

# Where Did All the Fascists Go?

A Study on the Extreme Right in Lund, Sweden

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# Abstract

The Fascist movement in Sweden is a field that hasn't attracted a great deal of research. This paper attempts to create a working theory as to why the Swedish Fascist movement is marginalized in the municipality of Lund while the Fascist presence is strong in the neighboring city of Helsingborg using qualitative methods. This paper proposes four factors for understanding this difference: the material/societal factor, the absence of an autonomous left movement, the leadership factor and the resource factor. These factors are applied to the case of Lund/Helsingborg in order to determine if there is indeed a relationship. The comparison shows that the factors are all present in Helsingborg while they are absent in Lund.

*Keywords:* Fascism, Lund, Helsingborg, extremism, Sweden

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# 1 Introduction

For a significant period of time the city of Lund was a bastion of right-wing extremism and Fascism in Sweden, with the university acting as a center for the intellectual Fascists and Nazis before and during the Second World War (Oredsson 1996 p. 219-220). It was also in Lund that Jimmie Åkesson, Björn Söder, Rickard Jomshof and Mattias Karlsson studied and plotted their renewal of the Sweden Democrats (hereon referred to as SD) (Mattson 2009). In that sense Lund carries a tradition of an intellectual extreme right, a tradition that today, at least superficially, seems extinct. In contrast to Lund the city of Helsingborg has had a comparatively strong extreme-right movement during the last couple of decades and the city has become sort of a center for extreme right-wing activities in all of Scania. This paper attempts to discern the nature of this order by constructing a comparative study between the two municipalities in order to discern why there is no organized extreme right-wing movement in Lund by looking at materialistic/social factors, the presence of the left autonomous left movement, the leadership factor and factors pertaining to resources.

There is today no active Fascist or extreme right-wing movements in Lund. With the exception of SD, the few activities that do take place are sporadic and not especially remarkable. There are a few exceptions to this; one example has been the efforts to revive the 30th of November tradition in 2008. Despite this, these activities are without exception initiated by groups and people outside of Lund. The few Fascists that do exist in Lund Municipality are generally concentrated to the villages outside of Lund rather than in the city proper.

One factor in the non-existence of the extreme right in Lund can be traced to the city's autonomous left movement, which is quite active and large for a city of its size. The autonomous left movement works directly in opposition to the extreme right and while the extreme right has become weaker in Lund, the autonomous left movement has grown. Anti-Fascists within the autonomous left movement often make comparisons with the situation in Helsingborg where, in comparison to Lund, the extreme right has been continuously present in several organizations and networks such as Blood and Honor, Aktivism Öresund, and Fria Nationalister Skåne.

## 1.1 Disposition

This paper is divided into six sections. The first section introduces the research subject and offers a historical background. This section also deals with the methods used and provides definitions for the terms used. The second section introduces the theoretical component. This section also roughly describes the Fascist presence in Sweden and its size and introduces the four factors which are vital for a Fascist presence. The third section continues the discussion by providing basic information about the different Fascist organizations in Sweden and why the term Fascists is applicable to them. The following section, section 4, deals with the Fascist movement in Lund and Helsingborg both historically and at present. There is a brief summary of their activities over the last years and the size of the movement in the cities. The fifth section uses the four factors introduced in the second section to order to find a positive or negative correlation between Lund and Helsingborg. The sixth and last section concludes the essay and summarizes the findings.

## 1.2 Methods

The Fascist movement of Lund is a research subject area that has not been well studied, and the studies that have been performed have been more concerned with the ideology or the violence, rather than why it exists in some places and not in others. This is a problem when researching the topic since there are few sources to draw upon and those that do exist tend to be either written by the movement itself or its opponents.

As previously stated, in order to discern the scope of extreme right activities it is not possible to find impartial sources since most activities attract very little attention and many of them are shrouded in secrecy. There are a few organizations that do track the movements of the extreme right and they have therefore been used extensively for their knowledge. One of these organizations is Anti-Fascist Action (*Anti-Fascistisk Aktion*, AFA) with whom an interview with a member has been conducted. AFA is a part of the autonomous left movement and are traditional enemies of the extreme right and therefore one should be careful with the data provided from the organization. Another organization that tracks the extreme right is *Expo Magazine*, whose archive has been used extensively. The data from the two organizations has been cross-checked with each other and external sources when possible in order to avoid being misled by false testimony.

This paper has made use of semi-structured interviews as defined by Ayres as “qualitative data collection strategy in which the researcher asks informants a series of predetermined but open-ended questions” (Ayres 2008). Semi-structured interviews also often utilize “a variety of probes that elicit further information or build rapport through the researcher's use of active listening skills” (Ayres 2008).

