant society was maintained intact and was more effectively exploited through use of servile labor. On the other hand, in Finland there was no strong landed aristocracy on the eve of

first industrialization efforts. The commercial and industrial leaders strengthened their positions vis-a-vis the large-scale peasants, by far a less influential group than in Romania, by the end of the nineteenth century. Agriculture was not commercialized by a labor-repressive system as in Romania; the internal structure of the landed society was more homogeneous in Finland, and commercialization was realized largely in terms of the peasant farms. Consequently, in Finland the peasants became part of the parliamentary system.

This difference between Finland and Romania means that the nationalist and chauvinist potential existing within the educated class and among the students had, in an important respect, a different social context. In Romania the peasantry was amorphous by nature, and as it was suffering from the market economy during the Depression the intelligentsia was able to benefit from it. In Finland the Depression had only temporary effects: as soon as economic recovery began, the support of the Lapua movement decreased. The students and the young educated class lost their ground; that is to say, the attribution of their ideas to peasants proved to be illusory. In Finland, where peasant activism declined rapidly, the connections with the earlier populist and nationalist ideology also declined, and the fascist influences from Germany arrived upon the stage. In Romania, where the rise of peasant fascism was to survive in the thirties, the native populist ideology was to remain strong; the transitional character of Finnish fascism in the thirties was absent in Romania.

NOTES

* This article is largely based on a study, *Akateeminen Karjala-Sevra,* dealing with the student movement in Finland between the two world wars to be published in 1973.

1. Marvin Rintala, *Three Generations: The Extreme Right Wing in Finnish Politics,* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1962. See also Anthony F. Upton, 'Finland,' in S. J. Woolf (ed.), *European Fascism,* London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1968.
2. Seymour Martin Lipset, *Political Man,* London: Heinemann, 1960, pp. 48–60.
3. See e.g. S. J. Woolf, 'Introduction,' in Woolf, *op. cit.*
4. Lipset, *op. cit.,* pp. 131–140.
5. Barrington Moore, Jr., *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy,* Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1967.
6. Leo Harmaja, *Tullipolitiikan vaikutus Suomen kansantalouden kehityssuuntaan ennen maailmansotaa* (Impact of Tariff Policy on the Development of the National Economy in Finland before World War II), Kansantaloudellisia tutkimuksia II (Economic Studies II), Helsinki, 1933, pp. 197, 221; Hugo E. Pipping, *I guldmyntfotens hägn,* Helsingfors: Frenckellska Tryckeri Aktiebolaget, 1969, pp. 258–259, 264–265. However, the conflict was never as intense as in Sweden, for example.
7. Seymour Martin Lipset and Stein Rokkan (eds.), 'Cleavage Structures, Party Systems, and Voter Alignments: An Introduction,' *Party Systems and Voter Alignments: Cross-National Perspectives,* New York: The Free Press, 1967, pp. 13–14; Stein Rokkan, *Citizens, Elections, Parties,* Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1970, pp. 101–102.
8. Rokkan, *op. cit.,* pp. 108–109.
9. *Ibid.,* pp. 108–109, 120.
10. E.g. Jussi Teljo, *Suomen valtioelämän murros 1905–1908* (A Crisis of State Formation in Finland 1905–1908), Porvoo-Helsinki: WSOY, 1949, p. 21.
11. Moore, *op. cit.,* p. 295.
12. *Ibid.,* pp. 448–450, 490–495.
13. Rokkan, *op. cit.,* 128.
14. Moore, *op. cit.,* 495.

