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2016

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Ylä-Anttila , M T 2016 , ' Moral justifications in the media debate on globalization in Finland,  
þý 1995 2014 ' , Communications , vol. 41 , no. 4 , pp. 465 486 . <https://>

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<http://hdl.handle.net/10138/342901>

<https://doi.org/10.1515/commun-2016-0022>

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# Moral justifications in the media debate on globalization in Finland, 1995-2014.

\*TUOMAS YLÄ-ANTTILA

## *Abstract*

*This article presents a methodological tool, Justifications Analysis, and uses it to analyze the debate on globalization in Finnish mass media between 1995 and 2014. Justifications Analysis focuses on the moral principles evoked to justify arguments, something that tends to be overlooked by most established approaches to media content analysis. Regarding the frequency of coverage, it is found that the debate in Finland deviates from the global issue attention cycle and lasts longer, driven by national key events. Concerning the groups of speakers, the Global Justice Movement is found to have initiated the debate; the elites are divided into two groups, one defending and the other opposing the movement. Moral justifications are used extensively. All parties to the debate justify their arguments by referring to the common good, but disagree over whether it should be defined in terms of market worth, equality and democracy, national values, or some combination of these.*

*Keywords:* globalization, news media, morality, framing, Justifications Analysis, Global Justice Movement

## **Introduction**

Globalization has been among the most debated topics in political and social sciences from the mid-1990s onwards (e.g., Beck, 2000; Castells, 2000; Held, McGrew, Goldblatt and Perraton, 1999; Hirst and Thompson, 1996; Robertson, 1992). The word “globalization” is also a prime example of how concepts migrate from social sciences to wider public debates and become concepts of everyday language (Giddens, 1986: xxxii). Academic research may find phenomena such as an increase in economic and cultural flows across national borders, and coin concepts like globalization to make sense of these. But mass media are the key arena where such phenomena and concepts become objects of political contestation. This is what happened to the concept of globalization around the turn of the Millennium. The media coverage of the meetings of the newly founded World Trade Organization and other international economic institutions increased sharply around the world, not least due to the protests organized around those meetings by the Global Justice Movement (GJM). The concept of globalization was politicized, and different views of the consequences of globalization and the necessary political decisions to reap its benefits and avoid its negative consequences were widely debated in the mass media.

Given the magnitude of the academic globalization debate, and the degree to which the concept trickled down to the mass media and became politicized, studies looking at mass media debates on globalization are surprisingly few. Earlier research (reviewed below) has focused on few countries, particularly the United States, and looked mainly at the coverage of the GJM only, rather than the more general debate on globalization.

The main contribution of this paper is empirical. I contribute to the literature on the coverage of globalization in the mass media by looking at a country not previously studied, Finland, and broaden the scope from the GJM to the entire debate around the concept of

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globalization from 1995 to 2014 as the interaction between various actors, including political parties, trade unions, business organizations, experts and journalists. My aims are (a) to show the changing *frequency of coverage* of the issue of globalization in the media over time, (b) to investigate the standing of different *groups of actors* in the media debate and (c) to study the *content* of the debate by looking at the claims made and the justifications presented to support them.

Regarding the third aim, I argue that earlier research on the media coverage of globalization, as well as research on framing in the media more generally, has tended to overlook a key feature of the content of mediatized public debates: moral justifications. In such debates played out in the public spheres of modern democracies, the participants face what Boltanski and Thévenot (2006) call the *imperative to justify*. Most of the time, they must justify their claims by referring to the common good rather than private interests. To do this, they need to refer to moral principles that are widely institutionalized and shared even by their opponents. To focus on this moral dimension of the media debate on globalization, I present a methodological tool, Justifications Analysis (JA), combining elements of Boltanski and Thévenot's justification theory with the coding scheme of Political Claims Analysis presented by Koopmans and Statham (1999).

The remainder of the article is organized as follows. First, I review earlier findings on the mass media debate on globalization and present the theory and methodology of Justifications Analysis. I then look at the frequency of coverage, actors and justifications in the debate, each in turn. In conclusion, I discuss the strengths and weaknesses of JA and put my empirical findings in the context of other current political debates over issues related to globalization.

## **What is known about the media debates on globalization?: Coverage, actors and content**

Most studies on the media debates on globalization focus on how the press reports on the Global Justice Movement (GJM) (Bennett et al., 2004; Beyeler and Kriesi, 2005; Boykoff, 2006; Kolb, 2005; Rauch et al., 2007). A few papers go beyond the GJM, looking also at other actors and events not related to the movement (Kim and Weaver, 2003; Marks, Kalaitzandonakes, and Konduru, 2006). Together, these studies give indications of the *frequency of coverage* over time, the different *groups of speakers* facing each other in the public arena, and the *content* of the debate.

About the *frequency of coverage*, Beyeler and Kriesi (2005, pp. 102-103) find that the peak of the coverage of the GJM, in most of the seven countries they look at, coincides with the mass demonstrations at the Seattle WTO meeting in November 1999. In Associated Press reporting coverage of globalization increased sharply after 1999 and declined after 2001 (Marks et al., 2006, pp. 625-626). Kolb (2005, p. 107) finds that reporting in Germany followed a similar pattern until 2002, the final year of his data. The coverage on globalization, thus, seems to follow a clear global issue attention cycle.