Probes were also used during the interview with Erik in order to encourage the interviewee to develop his thoughts. One problem with this research method is the possibility of asking leading questions that might skew the data (Ayres 2008). Questions were designed to limit the possibility of these types of questions but it is impossible to fully eradicate any sort of bias. The interview lasted about 50 minutes. This form of interview was used only for the interview with Erik from AFA.

Besides a semi-structured interview, this paper has made use of the *Expo Magazine* and every issue from the first issue in 2005 to the last issue in 2009 has been analyzed for articles pertaining to Scania. In doing so one might be able to see a pattern of where most activities are concentrated and what kind of activities they are. This data demonstrated that Helsingborg was indeed the municipality with the most mentions during this time period.

One last method for measuring the extent of was an analysis of the “activism thread” for southern Sweden on the Fascist forum nordisk.nu. All reported activities that pertained to Lund or Helsingborg in the thread, which dates from 2007 to 2010, were analyzed and noted. This also showed a pattern in which Helsingborg was not only more active but the gravity of the activities were greater and the number of different people reporting activities was higher. One should be careful with this data since not all activities are reported on the site and some activities might be made up or exaggerated.

One potential problem that has been encountered during this study is the amount of Swedish literature that has been used. This has presented a problem when quoting texts since it is absolutely necessary to have correct translations or one might misrepresent the ideas of the original authors. The translations have been performed by the researcher but have been approved and sometimes corrected by a native English speaker/English teacher.

### 1.3 Ethics

When utilizing interviews as a researcher the importance of research ethics can not be underestimated. Ogden writes that “Anonymity is most desirable to protect participants from harms that arise from the disclosure of their identities” (2008). This is the case with Erik from AFA whose real name is not Erik; he might not even be a man at all. The name Erik was selected simply due to the fact of it being a fairly common Swedish name.

Anonymity does not only help protect the interviewee from harm but is also important as “when investigating sensitive topics, anonymity can help to increase the likelihood that participants will give more candid information” (ibid). Ogden also states that “if a researcher does not know the names of interviewees, law enforcement authorities and other interested parties are unlikely to attempt to access confidential research files” (ibid). For this reason the true name of “Erik” is kept secret even for the researcher of this paper.

It is also important that consent is given before conducting research and that “consent should be both informed and voluntary” (Israel and Hayes 2008). This might not be possible in all cases but should be followed in all cases “other than in exceptional circumstances” (ibid). Some also hold that “researchers must provide potential participants with information about the purpose, methods, demands, risks, inconveniences, discomforts, and possible outcomes of the research” (ibid).

Before the interview Erik was asked to sign a form expressing consent to the interview and the use of it in research (see appendix 1 for the form). This form stated that he could abandon the interview at any time and that the results would only be published with his consent. It also stated that the interview would be destroyed on completion of the research and that all participation was voluntary. Erik was also informed about the aim of the study and what his interview would be used for but not until after the interview was conducted in order to not skew the data. The interview was digitally recorded with Erik’s explicit written consent and all copies of the recording and transcription will be destroyed upon publication of this essay.

## 1.4 Fascism or Right-Wing Extremism: a Definition

Right-wing extremism and Fascism are disputed terms with no clear definition. Both terms can refer to widely different ideas dependant upon the views and perceptions of the person utilizing the term. The term Fascism, which relates to a specific, although only loosely coherent, ideology, differs from the term right-wing extremism, which may include everything from reactionaries to neo-liberals to Fascists to hate groups such as the Ku Klux Klan. This subjective nature of the terms presents the researcher with several problems both when conducting studies or interviews due to the respondents’ subjective perception of the terms. The terms can also be problematic when researching or presenting the subject because of the perceptions of previous and future researchers might differ from the present researcher.

Some form of definition is, however, necessary in order to describe and study the term/phenomena in question. Lauri Karvonen outlines a “minimal definition” of the term Fascism in his book *Fascismen i Europa* (1990). This definition, which refers to the fascist movements in the inter-war era, describes the root formula for Fascism as “Organic Nationalism + Anti-Marxism + Anti-Parliamentarianism + direct action” (Karvonen 1990, p.18). Of these components the organic nationalism is by far the most important aspect, according to Karvonen, who would go so far as to say that it was the real core of the ideology superseding everything else: “nationalism formed Fascist ideology’s core without which the other ingredients cannot be understood or explained” (Karvonen, 1990, s. 12). Fascists, according to Karvonen, view the nation as something organic that is

created by nature and that the individuals living there are restricted to seeing it as a being in its own right (Karvonen 1990, p. 13).

I have decided to use the terms Fascism and Fascists rather than extreme right-wing to describe and refer to the different organizations throughout this paper. The reason for this is that the term extreme right-wing is too loose and subjective and fails to adequately describe the groups in question. Also, Karvonen's definition of Fascism can be applied to the different far-right organizations that this paper deals with, and may even serve as a common denominator connecting them to each other.

