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Elmgren, Ainur

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# “The Jesuits of our time”: The Jesuit Stereotype and the Year 1917 in Finland

*Ainur Elmgren*

University of Helsinki

*ainur.elmgren@helsinki.fi*

## Abstract

The tenacious negative stereotypes of the Jesuits, conveyed to generations of Finnish school children through literary works in the national canon, were re-used in anti-Socialist discourse during and after the revolutionary year of 1917. Fear of the Bolshevik revolution in 1917 paradoxically strengthened the negative stereotype of “Jesuitism,” especially after the attempted revolution by Finnish Socialists that led to the Finnish Civil War of 1918. The fears connected to the revolution were also fears of democracy itself; various campaigning methods in the new era of mass politics were associated with older images of Jesuit proselytism. In rare cases, the enemy image of the political Jesuit was contrasted with actual Catholic individuals and movements.

## Keywords

anti-Catholicism – anti-Bolshevism – revolution – stereotyping – nationalism – democracy – socialism

## The Jesuit Stereotype and the Revolution

A few weeks before the outbreak of the Civil War in January 1918, a Finnish newspaper published the satirical musings of a pseudonymous author. In the text, Ignatius of Loyola (c.1491–1556) and the early Socialists are sleeping restlessly in their graves. While the founding fathers of Socialism suffer from a monstrous nightmare that literally straddles their skeletons and tickles them with a bayonet, the dream of the “Great Ignatius” is pleasant. He mumbles:

“The end justifies the means!” and pulls his skull-like face into a grin.<sup>1</sup> For the reader, it becomes clear who the true victor of the impending conflict is implied to be. Whereas the old Socialists could be admitted to have some redeeming qualities, the Jesuit stereotype represented pure evil.

This study does not concern itself with real members of the Society of Jesus or their activities in Finland in the years around the country’s declaration of independence, which coincided with a tumultuous period in world history. Jesuit presence in Finland was practically non-existent, and writers using anti-Jesuit stereotypes did not practice *Jesuitenriecherei*, that is, spread a conspiracy theory about actual Jesuit influence in society.<sup>2</sup> The all-purpose usefulness of the “Jesuit” villain transcended its existence as a literary device in historical fiction.<sup>3</sup> It developed into a metaphor and an invective, transferring from the religious context to the secular, but without losing its original political connotations of a threat to the state and the social order. While the metaphor was used in articles on all kinds of topics, including religious and secular pedagogy, this study focuses on the political use of the Jesuit stereotype in the Finnish- and Swedish-language press in Finland. In 1917, two political sides that formed in conflict with each other drifted towards a civil war and accused each other for betraying the national project in terms that borrowed heavily from older anti-Catholic rhetoric.

In the specific context of Finland in the revolutionary year of 1917 and its immediate aftermath, “Jesuit” and associated concepts, such as “Jesuitism” or “Jesuit morality,” were used in the press as invectives against political enemies, with partly very specific connotations. Because of the historical development of the political power struggle in Finland, these terms were more often applied to Finnish Socialists and the Social Democrat Party, and, to a much lesser extent, to Russia and Russian political parties, until the end of the Civil War in May 1918. Many voices in the press used “Jesuit” as a derogatory description of a political opponent to highlight the special concerns and fears related to democracy and the potential abuse of the methods of mass politics—although

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1 Eenokki [pseud.], “Rajapykillä,” *Lahti*, January 3, 1918, 2.

2 Sisko Haikala, “‘Jesuitenreicherei’ und Kryptokatholizismuspropaganda: Eine Verschwörungsthese der Spätaufklärung,” in *Finnland und Deutschland: Forschungen zur Geschichte der beiden Länder und ihrer Beziehungen*, ed. Manfred Menger and Dörte Putensen (Hamburg: Kovač, 1996), 54–65.

3 Ainur Elmgren, “The Jesuit Stereotype: An Image of the Universal Enemy in Finnish Nationalism,” in *European Anti-Catholicism in a Comparative and Transnational Perspective*, ed. Yvonne Maria Werner and Jonas Harvard (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2013), 191–208.

the use of such inflammatory language itself was decried as abuse of the mass media for political purposes.

Finland partook in the heritage of the Reformation already as an integral part of the Swedish kingdom. After the Russian conquest in 1809, Finland was introduced into the empire as an autonomous kingdom with the Russian emperor as its monarch and maintained its separate constitution that guaranteed confessional autonomy as well as economic benefits. Beside the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland, a significant minority of the population were members of the Orthodox Church. Freedom of confession for Protestant denominations had already been granted during Swedish rule. During Russian rule, the Catholic community increased. Converts were few, but not unheard of.<sup>4</sup> In 1920, the Apostolic Vicariate of Finland was established, and the Act on Freedom of Religion of 1923 removed the final local obstacles for the Catholic Church.<sup>5</sup>

The press in Finland did not reveal much awareness of the existence of this community in 1917. To some of the authors who addressed the issue, the continuing existence of Catholic orders and institutions around the world appeared astonishingly anachronistic. The journal of the Helsinki YMCA stated that “it is probably less known to us that this very same system [the Catholic Church] rules over tens of nations, even in our days.”<sup>6</sup> A journal of the temperance movement noted that “modern man finds it odd that the brotherhood of the Jesuits, the mention of which brings to mind the blind religious fanaticism of the Middle Ages with all of its ensuing horrors, remains active today as a militant organization of the Catholic Church.”<sup>7</sup> The “oddness” might be explained as the effect of stereotyping that creates the very dangers that it is supposed to help to identify. Even a harmless variation in experience questions the validity of the stereotype, shakes its authority, and creates a sense of disorder.<sup>8</sup> The Jesuits were much more familiar to the authors of these articles as figures of speech, but the authors also seemed to accept, to a certain extent, the metaphor as an accurate reflection of reality.

4 Kalevi Vuorela, foreign expression: *Katolinen kirkko Suomessa 1700–luvulta 1980–luvulle* (Helsinki: Studium catholicum, 1989), 13–21, 92.

5 Vuorela, *Finlandia Catholica*, 102–14.

6 Anonymous, “Katolinen kirkko nykyaikana,” *Nouseva Polvi (Kuukauslehti)* 11 (1917): 151–54, here 151.

7 K. [editor-in-chief Vihtori Karpio?], “Kirjallisuutta,” *Kylväjät* 6 (1918): 83–84, here 83.

8 Michael Pickering, *Stereotyping: The Politics of Representation* (London: Palgrave, 2001), 2–4; Ainur Elmgren, *Den allrakäraste fienden: Svenska stereotyper i finländsk press 1918–1939* (Lund: Sekel, 2008), 18.

The newspapers and journals studied in this article represent a wide selection of nationwide and regional publications, both in the Finnish and the Swedish language, all accessible through the digital database of the National Library of Finland.<sup>9</sup> Searching for mentions of “Jesuits” and “Jesuitism,” it is possible to follow every step of the political developments in Finland during the revolutionary years of 1917 and 1918. In the press of the time, including daily newspapers as well as weekly and monthly journals, the use of pseudonyms and pen names was commonplace.<sup>10</sup> It is not always possible to identify the individual authors, as many opinion pieces were published anonymously. Although some of the sources are smaller publications for a local audience, they often reprinted articles from credited, politically approved sources; thus we find the same political discourse reaching different parts of the country via party newspapers. For example, the conservative, firmly anti-Socialist papers *Aamulehti* (Morning paper) of Tampere and *Länsi-Suomi* (Western Finland) of Rauma often published the same articles on political topics.

### Jesuit Stereotypes, Images, and Tropes

In her work on the “Jesuit specter” as an enemy image in imperial Germany, Róisín Healy notes that enemy images were, in a sense, simultaneously self-images. The use of the enemy image enabled definition of one’s own political position: “opposition to authoritarianism, tradition, and internationalism, in particular.”<sup>11</sup> The malleability of the image within a certain framework made it adaptable to different contexts and applicable to different enemies.<sup>12</sup> The case of Finland in 1917 takes this argument even further. Here, in a context completely lacking the opponent of the German *Kulturkampf* of the 1870s, the Jesuit stereotype acquires a life of its own. The metaphorical “Jesuits” of Finland were defined as such with the intent to reveal that they were disloyal to their nation and a threat to the public order.

9 Bibliographical information of the publications is available in Jussi Kurikka and Marketta Takkala, *Suomen aikakauslehdistön bibliografia 1782–1955* (Helsinki: SKS, 1983); and Akseli Routavaara, *Suomen sanomalehdistö 1771–1932: Bibliografinen esitys* (Helsinki: SKS, 1935).

