

What is Finnish about The Finns Party?

Political Culture and Populism

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Tiivistelmä – Referat – Abstract <p>This Master's thesis focuses on the arguments and justifications of Finns Party (Perussuomalaiset, PS) candidates before the Finnish parliamentary elections of 2011, where the populist party succeeded tremendously, over quadrupling its share of votes. The context is one of a rising tide of nationalist populism in Scandinavia and elsewhere in Europe. Other studies have theoretically and empirically provided some explanations for this dynamic both elsewhere and in Finland. However, a study of political sociology on the Finns Party candidates' argumentation can shed light on the cultural specificity the nationalist populist phenomenon takes on in the Finnish case. It is argued here that this specificity is born out of the legacy of Finnish populism, nationalism and political culture, including the legacy of the Finnish Rural Party (Suomen maaseudun puolue, SMP, 1959–1995), the predecessor of the PS.</p> <p>Data that facilitates such an analysis is found in the Helsingin Sanomat Voting Advice Application. This political questionnaire was answered by 202 (85%) PS candidates and released online as open data, providing a unique dataset not previously available. By a content analysis informed by the justification theory of Luc Boltanski and Laurent Thévenot, the study answers the following questions: How is Finnish political culture and history visible in the way the European populist phenomenon takes its shape in the PS? Is the PS geographically divided to a rural part with SMP rural populist roots and an urban part in line with the contemporary European populist radical right? It was hypothesized that rural PS populism is more left-wing in nature and stresses rural poverty, whereas urban PS populism sees immigration issues as more salient and is more right-wing in its economic policy. The rural candidates were expected to present justifications based on equality and social justice more often, and the urban candidates to use ones based on market efficiency.</p> <p>This hypothesis indeed holds true, according to the results of this study, but with some critical corrections. First, the rural/urban division is not as clear-cut as hypothesized. The radical right candidates are a minority even within the urban candidates. The mainstream of rural and urban candidates was more of a left-populist nature. Second, while a gender aspect was missing from the hypothesis, gender was indeed to be considered, since the radical right candidates were even more overwhelmingly male than they were urban. Third, while there were differences between the rural and urban candidates in their usage of justifications, this varied with the question and was not as consistent as hypothesized.</p> <p>Nevertheless, the use of justifications based on efficiency was notable. Both rural and urban candidates often related to political issues as to be decided upon with calculations of expected consequences. This is something that is typical of Finnish political culture, and in this study, it is found to be typical of Finnish populism as well.</p>			
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Tiivistelmä – Referat – Abstract <p>Tämä pro gradu -tutkielma keskittyy Perussuomalaisten eduskuntavaaliehdokkaiden argumentteihin ja oikeuksiin vuoden 2011 eduskuntavaaleissa, joissa puolue saavutti huomattavaa menestystä ja lähes viisinkertaisesti ääniosuutensa. Kansallismieliset populistipuolueet ovat nousussa muuallakin Pohjoismaissa ja Euroopassa, ja tätä kehitystä on tutkittu niin teoreettisesti kuin empiirisestikin Suomessa ja kansainvälisesti. Puolueen ehdokkaiden argumentaation tutkiminen poliittisen sosiologian keinoin voi kuitenkin antaa uutta tietoa siitä, miten populismi-ilmiö toteutuu Perussuomalaisissa erityisen suomalaisella tavalla. Tämän erityisyyden taustalla on suomalainen poliittinen kulttuuri sekä Suomen Maaseudun Puolueen (SMP, 1959–1995) perintö.</p> <p>Avoimena datana julkaistut ehdokkaiden vastaukset Helsingin Sanomien Vaalikoneeseen tarjoavat uudenlaisen ja ainutkertaisen kyselyaineiston tälle tutkimukselle. 202 (85 %) Perussuomalaisten ehdokasta vastasi kyselyyn. Menetelmänä käytetään sisällönanalyysia jonka luokitukset perustuvat Luc Boltanskin ja Laurent Thévenot'n oikeuttamisteoriaan. Tutkimus vastaa seuraaviin kysymyksiin: Miten suomalainen poliittinen kulttuuri ja historia näkyvät muodossa, jonka eurooppalainen populismi-ilmiö Perussuomalaisissa saa? Onko puolue maantieteellisesti jakautunut maalaan SMP:läisen populismin alueeseen ja kaupunkilaiseen eurooppalaisen laitaoikeistopopulismin määrittämään alueeseen? Tutkimuksessa oletettiin, että maalainen perussuomalaisuus on vasemmistolaisempaa ja painottaa maalaista köyhyyttä sosiaaliseen oikeudenmukaisuuteen vedoten, kun taas kaupunkilaiset perussuomalaiset ovat oikeistolaisempia, maahanmuuttopolitiikka on heille tärkeämpää ja he oikeuttavat mielipiteitään vedoten taloudelliseen tehokkuuteen.</p> <p>Tutkimuksen tulosten mukaan hypoteesi pitää paikkansa mutta vain tietyin tärkein korjauksin. Ensinnäkin maaseudun ja kaupungin jako ei ollut odotetun selkeä. Laitaoikeistolaiset ehdokkaat olivat vähemmistössä kaupunkilaistenkin ehdokkaiden joukossa. Niin maalais- kuin kaupunkilaisehdokkaidenkin valtavirta oli enemmänkin vasemmistopopulistista. Toiseksi, vaikka hypoteesi ei ottanut huomioon sukupuoliasetelmaa, se osoittautui tärkeäksi, sillä kaupunkilaisvoittoisuuttakin huomattavampaa oli laitaoikeistolaisten ehdokkaiden miesvoittoisuus. Kolmanneksi, maalais- ja kaupunkilaisehdokkaiden oikeuttamistavoissa oli eroja, mutta tämä vaihteli kysymyskohtaisesti eivätkä erot olleet niin yksinkertaisia kuin hypoteesi antoi olettaa.</p> <p>Tehokkuuteen vetoavien oikeutusten käyttö oli silti huomattavaa. Sekä maalais- että kaupunkilaisehdokkaat usein suhtautuivat poliittisiin kysymyksiin siten, että oikea ratkaisu tulee valita suorittamalla laskelmoitu arvio kunkin mahdollisen valinnan odotetuista seurauksista. Tällainen harkintaan ja laskelmointiin perustuva politiikkakäsitys on tyypillinen suomalaiselle poliittiselle kulttuurille ja tämän tutkimuksen tulosten perusteella myös suomalaisen populismin ominaispiirre.</p>		
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1 Introduction