Regarding the standing of different *groups of speakers* in the globalization debate, most studies find evidence of elite dominance. Kim and Weaver (2003, pp. 135-137) find that elite sources dominated the debate on the Asian financial crisis of 1997 in Korean, Indonesian, Thai, Malaysian and US reporting. According to Bennett et al. (2004), actors affiliated with the World Economic Forum (WEF) got more news space than the protesters against the Forum, and got to claim ownership of many activist issues such as justice and democracy. Rauch et al. (2007, pp. 136-137), however, find some increase in the share of activist sources in New York Times' reporting from 1999 to 2004. Kolb (2005) shows that Attac, the most central organization of the GJM in Germany, eventually gained a position as a legitimate news source on globalization.

Findings on the *content* of the globalization debate are mixed. On the one hand, studies demonstrate that the GJM is portrayed negatively and its issues are downplayed or stolen by elite actors. Boykoff (2006) finds five frames that US journalists use to delegitimize globalization protesters. Bennett et al. (2004) show how issues raised by activists are overshadowed by reporting on protests and the threat of violence. The official sources dominating the debate on the Asian financial crisis in 1997 sidelined the voices critical of the IMF (Kim and Weaver, 2003). The Economist, not surprisingly, champions neoliberalism (Starr, 2004).

On the other hand, those (rather rare) authors who look at the globalization debate in general, rather than just the GJM, find that the movement significantly influenced globalization reporting. According to Marks et al. (2006), the events in Seattle turned the overall tone of globalization coverage negative and brought the negative consequences for employment and the environment on the agenda. Beyeler and Kriesi (2005, p. 106) argue that by 2003, in the seven newspapers they analyzed, “advocates of a free-trade, liberal economic model have a difficult stance. Their arguments [...] are clearly outweighed by critical positions.”

Overall, regarding the *coverage*, most studies focus on one or a few key events. Reporting in the United States has got more scholarly attention than that in any other country. The changing relationships between different *groups of speakers* over time have received limited attention, and the role of the GJM has been studied more extensively than that of other actors. The role of journalists as actors in the public sphere – rather than as mere reporters of statements by other actors – is usually overlooked because editorials, op-eds and other texts explicitly expressing journalist opinion are left out of the material. In regard to *content*, no study so far has addressed the moral argumentation in the mass media globalization debate. This paper looks at a country not studied previously, Finland, follows changes in the debate over two decades, looks at all actors, including journalists, and focuses on the moral content of the debate.

### **Justification theory and the moral dimension of the globalization debate**

Why and how should the moral aspect of the media debate on globalization be studied? Do media debates involve moral argumentation to begin with? Based on the studies by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) on European politics, d’Haenens and de Lange (2001) on asylum seekers and Dirikx and Gelders (2010) on climate change, the answer would seem to be negative. All these studies find that moral frames are almost completely missing from their material. However, this apparent absence of morality from the media is, I would like to argue, the result of a rather narrow definition of what moral talk is.

Following Neuman, Just and Crigler (1992), the studies mentioned above define a morally framed article as one that “contains a moral message or makes a reference to morality, God and other religious tenets”. To be sure, only a few newspaper articles on globalization make explicit reference to the concept of morality, let alone to God. But they do report actors making evaluations of factual statements, policies and other actors, denouncing injustices and justifying their own positions by presenting certain things, actions and actors as more worthy than others. If such talk is reckoned to involve moral evaluations, then the globalization debate is, clearly, morally laden. Boltanski and Thévenot’s (2006) theory of justification provides a framework for understanding moral argumentation in this wider sense.

Boltanski and Thévenot present seven worlds of justification and track the roots of each world to the works of a classical author in the history of moral thought. Their exploration of the history of each world shows that the categories are rather well established and recognized as valid, though often competing, moral principles. Drawing on their empirical

research on shop floor disputes, Boltanski and Thévenot (1989, 2006) persuasively argue that the same moral principles that are found in their most elaborate form in philosophy books are also used by people in everyday disputes. Developed and institutionalized over time, these principles constitute a kind of cultural toolkit (cf. Swidler, 1986) of moral talk in modern democracies that can be used whenever a moral dispute occurs. Those disputes, to cite an example used by Boltanski and Thévenot (1999, p. 361), may be small like the dispute between two car drivers after a crash. But they may involve thousands of people in long-term episodes of claims-making in the public sphere, such as the globalization debate.

The four worlds of justification that are the most important for this study, and the classical authors they are associated with, are the market world (Adam Smith), the civic world (Rousseau), the industrial world (Saint-Simon) and the domestic world (Bossuet). The worlds of inspiration, fame and ecology were also coded but, because of their low prevalence, omitted from further analysis.

In the world of market justifications, the measure of worth is simply money, and the generation of the maximum amount of material wealth is seen as the highest form of common good. Such justifications can be expected from the economic elites who argue that globalization is good for economic growth. The civic world, where the common good is defined as equality, solidarity and democracy, on the other hand, is likely to be the justification world of choice for global justice activists. However, as I will show later, those two worlds are not necessarily in opposition but can be combined in several ways.