10 For the identification of individual pseudonyms and abbreviations, I have relied on Maija Hirvonen, *Salanimet ja nimimerkit* (Helsinki: BTJ Kirjastopalvelu, 2000).

11 Róisín Healy, *The Jesuit Specter in Imperial Germany* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 16, 21.

12 Healy, *Jesuit Specter*, 127.

A stereotype is a fixed category that creates meaning.<sup>13</sup> It is a product of a specific historical context and specific relations of power, which it often serves to uphold. Certain aspects of the Jesuit image in Finnish political discourse are stereotypes. They are also transferable to other, seemingly unrelated contexts, yet the audience is expected to recognize the stereotypes and react in a specific way to them. A stereotype has self-explanatory value. The negative meaning of the word “Jesuit” in Finnish, a result of centuries of Protestant propaganda, has been used as proof of the actual moral deficiency of the Society of Jesus.<sup>14</sup>

The first anti-Jesuit images were created in response to the active role of the Society of Jesus in the Counter-Reformation.<sup>15</sup> The Society, aspiring for political influence, was also accused of promoting rebellion and tyrannicide among the common people.<sup>16</sup> Even in the early years of the Counter-Reformation, Jesuits were suspected of operating in disguise and masking their sinister intent of global domination, a claim that then developed into a conspiracy theory that has been called the “Jesuit legend” or the “Jesuit plot.”<sup>17</sup>

The seventeenth-century debate between Jesuit moral philosophers and the French Catholic Jansenist movement produced the derogatory concept of “Jesuit morality.”<sup>18</sup> Although never articulated by a Jesuit, the formula “the end justifies the means” became a pervasive trope in fiction and nonfiction and the expression “Jesuit morality”—an ironic shorthand for immorality.<sup>19</sup> In 1916 and 1917, a brief article debunking the attribution of the formula made the rounds in the Finnish press. Here, the Danish author, Georg Brandes, (1842–1927)

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- 13 Pickering, *Stereotyping*, 18. Walter Lippmann, who first introduced the modern sense of the concept of stereotype, defined it elegantly as “the projection upon the world of our own sense of our value, our own position and our own rights.” Walter Lippmann, *Public Opinion* (New York: MacMillan, 1956), 96.
- 14 Kaarle Sanfrid Laurila, *Vapaamielisyyks: Mitä se ei ole ja mitä se on* (Helsinki: Otava, 1912), 30; Aksel Rafael Rosenqvist, *Valhe ja eettillinen kasvatus: Psykologinen ja eksperimentaali pedagoginen tutkimus* (Helsinki: Keisarillinen Aleksanterin-yliopisto, 1914), 11. Laurila was a prominent literary critic, and Rosenqvist (later Kurki) a pioneering expert in pedagogy.
- 15 Healy, *Jesuit Specter*, 159.
- 16 Harro Höpfl, *Jesuit Political Thought: The Society of Jesus and the State, c. 1540–1630* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 7.
- 17 Eric Nelson, “The Jesuit Legend,” in *Religion and Superstition in Reformation Europe*, ed. Helen L. Parish and William G. Naphy (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), 94–118, here 104.
- 18 Cf. Albert R. Jonsen and Stephen Toulmin, *The Abuse of Casuistry: A History of Moral Reasoning* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).
- 19 Healy, *Jesuit Specter*, 153; Franz Schupp, *Geschichte der Philosophie im Überblick 3: Neuzeit* (Hamburg: Meiner, 2005), 142–43.

discussed false attributions of several famous and infamous quotes, including the motto that had been attributed to the Jesuits since the days of the Jansenists.<sup>20</sup> However, this article had no discernible effect on the public discourse in Finland.

The contradictory trope of the “Jesuit revolutionary” and his “Jesuitical methods” began to take a definitive shape in the mid-nineteenth century. Victorian anti-Catholic writings combined fear of a foreign “Jesuit plot” against Britain with fear of revolt among the lower classes, showing Jesuits as master manipulators of social discontent.<sup>21</sup> In 1840, the Finnish national philosopher Johan Vilhelm Snellman (1806–81) accused Europe’s young radicals of openly professing “the Jesuit principle,” “the end justifies the means.”<sup>22</sup> The same radicals used the Jesuit as a symbol of political reaction. In the French radical Eugène Sue’s (1804–57) bestselling *roman-feuilleton* of 1844, *Le juif errant* (The wandering Jew), the Jesuits appear as the main antagonists leading a global conspiracy to defraud a dispersed family from its rightful inheritance.<sup>23</sup> The first Finnish edition in the Swedish language was printed in Viborg in 1846.<sup>24</sup> Sue’s novel provided one likely source of inspiration to the Finnish novelist Zacharias Topelius’s (1818–98) serial novel *Fältskärens berättelser* (Tales of the barber-surgeon). Set in the Thirty Years’ War, the first part of the novel featured a prominent caricature of an evil, scheming Jesuit, Pater Hieronymus. This character manipulates an innocent noblewoman into an attempted assassination of the Swedish king, Gustavus Adolphus (1611–32), only to be foiled by the Finnish heroes. In Topelius’s tale, the Jesuit is a symbol of reaction, but

20 Anonymous, “Historiallisia sananparsia,” *Kaiku*, January 27, 1917, 3; previously published in *Aamulehti*, January 12, 1917, 5–6. The same article appeared in *Länsi-Suomi*, September 7, 1916, 4, noting that it was Blaise Pascal who had attributed the phrase to the Jesuits; only a few weeks later the newspaper accused the Socialists of “Jesuit morality” in an editorial. Maalainen [pseud.], “Sosialistien hajotustyö osuuskaupoissa,” *Länsi-Suomi*, September 26, 1916, 1–2, here 1.

21 Maureen Moran, *Catholic Sensationalism and Victorian Literature* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2007), 44, 48.

22 Johan Vilhelm Snellman, “Om principen för samhällsreformer, Freja n:o 20, 10.III.1840,” in *Samlade arbeten. Vol. 1, 1826–1840*, ed. Jaakko Numminen et al. (Helsinki: Statsrådets kansli: Statens tryckericentral, 1992), 311–13.

23 Charles Woodward Hutson, *A History of French Literature* (New York: John B. Alden, 1889), 306.

24 Eugène Sue, *Den vandrande juden* (Viborg: Johanna Cederwall & son, 1846). Supplement in the weekly literary journal *Romanen: Veckoskrift för den sköna litteraturen*. A Swedish translation had also been published the year before in Sweden. A Finnish-language translation had to wait until 1895: Eugène Sue, *Kuljeksiva juutalainen, eli, Jerusalemän suutari: Osa 1* (Pori: Pihl, 1895).

the ultimate goal of the story is salvation through grace. Theatrical adaptations of this part of the novel were still shown in 1918. After a performance in Kuopio, an actor's interpretation of Pater Hieronymus was praised as the "complete picture of the Jesuit's insidiousness and guile," albeit a reviewer wished that the actor had toned down his rendition, "the Jesuits being masters of self-control."<sup>25</sup>

The Reformation achieved a paradigmatic status in the history of Finland, through the pens of its first nationalist historians, as yet another step towards the historically determined autonomy of Finland. This was a success story that needed convincing villains. The Jesuit, as the perfect accessory to evil autocracy, could be used as a veiled attack on the Russian empire, avoiding the attention of the censors.<sup>26</sup> Toward the end of the nineteenth century, rising Russian nationalism put the legal autonomy of Finland into question, and an increasing sense of political urgency mingled with religious millenarianism. With the February Manifesto of 1899, Emperor Nicholas II (r.1894–1917) threatened to reduce the Finnish Diet to a rubber stamp.<sup>27</sup> At least two history books for the general reader, written during the ensuing "years of oppression," claimed that the Jesuits gave Catholic rulers permission to break their oaths to their Protestant subjects, violating their kingdoms' legal foundations.<sup>28</sup> The enemy figure of the Jesuit allowed writers to attack representatives of Russian rule and their collaborators under the veil of anti-Catholicism.

But the enemy could also be internal. The protest movement against the February Manifesto contributed to the growth of the Finnish labor movement among the rural landless population—the majority of the workers and up to forty percent of the entire population.<sup>29</sup> The protests culminated with the Great Strike of 1905, following popular protests all over the Russian empire. The parliamentary reform of 1906 extended voting rights to all adult men

25 L. [pseud.], "Kuopion teatteri," *Savon Sanomat*, October 22, 1918, 3.

26 Pirkko Rommi and Marita Pohls, "Poliittisen fennomanian synty ja nousu," in *Herää Suomi: suomalaisuusliikkeen historia*, ed. Päiviö Tommila and Marita Pohls (Kuopio: Kustannuskiila, 1989), 69–119, here 113.