## 2 Fascism in Sweden a Theory

### 2.1 Fascist Presence in Sweden

It is hard to accurately measure the size of the Fascist movement in Sweden due to its reclusive and cautious nature. There are no official figures for the size of the different Fascist groups (Dalsbro et al 2009, p.16). It is, however, possible to obtain an idea about the size of the movement by looking at its biggest manifestation the Salem demonstration, which draws both organized and unorganized “nationalists.” At its peak the demonstration drew about 2,000 participants in 2003 (Dalsbro et al 2009, p. 30). This suggests that the Fascist movement in Sweden can count on a few thousand sympathizers throughout the country and therefore Fascism is a highly marginalized ideology.

Even though the Fascist movement is quite marginalized there are 39 Fascist organizations throughout the country and according to Expo Foundation, in 2008 there were activities in every Swedish region with the exception of Jämtland (Dalsbro et al 2009, p. 30). One should be vary of drawing any conclusions from this since these Fascist organizations are not always truthful about their activities and Expo’s figures are mostly taken from the reports published by the organizations themselves (Dalsbro et all 2009, p. 27).

### 2.2 Factors Behind a Continued Fascist Presence

This paper asserts that there are four major factors for the continuous Fascist presence in a community: material/social factors, the presence of the Autonomous left movement, the presence of charismatic leader figures and what kinds of local resources are available to the movement. Of course there are other minor factors that also can be decisive but the major factors can be divided into these four overarching factors.

#### 2.2.1 Material and Societal Factors

There are not many studies on the economic background of the people that are attracted to the Swedish Fascist movement or what material factors are present in the areas that have endured a continuous Fascist presence in modern times. In order to discern the material factors behind Swedish Fascism one therefore is forced to turn to the Fascist movement of the 1930s and 1940s and attempt to

apply the theories for that era to today's society. This is not unproblematic since society today is not the same society as that of the 1930s. This is due to societies not being static entities. If one takes a look at the background of Fascist activists today one can see similarities with the prewar era Fascist activists.

According to the Finnish political scientist Lauri Karvonen, who studied three Fascist movements in interwar Germany, Norway and Finland, the greatest support for Fascist parties can be seen in areas in which the traditional middle class is strong (Karvonen 1990, p.80-82). In order to measure the support of the middle class Karvonen identifies characteristics for this middle class, identifies the areas where the group was powerful and compares it to the vote share for the Fascist party (Karvonen 1990, p.81-82). Karvonen's comparison shows that there is a positive correlation, especially in Germany, between the middle class and Fascism while areas with a large working or upper class generally favored towards other parties (Karvonen 1990, p.82).

Karvonen defines certain occupations and sectors of society as belonging to the middle class, namely the tertiary industries (trade, transport, and service sectors) and certain agrarian sectors, namely middle-sized farms (Karvonen 1990, p.91). Furthermore, Fascists were more powerful in smaller population centers, including small towns, where "entrepreneurship and other small-scale enterprises – the main artery of the middle class – have the best conditions to be competitive" (Karvonen 1990, p.81). Most of these attributes can be said to describe the Swedish municipality of Helsingborg, which will be discussed further in section 4.

As previously stated, one cannot draw too many conclusion from a study based on another country and another society 60 years ago but the economic factors are still in play and just by looking at voter patterns one can see that today's political parties gather their support from basically the same segments of society that they did 60 years ago. It can be argued that the same should be true for Fascist movements in Sweden today. Also, according to Erik from AFA, most Fascist activists, or at least those who stay in the movement, come from middle class families (Erik 2010).

### 2.2.2 The Presence of an Active Autonomous Left Movement

The main opponent of the Swedish Fascist movement is the so-called autonomous left movement which regularly confronts Fascists, often violently. According to the Swedish security service SÄPO, the Autonomous left movement is a group of people that consist of "loosely connected networks that use different organization, event and campaign names" whose goal is a "classless and just society, which in the long run means a more just world order in which the cost of globalization is not borne by the third world" (Säkerhetspolisen 2009). Since the movement is not united but consists of several different independent groups and networks there is no unitary description of the autonomous left from the movement itself.

The existence of an active autonomous left movement in an area reduces the potential for Fascist organizations in three ways: firstly, they partially recruit from the same pool of people, secondly, they disrupt and counter the spread of Fascist propaganda and thirdly, they attempt to “make life so damn difficult” for the Fascists (Erik 2010). According to Erik, this means informing neighbors and colleagues about their Fascist views, damaging their cars or even employing physical violence. This limits the ability for the organizations to recruit new members by both limiting the number of potential recruits and by simply making it not worthwhile to be active in the organized Fascist movement in the area.

In a 2009 report by both the Crime Prevention Council (BRÅ) and SÄPO there is a description of how the autonomous left movement in a middle-sized Swedish city confronts and significantly reduces the local Fascist scene, which would lend credence to the theory (BRÅ 2009 p.96-97).