The industrial world is about expertise, planning and steering social processes by regulation and policy intervention. In the globalization debate, justifications arising from this world are likely to be used to defend the regulation of the global economy. In the domestic world, tradition and stability of the social order are considered worthy. In the globalization debate, it is likely that the stability of the sovereignty and cultural traditions of nation states are defended using arguments arising from this world.

Disputes involving moral justifications can occur within one world, where both parties agree on the criteria of justification and disagree only on whether they are being fulfilled. A more profound kind of dispute occurs when two worlds collide, and the criteria of justice in one world are *denounced*, using the criteria of another. Two worlds can also meet in a *compromise* (Boltanski and Thévenot, 2006, pp. 277-293). Furthermore, the globalization debate seems to include at least one other kind of relation between the different justification worlds, which I call *implication*.

## Research questions

My three research questions are the following:

RQ1: How does the *frequency of coverage* of the issue of globalization in the media change over time and what are the key events coinciding with the peaks in coverage?

RQ2: Who are the key groups of actors participating in the media debate on globalization, how does their standing change over time, and what is the role of journalists as claims-makers?

RQ3: Do the actors present moral justifications for their arguments and if so, which worlds, or which combinations of worlds of justification are evoked, and how do the justifications change over time?

## **Method: Justifications Analysis**

Justifications Analysis uses the categories of justification theory to analyze moral talk in the mass media. As in Political Claims Analysis (PCA) (Koopmans and Statham, 1999), the unit of analysis is a claim, defined as a unit of action in the public sphere. A claim can be a comment in an interview or a public speech, a demonstration or other action whose purpose is to influence public debate. One newspaper article may, therefore, contain several claims by several actors. A typical claim in the globalization debate would be: ‘Demonstrators from around the world gathered in Seattle to block the meeting of the World Trade Organization, because they think the free market policies of the WTO create inequality and poverty in the world’. This claim is coded as follows.

### **[Table 1. Coding a claim in Justifications Analysis about here]**

Three variables were used to code justifications. The first one indicates the worlds of justification that were invoked. Some claims invoked none, while others, as the example above, referred to several worlds of justification. Second, each world may be presented in a positive or a negative light. In this example, the market world was denounced by the civic world, which would result in a positive code for the civic world and a negative code for the market world. Third, the different combinations of justifications were coded as a separate variable to allow for more precise analysis of denunciations, compromises and other kinds of combinations.

The main difference between JA and PCA is that while PCA looks at the ways in which actors frame their claims, JA focuses, instead, on moral justifications. Two differences between frames and justifications are important for the purpose of the present article. First, while frames may or may not be morally loaded, justifications are always about giving moral support for the presented arguments.

Second, in the tradition of social movement studies that PCA builds on, framing is thought of as instrumental, strategic action. According to the well-known definition given by Snow and Benford (1988, p. 198), collective action frames “assign meaning to and interpret relevant events and conditions in ways that are intended to mobilize potential adherents and constituents, to garner bystander support, and to demobilize antagonists”.

Justifications, too, may sometimes be used instrumentally and strategically. However, the worlds of justification build on general moral principles institutionalized in the modern political imaginary through long historical processes. They are like an available set of tools that constrain and enable action and argumentation in the public sphere (Moody and Thévenot, 2000, p. 274). They are also, at least to some extent, internalized by actors. Thus, these principles may also be associated with strong moral sentiments (cf. Jasper, 1997). Invoking moral justifications in public debate, therefore, reflects structures and related cognitive and emotional processes beyond instrumental choices of individual rational actors.

Three methodological choices help in improving the reliability of the coding scheme. First, to identify what constitutes a claim, the codebook developed and tested for reliability by Koopmans (2002) was used. This made reliable delineation of the units of analysis, as well as attributing the claims to different categories of speakers, relatively straightforward. Second, moving on to coding the seven worlds of justification, they have been a reliable instrument in empirically interpreting materials as diverse as classic texts in philosophy (Boltanski and Thévenot, 2006), observations of everyday interaction in the workplace (Boltanski and Thévenot, 1989, 2006), and sets of materials for various case studies, including public documents, news reports and interviews (Lonkila, 2011; Luhtakallio, 2012; Moody and Thévenot, 2000). Third, I developed the scheme to identify these justification categories in

public disputes reported in the mass media together with another researcher working on another set of media material. Coding notes were exchanged, problematic coding decisions discussed, and systematic recoding done to improve reliability.

### **Country selection and research material**

Finland is a particularly interesting country for studying the globalization debate, because the consequences of economic globalization, both positive and negative, have been felt more strongly than in most (post)industrialized countries. The economy is exceptionally export-oriented (Vartia and Ylä-Anttila, 2003, p. 102), whereby wellbeing is extremely dependent on the twists and turns of the globalized economy. While liberalization in the 1980s coincided with a period of strong economic growth, the rapid pace of policy changes led to a severe economic crisis in the 1990s, and the development of the ICT industry led to another massive boom in the 2000s, lasting until the onset of the ongoing crisis since 2008. Since the 1990s, successive governments have followed the global trend of reducing taxation and redistribution, which have led in Finland to an exceptionally rapid increase in income inequality (Riihelä, Sullström, and Tuomala, 2010). Besides the structure of the economy and the policy developments since the 1990s, at least two other features of the institutional landscape and political culture are relevant in explaining why the globalization debate in Finland turned out how it did. First, in the Finnish political imaginary and practice the role of organized civil society is exceptionally strong (Alapuro, 2005). Second, and related, trade unions have long had a strong place in the institutional structure.