27 Antti Kujala, "Finland in 1905: The Political and Social History of the Revolution," in *The Russian Revolution of 1905: Centenary Perspectives*, ed. Anthony J. Heywood and Jonathan D. Smele (London: Routledge, 2013), 79–93, here 83.

28 Kustavi Grotenfelt, *Suomen historia uskonpuhdistuksen aikakaudella 1521–1617* (Jyväskylä: Gummerus, 1902), 288; Ernst Gustaf Palmén et al., eds., *Oma maa: Tietokirja Suomen kodeille 3* (Porvoo: WSOY, 1908), 394–98.

29 Kujala, "Finland in 1905," 85–86; Pertti Haapala, "The Expected and Non-Expected Roots of Chaos: Preconditions," in *The Finnish Civil War 1918: History, Memory, Legacy*, ed. Tuomas Tepora and Aapo Roselius (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 21–50, here 31.



and women. The Social Democratic Party gained the absolute majority in the first general elections in 1907 and maintained an electoral support of forty to fifty percent in the following elections.<sup>30</sup> This was a shock to the supporters of the old parties in the parliament, who accused the Socialists of using dubious methods to gain votes. For one disappointed liberal, this could only be the work of a devious enemy: “The Socialists are the Jesuits of our time.”<sup>31</sup>

The Socialists, like the stereotypical Jesuits as enemies of the Reformation, were accused of spreading hatred, persecuting the opposition, letting the end justify the means, and generally acting fanatically and intolerantly. More visceral connotations of impurity, whether ideological or physical, were also present in the biblical language of contemporary writers, condemning “popish leaven”<sup>32</sup> or the “impure” educational theory of the Jesuits, “mixing” worldly and Christian elements.<sup>33</sup> Such verbal imagery flourished especially in the writings of teachers and pedagogy experts, who were not necessarily targeting specific groups but abstract notions of obscurantism and reactionary ideas. What distinguished the treatment of the Socialists was the particular association of the Jesuit stereotype with political upheaval on one hand and internationalism on the other.

The identification between the struggle for national independence and Lutheran millenarianism engendered a worldview where the Finnish nation took on the role of the biblical chosen people, its salvation or damnation being equivalent with the salvation or damnation of all mankind. Topelius, the creator of Pater Hieronymus, saw himself as a witness of the world’s degeneration and hoped for the impending return of Christ and the salvation of the world, where the young Finnish people had been chosen by God to replace Israel as a light unto the world.<sup>34</sup> Lutheran priests were engaged in the national project from the very start.<sup>35</sup> Biblical narratives gave a religious anchoring to the national mythology of a people freed from bondage and reaching

30 Haapala, “The Expected and Non-Expected,” 27.

31 Anonymous, “Industri och arbete,” *Lördagen* 15 (1908): 116.

32 K[aarlo] A[ugust] Järvi, “Uskonpuhdistuksen vaikutus opetustoimeemme,” *Otava* 11 (1917): 473–82, here 481. “Leaven” as in “ideological contamination” was a figure of speech frequently in use in secular, political contexts; cf. Matthew 16:6, “Then Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.”

33 Aukusti Salo, “Luonne ja sen kasvatus,” *Opettajain Lehti* 1 (1917): 1–2.

34 Nils Erik Forsgård, *I det femte inseglets tecken: en studie i den åldrande Zacharias Topelius livs- och historiefilosofi* (Helsinki: Svenska litteratursällskapet i Finland, 1998), 116–19.

35 Risto Alapuro, *Akateeminen Karjala-Seura: Ylioppilasliike ja kansa 1920–ja 1930-luvulla* (Helsinki: W. Söderström, 1973), 53, 63.

for salvation.<sup>36</sup> There was no contradiction between the national project and Christ’s promise of salvation for all humanity—the individual would reach personal fulfilment in the service of the nation. It is important to note that Socialism in Finland was an heir to this tradition, a “new civil religion” building on the Bible, the emancipatory message of nationalism, and the progressive temperance movement.<sup>37</sup>

### Revolutionary Surges in 1917

In 1917, diverse political forces in Finland, hitherto an autonomous state within the Russian empire, were searching for the right moment to declare independence. As the situation in Russia became increasingly volatile, an internal power struggle escalated. Who would determine the character of society in the future independent Finland?

The changing political scene in Finland in 1917 can only be dealt with superficially here. Almost the entire press of the country was openly partisan, although partisanship was deplored as damaging to national unity. The Social Democratic Party’s victories persuaded the so-called bourgeois parties to unite against it as political tensions grew.<sup>38</sup> However, they were divided by a multitude of clashing interests: the Agrarian Union representing the farmers and the provinces, the Old Finns representing the old Finnish-speaking bourgeoisie and the conservative clergy, the Young Finns representing the liberal nationalist bourgeoisie, and the Swedish Party, struggling to provide a common political movement for the regionally, socially, and ideologically diverse Swedish-speakers of Finland. Meanwhile, the Social Democratic Party could boast of the support of the Central Organization of Finnish Trade Unions, whose membership peaked at 110,000 in 1917.<sup>39</sup>

The maintenance of law and order became increasingly difficult when the gendarmerie, previously subservient to the Russian governor-general, was abolished by the Provisional Government in the February revolution. Russian

36 Elmgren, *Den allrakäraste fienden*, 216–26.

37 Haapala, “The Expected and the Non-Expected,” 31.

38 The word “bourgeois” (Finnish: *porvarillinen*, Swedish: *borgerlig*) is often used as a neutral description of a political party in Finland, even though it might have negative connotations in other contexts. During the year 1917, it was used on occasion as a positive self-definition in contrast to “socialist.” Anonymous, “Porvari ja sosialisti,” *Länsi-Suomi*, September 25, 1917, 2.

39 Haapala, “The Expected and Non-Expected,” 32.

military still maintained a presence in the country since the beginning of the First World War. Together with municipal authorities, the Social Democratic Party's local sections organized committees of public order. The party planned a thorough reform of municipal politics, where the vote was still weighted in favor of the wealthy.<sup>40</sup> In fear of a radicalization, bourgeois politicians and officials organized their own militias, initially even in cooperation with the workers' committees. This struggle for control of public order continued during the summer and fall of 1917, when food shortages caused looting, riots, and strikes around the country.<sup>41</sup>

In 1917, the Finnish press was not only divided into a Socialist and a bourgeois faction. The notorious "language strife" split the Finnish educated classes in two internally conflicted factions, Swedish speakers and Finnish speakers.<sup>42</sup> "Jesuit" became useful as a form of political invective directed towards the opponent to suggest backwardness and dishonest methods.<sup>43</sup> The favorite conservative target of the Swedish-speaking liberals, the Old Finns party, was also accused of having an appeasement policy towards the Russian authorities.<sup>44</sup> The fact that the Old Finns tended to attract the support of Lutheran priests—for a long time, Finnish had mainly been the language of religious publications and sermons—made the Jesuit connection even more appealing for satirists.<sup>45</sup> The left, too, used "Jesuit" as a political invective against priests.<sup>46</sup> It provided a metaphor for sanctimoniousness, religious oppression and backwardness, and

40 Ibid., 35; Raija-Leena Loisa, "Monarchism, Republic and Parliamentary Government: Finland after the Civil War," in *The Politics of Dissensus: Parliament in Debate*, ed. Kari Palonen et al. (Santander: Cantabria University Press, 2014), 149–170, here 152.

41 Tuija Hietaniemi, *Lain vartiossa. Poliisi Suomen politiikassa 1917–1948* (Vammala: Suomen Historiallinen Seura, 1992), 38–39, 47–49.

42 Haapala, "The Expected and Non-Expected," 26.

43 Neger [pseud.], "Ur dagboken. Småbetraktelser," *Vasabladet*, April 12, 1917, 2; Farbror Frans [Frans Johan Valbäck], "Oss emellan," *Lördagen* 22 (1917): 257; see also *Lördagen* 24 (1917): 284–85, here 284; *Lördagen* 16 (1918): 132.