In Finland there's no extreme right or extreme left, the dividing line has for a long time been the People vs. the Elite. You apparently represent the Elite.

- A local PS councilman from Köyliö, later expelled from the party for his explicitly racist views, defends himself against accusations of extreme-rightism on Facebook 20 February 2012. All translations are by the author of this study.

The populist Finns Party's (Perussuomalaiset, PS)¹ upsurge in the parliamentary elections of spring 2011 shocked the Finnish political scene, marking the most significant post-war shift in Finnish politics. The latest phase in a significant rising tide in support for nationalist populist parties in the Nordic countries², formerly largely Social Democratic strongholds, made PS the third largest party in Finland with 19.1% of the vote, up from 4.1% in 2007 (Borg 2012a, 20). The last few decades have seen significant victories for nationalist populist parties all over Europe (see e.g. Mudde 2007). The PS can be seen as part of this development, but it also has roots in the Finnish Rural Party (Suomen maaseudun puolue, SMP, 1959–1995), its predecessor.

In this thesis, I will analyse the specificity that the contemporary European populist phenomenon takes in the Finnish case. While the party has much in common with the rising European populist radical right, such as anti-immigration and anti-EU policies that are a reaction to societal developments such as globalization and individualization; its ideology and policies are also rooted in Finnish political culture, political history and the legacy of the SMP. I ask if PS politics in urban centres have much in common with the European populist radical right (e.g. Eatwell 2003; Hainsworth 2008; Mudde 2000,

¹ Perussuomalaiset, previously often translated as the True Finns or Ordinary Finns, adopted the official English name The Finns in August 2011, after receiving international media attention (HS 21 August 2011).

² In Norway, The Progress Party (Fremskrittspartiet), the second-largest party since 1997 (Carr 1997), received 22.9% of the vote in 2009 (Statistics Norway 2009). In Sweden, the Sweden Democrats (Sverigedemokraterna) entered parliament for the first time in 2010 with 5.7% of the vote (Valmyndigheten 2010). Support for the Danish People's Party (Dansk Folkeparti) rose to 12.3% in 2011 (Statistics Denmark 2011).

2004, 2007), whereas the rural PS is better described by studies on rural populism (e.g. Canovan 1999; Helander 1971; MacRae 1969; Minogue 1969; Taggart 2004; Wiles 1969), with its ideological roots firmly in SMP's agrarian populist politics. This study will analyse the PS in relation to historical Finnish populism and contemporary European populism via an analysis of PS candidates' views in the Finnish 2011 parliamentary elections, by method of content analysis informed by Luc Boltanski & Laurent Thévenot's (1999, 2006) justification theory.

Several theoretical explanations for the rise of populist parties in contemporary Europe have been formulated, and preliminary empirical explanations for the PS' success have been suggested. However, theoretical explanations (see e.g. Eatwell 2003; Mudde 2004, 2007; Oesch 2008) have largely conceptualized the parties as right-wing, which does not seem to be the whole truth about the PS (see chapter 2.4; Borg 2012c; Grönlund & Westinen 2012), while empirical explanations of the PS' rise (see e.g. Borg 2012; Kantola et al. 2011; Rahkonen 2011) lack analysis on what does the party have in common with its European populist counterparts and what are its specificities. To study the PS as an extreme right party is not an adequate approach. While the party's positions on some issues are right-wing (value conservatism), its economic policy is left-leaning (Borg 2012c, Grönlund & Westinen 2012). In many issues, the party transcends the traditional left–right continuum and politicizes new issues in new ways.