The research material was drawn from the largest selling newspaper in Finland, Helsingin Sanomat (HS). The decision to focus on this one newspaper was motivated by the exceptionally strong position it holds in the Finnish media landscape. It is the biggest newspaper in the Nordic countries, with a circulation of 340,000 copies, in a country of 5.4 million inhabitants. To put this into perspective, the largest newspapers in France (population 67 million), *Le Monde* and *Le Figaro*, both have smaller circulation numbers than HS. The biggest rival in Finland, *Aamulehti*, has a circulation of 120,000. In addition to this wide readership, HS is recognized by media scholars as an exceptionally influential agenda setter, read widely by political decision-makers (Kunelius, Noppari, and Reunanen, 2009).

A two-phase search strategy was used to gather the research material. First, a simple query on the frequency of the use of the term 'globalization' was conducted in the electronic archives of the newspaper Helsingin Sanomat for the period 1995-2014. Nine media events (Dayan and Katz 1992) that show as peaks in the coverage were then identified. All of these events, which will be presented in more detail below, occurred between 1999 and 2005. In the second phase, for a period of one week before and three weeks after each one of these nine events, the contents of the paper were searched separately using a comprehensive list of search terms related to each event, including the key actors (such as 'WTO', 'activists') key phenomena related to globalization (such as 'trade', 'liberalization'), the location of the event ('Gothenburg', 'Genoa') to include in the material all articles that deal with the phenomenon of globalization without using the concept. This resulted in a final sample of 491 articles containing 717 claims, which were coded in detail. While the years 1995-1998 and 2006-2014 did not include any critical moments in the globalization debate and were, thus, left out of the sample that was formally coded, all articles from the years 2006, 2007, 2013 and 2014 were read through to gain an impression of the debate after its peak phase. This fading out of the debate will be briefly discussed in the analysis below.

### **Coverage: The three waves of globalization debate and their key events**

The globalization debate in Finland, like in many other countries, increased sharply after 1999. I call this first phase of debate the *Wave of Critique*. Unlike in other countries, however, the debate did not fade after 2001; instead, it rose to new heights driven by two opposing elite responses, the *Wave of Adoption* (2004-2005) and the *Wave of Counterattack* (2004-2005)<sup>1</sup>.

**[Figure 1. Three waves of the globalization debate about here]**

The *Wave of Critique* began with the Seattle demonstrations in 1999. Its peak month was April 2001, which coincided with a national key event, the founding of the Finnish branch of the GJM organization *Attac*. Other key events were the demonstrations at the Genoa G8 and Gothenburg EU summits in 2001, and the World Social and Economic Forums in 2002. The key events of this wave are related to the GJM, but this is only one indicator of the movement being a key actor of the Wave of Critique. The movement's claims and justifications also found considerable resonance among parts of the political elite. Leaders of political parties, from left to right, called for dialogue with the GJM. An *Attac* chapter was founded in the Finnish parliament in conjunction with the founding of *Attac Finland*. Every fifth parliamentarian joined, including the minister of foreign affairs.

With the *Wave of Adoption*, the arguments of the movement found their way to the top of the political hierarchy. The first key event of that wave was the publication of the report *A fair globalization: Creating opportunities for all*, in 2004. The report was written by the ILO World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization, chaired by the Presidents of Finland and Tanzania. In the publication event, the Presidents stated that the prevailing form of globalization was "morally unjust and politically unsustainable" (HS, 25 February 2004). The report demanded more just globalization governed by more democratic global institutions, more equal global distribution of wealth, decent work for all, and commitment to the UN millennium development goals. The second key event was the *Helsinki Conference on Globalization and Democracy* in 2005, chaired by the Foreign Ministers of Finland and Tanzania. The conference was part of the Helsinki Process that began in 2002. The objective, as stated by the Finnish Minister, was to bring the actors associated with the World Social Forum and the World Economic Forum together to discuss proposed reforms of global governance.

The *Wave of Counterattack* began some months later than the Wave of Adoption, but finished somewhat quicker. Its key events were two reports, presented as national survival strategies for Finland in the face of increasing competition in the global marketplace. The first report, *A recipe for Finland's success*, by the business think tank EVA, demanded more market-driven policies to boost national competitiveness. Lower taxes, less government spending and more incentives for businesses, spiced up with strong leadership independent of the whims of public opinion, are the ingredients of this recipe for success. The second report, *For a skillful, open and changing Finland*, was commissioned by the new center-right Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen. The recipe is rather similar to that of the first report.

After the most intense phase, characterized by the three waves described above, the debate begins to fade. By 2009, globalization is mentioned less frequently than in 1999, and in 2014 only four times per month on average. In 2007, a poll finds that globalization is among the issues least interesting to voters in the upcoming general election (HS, 18 March 2007).