44 Sepia [Rafael Lindqvist], "Fosterländsk logik," *Fyren* 14–18 (1917): 9.

45 For earlier examples, see: Orjanheimo [pseud.], "Pikku-uutisia. Pakinaa," *Eteenpäin*, September 2, 1911, 3; K.E. [pseud.], "Suomettarelaiset 'uskowaiset' hyökkäämässä uskonnon warjolla sosialismia vastaan," *Kansan lehti*, January 18, 1914, 2.

46 Isä Laurentius [Otto Orasmaa], "Terveisiä kirkosta," *Vapaa Ajatus* 2 (1917): 28–30, here 29; K.E. Rekola, "Lakko papillismaksujen suorittamisessa," *Vapaa Ajatus* 11–14 (1917): 155–70, here 162; Anonymous, "Laki kahdeksan tunnin työajasta teollisuudessa," *Kotimainen Työ* 6 (1917); 165–74, here 168.

thus a rhetorical tool for socialist journalists in their campaigns against the conservative elements in the priesthood.<sup>47</sup>

The rapidly evolving events that had crushed the Tsarist system threatened to pull old Finland down with it. A Christian author complained that "the icy wind of partisan spirit had been sown in the midst of our tribe." He saw a threatening "mass soul" being created, as "[they] have wanted to make the people's voice into God's voice."<sup>48</sup> This was not the fulfillment of "the people's will," it was "Jesuit morality."<sup>49</sup> Any means to exercise one's political rights became tainted and dubious to conservatives. Let the meek inherit the earth, some wished. One newspaper published an article praising the ability to "give space" rather than to "claim space" in the public sphere—the latter was "Jesuitical."<sup>50</sup> Even the word "independence" had become the Socialists' "Jesuitical article of faith," that is, a false promise.<sup>51</sup>

On March 20, 1917, the Provisional Government reversed the removal of Finnish privileges and rights enacted during the rule of Nicholas II.<sup>52</sup> Any potential joy over this decision was soon lost in political intrigues. The Finnish government, the senate, had hitherto consisted of a rainbow coalition of Social Democrats, Old Finns, Young Finns, the Swedish Party, and the Agrarian Union. In the elections of 1916, the Social Democrats had gained a parliamentary majority of 103 seats out of two hundred, but the party had hesitated for ideological reasons to man the senate alone.<sup>53</sup> This coalition government was called Tokoi's Senate after its chairman (i.e. prime minister), Socialist Oskari Tokoi (1873–1963).<sup>54</sup> Tokoi's Senate was severely criticized by Socialists for its inability to solve the question of public order and food shortages during the spring and summer of 1917. During this debate, the Socialists were accused of

47 Jäärä [Juho Rainio], "Moneen puolueeseen kuuluwa jesuiitta-pastori," *Sosialidemokraatti*, September 29, 1917, 4; Anonymous, "Waltiollisten olojemme järjestäminen eduskunnan käsiteltävänä," *Työmies*, November 10, 1917, 3; Irmari Rantamala, "Walheen profetat," *Työmies*, November 30, 1917, 3–4, here 3.

48 Yrjö J. [pseud.], "Barabbas juhlii," *Nuorten Ystävä* 3 (1918): 39–41, here 40.

49 Kasper [pseud.], "Stänk," *Syd-Österbotten*, August 8, 1917, 3.

50 Anonymous, "Gif plats," *Björneborgs tidning*, June 29, 1917, 2.

51 H.O. [pseud.], "Själftändighetslögnen," *Hufvudstadsbladet*, August 25, 1917, 9.

52 Pertti Haapala and Marko Tikka, "Civil War in Finland in 1918," in *War in Peace: Paramilitary Violence in Europe after the Great War*, ed. Robert Gerwarth and John Horne (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 72–84, here 78.

53 Haapala, "The Expected and Non-Expected," 26.

54 John H. Hodgson, *Communism in Finland: A History and Interpretation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967), 23–24.

“Jesuit tactics” if they threatened to topple the government by legal means, such as a vote of no confidence.<sup>55</sup>

In Petrograd, the Bolsheviks attempted a coup, and on July 18, 1917, the parliament of Finland voted to transfer supreme power to itself.<sup>56</sup> Contrary to the Provisional Government, the Bolsheviks supported Finnish separatism.<sup>57</sup> However, the Provisional Government, prevailing over the Bolsheviks, refused to ratify the law and ordered the dissolution of the Finnish parliament. New elections forced the Social Democratic Party back into opposition, where the bourgeois parties intended to keep it.<sup>58</sup> Dissatisfaction spread within the labor movement, and the press teemed with complaints about demagoguery. A Socialist newspaper argued, with a reference to Topelius’s Pater Hieronymus, that the Provisional Government ought not to be trusted: “don’t you see that from within the holy cross, the Jesuit’s murderous dagger blatantly peeks?”<sup>59</sup>

By the end of the summer, many Socialists had lost their trust in the parliamentary system and were following the Bolshevik efforts with growing interest. In the non-Socialist press, the radicalization of the working class could be blamed on Leninism, anarchism, and, as their logical conclusion, “Jesuit morality.”<sup>60</sup> In the most extreme cases, democracy itself was condemned: “Requisitions, robberies, assassinations and arson attacks all over our country prove what ‘democracy’ is capable of, and which Jesuitical means it deems licit.”<sup>61</sup>

The October revolution provided an opportunity for a bourgeois-led independence for Finland, all the more urgent as the radical labor unions called for a general strike.<sup>62</sup> The explosive potential of food shortages was a frequent topic in the minutes of the Social Democratic Party.<sup>63</sup> In the general strike of November 1917, over thirty people were killed in street riots.<sup>64</sup> There were also acts of violence and armed robberies, and the Finnish Social Democrats were accused of excusing these crimes “Jesuitically.”<sup>65</sup> The increasing tensions led a

55 Juho [pseud.], “Sosialistit ja eduskunta,” *Tampereen Sanomat*, June 27, 1917, 2.

56 Loisa, “Monarchism,” 152.

57 Haapala and Tikka, “Civil War,” 75.

58 Pauli Kettunen, *Politiittinen liike ja sosiaalinen kollektiivisuus: Tutkimus sosialidemokratiasta ja ammattiyhdistysliikkeestä Suomessa 1918–1930* (Helsinki: SHS, 1986), 87.

59 Setä [Kaarlo Luoto], “Tunnelma,” *Työ*, July 28, 1917, 7.

60 Anonymous, “Leniniläisyyden hedelmät,” *Karjalan Aamulehti*, June 15, 1917, 4.

61 Anonymous, “Anarkian jatkuessa,” *Laatokka*, November 24, 1917, 2.

62 Hodgson, *Communism in Finland*, 33, 37; Loisa, “Monarchism,” 153.

63 Hodgson, *Communism in Finland*, 31–32.

64 Haapala and Tikka, “Civil War,” 78.

65 Anonymous, “Från allmänheten: ’J’accuse!’ Med anledning av de socialistiska våldsdåden,” *Vasabladet*, November 24, 1917, 3.

writer with Agrarian sympathies to the conclusion that all ideologies “seemed to follow the same path.” Just as a humble Christian brotherhood upon reaching power had become “the most tyrannical Jesuit order,” the Socialists had followed a similar trajectory, “and soon we shall maybe see its accomplishments in its cruelest form,” the author concluded ominously.<sup>66</sup>

As the political struggle between the Socialists and the bourgeois parties intensified, both sides accused each other of exaggerating and outright lying. The Socialists were accused of betraying the national idealism of 1905, when the Finnish left and right had united in the struggle against external oppression. In 1917, they had supposedly turned “Jesuitical.”<sup>67</sup> The Socialists attacked their political opponents with similar images of “Jesuitical falsehood.”<sup>68</sup> The bourgeois press accused the Socialists of giving up on civil rights—“Socialists, do not fear press freedom like monarchs and Jesuits!”<sup>69</sup> Newspapers accused each other of distorting the news, “but such Jesuitism will soon meet its end,” a newspaper of the liberal nationalist Young Finns declared confidently.<sup>70</sup>

If one part took the invective in their mouths, it was as soon redirected against them. Socialist papers asked why taking an “honest position” in politics was branded as “Jesuitism.”<sup>71</sup> Similarly, if a Socialist accused an opponent of “Jesuitism,” the bourgeois press explained that the qualities that the Socialists branded as “Jesuitical” were in fact purely positive qualities, such as industriousness and honesty; faced with the truth, the Socialist ought to recognize that “he was the true, full-blooded Jesuit [himself].”<sup>72</sup>

In December 1917, some Socialist newspapers openly called for action to stop the “coup attempt” by the “Jesuitical” bourgeois parties.<sup>73</sup> The bourgeois press retaliated by accusing the Social Democratic Party of “Jesuitism,” or being “clad in a Jesuit cloak,” and denying the true reason for the armament of the Red

66 Anonymous, “Yleisiä uutisia: Sosialistista hirmuwaltaa,” *Lalli*, November 29, 1917, 3.

67 Pomo [pseud.], “Pakinaa: Vihtorin viimeinen villitys,” *Hämeen Sanomat*, November 27, 1917, 2–3, here 2.

68 Anonymous, “Eilinen suuri mielenosoitus,” *Työmies*, July 15, 1917, 1; Anonymous, “Porwarien asialla,” *Työmies*, November 23, 1917, 3–4, here 4; Anonymous, “Niitä näitä: Welwollisuutensa täyttänyt,” *Työmies*, November 24, 1917, 4; Anonymous, “Suomettaren jesuiittamainen walheellisuus,” *Työmies*, December 1, 1917, 5; Anonymous, “Suomettarelainen provokaattorilehti elementissään,” *Vapaa Sana*, December 7, 1917, 4.