This study attempts to remedy the aforementioned lacks and broaden our knowledge of the party and its significance to Finnish politics. While political science and electoral studies have given us vital contributions on the party (e.g. Borg 2012, Wiberg 2011), political sociology can deepen our understanding of dynamics of political justification and practices. The research questions to be answered are: **How is Finnish political culture and history visible in the way the European populist phenomenon takes its shape in the PS? Is the PS geographically divided to a rural part with SMP rural populist roots and an urban part in line with the contemporary European populist radical right?**

To answer these questions, I will analyse a new type of data, the Helsingin Sanomat Voting Advice Application (HS VAA) dataset, published online as open data by HS (6 April 2011). This is combined with data on the municipalities of residence for candidates (Ministry of Justice 2011) and a classification of municipalities by their population density (Statistics Finland 2011a) to make the rural/urban comparison possible. The HS VAA data contains free-text answers to a political questionnaire of 31 questions by 202 PS candidates, amounting to 85% of the PS candidates in the parliamentary elections of 2011. The dataset is unique and such a high response rate could not have been achieved by normal survey data collection methods, nor is such data yet available for other countries. Out of this dataset, answers to seven questions are picked: two on economic redistribution and social justice, two on regional politics and three on globalization. The data will be studied in light of existing research literature regarding the PS and its predecessors, Finnish political culture and current European populism, to extract the specificities of the Finnish case.

I will first present the case of the PS' rise and existing analyses on it, before moving on to my conceptualizations, methods, hypotheses and data. This will be followed by the main contribution of this study, the analysis of PS candidates' pre-election discourse and justifications. Finally, I will present some concluding remarks. My results, in short, support the hypothesis that the party combines elements from agrarian populism and from contemporary radical right populism. The most dominant feature I found their discourse was strong support for the welfare state, justified with an ideal of equal rights in society, but with a strong anti-elitist bent. This was true especially of the rural part of the party. While there is a radical right populist bloc, it constitutes but a minority of the urban candidates, and the rural/urban divide is not as clear-cut as hypothesized. A typically Finnish conception of politics as taking care of common issues rationally and efficiently, instead of as emotion-fuelled fierce debate (e.g. Luhtakallio 2012, 13–16, 178–190; Luhtakallio & Ylä-Anttila 2011, 44–45), was found to be common even among populists in Finland.

2 The Rise of the Finns Party

This literature review aims to show that while the Finnish party field has been relatively stagnant for decades and interest in politics has been low, especially rural working populations have now been mobilized by the PS in the aftermath of an election funding scandal, an immigration debate and the economic crisis in the EU. This largely explains why the PS' rise happened when it did and connects the PS to the European nationalist populist phenomenon, but also highlights that the PS is a predominantly left-wing party, unlike some of its European counterparts, including the successful Norwegian and Danish populist parties (Paloheimo 2012, 342–343).

Five years before the PS' landslide victory of 2011, Elina Kestilä (2006) analysed the demand for what she calls radical right populism in Finland by using survey data of attitudes and comparing the Finnish case to other Nordic and Western European countries. Her theory is that low satisfaction with the political system and negative attitudes towards immigration facilitate radical right populist voting. She finds that while Finns are more satisfied with their political system than the electorates of most West European countries, attitudes towards immigrants and the political elite are quite negative (*ibid.*, 184), and concludes that there indeed is attitudinal demand for radical right populism within the Finnish electorate.

She speculates that the lack of a politically attractive anti-immigration party, capable of tapping into the anti-immigrant sentiment, accounts for anti-immigrant attitudes not manifesting as electoral success (*ibid.*, 187). What happened in those four years from her study in 2007 to the PS' victory in 2011 that legitimated the PS vote to such an extent? Did satisfaction in the political system, one of the variables observed by Kestilä, decline?

2.1 Declining Trust: The Campaign Funding Scandal of 2008–2011

Indeed, one explanation is that trust in the political system and especially the mainstream parties took a major blow with the election campaign funding scandal that domi-

nated Finnish media in 2008–2011 (Kantola, Vesa & Hakala 2011, 78–79). While Finland has been considered to be one of the countries with the least public sector corruption (e.g. Transparency International 2011), the reality of political campaign funding began to unravel in public in 2008. On May 7, the Centre Party (Suomen Keskusta) MP Timo Kalli admitted on national television that he had not disclosed to the Ministry of Justice all campaign donations over 1700 Euros (Yle 7 May 2008), as required by the new campaign funding law of 2000. Kalli explained that even though this was a legal requirement, neglecting it was not punishable under the law, and he believed that this should be a matter between him and the donor.

In the following weeks and months, it was revealed that it was in fact commonplace amongst politicians not to disclose their campaign donations, even though required by law. Many donors wished to remain anonymous. However, with relentless media pressure on elected officials, many were now forced to open up details of their campaign funding. It emerged that a conglomerate of wealthy businessmen had set up a fund, *Kehittyvien maakuntien Suomi* (KMS, “Finland for Provincial Development”), which had close ties to the Centre Party, to the point of having been founded in the party office. The fund gave out substantial donations to politicians of the Centre Party and like-minded candidates in other parties (Yle 9 February 2012). What cast a dubious light over this operation was the fact that several politicians who received the funding, including Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen, had supported plans for large property developments, such as a shopping centre and a snowmobile factory, initiated by the same businessmen who were behind the KMS money. Thanks to relentless investigations by journalists, several other, smaller-scale scandals were also revealed during the three-year political turmoil. These included the channelling of taxpayer money to fund the Centre Party via Finland’s Slot Machine Association (Raha-automaattiyhdistys, the state-owned charitable gambling monopoly). Several cases related to PM Matti Vanhanen were investigated but not brought to court, and he eventually resigned for “personal reasons” in the summer of 2010 (Kantola et al. 2011, 79–80). Only some of the accusations resulted in judicial processes, several of which are still pending at the time of writing. Nevertheless, the reputations of many politicians, mostly of the Centre