The success of the GJM in initiating a debate on globalization shows how taking over media events (Dayan and Katz, 1992) and making them their own can be a resource for challengers of the status quo (cf. Hepp and Krotz, 2008, p. 268). Media events can, as Krotz (2010, p. 96) notes, be used by the power holders to ritually consolidate their power and maintain the existing order of things, but power elites are by no means the only ones that can



use media events to their advantage. The GJM turned media events staged by global elites with their handshake photos and press conferences into a visually dramatic ritual confrontation between the protesters, dressed in white or in bright colors and the riot police in black armor.

The momentum generated in the global media by the GJM was, no doubt, essential to the initial success of the movement in Finland. But the case of the Finnish globalization debate also underlines the importance of national key events and actor configurations in shaping how a debate that has global origins plays out in a specific national setting. The first peak of the debate in Finland coincided with the founding of the national chapter of Attac. The GJM activists coupled their earlier reliance on colorful protest with something more typical to the Finnish context, the establishment of a formal organization, which ended up generating more media attention than protest alone. After this initial peak, the debate did not fade as it did in most other countries (cf. Beyeler and Kriesi, 2005; Marks et al., 2006). Instead, it rose to new heights in 2004-2005, again driven by national events staged by two opposing elite groups, one siding with the GJM and the other opposing its claims.

### **Speakers: The importance of civil society and journalists**

The Finnish debate also differs from those studied by Kim and Weaver (2003) and Bennett et al. (2004) in that the pro-globalization elites did not unequivocally dominate. It is true that official government sources form the most important group of speakers overall, accounting for 24% of the claims in the Waves of Critique and Adoption, and 10% in the Wave of Counterattack. However, the elites were not uniformly pro-globalist, and the standing of different actors varied greatly from one wave of debate to another.

#### **[Table 2. Claims by actor type and wave of debate about here]**

During the Wave of Critique, civil society actors took an active role, accounting for 22% of the claims. Civil society, however, did not improve its standing over time, as it did in the US (Rauch et al., 2007). Civil society actors made only 12% of the claims in the Wave of Adoption, and in the Wave of Counterattack they were almost absent.

A second deviation from the pattern of elite dominance observed in earlier studies was the strong role of journalists as claims-makers, particularly in the Wave of Counterattack. In fact, the 37% of the claims made by journalists in this wave was so large a share that it contributed significantly to making this third wave of the debate happen. The editorial team, in particular, strongly supported the views of the business lobby:

It is easy to agree with the report's basic message: a successful business sector is what creates the necessary means for income redistribution. ---The most important thing is that doing business in Finland should be made as simple and unencumbered as possible. Corporate taxation must be unequivocal and set to a level that makes Finland an appealing country for businesses. (HS, Editorial, 6 October 2004)

The business elites themselves did not take a particularly strong role in the debate. They did form the second most prominent group of speakers in the Wave of Counterattack, but even there their share was only 13%. Trade unions were much quieter. Unlike in the US and Brazil, where unions were active participants in the Seattle demonstrations and the making of the World Social Forum, the unions steered clear of the GJM in the public debate, not participating in voicing the Wave of Critique. The most likely explanation for this silence is that the unions are much more a part of the established system of decision-making in Finland than in Brazil and the US and are therefore less likely to engage in protest actions. This

interpretation is supported by the fact that in Sweden, another country of established unionism, the relationship between the GJM and the unions has been similarly distant (Sörbom, 2006).

Overall, official sources and other elites are important in the debate, as they have been in other countries studied. But what is special with Finland is that the elites were divided into two groups, one group adopting and the other countering the GJM's claims. Also, the role of civil society actors in the first wave of the debate and the role of journalists in the last one seem exceptionally strong.

### **Content: The moral justifications**

Providing moral justifications for one's arguments is very common in the Finnish globalization debate; 79% of the claims included justifications. Contrary to expectations, however, the market world was not the dominant mode of justification. Instead, civic justifications prevailed.

### **[Figure 2. Justifications of globalization about here]**

This shows that throughout the most intense period of globalization debate from 1999 to 2005, globalization was discussed more in terms of its consequences to such civic objectives as democracy and equality than in terms of its economic consequences. Given that, before 1999, the debate focused mostly on positive impacts to economic growth (Marks et al., 2006; for Finland, see Lounasmeri, 2006), the rise of the GJM seems to have coincided with a clear change in the content of the debate. Moreover, values related to the civic world were presented in a much more positive light (the ratio of positive references to negative ones was 0.93, 0.71 and -0.15 in the Waves of Critique, Adoption and Counterattack, respectively) than those associated with the market (0.14, 0.27, 0.56).

Does this prevalence of civic justifications mean that the economic elites, too, were really concerned about the consequences of globalization to equality and democracy? Bennett et al. (2004) seem to assume that all talk about poverty and equality by the elites was pure PR spin. It may well be so. Nevertheless, to understand how public debate works, it is also important to investigate how new actors, emerging in the public sphere, such as the GJM, managed to introduce new moral dimensions in the debate.