### 2.2.3 Leaders and Weber’s Charismatic Authority

The German sociologist Max Weber defines three types of authority or leadership: charismatic authority, traditional authority and legal authority (Weber 1964). Charismatic authority and charismatic leaders can be traced back far in time where people endowed with this quality were often referred to as prophets or military heroes, such as the ancient berserkers or the Mormon prophet Joseph Smith whose followers viewed their powers and abilities as super human or even the persons themselves as super human (Weber 1964, p.359). Weber himself applies the term charisma to “a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is set apart from ordinary men and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities” (Weber 1964, p.358). The term traditional authority refers to a system in which “legitimacy is claimed for it and believed in on the basis of the sanctity of the order and the attendant powers of control as they have been handed down from the past” (Weber 1964, p.341). In other words, the power comes from the fact that it has always been that way. Legal authority is based “on a belief in the ‘legality’ of patterns and normative rules and the right of those elevated to authority under such rules to issue commands” (Weber 1964, p.328).

Of these three forms, charismatic authority would seem to best describe the system of authority and leadership in the Swedish Fascist movement for several reasons. Firstly, the Swedish Fascist organizations are too young to have developed a traditional authority amongst themselves so no individuals can claim a leadership role based on tradition. Secondly, the Fascist leaders are not chosen by some rational process but rather the leaders select who is allowed to join the organization (Dalsbro et al p.23). Finally, The Fascist movement does not adhere completely to Weber’s model in that the organizations are usually quite hierarchical compared to the non-hierarchy of Weber’s charismatic authority.

The importance of charismatic leaders within the Swedish Fascist movement should not be underestimated and these charismatic leaders often form a core that attracts other sympathizers around them. Most of the Fascist organizations in Sweden also work according to what Expo describes as “the leader principle” which put the leaders above the regular members and gives them far-reaching power within the organization (Dalsbro et al 2009, p.23-24). The clear hierarchical structure of the organizations thus promotes strong leaders that are supposed to carry the group. In fact, the higher up one is in the organization, the more time and money one is supposed to spend on the struggle, with the highest echelon being composed of full-time activists (Dalsbro et al p.24). The role that the charismatic leader plays for the Fascist movement is therefore crucial to understand the presence of the movement in an area.

## 2.2.4 Resources

Fascist groups, as all groups in a capitalistic society, need certain resources in order to thrive. The resources that are vital for the Fascist movement includes money and meeting places. According to Expo Magazine the Fascist movement procures money from four main sources: sales of items related to the movement such as clothes or music, concerts/parties, donations and member fees, the latter being the most important source. Meeting places and places to hold their activities in is also of vital importance, especially if the movement wishes to build a continued presence in a community.

In the report (Violent Political Extremism: Anti-Democratic groups on both the far right and left), BRÅ and the Swedish Security Service state that in order to curb the number of ”extremist groups” it is important to make it hard for them to rent facilities(BRÅ et al 2009, p.12). Erik from AFA also believes that meeting places are important for the Fascist movement and mentions specifically a house in Helsingborg which has been used by the Fascist organizations in the area (Erik 2010). The different houses and meeting places seem to be important for a continued presence due to the fact that people go in and out of the movement but the physical houses remain and can be used by future activists. According to Erik, this is how the meeting places work for the autonomous left movement and one might be able to assume that they play the same role for the Fascist movement (Erik 2010).

## 3 Swedish Fascist Movements

### 3.1 Fascist Organizations and Parties

#### 3.1.1 The Swedish Resistance Movement (*Svenska motståndsrörelsen*)

The Swedish Resistance Movement, or SMR, is known for being the most highly militant Fascist organization in Sweden. Paramilitary training is a must for its members and the organization has a history of violent crime, including the murder of trade unionist Björn Söderberg in 1999 (Expo 2010). SMR was formed in 1997 by veterans from VAM (White Aryan Resistance) which was known for several bank robberies and other criminal acts (Dalsbro et al p.64).

SMR bases their ideology on national-socialism and “anti-democracy, race biology and anti-Semitism are important cornerstones for the movement” (Dalsbro et al p.65). SMR believes that the Jews run “the world, society and the media” (ibid). SMR’s activities consist mostly of spreading propaganda, including sales of their magazine *National Resistance*. They also elicit funds for imprisoned members of their organization (Dalsbro et al 2009 p.66-67).

SMR fits into Karvonen’s definition of a Fascist movement. Their organization fits the formula “Organic Nationalism + Anti-Marxism + Anti-Parliamentarianism + Direct Action” (1990 p. 18). SMR states on their website that “every race/people have the right to follow their own fate, to develop and create culture and society after their own nature” is an example of SMR’s organic nationalism (Redaktionen 2010). The organization also believes that “Zion created Marxism and fans the flames of class hatred” (Lund 2008). As Dalsbro et al mentions earlier, anti-democracy is a cornerstone of the organization, which would satisfy the requirement of their views being anti-parliamentary (2009 p.65). SMR therefore fulfills Karvonen’s specifications.