69 Anonymous, “Älkää koskeko painovapauteen!,” *Karjalan Sanomat*, November 27, 1917, 3.

70 Nuorsuomalainen [pseud.], “‘Helsingin Sanomain’ sakset ja oikeustaistelu,” *Karjala*, August 8, 1917, 3.

71 Jyry [pseud.], “Viipurin kirje,” *Karjala*, February 4, 1917, 2.

72 Eenokki [pseud.], “Kylvöä ja satoa,” *Lahti*, August 12, 1917, 2–3.

73 O.T. [pseud.], “Kansanwallan perustuslaki,” *Sorretun Woima*, December 3, 1917, 1.

Guards around the country.<sup>74</sup> The threat of a civil war was “shameful” and its only purpose would be to “add, with cynical Jesuitism, a few shocking pages to the history of Communism from Finland.”<sup>75</sup> By using such methods, the Socialists had even “lost their humanity.”<sup>76</sup> This rebounding and deflecting use of the invective foreshadows the use of the word “populist” in parliament, almost a century later.<sup>77</sup>

Among the concepts connected to the Jesuit image, “Jesuit morality,” letting the end justify the means, lent itself most to rhetorical attacks. Any movement could be accused of honoring “that infernal motto of the Jesuits”: the Old Finns, the Socialists, Finnish nationalists, and even the temperance movement.<sup>78</sup> In the grand narrative of national liberation, the role of the Jesuit was easily filled with other representatives of the eternal enemy. When this narrative was imposed on neighboring Estonia, viewed by Finns as a sister nation, threatening anti-national “Jesuit elements” were identified—among the Russian Orthodox clergy.<sup>79</sup>

“Jesuit morality” was applied more specifically to political methods seen as less than savory, such as the speeches of political agitators and mud-slinging journalism.<sup>80</sup> In a journal of the Turku city mission, an author complained about “Jesuit morality teaching” among the Socialists: “With hatred as their strength and the lie as their weapon [...], the Socialists build the society of the future.”<sup>81</sup> The unsuccessful general strike in November 1917 was also counted among “Jesuit methods.”<sup>82</sup> In a time of misery, “it was so easy to keep quiet about the truth and Jesuitically sanctify any means necessary for the end: to raise the masses in restlessness against the bourgeoisie, toward civil war and

74 –ö. [pseud.], “Kewytmielistä tietä,” *Etelä-Suomi*, December 1, 1917, 2; Anonymous, “Punakaartien aseistamisen tarkoitus paljastuu,” *Turun Sanomat*, December 19, 1917, 1–2, here 1.

75 Anonymous, “Kansalaissota on häpeällistä,” *Kaleva*, November 22, 1917, 1.

76 Anonymous, “Sosialistien militarismi,” *Tornion Lehti*, December 21, 1917, 3.

77 Ainur Elmgren, “The Nordic Ideal: Openness and Populism according to the Finns Party,” in *The Paradox of Openness Transparency and Participation in Nordic Cultures of Consensus*, ed. Norbert Götz and Carl Marklund (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 91–119.

78 Pelle [pseud.], “Små kåserier: Förr och nu,” *Lördagen* 36 (1917): 412.

79 Anonymous, “Weljeskansamme wirolaiset,” *Turun Sanomat*, April 18, 1917, 2.

80 W.A.R. [pseud.], “Kenelle voitto?,” *Salmetar*, September 27, 1917, 1; Työläinen [pseud.], “Kalewan walistustyö,” *Kansan Tahto*, December 5, 1917, 3; Maaseudun Jaakko [pseud.], “Totuus pilkistää esiin,” *Liikeapulainen* 4 (1917): 58–61, here 58; T-s. [pseud.], “Työnantajat ja –tekijät,” *Vaatturi* 6–9 (1918): 17–18, here 18.

81 K.M.L. [pseud.], “Tarkoitus pyhittää keinot,” *Kirkollinen Sisälähetys* 6 (1917): 89–91, here 91.

82 Anonymous, “Kulttuurielämä Suomessa: Synkkiä tulevaisuuden enteitä,” *Kodin Kuvasto* 45 (1917): 510–12, here 510.

rioting."<sup>83</sup> The newspaper of the railway workers' union retaliated by accusing the bourgeoisie and the church of causing the general strike in November 1917 by acting irresponsibly and "Jesuitically" claiming their innocence afterwards.<sup>84</sup>

A "Jesuit morality" could be used to justify anything, hence the phrase could be used to ascribe any kind of bad behavior to one's opponent. The Socialists were accused of cultivating the "Jesuitical virtues" of "distrust, inconsequence, twistedness, hatred, meanness, intolerance and oppression of dissidents."<sup>85</sup> The liberal newspaper *Länsi-Suomi* developed lurid theories about the extremes that the Socialists' supposed "Jesuit games" would lead to, including female promiscuity with foreigners and the "development of a new race" as their offspring.<sup>86</sup> Finnish women's relationships with foreigners, including Russian soldiers and sailors and Chinese workers during the First World War, but also any other imaginable nationalities, was a common moral concern for left- and right-wing press before, during, and after the Civil War.<sup>87</sup> By using the Jesuit adjective, *Länsi-Suomi* seemed to imply that racial mixing was not only an incidental result of social contacts between Finns and foreigners, but part of a cunning plan.

### After 1917: Jesuitism as the Dark Side of Democracy

On December 6, 1917, the parliament adopted a Declaration of Independence, which was recognized by the Russian SFSR on January 4, 1918. As the struggle for power over an independent Finland intensified, the politically radicalized militias began to prepare for armed conflict. The White Guards were nominated as government troops by the Senate in January 1918.<sup>88</sup> The Social Democrat press feared that a new constitution, pushed by a bourgeois dominated

83 Anonymous, "Elintarwike-anarkia," *Kaleva*, November 24, 1917, 1.

84 Kuikka [pseud.], "Maaseutukirjeitä: Turusta; Vielä vähäsen suurlakosta," *Juna*, December 27, 1917, 4.

85 Työn raataja [pseud.], "Vastalause," *Länsi-Uusimaa*, November 30, 1917, 3.

86 Anonymous, "Sosialistit Suomen kansaa kurjistamassa," *Länsi-Suomi*, September 25, 1917, 1–2, here 1.

87 Outi Karemaa, *Vihollisia, vainoojia, syöpäläisiä: Venäläisviha Suomessa 1917–1923* (Helsinki: Suomen historiallinen seura, 1998), 60–62; on Chinese workers in Finland, see Harry Halén, "Katsaus Suomessa toimineen Venäjän sotaväen etniseen koostumukseen," *Genos* 70 (1999): 26–38.

