

JÄNIS-ISOKANGAS Ira / ЯНИС-ИСОКАНГАС Ира

Aleksanteri Institute, University of Helsinki/ Александровский институт, Университет Хельсинки

Finland, Helsinki / Финляндия, Хельсинки

ira.janis-isokangas@helsinki.fi

KONRAD (KONNI) ZILLIACUS AND REVOLUTIONARY RUSSIA

КОНРАД (КОННИ) ЦИЛЛИАКУС И РЕВОЛЮЦИОННАЯ РОССИЯ

Abstract: В статье прослеживается путь Конрада Циллиакуса (1855–1924) от журналиста и писателя до политического активиста. Его идейная эволюция как представителя шведоязычной элиты, получившего хорошее образование и имевшего широкие международные связи, отражает изменения в образе мышления высших кругов финляндского общества. Статьи и книги Циллиакуса были посвящены истории США и американскому обществу, японской культуре, истории Финляндии, революционной России и финляндскому «активному сопротивлению» русификации в т. н. первый период утнетения (1899–1905). Его политическая деятельность включала в себя организацию международной поддержки конституционалистов, создание сети борцов с царизмом и содействие финляндскому «активизму» и сторонникам сопротивления российской власти, таким как «Союз силы» (*Voimaliitto*) и егерское движение. Имя Конрада Циллиакуса часто упоминается в историографии в связи с Финляндией периода русификации, однако он оказался в тени других конституционалистов и «активистов». Порой о нём говорят как об авантюристе-космополите и радикале без настоящих политических предпочтений. В настоящей статье биография Циллиакуса и его сочинения анализируются в контексте проблемы изменений во взглядах шведоязычной элиты Великого княжества Финляндского. Показано, как он пришёл к политическому «активизму» и как происходила его радикализация в период русификации. Его сотрудничество с российскими революционерами служит примером сложного переплетения национализма с другими идеологиями в первом десятилетии XX в.

Ключевые слова / Keywords: Konrad Zilliacus, elite, Grand Duchy of Finland, Russification, Constitutionalists, active resistance, Revolutionary Russia / Конрад Циллиакус, элита, Великое княжество Финляндское, русификация, активное сопротивление, революционная Россия

Introduction

This paper analyses the radicalisation process of the Finnish elite in the second half of the 19th century by looking at Konrad (Konni) Zilliacus's (1855–1924) career and activities. Zilliacus was a Swedish-speaking journalist and activist who organised active resistance campaigns among the young Constitutionalists, which constituted a special group of the Fennoman party. They represented the academically educated, mostly Swedish speaking administrative and cultural elite, a group vital to the development of Finnish nationhood as well as to the continued success of the Grand Duchy of Finland and its relations with the

Russian Empire. Their rather peaceful attitudes towards the Empire changed, however, when the Tsarist regime tightened its control over the Grand Duchy.

Konrad Zilliacus makes for an interesting case in the history of the Russian Empire, Revolutionary Russia, and the Russification period of the Finnish Grand Duchy, not to mention the history of Finland. This paper explores how Konrad Zilliacus's life story explains his radicalisation within the context of the Finnish elite, Russification and revolutionary movement in the Russian Empire.

Konrad Zilliacus's name was linked with the Russian revolutionary parties actively involved with terrorism at the beginning of the 20th century. By looking at his biography, this paper seeks to find answers to why he became a radical activist. Why prompted a well-educated member of the Swedish-speaking elite to no longer envision a future within the framework of the Russian Empire?

Many researchers have analysed political developments in the Grand Duchy of Finland.¹ This paper will concentrate on the Finnish elite's strategies to secure Finland's position and the development of Finnish nationalism during the first period of Russification (1899–1905).²

Finnish political nationalism and activism is also a widely studied and discussed topic, especially in Finland, and much quite interesting and thorough research has been done on it.³ Konrad Zilliacus, though, has never been the focus of such analyses. He has often been mentioned, but never discussed in detail in many important studies on the Russification period.