Party, were tarnished irreversibly. The first conviction was passed in the spring of 2012, when veteran National Coalition (Kansallinen Kokoomus) politician Ilkka Kanerva was convicted of receiving bribes and three businessmen of giving them. The businessmen received prison sentences of up to six years, Kanerva a fifteen-month suspended sentence. However, all parties have appealed the decision and it will be reviewed by higher courts later. (HS 18 April 2012.)

What were the effects of this corruption scandal for the 2011 elections? According to Kantola et al.'s (2011) survey data, party loyalty was exceptionally low in the lead-up to the election. In the survey, performed before the election, 40% of participants reported intending to vote for a different party than in the previous elections of 2007. A third of these reported the campaign funding scandal as a reason for the move. Of PS voters, however, over half reported it as their reason for the decision. (Ibid., 152.) Also, the PS was the most successful in mobilizing voters, that is, attracting the votes of those who did not vote at all previously (Borg 2012b, 137).

Mattila & Sundberg (2012) find that the election funding scandal hit the Centre Party the hardest. 72% of respondents to their survey said their view of the Centre Party had changed for the worse because of the scandal. For the National Coalition, this number was 53% and for the Social Democratic Party (Suomen sosialidemokraattinen puolue, SDP), 36%. However, 30% said their view of the PS had changed for the better. (Mattila & Sundberg 2012, 235–238.) Thus, the PS vote seems at least partly to be explained as a protest vote (see e.g. Eatwell 2003, 51–52) against the mainstream parties. However, it should not be dismissed as *just* a protest vote in the aftermath of a crisis; instead, the PS vote is indeed backed by an ideology, shown by e.g. Grönlund & Westinen (2012), discussed in chapter 2.4.

2.2 Similarities to the Finnish Rural Party's 1970s Success

The election funding scandal described in the previous passage also bears similarities to the so-called Salora scandal of the 1970s, which coincided with an electoral victory for the Finns Party's predecessor, the Finnish Rural Party (SMP, Suomen maaseudun

puolue) in 1979. In the Salora case, the head of the Finnish tax administration, among other high-ranking government officials, was forced to resign after being convicted of receiving bribes from the CEO of Salora, a Finnish electronics manufacturer. Salora's CEO had attempted to influence a political decision to found a state-owned factory for production of cathode ray tubes used in manufacturing television sets. Several government ministers were charged for receiving bribes, but were acquitted. (Kantola & Vesa 2011, 47–48.) The populist SMP cashed in on the scandal. The Social Democrats, implicated in the scandal, crashed in the 1979 parliamentary elections, whereas the SMP gained seven seats in parliament, up from two.

However, this was not the first success for the rural populist party. The SMP had gained as much as 18 seats already in the elections of 1970 (Sänkiaho 1971, 22), before declining towards 1979, and then succeeding again in the wake of the Salora scandal. Sänkiaho (*ibid.*, 30–37) explains the late 1960s rise of the SMP with five societal developments: first, the development of mass media, mainly television, distributing pictures of the wealth of urban centres into the countryside; second, the large-scale migration from the countryside to the cities in 1960s Finland; third, industrialization; fourth, the political environment (actions of other parties, mainly the failings of the Centre Party); and fifth, group behaviour (strong opinion leaders in rural villages).

For Sänkiaho (1971), the importance of the spread of mass media in 1960s Finland must be seen in context of the post-war cultural atmosphere. He interprets the legacy of the 1918 Finnish civil war as one that instated traditional peasant community values in the whole country. He argues that the victors, the right-wing White army, were predominantly rural, nationalistic land-owning peasants, while the defeated radical left-wing Reds represented urban Finland. The post-civil war unification of Finland was done on the terms of the victors. Up to the 1960s, schoolbooks and films depicted peasant communities and their norms. (*Ibid.*, 30.) Television, popularized in Finland only in the 1960s, was the first medium to spread images of urban lifestyle and more liberal norms, together with images of urban wealth. This coincided with the demise of the farming economy. Together with industrialization, mass migration to the cities created large-

scale rural poverty and rising tax rates in rural areas. These structural and cultural changes resulted in widespread rural discontent. (Ibid., 31–33.)

Meanwhile, the Centre Party (renamed in 1965, previously the Agrarian League, *Maalaisliitto*) now tried to cater to urban voters as well. Instead, they lost their foothold in the countryside, and rural voters turned to the SMP. Many of them felt that by voting SMP they were not actually changing parties but sticking to true Agrarian politics against the “turncoats” of the Centre Party. (Ibid., 34–35.)