88 Haapala and Tikka, "Civil War," 80.



parliament, would become “the most conservative possible” and to the advantage of the bourgeoisie—“a Jesuitical thought indeed!”<sup>89</sup>

A secret military committee of the White side decided to start repatriation of Finns who had clandestinely received military training in the German army during the World War and to buy arms from the Germans via Sweden. Another urgent matter was the removal of Russian troops still remaining in the country, which the Bolsheviks stalled. The Social Democratic Party’s leadership hesitated, but as the Red Guards took the initiative and mobilized, the party assumed leadership of the revolt by forming an executive committee and, soon after, a Socialist government of Finland, the People’s Delegation, in late January 1918. This de facto coup developed into a full-blown revolution in the southern, urban, and industrialized parts of the country.<sup>90</sup>

During the revolt, the Socialist press continued to use the inimical Jesuit image of their ideological opponents. In February 1918, as the Civil War was raging, a contributor to the Social Democratic Party’s newspaper pointed out the tendency of teachers to join the White side and called for the abolishment of the teachers’ seminar that produced these “Jesuitical teachers.”<sup>91</sup> The closure of bourgeois newspapers was defended as “justice” meted out against a “Jesuitical press.”<sup>92</sup> Even in the final phase of the war, the Reds holding out in the southern cities kept publishing their papers. “Why did the workers take the government into their own hands?” they asked, then replied: because the bourgeoisie became Jesuits.<sup>93</sup>

The bourgeois members of Senate retreated from the capital to the coastal town of Vaasa. The Red Guards requisitioned arms from the Russian military in the south and requested support from Vladimir Lenin (1870–1924). The direct involvement of the Russian Bolsheviks was minimal.<sup>94</sup> At the same time, the White Guards led by General Carl Gustaf Emil Mannerheim (1867–1951) requisitioned the arms of Russian troops stationed in central and northern Finland. As the local Red Guards took control over the industrial areas, the White Army

89 Don Q. [pseud.], “Lantdagsbrev,” *Arbetet*, January 17, 1918, 3.

90 Haapala and Tikka, “Civil War,” 76.

91 Itseoppinut [pseud.], “Opettajain osuus luokkasodasta,” *Työmies*, February 13, 1918, 6–7; R. Liukkonen, “Kansakoulunopettajain valmistuksen järjestelyistä,” *Työn Valta*, January 7, 1918, 2.

92 M.R.K. [pseud.], “Olemmeko sortajia?” *Toveri*, February 26, 1918, 1.

93 A[arne] R. Kotilainen, “Varför tog arbetarna regeringen i sina händer?” *Porvoon Työväen Tiedottaja*, April 12, 1918, 1; A.A. [Antti A. Ahonen], “Weljeytymisaate ja porwaristo,” *Työmies*, February 20, 1918, 2; L.A. [pseud.], “Wapauden puolesta,” *Työmies*, March 11, 1918, 4.

94 Haapala and Tikka, “Civil War,” 76.

mobilized the farmer population of the north and started to advance towards the south, receiving support from the German Baltic Division under General Rüdiger von der Goltz (1865–1946). In this “war of amateurs,” the advantage was initially on the Red side, but the White side had officers with German, Swedish, and Russian training and strategic experience at its disposal. After the fall of the Tampere, the industrial center and heart of the labor movement in the south, the defeat of the Red side was inevitable.<sup>95</sup>

The White press used historical imagery of the protection of the Lutheran faith to mobilize the grassroots in the White-controlled areas in northern and eastern Finland. Vicars held inspirational sermons about King Gustavus Adolphus’s victory over “the Jesuit Tilly.”<sup>96</sup> The “Jesuitical twistedness” of the Red press was condemned.<sup>97</sup> The Reds were bound to fall, because they had “taken the Jesuit slogan as their guide.”<sup>98</sup> Their fears of a bourgeois military coup were dismissed as pretentious and their claim that the bourgeoisie acted against the interests of the workers “Jesuitical.”<sup>99</sup> The reformist Social Democratic newspaper *Työn valta* (Power of labor) repeatedly positioned itself firmly against Bolshevism with the help of the Jesuit stereotype: “Uplifted to the level of a religion, Marxism turns into Jesuitism.”<sup>100</sup>

The greatest losses occurred after the battles had already ceased. Tens of thousands of prisoners, among them numerous civilians accused of collaboration with the revolutionary government, were incarcerated in camps during the late spring and the summer of 1918. The prisoners were ravaged by hunger and infectious diseases, resulting in the death of thousands, besides those who were executed after trials or informally as a revenge for the Red Terror during early spring.<sup>101</sup> White reactions to the revolt were desperate. Some saw their fears of mass power since the days of the general strike of 1905 confirmed. Many members of the educated middle classes had grown up with idealized

95 Ibid., 78–79. Cf. Aapo Roselius, *Amatöörien sota: Rintamataisteluiden henkilötappiot Suomen sisällissodassa 1918* (Helsinki: Valtioneuvoston kanslia, 2006).

96 Anonymous, “Puhe jonka kirkkoherra Kalke piti Tohmajärven kirkossa 17.2.1918,” *Karjalainen*, February 21, 1918, 2.

97 Anonymous, “Häikäilemättömyys huipussaan,” *Kaiku*, March 21, 1918, 1.

98 Anonymous, “Miksi punaisten täytyy sortua?,” *Länsi-Savo*, April 10, 1918, 2.

99 Anonymous, “Ken alkoi kansalaissodan?,” *Turun Lehti*, May 11, 1918, 2.

100 H.L. [pseud.], “Sosialistinen valistustyö,” *Työn Valta*, April 23, 1918, 2; H.L. [pseud.], “Rehellisyys,” *Työn Valta*, April 23, 1918, 3; W.H. [pseud.], “Ei ole syytä epätoivoon,” *Itä-Suomen Työmies*, September 14, 1918, 5.

101 Haapala and Tikka, “Civil War,” 79f.

and infantilized depictions of “the people” as docile commoners.<sup>102</sup> They struggled to make sense of what had led to the breakdown of society as they had known it and found explanations in familiar stereotypes.

Jaakko Gummerus (1879–1933), professor of church history and eventually bishop of Porvoo, called Christians as citizens to struggle for the rule of law, not the rule of “Jesuit morality.”<sup>103</sup> For Gummerus, “Jesuit morality” referred specifically to political use of “any means necessary” to reach a certain goal, and more narrowly to those methods that were associated with the evils of party politics and parliamentary democracy. The conservative factions of the Old Finns and the Young Finns, together with a majority of the Swedish Party, advocated monarchy as the solution for Finland’s internal problems in the summer of 1918.<sup>104</sup> It was also hoped that a German monarch would seal the alliance between Finland and Germany, which had supported the White side with military power. Monarchist supporters claimed that the country could not be rebuilt by political parties and “crooked partisanship,” and that splitting the bourgeois front was nothing but “Jesuit spirit.”<sup>105</sup>

However, liberal Young Finns and the Agrarian Union advocated a republican constitution. They feared that the democratic advances from 1907 would be repealed and that the old elite would maintain its position with German support. In the newspapers of the Agrarian Union, the monarchists were called Jesuits or accused of using Jesuit methods.<sup>106</sup> Simultaneously, monarchist advocates surveying popular attitudes lamented that the republicans were “similar to Socialists, they believe that all means are permitted”—an oblique reference to the “Jesuit morality” that had now been transferred to the Socialists.<sup>107</sup>

The armistice and the German revolution in November 1918 provided a rude awakening from the monarchist dream. The former Whites continued to view one another with distrust. When the bourgeois parties attempted to unite their forces after the monarchist fiasco, the Swedish-language satirical magazine

102 Kukku Melkas and Olli Löytty, “Jalon sivistyneistön kuriton kansa,” in *Kansa kaikkivaltias: Suurlakko Suomessa 1905*, ed. Pertti Haapala et al. (Helsinki: Teos, 2008), 237–51.

103 Jaakko Gummerus, “Yhteiskuntamme peruskivet,” *Teologinen Aikakauskirja* 5 (1917): 265–69, here 266.

104 Loisa, “Monarchism,” 154.

105 R.E.S. [pseud.], “Muuana sana,” *Heinolan Sanomat*, August 28, 1918, 1–2, here 2.

106 Väinö Kivilinna, “Hallituskysymys ja suomalainen maalaisväestö,” *Ilkka*, August 1, 1918, 2; Jaska [pseud.], “Katsaus maailman menoon,” *Ilkka*, August 28, 1918, 2; A.O.V. [pseud.], “Suomen ulkopoliittisia näkökohtia. 8,” *Maakansa*, March 28, 1919, 2.

107 Vesa Vares, *Kuninkaan tekijät: Suomalainen monarkia 1917–1919: Myytti ja todellisuus* (Juva: W. Söderström, 1998), 194.