This research paper is a micro-level study of a single political actor, Konrad Zilliacus, and his relations with both the Finnish and Russian political parties as well as his understandings of passive and active resistance and terrorism and how the changes in the political landscape in Russia and Finland influenced his views. This paper analyses this development through his writings. Konrad wrote many articles on the Finnish question, for example in the newspapers *Nya Pressen* and *Fria Ord*, and he published many books on Finnish history. This paper concentrates on the ideas he explored in two

¹ Sami Suodenjoki, "Kansalaisyhteiskunnan ja Suomen ideat, liikkeet ja julkisuudet ennen vuotta 1917," in Kari Paakkunainen (ed.), *Suomalaisen politiikan murroksia ja muutoksia* (Helsinki: Helsingin yliopisto, politiikan ja talouden tutkimuksen laitos, 2012), <https://helda.helsinki.fi/handle/10138/36047>, *Politiikan ja talouden tutkimuksen laitoksen julkaisuja* 2012:1; Rauli Mickelsson, *Suomen puolueet. Historia, muutos ja nykypäivä*, (Tampere: Vastapaino, 2006); Risto Alapuro et al. (eds), *Kansa liikkeessä* (Helsinki: Kirjayhtymä, 1987).

² Ilkka Liikanen, *Fennomania ja kansa. Joukkojärjestäytymisen läpimurto ja Suomalaisen puolueen synty* (Helsinki: SHS, 1995); Päiviö Tommila (ed.), *Venäläinen sortokausi Suomessa* (Porvoo: WSOY, 1960).

³ See for example, Tommila (ed.), *Venäläinen sortokausi Suomessa*; Risto Alapuro, "Nineteenth Century Nationalism in Finland: a Comparative Perspective," *Scandinavian Political Studies* 2, no. 1 (1979): 19–29; Antti Kujala, *Vallankumous ja kansallinen itsemääräämisoikeus. Venäjän sosialistiset puolueet ja suomalainen radikalismi vuosisadan alussa* (Helsinki: SHS, 1989); Antti Kujala, "Finnish Radicals and the Russian Revolutionary Movement, 1899–1907," *Revolutionary Russia* 5, no. 2 (1992): 172–192.

books, *Det revolutionära Ryssland* (Revolutionary Russia), published in 1903, and *Från ofärdstid och oroliga år: politiska minnen* (Memories from the Russification period), published in 1920.⁴

Finnish elite within the Grand Duchy of Finland, the early years of Konrad Zilliacus

Konrad Zilliacus's family background was typical of the multinational elite within the Russian Empire. The family had German roots tracing back to the 17th century in Ingria, from where the family moved to different places in Finland, Estonia, and Germany. Konrad's grandfather had moved to Finland after it had become a Grand Duchy. Zilliacus was born there on 18 December 1855. His father was a senator, Henrik Zilliacus. Both parents used Swedish and German at home, while some Finnish was also spoken within the family. Although the family soon moved to Helsinki, the family's Karelian ties still remained strong.⁵

Zilliacus's biographer, Hermann Gummerus, notes that he was "a talented but lazy student".⁶

Nevertheless, he managed to graduate at the age of sixteen and began to study law. During his studies, he also spent one semester in Switzerland to improve his French. It took five years for him to complete his studies, and in 1877 he started work at the Court of Appeal in Turku. Gummerus describes Zilliacus as cheerful and a good companion, saying that many liked him.

In what came as a surprise for many, Konrad Zilliacus decided to marry a widow, Lovisa Ehrnrooth, who was eleven years older and the mother of seven children. For Zilliacus, this meant that he tried to follow in the footsteps of the men of his family and joined the civil service in 1879, which seemed to be a natural choice for him given his background and education. However, he did not like working at the governor general's chancellery and soon resigned from that post.

In 1881, Zilliacus moved to the countryside with her wife and established an estate. With a new enthusiasm for work, he began to develop the estate. Although he possessed some knowledge in this field, operating the estate and specialising in the breeding of horses proved very costly. He also travelled to Paris and Moscow to showcase his horses. Aside from his agricultural and international activities, he also maintained his contacts and networks in Helsinki.

A turning point in his life came when the estate in Kellokoski went bankrupt in 1889 and he had to leave the country in order to save his wife's property. Zilliacus's career was

⁴ Konrad Zilliacus, *Det Revolutionära Ryssland. En Skildring af den revolutionära rörelsens i Ryssland uppkomst och utveckling*, 2nd ed. (Stockholm: Boström, 1903); Konni Zilliacus, *Från ofärdstid och oroliga år. Politiska minnen. II* (Helsingfors: Söderström, 1920).