Studies of the SMP not only shed light on the PS’ ideological roots, but also serve as a reminder that the often-cited description of Finnish political culture as one of pacific consensus (e.g. Karvonen & Paloheimo 2005, 297–298) is not a monolithic, deterministic and unchanging “national character”. Helander (1971) identifies as key characteristics of the Finnish political system “the consistency of the power relations of parties and the radical divisions and intensity of power struggles between parties” (ibid., 9). He goes on to describe the Finnish political culture as “relatively broken” (ibid.). “The consistency of the power relations of parties” clearly refers to the dominance of the Social Democrats and the rural Centre Party, with the conservative National Coalition as a strong third. This did continue to be the case until recent developments in the new millennium. However, the description of “radical divisions” and “intense power struggles” between parties and a “broken” political culture is almost the opposite of typical modern descriptions of the pacific and consensual Finnish political system and culture, and this was only in 1971.

Whereas Helander (1971) and Sänkiaho (1971) interpret the rise of the SMP as a not very surprising backlash against modernization, an attempt at return to rural peasant community values instated in the civil war of 1918, perhaps the PS’ rise as well should not have come as much of a shock. This might be argued especially given the geographical consistency between SMP and PS voting (Borg 2012b), and considering that the main explanatory factors presented for the PS’ rise by Borg (2012c, see chapter 2.4) are fairly similar to the ones used to explain the SMP in 1971: failings of the Centre Party, media effects and discontent over modernization. Only this time, the rural discon-

tent is not over industrialization and urbanization, but globalization and European integration, discussed in the following.

2.3 The Immigration Debate and the Euro Crisis in the Media

Another prevalent theme in the lead-up to the 2011 elections, in addition to the campaign funding scandal, was immigration policy (Pernaa 2012, 31), a discussion largely dominated by the Finns Party. The debate was to a large extent initiated by the anti-immigration “wing” of PS and led by the (later elected) parliamentary candidate and Helsinki councilman Jussi Halla-aho. The challenge to debate met one of the first official responses by mainstream parties in 2010, when the Social Democrats announced that they were preparing a new immigration programme under the slogan “maassa maan tavalla” (when in Rome, do as the Romans do) – a reference to requiring immigrants to adopt Finnish ways of life. This was seen as an attempt by SDP to salvage as many votes as possible that were being siphoned off by the PS. Soon after, chairman of the National Coalition, Jyrki Katainen, made reference to the need to “accept diverse opinions on immigration”, seen as a nod to the immigration critics. (Ibid., 32.)

According to Pernaa (2012), the immigration debate died down to some extent already in 2010 and did not become such a salient topic in the electoral campaigns of 2011 as was anticipated. Instead, other issues became dominant. However, according to opinion polls, the surge in PS support took place in 2010, at the time of the peak of the immigration debate (ibid., 32). With that in mind, the debate can indeed be seen as one of the main factors legitimizing the PS vote.

Pernaa (2012) has conducted a broad media study of the prevalent topics in Finnish newspaper and television media in the run-up to the 2011 election (1.1.–17.4.2011). He finds that during that time, issues seen as “owned”³ by the PS dominated Finnish newspaper publicity (immigration in 2010, EU economic crisis in early 2011). Also, the

³ On issue ownership, see Petrocik 1996.

party and its success itself, in the form of news about its campaign opening, popularity and poll success, were dealt with extensively. According to Perna's study, the party was able to all but dominate the political discussion in the run-up to the elections (Perna 2012, 39–40). Not only did the surge in PS support take place in 2010, when the immigration debate hit its peak (*ibid.*, 32), but right before the elections, the Euro bail-outs became a major debate the PS could tap into. The discontent at supporting the crisis economies of the EU seems to have been a major factor in PS voting (Borg 2012d, 250). PS candidates' responses to this issue will be analysed in chapter 6.3.

2.4 Survey Research: Dissecting the PS Vote

Studying survey data on PS voters of 2011, blue-collar workers and entrepreneurs were overrepresented (Grönlund & Westinen 2012, 161; Rahkonen 2011, 427). Age groups were fairly evenly represented (Grönlund & Westinen 2012, 161), but as much as 67% of PS voters were men (Grönlund & Westinen 2012, 159; Rahkonen 2011, 428; Suhonen 2011, 66). This partly explains why the PS succeeded in geographical areas with high percentages of industrial workers and high unemployment rates. It has to be noted that many are the same areas in which the SMP succeeded in the 1970s and 1980s (Borg 2012c, 195–197). Also, there was a strong positive correlation between the rise in turnout in an area and PS support, suggesting that the PS was very successful in mobilizing previously inactive voters. Even stronger was the correlation with male turnout. (*Ibid.*, 196).

Grönlund & Westinen (2012) suggest that Finland is politically divided into wealthy urban Finland, where the conservative National Coalition and the Social Democrats dominate, and rural, sparsely populated Finland, which was previously dominated by the Centre Party, but where the Finns Party has now strongly taken hold. In urban Finland, the PS mainly siphoned off the traditional workers' party SDP's votes, whereas the National Coalition vote remained almost untouched. The PS' victory was mainly a loss of the Centre Party and the SDP. This, as well, would suggest a difference in PS voter and candidate profiles of rural and urban areas which I will examine in this study.