#### 3.1.2 Free Nationalists/Info 14 (*Fria Nationalister*)

Info 14 was originally a news media for Stockholm’s Young National-Socialists (*Stockholms Unga Nationalsocialister*) but continued their existence after the organization was abandoned in 1996 (Dalsbro et al 2009, p. 57). Info 14 also started up the network Free Nationalists (*Fria Nationalister*), including Free Nationalists Skåne, which are loosely connected to each other and in 2008 consisted of the following five groups: Dalarna’s Free Nationalists, Free

Nationalists Gothenburg, Free Nationalists Stockholm, Free Nationalists Västerås and Nyköpings Free (Dalsbro et al 2009, p.57-58).

Info 14 has been described as “independent patriotic,” according to Dalsbro et al (2009 p.60). It is hard to determine Info 14 and Free Nationalists’ concrete ideology since they are not one organization but rather several different groups that work together under an umbrella organization. By reading the articles published on Info 14 one can get some insight into their views and ideas. The belief in an organic nationalism can be seen in an article in which the writer wants to “stop this decay of our ancestors’ creation” (Hjelmerud 2010). In another article, Marxism is said to be a construction of the ruling classes set up to divide the population (Lindholm 2006). Modern democracy is also seen as an ideology that is “dangerous to society and humanity” (Hennix 2010). Free Nationalists works outside parliamentary politics through direct action and organize events such as the Salem demonstration (Dalsbro et al 2009, p.59). Info 14/Free Nationalists thus fit the criteria of a Fascist organization or network.

### 3.1.3 Party of the Swedes/the Peoples front/the National-Socialist Front (Svenskarnas Parti/Folkfronten/Nationalsocialistisk Front

The National-Socialist Front was formed in Karlskrona in 1994 and is the oldest, largest and most active of the currently active Fascist organizations in Sweden (Dalsbro et al 2009 p.50). In 2008, NSF was responsible for more activities than the rest of the organized Fascist movement in Sweden combined (Dalsbro et al 2009, p. 20). These activities consisted mostly of spreading Fascist propaganda but also demonstration, speeches, concerts and parties (Dalsbro 2009, et al p.29).

According to Dalsbro et al, NSF “stood for a classic national-socialism with anti-democracy, anti-Semitism and race biology on the agenda” (Dalsbro et al p.51). The organization also believes that the white Aryan race is superior to other races (ibid). NSF also wants Sweden to be ruled according to some form of corporatism (Dalsbro et al 2009, p.51-52). The organization changed their name to *Folkfronten* in 2008 and removed mentions of race and national-socialism from their manifesto (Dalsbro et al 2009, p.50-52). The ideology seems to be the same and Dalsbro et al believes it is only the words that have changed (Dalsbro et al 2009, p.52).

NSF clearly fulfills Karvonen’s requirement for a Fascist organization. They are clearly anti-parliamentarianism though they do not have a clear stance on public elections (Dalsbro et al 2009, p.52). Since NSF has changed their name and websites twice the last couple of years it has not been possible to find any evidence of anti-Marxism. It is also hard to find evidence of anti-Marxism and anti-communism in *Expo Magazine* or newspapers since it is not as important to them as anti-Semitism or homophobia. Anti-Marxism is simply more socially acceptable. The NSF does believe in an organic nationalism. In an article on *Svenskarnas Parti*’s website labeled “Our Historic Assignment” the party talks

about how individuals are "unique but still part of something greater" (Svenskarnas Parti 2010). Another quote from the same article states that "we [as Swedes] are part of something great. As humans through being a part of the Swedish people" (ibid). NSF is, as previously mentioned, the most active Fascist organization in Sweden. Their activities usually takes the form of direct action such as putting up posters and stickers or destroying "decadent" art exhibitions; the group even organized an attack on RFSL (an organization supporting gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transsexuals) in 2006 (Dalsbro et al 2009, p.52-53). All this demonstrates that the NSF lives up to the demands that Karvonen places on a Fascist organization.

# 4 Fascism in Lund and Helsingborg

## 4.1 Lund

### 4.1.1 Early Racism, Fascism and Nationalism 1933-1945

Fascist and Nationalist movements became popular in Lund in the years between World War I and World War II but the mentality behind them can be traced back to the 19th century. Lund has been a university town (since) It is generally accepted that universities tend to attract the elites of a society and the offspring of these elites is vital in creating a group mentality of superiority among its members. In the interwar years the surging Fascist movement, espousing ideals of superiority, found ample soil within the intellectual and societal elite who were studying at the university. It is also no surprise that when the national-socialist project, Hitler's Germany, appeared to be doomed; the elites that once supported the cause abandoned it.