⁵ Herman Gummerus, *Konni Zilliacus. Suomen itsenäisyyden esitaistelijä* (Jyväskylä: Gummerus, 1933), 9–10.

⁶ Ibid, 10.

saved because of his networks, and he found a job as a correspondent for the Helsinki-based newspaper *Hufvudstadsbladet*. With this new job, he sailed to the United States to report on Finnish immigrants there.⁷

Zilliacus's years as correspondent in the United States gave him a different understanding of those Finns who did not share his social status. Moreover, the problems of migration and nationalism became more concrete to him.⁸ Zilliacus regularly published news and stories from the States, which were quite popular in Finland.⁹ This, however, did not prevent him from suffering a constant lack of money, which put him in the same position as many other migrants to the United States. Eventually, he had to accept manual work in order to survive.¹⁰

It seems that Zilliacus's nationalism grew during his American years. Most of the Finns he met spoke Finnish, and the question of maintaining the native language came up frequently. At the same time, news from Finland became more worrisome concerning its status. The 1809 Treaty of Fredrikshamn (or Treaty of Hamina) guaranteed Finland its own system of national self-governance with Finnish civil servants. The Grand Duchy of Finland had its own legislative organ, the Senate, which was independent with regard to the Duchy's internal matters. Finland was also freed from providing recruits for military service, and it had its own postal service and systems of customs, finance, and credit.

All such rights came under threat when unification processes were intensified within the Russian Empire in the latter part of the 19th century.¹¹

While the reasons for the unification process within the Russian Empire had more to do with the foreign and security policy of the Empire than with the exceptional status of Finland, the Finns viewed these discussions and measures as a direct threat to their autonomy.

In his memoirs (*Sortovuosilta*), Zilliacus acknowledges that his experiences and the news from home influenced him greatly. He describes how, while at a dinner party, a few Americans had told him that Finland had no other way than to surrender to Russia's demands and how much this had irritated him.

"It is possible that if you take into consideration [the fact that the] Tsarist regime's understanding of fairness and justice, which is shared in other places as well ... but as hopeless as it seems, I am sure that

⁷ Ibid, 17–18.

⁸ Ibid, 19–20.

⁹ He published several books such as *Mariquita och andra historier från världens utkanter* (1890), *Utvandrarehistorier* (1892), *Några landsmän jag träffat* (1895), *Nya utvandrarehistorier* (1897), and *Indiankriget. Amerikanska gränsmarkshistorier* (1898).

¹⁰ Gummerus, *Konni Zilliacus*, 38.

¹¹ Andreas Kappeler, *The Russian Empire. A Multiethnic History* (Abingdon (Oxon.)—New York: Routledge, 2013), 260.

resistance will take place. And when it comes to me, I will take part in this fight, even if I have to crawl back home to be part of the fight.”¹²

The Constitutionalists — passive and active resistance

During the period of Finnish autonomy, the Swedish-speaking elite perceived Finland as a constituent state.¹³

This perception was based on the Finnish constitution, which guaranteed the Finns autonomy within the Russian Empire, and which the Finnish elite considered to be intact. Tsar Nikolai II challenged this view when he issued a manifesto in February 1899. The manifesto stated that the Tsar had a right to issue laws in Finland without consulting representative organs of the Finnish Grand Duchy. This position led to the first Russification period, which divided the Finnish elite on how to defend the nation's autonomy.

The Russification period provoked different tactics within the Grand Duchy. The elite's strategy was to defend Finland's autonomy and develop Finnish nationhood. However, within the elite there were different views and points of emphasis on how to do it.

J. V. Snellman was a driving force for political nationalism and for the development of Finnish nationhood. After his death, his party, the Fennoman Party (*suomettarelaiset*), split into different fractions — into more conservative Old Finns (*vanhasuomalaiset*) and more liberal Young Finns (*nuorsuomalaiset*). Additionally, the Finnish political spectrum included the Swedish Party, which opposed the policies of the Fennoman Party, and a new political party called the Finnish Workers' Party was founded in 1899.