Grönlund & Westinen also built seven compound variables based on a voter values survey to plot political positioning of different parties' voters on seven two-dimensional axes. Their variables were left–right (market liberalism and income inequality), centre–periphery (regional policy), sovereignty–alliance (with regards to EU and NATO), elite–people (trust/distrust towards politicians), monolingualism–bilingualism (Finnish and Swedish), traditionalism–open-mindedness (immigration, multiculturalism, sexual minorities) and growth–ecology.

On a socioeconomic left–right scale, PS voters received a slightly left-leaning score along with SDP (Grönlund & Westinen 2012, 171). This also corresponds to self-reported positioning, where PS voters ranked themselves averagely slightly left-leaning, close to the political centre, although the standard deviation was higher than that of other parties (Borg 2012c, 198–199).

On the centre–periphery scale, perhaps surprisingly, it was found that the PS voters emphasized regional politics less than all the other parties' voters, the Greens notwithstanding (Grönlund & Westinen 2012, 174). This might be due to the fact that the Centre Party has a long history as the advocate of regional politics. Also, the authors state that the narrow dispersion of opinions on this scale casts some doubt on the reliability of this indicator. Nevertheless, they interpret this as the party voter base moving away from their SMP roots. I will analyse regionalism of PS candidates in chapter 5, and find that according to my data, contrary to what Grönlund & Westinen found of voters, regional politics and local democracy in peripheral municipalities seem to be quite important for PS candidates in both rural and urban constituencies.

On the sovereignty–alliance axis, unsurprisingly, the PS voters score most strongly for national sovereignty; on the people–elite scale, again unsurprisingly, most strongly for the people against the elite; and similarly, most strongly for monolingualism, against bilingualism. On the traditionalism–open-mindedness scale, they are surpassed in conservatism only by the Christian Democrats. Finally, on the growth–ecology scale, perhaps unexpectedly, the PS voters score very strongly for growth. This can be explained by the fact that they have gradually built up their policy as a reaction to the value-liberal,

ecological and climate-conscious policy advocated by the Greens (Vihreä liitto). Also, many environmental policies advocated by the Greens – such as fishing restrictions and the new sewage law debated in 2010 and early 2011 – mostly affect rural regions, where the PS is strong. Emphasizing economic growth can be interpreted as a liberal right-wing position and in conflict with a left-leaning economic position. (Grönlund & Westinen 2012, 171–177.) My findings on PS candidates' economic policy, discussed in chapter 4, indicate that this is an issue where PS candidates are quite divided.

From these voter survey findings, we should note not just the attitudinal positioning of PS voters, but also the fact that on five out of the seven axes, PS voters ranked at the very end of the scale, out of the eight largest parties that were compared. This confirms the party's status as a radical challenger of Finnish consensus politics. (Grönlund & Westinen 2012, 178.) However, the Greens could just as well be viewed as such, having ranked at the (opposite) end of four of the seven axes.

Borg, on the other hand, also based on a voter survey, identifies major political currents that contributed to the rise of the PS in 2011 (2012c, 194–195; 2012d, 250). These were the election funding scandal, the immigration discussion and the global economic melt-down. The most commonly cited reasons for PS voting by voters themselves were “a desire to shake up the stagnant party system”, “a desire to tighten immigration policy”, “a desire to curb Finland's commitments to the EU”, and the media-savvy chairman of the party, Timo Soini (Borg 2012c, 200–209). It is notable that immigration policy, EU policy and chairman Soini, reported by PS voters as reasons for voting, correspond closely to the most visible politics stories in the media, discussed previously. Borg's note on PS voting as protest against stagnant politics, however, warrants further examination.

2.5 Consensus or Stagnation: Finnish Political Culture and Populism

While contemporary Finnish politics is widely regarded as non-confrontational, fairly stable and based on negotiation instead of intense debate, conflict and rivalry (Karvonen & Paloheimo 2005, 297–298; Sänkiaho 1971, 30; Ylä-Anttila 2010, 98–103), consensus

politics are founded not only on broad common denominators but also the exclusion of options (Saari 2010, 469) and can be perceived as stagnation. The relative fixation of the Finnish party field in the late 20th century can be explained by a situation where the division of the mainstream parties corresponded strongly to the societal class structure and the left–right divide was clear, and also by geopolitical realities, namely Finland’s position neighbouring the Soviet Union. Even fairly substantial electoral changes did not really manifest themselves in government formation, actuated by the president, during Urho Kekkonen’s multi-term era of 1958–1982. Even though turnouts momentarily increased at the end of this phase, they soon started declining again. Finnish attitudes towards political parties have to this day been largely indifferent, even hostile. There has been an inherent anti-elitism dormant in the Finnish electorate, which has created a suitable breeding ground for a party protesting against supposed consensus, portraying it as stagnation. (Alapuro 1997; Alapuro 2010; Borg 2012c; Sänkiäho 1971, 30; Ylä-Anttila 2010, 98–103.) However, it should also be noted that this fertile breeding ground, set by Finns’ low interest and trust in politics, was at least to some extent changed by the 2011 elections. Elo & Rapeli (2012, 289) find that the elections increased Finns’ interest in politics, especially among young people.