In the globalization debate, even the formerly hegemonic actors found it necessary to follow the civic forms of moral argumentation brought forward by the GJM. The movement managed to introduce a new yardstick in the globalization debate whereby the worth of globalization is measured not in economic terms only, but also in terms of democracy and equality. It shows that the norm, according to which arguments in public debate need to be justified by invoking the common good, or, *the imperative to justify*, as Boltanski and Thévenot (2006, p. 25) call it, can sometimes work to the advantage of the new challengers. A closer look at how justifications were used and combined sheds further light on this process, through which different parties tried to make their arguments acceptable to their opponents. First, market justifications can also refer to the common good, and self-interested profit maximization can be argued for as a source of economic growth that benefits everybody (Boltanski and Thévenot, 2006; Lehtonen and Liukko, 2010, p. 374). "Private vices" are seen as a source of "public benefits", to cite Mandeville's (1688/1714) classic formulation that was later picked up by Adam Smith (1776/1776) to become the basis of modern economics.

Second, market good is argued for not only as such, but also for its assumed positive consequences in terms of the common good as defined by other worlds of justification. The most prominent example is the assumption that promotion of market good leads

automatically, as if by a natural law, to the advancement of the civic goods of democracy and human rights. In an op-ed, a member of the editorial board of Helsingin Sanomat praised China's newly announced membership of the WTO precisely for this reason:

Economic liberalization is always followed by demands for other rights. (HS, 25 November 1999)

This way of combining justifications is distinct from the two combinations originally recognized by Boltanski and Thévenot, *denunciation* and *compromise*. In a compromise, two incompatible worlds of justification are temporarily forged into a fragile setup (Boltanski and Thévenot, 2006, pp. 278-282). But here, the worlds are presented like they go together effortlessly. In fact, the good as measured in one world is argued to follow from advancing the good in another, as if by logical implication. For purposes of future research on public justifications, I propose to call this kind of relationship between justification worlds *implication*.

Third, the justifications for the GJM's arguments gained in complexity when they met with opponents in the mainstream media. In the most basic form, often used in the alternative media published by the movement itself, economic globalization was simply denounced as bad for civic values such as equality and democracy (see Salo 2012) To convince others in the mainstream media, the movement and especially its allies often opted for more complex sets of justifications. The main argument quickly took the form of arguing that to produce a maximum amount of material good and distribute it in a just way, global markets need rules of the game that are democratically agreed upon. In terms of justifications, this argument is a combination of market (economic growth), industrial (means for regulating the economy designed by experts), and civic (democratic decision on these means) justifications. It owes much of its influence to the fact that it can be presented in two forms, one disapproving and the other approving the market world.

The version disapproving the market, presented most often by the GJM and its allies, consists in saying that without public regulation, markets would not produce any kind of common good, but rather, the opposite. But when goods as defined by the industrial (regulation) and civic (democracy) worlds are attended to, the market too is capable of producing common good. In an attempt to find common ground at the height of the Wave of Critique, some members of the business lobby adopted a rather similar form of argumentation. The difference between their version of this argument and the GJM's version is that the market world was presented as positive in its own right, but possibly even better when combined with policy measures promoting the good as defined in civic and industrial terms. The CEO of the Finnish Branch of the International Chamber of Commerce argued thus:

Businesses do not want to see deregulation leading to savage markets [...] the liberalization of world trade must continue, but in an internationally regulated and controlled manner. The WTO and UN are examples of institutions which can develop common rules of the game. (HS, 27 May 2001)

Fourth, and finally, when the economic elites made their counterattack, it was not worded as a simple praise of the free market; rather, the main argument was for *national competitiveness*, a compromise between market and domestic justifications.

One possible interpretation of this stance is to take it as mere rhetoric, saying that objectively, the interest of economic elites does not lie in promoting national values and a stronger state, but rather the opposite: weakening the state, especially when it comes to regulating the economy. Hence, the domestic justifications would be a mere smokescreen to persuade those supporting more traditional values. But it is equally possible that many of those making the Wave of Counterattack truly believe in the two seemingly conflicting moral

principles: that global markets free from state regulation are the best producer of the common good measured in economic terms, *and* that the nation-state is a morally valuable entity that should be defended.

Analyzing this argument in terms of justifications brings out another feature, which is, perhaps, rather common in public deliberation. In the context of modern societies marked by value pluralism, people often simultaneously hold moral views that stem from several worlds of justification. Though these moral convictions may be conflicting, actors often settle for compromises, and these compromises often find acceptance in public debates (cf. Boltanski and Thévenot, 2006, p. 277).

## **Discussion and conclusions**

In this paper I have presented the method of Justifications Analysis and used it to analyze the media debate on globalization in Finland, looking at the frequency of coverage over time, the actors involved and the moral justifications given to claims presented in the debate. The *frequency of coverage* in Finland diverged from the global issue attention cycle, and this divergence can be explained by the effect of national key events staged by the key actors mobilized in political contestation over globalization. The *actor constellation* in the Finnish debate also diverged from countries that have been studied previously. Pro-globalization elites did not unequivocally dominate, the Global Justice Movement got much coverage and the elites were divided between those promoting globalization and those assessing it critically. *Moral justifications* were abundant, reflecting disagreements over whether the common good should be defined in terms of market worth, equality and democracy, national values, or some combination of these.