The Fennoman Party was a conservative party that adopted the strategy of strengthening the Finnish language and its status as a precursor to Finnish nationhood. In beginning of the Russification period, the leadership of the party chose not to resist the new statutes issued by the Tsar. It estimated that by avoiding conflicts and strengthening the Finnish language, the nation would have been better chances of surviving.¹⁴ However, this tactic led to a split within the party.

The younger generation challenged the chosen tactic and presented an alternative tactic, which was based on the legal argument that the Finnish constitution guaranteed the autonomy of Finland. This group, now called the Constitutionalists and led by Senator Leo Mechelin, adopted the concept of passive resistance.¹⁵

¹² Konni Zilliacus, *Sortovuosilta. Poliittisia muistelmia* (Porvoo: WSOY, 1920), 7.

¹³ Osmo Jussila, *Suomen suuriruhtinaskunta. 1809–1917* (Helsinki: WSOY, 2004); Eino Jutikkala, Juhani Nyssönen and Kauko Pirinen, *Suomen historia*, 6th ed. (Helsinki: WSOY, 2002); Matti Klinge, *Keisarin Suomi* ([Espoo]: Schildt, 1997).

¹⁴ Pirkko Rommi, “Myöntyväisyyssuuntauksen ideologia,” in Tommila (ed.), *Venäläinen sortokausi Suomessa*.

¹⁵ Lauri Hyvämäki, “Perustuslaillinen ideologia,” in Tommila (ed.), *Venäläinen sortokausi Suomessa*.

The concept of passive resistance meant that the Constitutionalists urged the Finnish people to ignore the law. They opposed the new law on language and urged Finnish people to resist being drafted into the Russian army. At the same time, passive resistance meant that the leaders of the Constitutionalists tried to seek international support for the Finnish question.

For Konrad Zilliacus, the Constitutionalist's project provided the perfect platform for him to use his skills as a writer and international activist. Zilliacus's career as a writer, novelist, and journalist began to flourish in the early 1890s. In 1893, he secured an agreement for a new book, which took him all over the world, and eventually, after many incidents, he landed in Japan. After spending two years in Japan, Zilliacus arrived with his new family in Paris in 1897, and finally, in 1898 he returned to Finland.

In his memoirs, Konrad Zilliacus describes how the Finnish elite were bewildered as to how to react to the February Manifesto and the feeling of betrayal that the manifesto caused. While others tried to draft arguments to convince the Tsar of the unique position of Finland and its people's loyalty to the Tsar, Zilliacus decided to seek international support.¹⁶

"I decided to travel abroad to see if there was any chance in Europe to express support for Finland on the basis made by the Dutch (officer) or on something other."

Konrad Zilliacus became radicalised when he was working as a journalist at *Nya Pressen*, the newspaper where he started to work after he had returned to Finland. His writings in *Nya Pressen* were nationalistic and political, and they received the regime's attention immediately. The paper itself was shut down on 29 June 1900 because of one of Zilliacus's articles. Zilliacus immigrated to Stockholm, where he continued writing for different publications.¹⁷

The Constitutionalists, many of whom now lived in Stockholm, started to publish a new journal called *Fria ord* (Free Word). This was the paper where Zilliacus most actively continued his writing career.

Beside his journalistic work, Zilliacus specialised in smuggling operations and helped the Constitutionalists sneak *Fria ord* into Finland. This activity expanded also into a larger network of smuggling, in which he moved all kinds of publications and people between the borders of the Russian Empire and Sweden. In his memoirs, Zilliacus describes in detail how he prepared these operations and what kind of play existed between Tsarist authorities and the Finnish activists.¹⁸ Zilliacus also helped the Russian revolutionaries by renting his boat to them and helping them smuggle revolutionary publications and the revolutionaries themselves into Russia. During the time of these operations, the skills

¹⁶ Zilliacus, *Sortovuosilta*, 8–11.

¹⁷ Matti Klinge, "Zilliacus, Konni (1855–1924)," *Kansallisbiografia-verkkojulkaisu. Studia Biographica 4* (Helsinki: SKS, 1997–) July 30, 2007, <http://urn.fi/urn:nbn:fi:sk:s-kg-003698> (accessed December 30, 2018).

¹⁸ Zilliacus, *Sortovuosilta*, 92–93.

of Zilliacus and his comrades improved and they became experts in navigating the waters around the Gulf of Finland.