Of course, the spirit of consensus did not mean that all political rivalry, disagreements or conflicts were swept under the rug, even if politics was comparatively pacific for decades. Neither can “political culture” be used as an explanation by itself, as political cultures are historically forged and in constant flux. The rise of the PS must be seen as indicative of a gradual breakdown of this consensual system. While the consensus was broad and inclusive, consensus always has to exclude *some* views, those that are just too extreme to assimilate. The consensus was a consensus agreed upon by the elite (Saari 2010, 476), and populist rhetoric is an effective critique against such a system.

Additionally, this perceived stagnation of the political field, attributed to political history, reminds us to consider how the Finnish case differs from the Scandinavian countries. Perhaps the late arrival of the populist phenomenon to Finland, compared to the Scandinavian countries, can be attributed to this stagnation of politics due to historical specificities.

In a comparison of Nordic populist party voters, Paloheimo (2012, 333) notes that whereas in Sweden, Norway and Denmark, populist party voters are mainly of middle and low income classes, the PS in Finland has managed to appeal to all income classes, even the high earners. This is especially noteworthy in light of the party's left-leaning economic policy.

Another Finnish specificity is that while in all of the Nordic countries, populist party voters view politics as "too complicated to understand" more often than voters of other parties, in Finland, both populist and mainstream party voters thought so notably more often than in the other Nordic countries (*ibid.*, 340). Paloheimo explains this, again, with Finnish consensus politics, lacking the simplicity of a "government vs. opposition" setting.

He also notes the left-leaning economic position of PS voters. While the Swedish Democrat voters' positioning is somewhat similar, the Danish and Norwegian populist party voters are decidedly right-wing on a self-reported scale (*ibid.*, 342–343). While the anti-immigration and anti-integration sentiment that has recently spread in Europe found its home in anti-tax right-wing parties founded in the 1980s in Denmark and Norway, it attached itself to the PS in Finland. The roots of the PS lie in rural left-leaning anti-industrialization populism (SMP) of the 1970s, which partly explains why Finnish populism is more left-wing in nature.

Also noteworthy is that despite long traditions of consensus politics and coalition governments, there are still strong ideological divides between the voters of different Finnish parties, both on left–right and conservative–liberal axes. This is true not just of those voting for the PS and the Greens, but mainstream parties as well. Also, there seems to be no basis to label the PS vote as a mere protest vote with no significant ideological content (e.g. Eatwell 2003, 51–52). According to the voter survey findings discussed above, the PS is a left-leaning but value-conservative and populist workers' party, which makes it almost a mirror image of the Greens.

These findings highlight why it is problematic to apply the canon of scholarship on European populist radical right parties to the PS. However, I hypothesize that scholarship on radical right-wing populism does apply to the urban part of the party, whereas their politics in rural areas are better analysed by referring to texts on traditional rural populism.

Summarizing this review of literature on the PS, it seems that the party is value-conservative but predominantly left-wing, with a male rural worker as a typical voter but appealing to even urban high earners. It is a reactionary populist party opposed to mainstream party consensus with views critical of the EU, globalization and immigration. The Euro crisis and declining trust in mainstream parties gave the party its opportunity. While the party has already been classified by some as populist radical right based on its programmes (e.g. Arter 2010), I believe that its nationalism and value conservatism are insufficient grounds for such a label, considering its left-wing economics. In fact, labelling the party is of minor interest here – instead, my interest lies in how political dynamics and cultural aspects mould the arguments and justifications of party representatives, how do they do politics and why. This is why my study will analyse the political argumentation of PS candidates with a framework of political sociology, described in what follows.

3 Conceptualization, Methodology, Hypotheses and Data

In this chapter, I will present my conceptual and theoretical framework for analysis. This will include discussions on the concept of populism, on Luc Boltanski and Laurent Thévenot's justification theory, a presentation of my hypotheses and of my data, the Helsingin Sanomat Voting Advice Application open data for the Finnish parliamentary elections of 2011.

3.1 Populism

Early works on populism (Ionescu & Gellner 1969, Canovan 1982) largely conceptualized the phenomenon as one of agrarian protest against modernization, with peripheries rebelling against the elites of centres, in a nostalgic ideology wishing to reinstate an “agrarian *gemeinschaft*” of traditional rural community values (MacRae 1969, 156). Following this, these conceptions of populism were used in analysing the SMP in Finland (Helander 1971). With a new version of European right-wing radicalism emerging, some scholars have turned to theories of populism, modifying them to fit the new situation, merging the concept with studies on the radical right (e.g. Mudde 2000, 2004, 2007). Some (e.g. Canovan 1999; Laclau 2005a, 2005b; Taggart 2004), on the other hand, have continued to develop the concept of populism in a way that is not specific to right-wing movements. However, I wish to argue that for the Finnish case, both these two discussions, the classical one on rural populism updated to a broader conception of populism; and the newer, specific version of the contemporary populist radical right, are useful. The PS combines two ideological strains: the rural populist legacy of the SMP and contemporary European populist radical rightism. The SMP's rural populist legacy is what gives the party its left-wing ideological roots, with populism manifesting as strong support for the rural poor, while contemporary European populist radical right ideology gives the party its anti-immigration and anti-EU alignment.