In conclusion, an assessment on the strengths and weaknesses of Justifications Analysis and suggestions for overcoming the latter, as well as some reflections on the future of public debates over globalization are in order. I have argued that the strength of Justifications Analysis as compared to established methods of framing research is that JA's categories are general moral principles that constitute a relatively institutionalized cultural toolkit for moral argumentation in modern democracies. The method is thus suitable, in case studies such as the one presented here or broader comparative research designs, to track similarities and differences in the moral principles used in public debates over various political issues as well as in different countries. This reliance on predefined categories, however, also constitutes a potential weakness of the method. Like any set of categories, the one proposed by Boltanski and Thévenot is by no means complete, as demonstrated by the fact it proved necessary in this study to divide the civic category in two, justice and democracy, to make sense of the globalization debate. Drawing on recent research in moral philosophy and moral psychology might help possible future research utilizing JA to further divide the category of civic justifications to more accurately capture the different dimensions of justifications. For instance, Drawing on Haidt (2013), freedom justifications are often used in moral discourse, often by conservatives who also tend to appeal to market justifications. In other words, it is not only the appeal to monetary value that constitutes the moral basis of neoliberal discourse – the principle of freedom is often equally important. Similarly, drawing on Honneth (1995) and Fraser (2008), the moral principle of recognition has been an important part of the argumentation of many social movements, particularly those calling for the recognition of difference, such as movements related to ethnicity/race and sexual difference.

I have shown that the globalization debate proceeded in three waves between 1999 and 2005, after which the use of the term globalization in the news dropped sharply. This does not mean, of course, that globalization itself, understood as increasing economic and cultural

interconnectedness across national borders, would have disappeared – quite the contrary. Nor has political contestation over its consequences. Indeed, scholars have argued that the “globalization cleavage” has in recent years become an important defining feature of the political field in Europe (Kriesi et al., 2012), and populist parties in most European countries are now explicitly opposing cultural and economic integration across borders. While populist parties clearly take on the consequences of globalization, they or their opponents hardly ever, at least in the case of Finland, use the term globalization. The Finns Party won its remarkable electoral success in 2011 by focusing on two issues: the bailout of Greece by the EU and anti-immigration. While the first one of these issues is clearly related to economic and the second to cultural globalization, these terms were not a part of the electoral campaign debate (Ylä-Anttila & Ylä-Anttila, 2015). These developments demonstrate that economic and cultural globalization and its consequences are likely to remain an important source of political conflicts long after the term itself has been buried back into the academic books that it came from.

## Note

<sup>1</sup>The last two waves overlap in time. Instead of temporality alone, they are defined by the critical discourse moments that drive the debate. Thus, each wave consists of two periods of four weeks around the two key events that show as peaks in coverage in Fig. 1 (the ILO report and the Helsinki Conference for the Wave of Adoption, and the EVA report and the Prime Minister’s report for the Wave of Counterattack).

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*Table 1: Coding a claim in Justifications Analysis.*

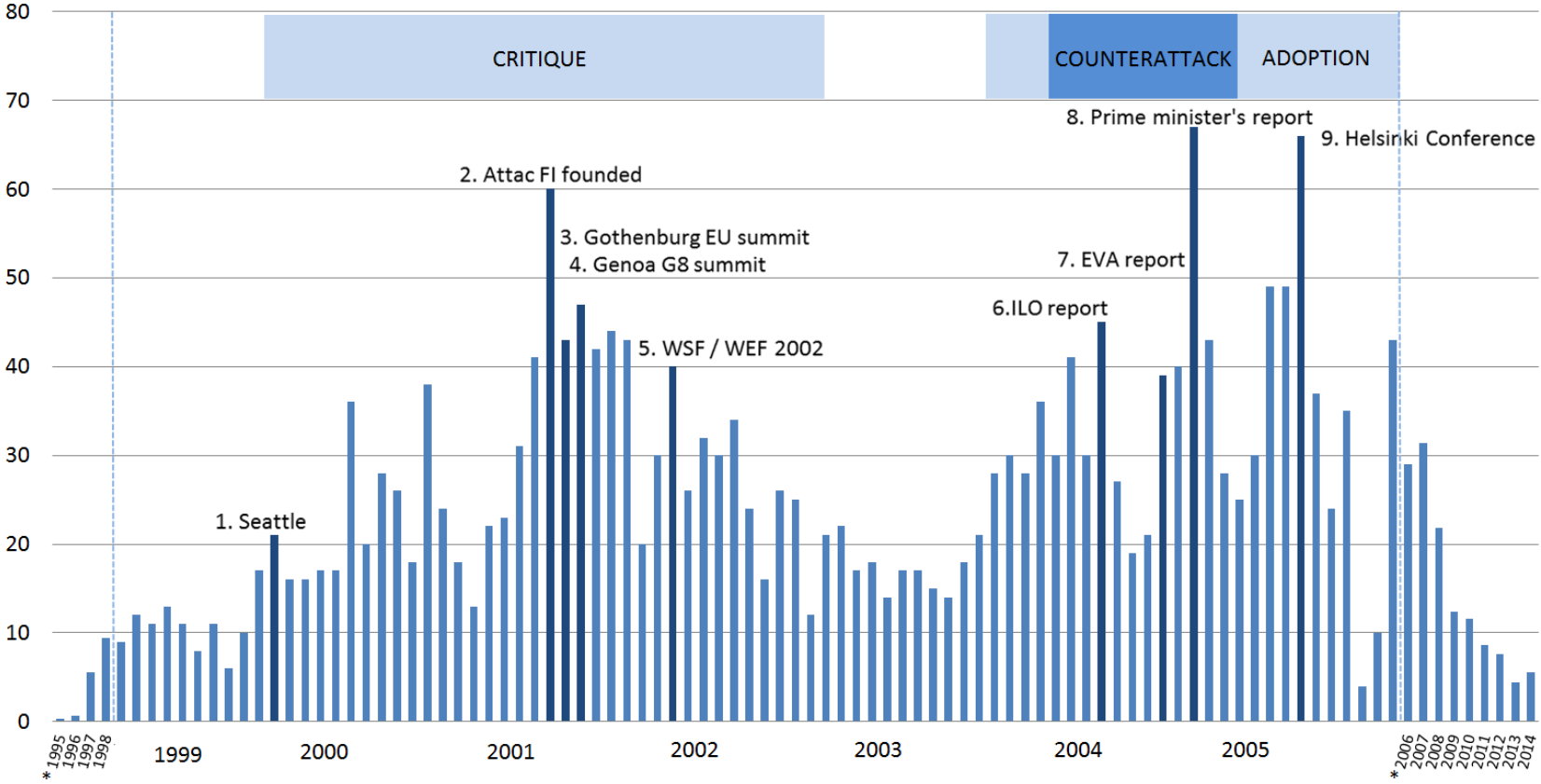
<b>Who: Speaker</b>	<b>To whom: Addressee</b>	<b>How: The way of making the claim</b>	<b>What: Content of the claim</b>	<b>Justification</b>
Civil society actor / global	Intergovernmental organization / global	Demonstration	WTO meeting must be stopped	Civic+ Market -