Senator Leo Mechelin and Konrad Zilliacus were working together at first. In the beginning of the Russification period, Zilliacus had acted as a mediator and creator of networks for the Constitutionalists, between Leo Mechelin and international experts, when the Constitutionalists had sought international support for the Finnish cause. One of these acts of support was an address by international cultural activists, who expressed their support for Finland, and which the Constitutionalists tried to deliver to the Tsar.

The relations between Mechelin and Zilliacus soon became more complicated, though. Mechelin had made full use of Zilliacus's services when it came to publishing, smuggling, and international networking, but later he started to worry that his name or even the Constitutionalist's cause would be associated with illegal activities and forms of resistance. This frustrated Zilliacus, who advocated for more active Finnish resistance efforts. His idea was to unite all forces that resisted the Tsarist regime — the Russian revolutionaries, Polish nationalists, and Japanese government.

In 1902, Zilliacus wrote a book called *Det revolutionära Ryssland* (Revolutionary Russia), which described the activities of the Russian revolutionary parties starting from the Decembrists and continuing all the way to the revolutionary parties functioning in the early 20th century.¹⁹ The aim of the book was to introduce the actors, practices, and ideas behind the forces resisting the Tsarist regime inside Russia and to inspire Finnish activists on how to organise their resistance.

Konrad Zilliacus's relationship with the Russian revolutionaries was an issue, one which caused a conflict between Leo Mechelin and Zilliacus. Mechelin did not want the activities of the Constitutionalists and the Finnish cause being associated with the revolutionaries in Russia for two reasons. First, most of the Finnish Constitutionalists were conservative social reformists who were ideologically far from the radicals of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party and the Social Revolutionary Party. Second, according to Leo Mechelin the case of Finland should be discussed at the level of the international community since it involved the Finnish state and Finnish nationhood. Therefore, his aim was to put pressure on the Tsar with the help of international scientific and cultural elite.

Passive resistance as a tactic was challenged when Governor General Nikolai Bobrikov received a special mandate to put an end to Finnish resistance in 1903. His mandate included the power to exile disobedient Finnish elite, and indeed many members of the group of Constitutionalists received just such a punishment. Instead of putting an end

¹⁹ Konrad Zilliacus, *Vapanden liike Venäjällä* (Stockholm: Svanbäck, 1903).

to the resistance, this manoeuvre by the Tsar only served to radicalise many of the Constitutionalists, many of whom also belonged to the cultural elite of Finland.

The Finnish historian Matti Lauerma has pointed out that now the passive resistance of the Constitutionalists changed into that of active resistance — into the idea that violence needs to be met with violence.²⁰ According to him, the main reason was the Constitutionalist's reluctance to start an open conflict with the Tsarist regime, which the Constitutionalists thought would be devastating for the party. Therefore, they chose as their tactic to stick strictly within the law. However, Governor General Bobrikov's actions and the conservatism of the Constitutionalists caused many in the younger generation to demand taking more severe actions against Russification.

Konrad Zilliacus was close to the Kagal Organisation, which was founded as an underground movement to resist Russification. His brother and many friends were part of the organisation. Although he was not in the leadership of this organisation, Zilliacus's activist ideas were reflected there as well. In a brief description of a Kagal meeting held in April of 1903, the organisation emphasised the need to involve a large stratum of Finnish society in the resistance movement. Special emphasis was placed on the information being spread by the newspapers:

*"Papers like Fria ord and Vapaat lehdet have been valued by several speakers. People have generally acknowledged that this is the only way to follow state developments in our country."*²¹

Zilliacus became more involved with the activists. The Finnish activists planned many political murders — the murders of Finnish officials who cooperated with Tsarist regime and the representatives of the regime itself, such as Governor General Bobrikov. This plan was devised by Eugen Schauman on 16 June 1904. Although he was not a member of the Kagal Organisation, or any other activist organisation, the group of activists strongly supported the plan. They thought, however, that his subsequent suicide was unnecessary in terms of making a political point since the members of the organisation considered themselves engaged in a war with Tsarist Russia.²²

Interestingly enough, Zilliacus himself does not discuss Bobrikov's murder in his memoirs when describing the activities of the Finnish activists in 1903–1904. He concentrated instead on describing the international relations of the activists and his role in organising them. It might be because he was then in Sweden, but also because from his point of view international cooperation in resistance was more important than singular acts of violent resistance.