It is hard to exactly determine the origins of right-wing extremism in Lund due to the many shapes and forms it has taken during the course of history. Since 1853 on the 30th of November on the anniversary of the death of Charles XII, there has been a torch demonstration commemorating the "warrior king" Charles the XII (Oredsson 1996, p. 17). Charles the XII was a Swedish king who at the end of the 17th century fought wars from the start of his reign until his death. He is praised by the Fascists for his courage and warrior spirit. This demonstration was originally organized by the student union but was later abandoned by the union during the course of the World War I and would be picked up by the so-called 30th of November organization in 1921 (Oredsson 1996, p.17). This demonstration would come to take a central position within the extreme right-wing movement of Lund.

From the beginning of World War I to the conclusion of World War II the number of students at Lund University was around 2,500: of these students with an increase of 200 students in 1945 (Oredsson 1996, s. 11). According to Oredsson there were at least four extreme-right wing organizations active at the university during this time: The National Youth Federation, the Nationalist Student Organization of Lund, the 30th of November Organization, the National-Socialist Student Organization and Lund's Swedish-Socialist Student Organization.

The Nationalist Youth Federation (Nationella ungdomsförbundet) was characterized as aggressively conservative and racist as well as nationalist. The Nationalist Student Organization of Lund (Lunds nationella studentklubb) was for a time connected with the Conservative Party (Högerpartiet) but the ties were cut

due to the anti-Democratic tendencies within the Nationalist organization. The 30th of November Organization, the National-Socialist Student Organization (Nationalsocialistiska studentklubben), Lunds Swedish-Socialist Student Organization (Lunds svensk-socialistiska studentförening) who despite their name was Fascist and not socialist and there were also several organizations who were “friendly towards Germany” ( Oredsson 1996, p. 16-17).

The sheer number of extreme right-wing organizations indicates the popularity of the movement during this time period. Another indication of the popularity of Fascist movements can be seen by the fact that the Nationalist Student Organization of Lund had 400 members in Lund out of about 2,500 students or about 16% of all students at one time. LNS was also a part of Sveriges nationella ungdomsförbund (Sweden’s Nationalist Youth Federation) which had a membership count of 31,700 in 1930 (Oredsson 1996, p. 16).

#### 4.1.2 Lund Today

The modern Fascist movement in Lund is nowhere as near as strong as it once was. Today there is no Fascist organization active within the municipality. This has been the case for most of the post-war era, with the exception of the 30<sup>th</sup> of November demonstrations in the 1980s and early 1990s. Meanwhile, the left and especially the autonomous left have been consistently present in the city since as early as the 1990s (Erik 2010). The few actions that the Fascist movement has been responsible for in Lund have been sporadic and usually quite small (Erik 2010).

One Fascist tradition that did survive the Second World War was the 30<sup>th</sup> of November demonstrations which, as previously mentioned, have been a tradition since 1853 (Oredsson 1996, p.17). The tradition was actually abandoned after the war but was revived by Lars Hultén, a nationalist student, in 1965 (Löow 1998, p.392). From 1965 to 1992 the 30<sup>th</sup> of November demonstrations seem to have been one of the few continuous Fascist events in Lund and the event is still important for the Fascist movement in Scania.

The 30<sup>th</sup> of November has also been important for the autonomous left and Erik refers especially to the demonstration in 1991 (Erik 2010). That demonstration was stopped by activists from the autonomous left movement in Sweden and Denmark (Löow 1996, p.389). Erik sees 1991 as the starting point of the current autonomous left movement in Lund and one of the reasons for the lack of a Fascist movement in the city (Erik 2010).

As previously stated, Fascist activity in Lund has been quite low: however, this does not mean that there has not been any activity at all. Over the last five years *Expo Magazine* has reported two Fascist actions or activities in Lund (*Expo Magazine* 2005-2009). In 2007, activists from NSF destroyed an exhibition by the artist Andres Serrano due to its sexual nature (*Expo* 2007). The exhibition featured people engaged in sexual acts. Erik also mentions a short demonstration held by NSF in 2007 (Erik 2010). The second activity mentioned by *Expo Magazine* was the 30<sup>th</sup> of November demonstration in 2008 which was organized

by Fria Nationalister Skåne, which is linked to Info 14, and was attended by about 50 Fascists (Expo 2008).

By looking at the activism forum of the Fascist website nordisk.nu, one finds a different result with over 15 reported activities in Lund since 2007 (nordisk.nu 2010). By taking a closer look one will find that almost none of these activities can be considered significant and the majority of the activities are confined to putting up stickers (nordisk.nu 2010). One can not even be sure of how many of the sticker operations actually took place. This is because organizations and activists within the Fascist movement tend to over-exaggerate or make up actions and activities (Dalsbro et al 2009, p.27).