*Table 2: Claims by actor type and wave of debate (%).*

<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Wave</b>		
	Critique	Adoption	Counterattack
Civil society	22	12	0
Government	24	24	10
Journalist	15	12	37
Internat. institution	11	14	5
Trade union	0	6	7
Business	1	11	13
Expert	10	12	9
Other	17	9	19
Total	100	100	100
N	451	178	88

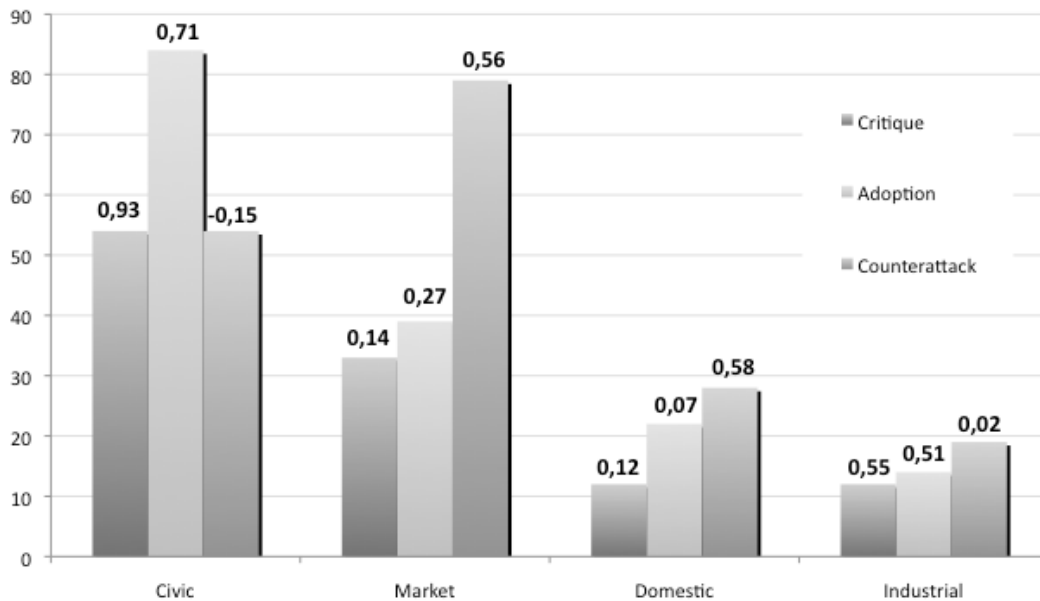


Figure 1. Three waves of the globalization debate and their key events. Count of occurrences of the term “globalization” in Helsingin Sanomat, 1995–2014.



\*For the years 1995-1998 and 2006-2014 the bars indicate the average monthly occurrence of “globalization”. These years did not contain key events that would have shown as peaks in coverage for globalization, so detailed analysis was limited to the years 1999-2005 which did contain key events. The periods before and after this peak phase are included in the figure only to show how the debate began in 1999 and faded after 2005. The dotted lines indicate the change of scale from annual to monthly and back to annual.

Figure 2. Justifications of globalization in the three waves of debate (%) and their approval rates.\*



\* The height of the columns represents the share of claims invoking each justification. The numbers above the columns indicate whether each justification is used mainly in positive or negative light. This figure varies between +1 and -1, the former denoting a fully positive usage of the justification in question and the latter a fully negative usage. Figures add up to more than 100% because several justifications may be given to each claim.