*Fyren* (The lighthouse) reminded them that the "language question" was still unsolved:

When the bourgeois Finn makes a pass  
 At the Swede, and wants to reconcile and bury grudges, [...]  
 Then he is nothing but a home-grown Jesuit.<sup>108</sup>

After the Civil War, the Jesuit revolutionary trope maintained its connection with the Socialists. The Social Democratic Party resumed activities under reformist leaders who had refused to participate in the revolt of 1918. Even if reformist Social Democrats condemned the "Red Terror," they were accused of "Jesuitism" in the White press.<sup>109</sup> The mass outreach methods of democracy had become tainted by their use to spread revolutionary propaganda, and many authors could not find a better expression for this abuse than "Jesuit morality."<sup>110</sup> The revolutionaries in Finland were "the Jesuit Fathers" of the "one true faith" of the modern era.<sup>111</sup> Although reformist Social Democrats were opposed to the Russian Bolsheviks' methods, both of these political movements were depicted with the same Jesuit imagery in the liberal and conservative White press.<sup>112</sup> Even those Social Democratic leaders who had opposed the revolution could not be trusted as long as they submitted themselves blindly to the party's authority "like a Jesuit monk."<sup>113</sup> For unapologetic Whites, even bourgeois moderates who argued for a policy of reconciliation were "Jesuits of Helsinki."<sup>114</sup> Anti-revolutionary repression, including prison camps and courts martial under Russian military law, was justified as a matter of national protection.<sup>115</sup> Accusations of "White Terror" could be deflected by

108 Sepia [Rafael Lindqvist], "Ur min politiska visbok: De såta bundsförvanterna," *Fyren* 5–8 (1919): 10.

109 Anonymous, "Rauman kirje," *Länsi-Suomi*, April 23, 1918, 4.

110 Anonymous, "Häpeän päiwiltä," *Karjala*, May 3, 1918, 4; Tähystäjä [Maikki Friberg], "Katsaus omasta ikkunasta," *Naisten Ääni* 16 (1919): 196–97, here 196.

111 Johannes Hastig, "Det röda upprorets tillblivelse (forts.)," *Tidskrift utgiven av Pedagogiska föreningen i Finland* 3–4 (1919): 108–28, here 114.

112 Sam [Arthur Sjöblom], "Småbetraktelser," *Hufvudstadsbladet*, November 21, 1920, 7; Anonymous, "Veckans viktigaste utrikesändelser," *Hufvudstadsbladet*, February 29, 1920, 11.

113 Anonymous, "Miksi emme voi luottaa nykyisiin sosialistijohtajiin," *Kokkola*, February 20, 1919, 3; also published as "Sosialistisen puolueen nykyiset johtajat," *Aamulehti*, February 19, 1919, 2.

114 Anonymous, "Puhtain käsin," *Etelä-Savo*, January 13, 1920, 2; also in *Länsi-Suomi*, June 7, 1919, 4.

115 Haapala and Tikka, "Civil War," 80–81.

self-ironically comparing the White field courts with “the [inquisition] of the Jesuits”—this comparison was intended to be self-explanatory in its supposed absurdity.<sup>116</sup>

The traumatic experience of a popular uprising remained in the consciousness of intellectuals and churchmen. Church officials warned against people who did not obey authority, but let the “fire of hatred” burn against “truth, justice, and righteousness.”<sup>117</sup> In describing the methods of these disobedient agitators “to attract the minds of the undeveloped working people,” a conservative Christian writer referred to “the slogan of the Jesuits,” which he interpreted as “talking and writing against better knowledge [...]”.<sup>118</sup> The great fault of the Socialists, both in politics and in the press, had been their “party tactics,” “that disgusting Jesuitism,” according to several articles in the center-right press.<sup>119</sup>

For the labor movement, the events of 1918 had created a deep cleavage between revolutionaries and reformists. Those labor movement publications that managed to remain in the presses after the defeat of Red Finland in early May 1918 became desperate to explain that “banditry and the cause of the labor movement were two different things.”<sup>120</sup> The party newspaper of the Social Democrats argued in 1921, along with the bourgeois papers, that “the tactic of the Moscow Communists is Jesuit morality.”<sup>121</sup> The Bolsheviks were, according to reformists, actually not Socialists at all: they did not represent the teachings of Karl Marx (1818–83), but his opponent, the anarchist Mikhail Bakunin’s (1814–76) “Jesuitical ruthlessness.”<sup>122</sup> It was impossible to admit any kind of idealism or heroism, however misguided, to the losing side; upon reading the epitaph of Red Guards, “fallen for human dignity and justice,” a White journalist recoiled in disgust at this “Jesuitical statement.”<sup>123</sup>

Towards the end of 1918, the prison camp system began to be partly dismantled and the new civilian government of Finland declared a general amnesty

116 Eric V. [Eric Wilhelm Vasström], “Den vita terrorn,” *Hovnarren* 16 (1918): 2.

117 Yrjö J. [pseud.], “Barabbas juhlii,” *Nuorten Ystävä* 3 (1918): 39–41, here 39.

118 Oskari [pseud.], “Jumalan kuva,” *Kansan Henki* 1 (1917): 20–21, here 20.

119 Anonymous, “Eduskunnan kokoontuminen,” *Länsi-Suomi*, September 27, 1917, 2; Anonymous, “Suomi itsenäisenä valtiona,” *Länsi-Uusimaa*, November 20, 1917, 1; Anonymous, “Hetsen i socialistpressen,” *Wasa-Posten*, November 28, 1917, 1–2, here 1; Anonymous, “Sosialistilehtien väritetyt ja walheelliset kirjoitukset,” *Kaleva*, December 3, 1917, 1.

120 Nahkapaika [pseud.], “Wahtisotilaan ‘kaappauksia,’” *Tampereen Sanomat*, May 25, 1918, 6.

121 Anonymous, “Ero on kompromissilla ja ‘kompromissilla,’” *Suomen Sosialidemokraatti*, June 15, 1921 4.

122 M. T.-a. [Matti Turkia], “Piiireitä pakolaisen elämästä,” *Suomen Sosialidemokraatti*, June 21, 1924, 6.

123 Jati [pseud.], “Otteita Raahen komppanian päiväkirjasta,” *Raaha*, July 24, 1918, 2–3, here 3.

for the White side.<sup>124</sup> This was noted with indignation in the remaining Social Democratic press and condemned as inspired by the "old slogan of the Jesuits."<sup>125</sup> Although the Social Democratic Party made an effort to position itself as anti-Bolshevik and reformist, the bourgeois parties still remained suspicious, especially of any effort to counteract the institutions of the White side. The Young Finn newspaper *Tampereen Sanomat* (Tampere tidings) condemned the excesses of both the Bolshevik and the Finnish revolution. In both countries, a movement had "carried the apostolical slogan on its shield, but used Jesuitical methods" to reach its goal. And what brought it down in Finland? "Faithlessness to its principles, and Jesuitism!"<sup>126</sup>

The victors were, despite their differences, intent on preserving order their way. As the Civil Guards, the paramilitary force that had served a central role in the mobilization of the Whites in 1917–18, became legalized instead of being absorbed in the regular army, Social Democratic protests were dismissed as "Jesuitical."<sup>127</sup> Even the anti-revolutionary Social Democrats were assumed to be hypocritical in their condemnation of what amounted to a second, ideologically led army in the country. The conflation between the Jesuits and the medieval inquisitions was put into rhetorical use as the White side sought to condemn the Red side as strongly as possible and justify the countermeasures that had led to the deaths of thousands in the "White Terror." The tribunals of the Reds reminded one writer of "the Jesuit tribunals of the Middle Ages."<sup>128</sup>

The vision of Finnish democracy was now tainted by the revolutionary years. What was democracy worth, if the power of the majority actually meant the power of those who mold its opinions? Those who expected people to vote according to their own best interest ought to have "studied the methods of the Jesuits" to gain a truer picture of politics.<sup>129</sup> The discussion on the Freedom of Religion Act in 1920 addressed similar concerns. A letter to the editor warned against religions with "secret teachings" that were not openly professed, but were "unethical, revolutionary and illegal." The writer claimed that such teachings were found in Judaism "and maybe also in the teachings

124 Aapo Roselius, *I bödlarnas fotspår: Massavrättningar och terror i finska inbördeskriget 1918* (Stockholm: Leopard, 2009), 50–54.