15. See e.g. Sven Lindman, 'Statsrådet i Finland 1919–1934,' in *Skrifter utgivna av statsvetenskapliga föreningen i Uppsala IV* (1935), pp. 174–175.
16. Mikko Juva, *Valtionkirkosta kansankirkoksi* (From the State Church to the People's Church), Porvoo-Helsinki: WSOY, 1960, pp. 276–278; Eino Murtorinne, *Taistelu uskonnonvapaudesta suurlakon jälkeisinä vuosina* (The Struggle over Religious Freedom after the General Strike), Porvoo-Helsinki: WSOY, 1967, pp. 90–104, 222, 231.
17. Ernst Nolte, *Die Krise des liberalen Systems und die faschistischen Bewegungen*, München: R. Piper, 1968, p. 44.
18. Väinö Luoma, *Virkamiesten järjestäytyminen Suomessa I* (with an English summary 'Civil Servant Unionism in Finland'), Turku: Uuden Auran Oy:n kirjapaino, 1962, pp. 56, 100–101, 104–105.
19. *Ibid.*, pp. 65–67, 73–74.
20. See Matti Klinge, *Ylioppilaskunnan historia III* (History of the Students' Union at the University of Helsinki III), Porvoo-Helsinki: WSOY, 1968.
21. Risto Alapuro and Matti Alestalo, 'Konkreettinen sosiaalitutkimus' (Concrete Social Research), in Risto Alapuro, Matti Alestalo and Elina Haavio-Mannila (eds.), *Suomalaisen sosiologian juuret* (The Roots of Finnish Sociology), Porvoo-Helsinki: WSOY, 1973.
22. The data on the membership have been collected from the registers of the institutions of higher learning on the basis of the so-called oath book, which includes the names of the oath members.
23. E.g. Seymour Martin Lipset, 'University Students and Politics in Underdeveloped Countries,' in Seymour M. Lipset (ed.), *Student Politics*, New York: Basic Books, 1967, pp. 23–24.
24. More extensive presentation and the detailed notes are to be found in Alapuro, *op. cit.*, forthcoming in 1973, Part 3. See also Rintala, *op. cit.*
25. Klinge, *op. cit.*, p. 348.
26. Santeri Alkio, *Talonpoika ja Suomen vapaus* (The Peasant and Finnish Independence), Vaasa: Ilkka, 1922.
27. Joseph Gusfield, *Symbolic Crusade*, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1963, p. 3.
28. See e.g. John L. Horn and Paul D. Knott, 'Activist Youth of the 1960's: Summary and Prognosis,' *Science 171* (1971), pp. 977–985.
29. Henry L. Roberts, *Rumania: Political Problems of an Agrarian State*, New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1951, p. 32.
30. *Ibid.*, pp. 6, 14, 20.
31. *Ibid.*, pp. 16–32.
32. *Ibid.*, pp. 143–147; Ghita Ionescu, 'Eastern Europe,' in Ghita Ionescu and Ernest Gellner (eds.), *Populism. Its Meanings and National Characteristics*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1969, pp. 100–105.
33. Roberts, *op. cit.*, pp. 148–149, 341–342, Ionescu, *op. cit.*, p. 102.
34. Roberts, *op. cit.*, pp. 90–91.
35. *Ibid.*, pp. 89–90, 337–338.
36. Eugen Weber, 'Romania,' in Hans Rogger and Eugen Weber (eds.), *The European Right*, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1965, pp. 507–511, Roberts, *op. cit.*, p. 143 n.
37. Walter M. Kotschnig, *Unemployment in the Learned Professions: An International Study of Occupational and Educational Planning*, London: Oxford University Press, 1937, pp. 13, 17, 48–51, 170; Weber, *op. cit.*, 514; Eugen Weber, 'The Men of the Archangel,' in Walter Laqueur and George L. Mosse (eds.), *International Fascism 1920–1945*, New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1966 (first published as *Journal of Contemporary History I*, 1 (1966) p. 110.
38. Weber, *International Fascism*, pp. 106–107, Roberts, *op. cit.*, p. 231.
39. Weber, *International Fascism*, p. 109.
40. Roberts, *op. cit.*, pp. 147, 229–231.
41. *Ibid.*, pp. 345–346.
42. *Ibid.*, p. 229 n; Weber, *International Fascism*, pp. 110–118.
43. Moore, *op. cit.*, pp. 496–497.
44. Roberts, *op. cit.*, p. 224.
45. See Moore, *op. cit.*, especially pp. 433–438.