²⁰ Matti Lauerma, "Aktivismi," in Tommila (ed.), *Venäläinen sortokausi Suomessa*, 138.

²¹ "Kagaalin" arkistoa. *Kokoelma vuosina 1899–1905 ilmestyneitä poliittisia lentolehtisiä, julistuksia, kiertokirjeitä y. m.* (Helsinki: Eduskunnan kirjasto, 1939), 252.

²² Lauerma, "Aktivismi," 141–142.

Zilliacus and the Russian revolutionaries

Despite cooperating with the Russian revolutionaries, Zilliacus's attitudes towards terrorism remained ambivalent. His silence on Bobrikov's murder and his earlier writings show that he did not advocate political murder. However, something changed during his years in exile in Stockholm. In his memoirs, Zilliacus writes, that during the meeting in Amsterdam, during which time he helped arrange for a conference in Paris, the Russian Social Revolutionaries had discussed the issue of political murders, attempted murders, and possible new targets of political violence. They had also asked Zilliacus on his position on this issue. Zilliacus replied as follows:

*"I explained that the murders of Sipyagin, Plewhe, and Prince Sergei have shown that no matter their high social and political position, they had no influence whatsoever on the political resistance [movement]. They have confused the public, but nothing has changed. One actor has been replaced with another. There are plenty of people in Russia, who want to replace them, but there is no organisation that can dream that they can eliminate them all. Danger does not scare them from continuing the same policies typical of the regime. In my opinion, there is only one political murder worthwhile of an attempt, which would lead to the kind of situation and the social and political system that we want — it would be the murder of the head of the regime — the Tsar himself."*²³

His reply shows that terroristic attacks and political violence had for him only instrumental value. Lacking any direct benefits, then there was no use in using such measures. The change in his attitudes towards political murder, and the murder of the Tsar, occurred only after the Tsar had produced an heir. The legitimacy and authority of the regency would be significantly diminished as a result of powers scheming to have influence over the young heir, and this in turn would offer the chance for change:

*"How long do you think that this government will remain unanimous? From the very first day, it will start to plot how to influence him. After three months, the whole government, and with it the whole of Russia, would be split into different groups. This would give you — the Russian revolutionaries — a chance to create a revolution in Russia."*²⁴

Despite these comments, it is difficult to associate Zilliacus with the Russian revolutionaries, since his *modus operandi* was not to institute social change, only see to the end of the Tsarist regime and thereby Finnish independence. Zilliacus highlighted active resistance, which consisted of influencing public opinion and of international cooperation. Terrorism and political violence were the means to achieve goals that would otherwise be unachievable, and this connected him, although very weakly, to terrorism and the Russian revolutionaries.

In October 1904, Zilliacus organised the All-Russian Congress for oppositional and revolutionary parties in Paris. He acted as chairman for this congress, in which all

²³ Zilliacus, *Sortovuosilta*, 118–119.

²⁴ *Ibid*, 119.

the larger opposition parties except the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks took part. The resulting conference resolution demanded autonomy for all Russian minority nationalities. At the conference, Zilliacus agreed with the Russian revolutionaries and with the Polish nationalists that cooperation against the Tsarist regime should continue and develop. Both the conference resolution and the plan for resistance were published.

It seems that Zilliacus's attitude regarding political violence changed after the Paris conference, which was in many ways a disappointment for Zilliacus. He had hoped that the participants' belief in a common Tsarist enemy would have created an understanding about the goals and measures for achieving them. According to Zilliacus, the main result of the conference, the resolution, was so weakly worded that it had no practical meaning. The resolution did, however, clearly state two important objectives. The first was the clause calling for the autonomy of all national minorities and the second the idea of what tactics would best lead to revolution. Another disappointment for Zilliacus was that the Constitutionalists, led by Leo Mechelin, refused to sign the resolution.²⁵ Despite the fact that the resolution condemned autocracy and violations against the Finnish constitution, the Constitutionalists were afraid that the cause would defame the party and be perceived as overtly cooperating with the Russian revolutionaries. Instead of active resistance, most of the Constitutionalists wanted to continue their political activities within the framework of parliamentary activities.