From all of this one may conclude that the Fascist movement is non-existent or extremely marginalized in Lund. This is apparent due to the sporadic nature of the activities in the municipality and the lack of a continuous Fascist organization presence.

## 4.2 Fascism in Helsingborg

Helsingborg lies just half an hour north of Lund by train, but in contrast to Lund Helsingborg has had a solid Fascist present in recent times. All of the three main sources, *Expo Magazine*, AFA and Nordisk support this assessment. Furthermore, Helsingborg has seen a continuous presence of several organized Fascist groups over the last years.

Five activities are mentioned in relationship to Helsingborg in *Expo Magazine* over the last five years (Expo Magazine 2005-2009). In February 2005, the American neo-Nazi David Duke visited Sweden and Helsingborg (Expo Magazine, 2005/1). Later in 2005 there was an incident was reported with Fascist involvement among the local football hooligans (Expo 2005). In another incident in 2005 a Fascist in Helsingborg was sentenced for having created an illegal database with information about up to 1,000 political opponents (Expo Magazine 2005/3-4, p.6). In 2007 a man from the Helsingborg-based Fascist organization Helsingborgskampanjen was threatened at gunpoint by man belonging to another Fascist organization (Expo Magazine 2007/2, p.5). Finally, in 2009 the organization Free Nationalists Skåne held a May Day parade which drew about 60 sympathizers all in all (Expo Magazine 2009/2, p.6)

In the interview with Erik, he speaks about the continuity within the Fascist movement in Helsingborg (Erik 2010). He specifically mentions the organization Blood and Honor which was strong in the area in the late 1990s early 2000s (Erik 2010). Erik characterizes the movement during that time as a “hibernated skinhead movement” and mentions the existence of a house that they own (Erik 2010).

Erik also mentions two ways in which the current Fascist movement of Helsingborg recruits members. According to him, they recruit “actively on feelings, they recruited by finding everyone who had been in fights with immigrant gangs and told them that the next time someone jumps you at your

school or bar, call us” and by doing they create a member base (Erik 2010). Erik, like *Expo Magazine*, also mentions the link between hooligans and the Fascists (Erik 2010).

Nordisk.nu has many reports from Helsingborg with activities ranging from “sticker rounds” to activities against pedophiles (nordisk.nu 2010). One should take the same precautions with this data as with the data from Lund. One difference with the data from Lund is that two of the organizations active in Helsingborg over the past years, Helsingborgskampanjen and Aktivism Öresund, had their own homepages and do not publish their activities at nordisk.nu. Their websites are now defunct and access either of them has been restricted.

All three accounts thus support the hypothesis that Helsingborg has an active Fascist presence, especially when placed in comparison to Lund. The number of reported activities, the gravity of the actions as well as the number of active organizations surpasses Lund considerably.

# 5 Lund and Helsingborg: A Comparison

## 5.1 Lund and the Four Criteria

As concluded in Section 4, the Fascist presence in Lund is marginalized compared to Helsingborg. The reason for this might be explained by the four factors mentioned in Section 2, namely material and societal factors, the presence of an autonomous left movement, the leader factor and the resources factor. By applying these factors to Lund we should be able to see if the hypothesis holds water.

There are several material factors that are apparent in Lund: the university, the presence of several large companies and the university hospital (Lund.se 2010). The university is one of Lund's most preeminent characteristics and is one of the largest universities in Sweden. The university employs a considerable portion of the municipality's work force but also attracts students from all over the country (Lund.se 2010). One can assume that both Swedish students and professors are mainly from the upper echelons of Swedish society and would not make a good base for Fascist recruitment.

Lund is also home to several large companies that together employ a larger share of the workforce compared to most municipalities. In fact, there are four companies with more than 1,000 employees and two, Sony Ericsson and Tetra Pak, with more than 3,000 employees (Lund 2010). This is contrary to Karvonen's ideal environment for Fascists (Karvonen 1990, p.91). The third big employer is the Region Skåne, which runs the university hospital. People working at hospitals, such as doctors and nurses, tend to be well educated and therefore fail to make a good Fascist base.

Lund has an active autonomous left movement. According to Erik, this movement has been continuously active as far back as 1991 (Erik 2010). There are several places connected to the autonomous left movement and several organizations within the city (Erik 2010). This is in stark contrast to Helsingborg, where the autonomous left is not as present, with the exception on one AFA group (Erik 2010). Also, according to Erik the autonomous left in Lund actively works against Fascist organizations trying to establish themselves in the city.