125 Anonymous, "Nykyisen hallituksen ensimmäinen teko," *Itä-Suomen Työmies*, December 16, 1918, 5.

126 Nahkapoika [pseud.], "Wahtisotilaan 'kaappauksia,'" *Tampereen Sanomat*, May 25, 1918, 6.

127 Anonymous, "Skyddskårsanslaget beviljat trots socialisternas obstruktion," *Hufvudstadsbladet*, March 18, 1920, 4.

128 Taula-Matti [Samuli Paulaharju], "Pakinaa ja politiikkaa," *Riihimäen Sanomat*, May 25, 1918, 2–3, 2.

129 Anonymous, "Kansanvalta ja vallankumous," *Pohjan Kansa*, July 3, 1920, 2–3, here 2.

of the Jesuits,” but most dangerous were the “nameless religions”: Communism and Bolshevism.<sup>130</sup>

Before the Civil War, anti-Semitic tropes were rarely included in comparisons between Socialists and Jesuits.<sup>131</sup> In 1920, some articles appeared accusing Jews of having led the Bolshevik revolution; these were based on German sources or the accounts of officers serving in the Russian White Army.<sup>132</sup> Even rarer were cases of racist conspiracy theories such as one where the Jews, along with the Chinese and the Latvians, were accused of “sacrificing the European workers as the Asian race gains power.”<sup>133</sup>

A subtler connection could be made without implying any conspiracy between Jews and Jesuits. A journal of the YMCA depicted a Germany in revolutionary chaos to the benefit of Jews and Jesuits, reinforcing the image of outsider parasites feeding on the national “body.”<sup>134</sup> The “Jesuitical Reds” were compared with Pharisees.<sup>135</sup> Lenin’s ideology was summarized as “the art of trickery and deception acquired by the Jewish race throughout the millennia,” but also “the realization of Jesuit teaching.”<sup>136</sup> Reportedly, the attempt to introduce more freedom to the pupils in Soviet schools was also a “Jesuit method,” implied to be the brainchild of the “Israelite majority” at the Commissariat of Education.<sup>137</sup> The Bolsheviks were accused of “breaking their promises like Jesuits” and “lying like the Jews at the markets.”<sup>138</sup> A “Jesuitical” ideology such as Bolshevism, enticing its followers to betray their fatherland, could only have sprung from the brains of a “misanthropic race,” the Jews.<sup>139</sup> These articles

130 J.B.B. [pseud.], “Uskonnonvapauslakiehdotuksen johdosta,” *Uusi Aura*, May 9, 2910, 5. The story of “secret teachings” in the Talmud had already been debunked, but not without a comparison between its “excesses” and the Jesuits, by the Orientalist Knut Tallqvist, “Judarna och vi,” *Finsk Tidskrift* 1–2 (1909): 51–75, here 71.

131 An exception is to be found in Jörö [pseud.], “Päiwän pakinaa,” *Kaiku*, September 19, 1917, 3.

132 Robert Hausing, “Krigsfångarnas liv i Ryssland I,” *Hufvudstadsbladet*, October 27, 1920, 6; Viktor Stjerncreutz, “Av bolsjevikerne mördad finländsk officer,” *Hufvudstadsbladet*, November 17, 1920, 6.

133 Anonymous, “Ukrainan olot,” *Etelä-Savo*, January 13, 1920, 2.

134 Oscar Krook, “Strömmar och motströmmar: Intryck från Berlin,” *Mot Hemmet* 4 (1921): 59.

135 Anonymous, “Kuopion kirje,” *Savo*, February 21, 1920, 2.

136 –ii– [pseud.], “Euroopan rauhan jälleen järkkyyssä,” *Aamulehti*, August 14, 1920, 2; Anonymous, “Lenin ihmisenä ja wallankumouksellisena,” *Helsingin Sanomat*, August 9, 1918, 7.

137 Anonymous, “Neuvosto-Venäjäen kouluolot,” *Iltalehti*, August 26, 1920, 3–4, here 3.

138 Anonymous, “Venäjän kruununtimantit ja bolsheviki-propaganda,” *Savonmaa*, October 14, 1920, 3; reprint of article in *Haminan Lehti*, October 2, 1920, 3.

139 P.K. [pseud.], “Suurin synti,” *Jaakkiman Sanomat*, May 31, 1922, 4.

were all mainly denigrating the Russian Bolsheviks, but some may have read them, after the fact, as cautionary tales of the revolt in Finland.

Negative images of Jews and Catholics in the press did not prevent the passing of the Act of Freedom of Religion. Nevertheless, the connotation of foreignness and otherness lingered with the Jesuit image, and the fear of the Catholic Church, for centuries limited to fictional depictions of Jesuits and metaphorical invectives aimed at fellow Finns, could still be directed at the original target. Antti J. Pietilä (1878–1932), a conservative theologian and professor of dogmatics, warned that the Catholic orders active in Finland, the Priests of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Redemptorists, were “acting in the spirit of the Jesuits,” and their members were even foreigners.<sup>140</sup> Pietilä’s zealous activism against the Act of Freedom of Religion was satirized as “Jesuitism” in the liberal newspaper *Turun Sanomat* (Turku tidings).<sup>141</sup>

The most spectacular defense of Finnish democracy against the many-headed chimera of Judeo-Bolshevism and reactionary Jesuitism was mounted by an author in the Agrarian Union’s newspaper *Maakansa* (Country folk). Accusing the Old Finns and their monarchist successors of “two-faced, Jesuitical policy inherited from the Russians,” the author claimed that the leadership of the human race had gradually moved from the south to the north. As Finland was the northernmost state in the world, it now stood guard at the forefront of culture. It had realized equality between the sexes, equal national rights (for the Finnish- and Swedish-speakers), the eight-hour workday, and it had first of all defeated the “barbarism of Bolshevism and materialist Judaism.” Finland had made come true the “great ideals of the Gospel and its principles of fraternity, liberty and equality” in its political affairs, the first in all the world to do this.<sup>142</sup>

The optimism of this writer, convinced of Finnish supremacy, was difficult to match among contemporaries, even though it echoed Topelius’s millenarian vision of the Finnish nation’s spiritual purpose. If Finland had reached its highest point of development in 1919, with its citizens still participating in unofficial battles against the Bolsheviks abroad and struggling with social justice, the economy, and redistribution of resources at home, one sincerely hoped that the ascent would not end there.

140 Antti J. Pietilä, “Roomalaiskatolisen kirkon asema Suomessa,” *Länsi-Suomi*, January 24, 1920, 1–2, here 1; also in *Aamulehti*, January 27, 1920, 6; Antti J. Pietilä, “Uskonnonvapauslakiehdotus,” *Länsi-Suomi*, June 12, 1920, 2; also published in *Aamulehti*, June 12, 1920, 2.

141 Esa [pseud.], “Kesälesken mietteitä,” *Turun Sanomat*, August 11, 1920, 3.

142 A.O.V. [pseud.], “Suomen ulkopoliittisia näkökohtia. 8,” *Maakansa*, March 28, 1919, 2.



## Conclusion

Even when the Catholic Church formed a negligible threat on the young nation's mythic path to independence, anti-Jesuit phrases continued to be used in political discourse. One reason was the imprint of Christian eschatology on Finnish nationalism. An existential enemy was necessary to motivate the continuing struggle for a unified and successful nation-state. In the twentieth century, this enemy was often Russia, but tropes defining other, more ancient enemies were transferred to it. The negative Jesuit stereotype became detached from its original anti-Catholic context, but not from the context of the grand narrative of the nation's apocalyptic struggle.

During the revolutionary years of 1917 and 1918, counting the Finnish Civil War of 1918 as an abortive revolution, the political use of the concepts "Jesuit" and "Jesuitism" gained a new significance in the Finnish press. The press of the day was taking sides for or against the Social Democratic Party, which had just lost its majority in parliament. Both sides of the conflict used "Jesuit" as a political invective or metaphor. Even though the invective could be hurled by anyone against anyone, it was particularly attributed to the Socialists in Finland in 1917. The use of the Jesuit stereotype as an anti-Socialist device did not end with the Civil War, but after 1918, it was increasingly used to describe the character and methods of the Russian Bolsheviks.

What actually had happened in the years 1917–18 was a constant source of political contention in the interwar years. The White side tried to launch an alternative narrative about the Civil War as the "War of Liberation" against external forces, denying the Red Finns' agency by depicting them as naively and unwittingly led astray by "foreign" propagandists. The concepts were also used to address perceived dangers of the parliamentary system, of party politics, and of democracy in general.

The Jesuit trope fit this narrative well. Socialist agitators had already been accused of acting like Jesuits during the first years of universal suffrage in Finland. A "Jesuit" was a hypocrite, a liar, an agitator, abusing and undermining the democratic system. This "Jesuit" could not exist without the gullible "masses" to delude. Therefore, the use of the "Jesuit" stereotype in politics also betrayed a deep mistrust in the common people, a mistrust that became a self-fulfilling prophecy.