For Zilliacus, support from the West was not enough. He also sought cooperation with Japan. At the start of the Russo-Japanese war of 1904–1905, Zilliacus contacted the Japanese military attaché in Stockholm, Akashi Motojiro, to discuss how best to help the Japanese win the war. Zilliacus suggested that Polish soldiers should be given guarantees that they could safely travel to the US if they abandoned the front.²⁶ Though this attempt did not succeed, Zilliacus's contacts with the military attaché remained.

Finnish Active Resistance Party and Power League

Disappointed, Zilliacus organised a new party — the Finnish Active Resistance Party (*Suomen aktiivinen vastustuspuolue*), which aimed to stage armed mutinies and launch terrorist attacks against the Russian authorities. In its founding conference on 17 November 1904, Johannes Gummerus was chosen as the leader of the party. The party had its own military wing, which worked together with the militant workers, especially in eastern Finland. The party programme stated its aims and measures accordingly:²⁷

²⁵ Ibid, 132, 136–138.

²⁶ Ibid, 97–98.

²⁷ Lauerma, "Aktivismi," 143–144.

§ 1. *The party wants to wake up the Finnish people and to make them realise that there is no law in Finland and that the country is dependent on the Russian autocracy, and that the active, severe, and ruthless fight against despotism and its henchmen is needed and justified.*

The party cooperates with other parties of resistance from other parts of Russia, and it sees benefits of this cooperation. The party wants to abolish the sense of loyalty of the people to the Tsar and strengthen their sense of freedom:

- a) by written and oral propaganda;*
- b) by forming and delivering weapons among a voluntary people's militia;*
- c) by supporting the military wing of the party;*
- d) by any other means appropriate for the cause.*

§ 2 *The party supports the work that individual people have already conducted in order to help further the Russian revolution.*

The military wing of the party initiated several unsuccessful murder attempts against Russian officials.²⁸ They even tried to murder Tsar Nikolai II when he was hunting in Koivisto in 1905, but the attempt failed when the Tsar had to leave for St. Petersburg before the activists had reached Koivisto region.

According to Lauerma, the general strike in October and November of 1905 (30.10.–5.11.1905) reflected the growing popularity of active resistance. The activists took part in planning and conducting the strike, cooperating with the labour movement.²⁹ However, the result of the general strike, the November Manifesto, forced the Finnish activists into the political margins. The Constitutionalist believed that ultimately it was their tactic of passive resistance that led to the victory of law and order and the Finnish constitution over unlawful militant actions. For them, the goal was to overrule the February Manifesto, which was achieved through the means of passive resistance.

However, for the activists the goal had changed. Their goal became that of Finnish independence because Konrad Zilliacus and his supporters did not believe that the situation in Tsarist Russia had significantly changed. Therefore, he and a group of political and cultural elite in Finland started to plan military resistance to free Finland.

The military wing of the Activist Party was founded in 1905. Zilliacus also organised the Finnish Power League (*Voimaliitto*), which was supposed to act as a people's militia and replace the Russian Army in Finland. In May 1905, the Power League had 125 regional units and approximately 25 000 members.³⁰ It managed to gather together members of the politically active cultural elite, such as Akseli Gallen-Kallela, Alpo Sailo, Aarno Hasselqvist, Mikko Oinonen, and Carl Bengts as well as many students. A significant part of the Finnish elite was involved in the league's activities, including the future president of Finland, Per-

²⁸ Ibid, 148.

²⁹ Ibid, 150–151.

³⁰ Ibid, 152.

Erik Svinhufud.³¹ These activities aimed at military resistance. Though masked as sports activities, the league sought through them to obtain weapons from Europe. Deliveries nonetheless failed, and the authorities uncovered the real nature of the league and shut it down in November 1906.

When Zilliacus's links with Japan were discovered, he had to escape to Sweden again in 1909. On the eve of WWI, he began actively supporting the Finnish jaegers. When he returned to Finland in 1918, he started to write his memoirs. In his memoirs, Zilliacus describes the goals and measures — the strategies and tactics — which the Finnish elite had chosen to resist Russification. The memoirs also reveal how the Finnish elite became radicalised and changed its tactics from passive to active resistance.