The leadership factor is more difficult to discern. This is due to obvious reasons, such as the secrecy within the Fascist movements. Another problem is that charismatic leaders might not have the opportunity to develop in Lund due to the pressure of the autonomous left movement as well as the other factors that limit Fascist potential. Erik names one person who tried to start up an organized

group in the city but later abandoned his project after being beaten up by other Fascist due to his controversial views (Erik 2010). An interesting fact is that it was in Lund that Jimmie Åkesson, Björn Söder and their two friends developed their ideas for the development for the Sweden Democrats (Mattson 2009). There are no gathering points or houses for the Fascist movement in Lund (Erik 2010). This means that there are no places for them to meet, to discuss strategies or conduct parties. All factors thus seem to be absent in the case of Lund. There is no material base, an active autonomous left movement, no leaders and no resources such as meeting places.

## 5.2 Helsingborg and the Four Criteria

In order to see if the four factors have any relevance one needs to procure a positive result because the absence of evidence is not evidence in itself. Therefore, if the factors are positive in the case of Helsingborg, the hypothesis would be severely strengthened.

The material and societal factors in Helsingborg are quite different from those in Lund. Unlike Lund, there is no university, no large hospital and the businesses are generally smaller than in Lund (Helsingborg City 2007). There is only one private company, IKEA, with over 1,000 workers, and none over 2,000 (Helsingborg City 2007). The biggest sector of the economy is trade and communications (Helsingborg.se 2009). This material picture is similar to the potentially Fascist middle class that Karvonen speaks about (Karvonen 1990, p.91).

According to Erik, there is no autonomous left movement to speak of in Helsingborg (Erik 2010). There is an AFA group in Helsingborg but no other group or organization as of now.

As previously stated, it is hard to obtain information about Fascist leaders. Erik from AFA does mention Kristoffer Dahlström who is the leader of Free Nationalists Skåne and lives in Helsingborg (Erik 2010). Erik says that Kristoffer is a “clever guy” who is trying to build a real movement using a Fascist critique against capitalism, thereby adopting characteristics of the autonomous left (Erik 2010).

The Fascist movement in Helsingborg does have resources. One of the most important resources, according to Erik, is a house somewhere in or close to Helsingborg. He never mentions specifically where it is, only that it has been used as a gathering place and as a location to hold parties for several generations of activists. This house therefore seems to have created the continuity that a movement needs in order to survive from one generation to the next.

By applying the factors to Helsingborg one is able to explain the existence of a continuous Fascist movement in the municipality. There should be a societal base if one looks at the material characteristics of the city. There is no organized

autonomous left movement to speak of. Leaders seem to exist, specifically Kristoffer Dahlström. Finally, there are resources in the form of gathering points; all of these factors combined has created a continuity within the Fascist movement in Helsingborg.

## 6 Concluding Discussion

Studies on the modern Swedish Fascist movement have not been as extensive as research on Fascist movements in other countries such as Italy or Germany.. Those that do exist are generally concerned with violence and the ideas behind it rather than working out a theory for why they exist in certain towns, like Helsingborg, and not in others, like Lund. Fascist movements do present a threat to certain individuals and groups of people. This is why this paper attempts to describe the factors that create a base for a Fascist movement.

The aim of this paper has been to answer the question of why there is no Fascist movement in Lund while there exists one in Helsingborg. The theory worked out in chapter 2 suggests four factors that are vital for the formation of a stable Fascist movement in an area. By applying the theory to the case of Lund/Helsingborg one can see that it does indeed seem to be valid for this particular case. Lund lacks the material base, the leaders, the resources and there exists an active autonomous left movement in the city. Helsingborg, on the contrary, has the material base, one can identify certain strong leaders, there are resources available to the Fascist movement and there is no autonomous left movement to speak of in the city. This all correlates with the factors from chapter 2. However, these conclusions have come from inductive reasoning based on a comparison of the characteristics of the two municipalities. In order to see if the theory is indeed valid one would therefore have to apply it to other cases in order to increase the validity of the theory.

There are also problems with the reliability of the data. Some of the data used in this paper comes from sources that are biased in one way or the other or who might have an interest in presenting a certain picture of the Fascist movement. Erik, who is a member of Anti-Fascist Action, might prefer to downplay their importance and *Expo Magazine*, whose existence is built on the Fascist movement, might want to exaggerate the movement's threat. The Fascist movement itself would obviously want to seem bigger and more important than what it actually is. By cross-checking different facts and accounts one can eliminate some of that bias but unfortunately not all.

For further research it would be interesting to expand the scope of the research in order to test the theory on all cities with a Fascist presence to determine whether there is a positive correlation with the four factors throughout the country. Another interesting study would be to study the background of activists within the movement in order to see if they are consistent with Karvonen's middle class theory and Erik's views on three different kinds of people who are attracted to the Fascist movement. Finally, when one reads about the Sweden Democrats there is occasionally a mention of their Fascist roots. These roots are not that old

and in many ways the Sweden Democrats still embodies values that are characteristic of a Fascist movement.

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