Conclusions

Konrad Zilliacus's background gave him ample resources to network internationally. Despite having strong ties with the Swedish-speaking elite in Finland, he also had good connections both to the West and to the East. His ties with Russia started from early on and continued throughout his adult years. However, this was not unique in the context of the Grand Duchy of Finland. What is interesting is that by abandoning a career in the civil service, Konrad Zilliacus began to mix more with different social groups and eventually created a career for himself abroad, namely in the United States.

During his stay in the United States, Zilliacus became more aware of the question of nationalism and social hierarchies. The issue of Finnish migration, which he studied systematically during those years, made him constantly return to the situation in the Finnish Grand Duchy. Why had so many people left the country, and how did Finnishness survive in the multinational environment of the States? Moreover, the immigrants were usually Finnish-speaking peasants and workers, and this it seems contributed to Konrad Zilliacus's emotional ties to the question of Finnish nationhood.

The Constitutionals provided Zilliacus with two crucial advantages. First, a network of Finnish elite, among whom he already belonged. His relatives, friends, and peers joined together to oppose the Russification process both by legal and underground means. The Kagal Organisation offered an example of how to organise underground activities. Second, the Constitutionalist's newspapers, *Nya Pressen* and *Fria Ord*, offered Zilliacus a platform to continue his activities as a writer and journalist.

However, Zilliacus's understanding of how to combat Russification was different from that of the leaders of the Constitutionalist Party. This was partly because of his personality, as a “man of action”, and because of his experiences and contacts with different immigrant

³¹ “Vaihe Suomen itsenäisyystaistelusta. Voimaliiton 25-vuotismuistio,” *Suomen Kuvalehti*, May 16, 1931, no. 20.

and political networks abroad. Zilliacus was ready and willing to cooperate with different parties on the opposite side of the political spectrum. For him, the main issue was first autonomy and later the independence of Finland.

Through examining the Constitutionalists and Konrad Zilliacus, a picture emerges of the different forms of resistance and the many conflicts affecting the issue of political independence. Within the Fennoman Party, the Finnish question was ideological and concerned tactical disputes over nation-building efforts and nationhood. At one end of this dispute, activists adopted the tactic of strengthening the nation through the Finnish language and administration, while on the other they sought to maintain the state structure and strengthen it by legal means.

A dispute also existed between regarding the various forms passive and active resistance within the Constitutionalist Party. Through analysis of the activities and ideas of Leo Mechelin and Konrad Zilliacus, we obtain a picture of the norms and values advocated by those within the Finnish resistance. Resistance efforts also had both a national and international dimension. Even though the Constitutionalists sought international support, such support had its limits for them. If we look at Zilliacus's activities, they confirm the precise nature of political opposition during the last years of the Tsarist regime. The more severe the measures taken against resistance efforts, the more radical the resistance efforts became.

Attitudes towards terrorism among the Finnish elite also changed. In the beginning, Constitutionalists such as Konrad Zilliacus did not consider political violence to be justified as a means of political resistance. Later, he saw justification in terrorism if it really had an impact on power relations. When the social conflicts reached their peak at the end of the 1910s in Finland, a certain number of Finns had adopted the means of violent resistance as a measure to achieve their goals.

Despite cooperating with the Russian revolutionaries, Zilliacus's attitudes towards terrorism remained ambivalent. His silence on Bobrikov's murder and his earlier writings show that he did not advocate political murder. However, something changed during his years in exile in Stockholm. In his memoirs, Zilliacus writes that during a meeting in Amsterdam, during which time he helped arrange for a conference in Paris, the Russian Social Revolutionaries had discussed the issue of political murders, attempted murders, and possible new targets of political violence. They had also asked Zilliacus about his position on this issue. Zilliacus replied as follows:

"I explained that the murders of Sipyagin, Plewhe, and Prince Sergei have shown that no matter their high social and political position, they had no influence whatsoever on the political resistance [movement]. They have confused the public, but nothing has changed. One actor has been replaced with another. There are plenty of people in Russia who want to replace them, but there is no organisation that can dream that they can eliminate them all. Danger does not scare them from continuing the same policies typical

of the regime. In my opinion, there is only one political murder worthwhile of an attempt, which would lead to the kind of situation and the social and political system that we want — it would be the murder of the head of the regime — the Tsar himself.”

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