Indeed, most conceptualizations of contemporary European nationalist parties used today include the term right-wing in one form or another, including “far right”, “extreme right”, “radical right”, “populist right”, “new right” or some combination of these, such

as “populist radical right”. (Hainsworth 2008, 5–7; Mudde 2007; Rydgren 2007, 242.) The particular selection of parties examined varies to some degree, but it typically includes parties such as the French Front National (FN), The Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ), The Swiss People’s Party (SVP), the Netherlands’ Party for Freedom (PVV), the Swedish Democrats (SD), the Danish People’s Party (DF) and the Norwegian Progress Party (FrP). While some of these parties can indeed be categorized as far/radical/extreme right, the PS is not adequately described as such. The traditional left–right divide is, to some extent, a thing of the past for many of these parties. They are often voted for by workers, but also by white-collar voters, and their economic policy is not what defines them. Their voter bases are not very strictly socioeconomically determined, and they are not interest groups of social classes. The left–right divide is increasingly replaced by new modes of politicization, around questions such as multiculturalism, nationalism, permissiveness, tolerance and authoritarianism. (Eatwell 2003, 52–56; Rydgren 2007, 246.)

This is why I prefer using the concept of populism, without the additional “right-wing” qualifier, taking into account both the literature on agrarian populism and the one on contemporary radical right populism. Populism is a label the party itself acknowledges, too, while condemning both the “left” and the “right” (PS 2011, 6).

While the concept of populism is an elusive and disputed one, Cas Mudde’s (2004) definition synthesizes many others and is sufficient to serve as a starting point for the needs of this study:

“[A]n ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic groups, ‘the pure people’ versus ‘the corrupt elite’, and which argues that politics should be an expression of the *volonté generale* (general will) of the people.” (Ibid., 543.)

Mudde defines populism not as a political rhetoric or style, but an ideology; however, it is a “thin-centred” one (ibid., 544), thus it can be combined with very different left- and right-wing ideologies. The core concept for populism, undoubtedly, is that of “the people”, the righteous views of which the populists claim to represent. According to Mudde,

this “people” of the populists is a mythical construction, a sub-set of the whole population, best described by Benedict Anderson’s (1983) notion of an *imagined community*. Thus, common populist arguments often deal with who actually belongs to “the people”, whether it is explicitly expressed or merely implied (as in “we should take care of *our own* problems first before helping *others*”, where “us” refers to ethnic nationals and “others” to immigrants).

To be clear, I expect there to be no such thing as “pure” populism that would fit this description perfectly, or anything like an “exclusively populist” (Taggart 2004, 270) party. Rather, Mudde’s definition is here understood as an ideal type of populism, like Taggart (2004, 273) advocates the use of the concept. Empirical cases are expected to correspond to this definition of populism to differing degrees, making it useful as an analytical category.

Mudde does argue that populism is not just a right-wing phenomenon, but instead, it is inherent to contemporary politics, hence his expression “the populist Zeitgeist” (2004). He argues that the New Left movement of post-1968 and the Green parties’ rise since the 1980s were populist movements *par excellence* (Mudde 2004, 548), in presenting themselves as fierce critics of a misguided “political elite”. But he also believes that today’s populism is largely “associated with the (radical) right” because there is often a connection between populism and nationalism, since “[t]he step from ‘the nation’ to ‘the people’ is easily taken, and the distinction between the two is often far from clear”⁴ (ibid., 549). The fact that the PS is strongly nationalist but seems to combine left- and right-wing policy casts doubt on Mudde’s focus on “rightism”.

⁴ We should note that this is especially true in Finnish, where the word *kansa* carries both meanings, the nation and the people, thus connecting the concepts even in everyday language. The word is one of the staple concepts in the party’s vocabulary, often used by the PS chairman Timo Soini in his trademark proverb, borrowed from his mentor, Veikko Vennamo of the SMP, “*kyllä kansa tietää*” (“the people/nation know(s)”). This implies, in typical populist fashion, that true political knowledge rests within the conscience of the people.

As for the causes of the current populist *Zeitgeist*, Mudde presents several explanations, of which he focuses most on the changed role of the media and what he calls the “emancipation” of citizens (ibid., 552–556). He argues that because of increasing market competition between private media, there is a tendency to focus on extreme or scandalous views, simply to sell newspapers. Populist politicians fit this bill very well. The “emancipation” of citizens refers to better education and political awareness. Citizens demand more political representation and challenge established parties more eagerly.

Finally, Mudde analyses reactions to the populist “threat” (as perceived by the challenged mainstream parties) (ibid., 557–562). He argues that reactions emphasizing deliberative democracy, for example, are counter-productive, because the populist call for “more democracy” is a call for better *outputs* (i.e. materialization of the populists’ demands) rather than better *inputs* (i.e. participation). This is a view that can be disputed, both on theoretical and empirical grounds, for example with regards to the initiatives by many populist parties (e.g. the SVP in Switzerland) towards direct democracy such as referenda. Additionally, scholars of populism have made the point that populism thrives specifically because the outputs of democracy can never fully match the inputs. This is a structural feature of representative democracy, and can be conceptualized as a gap between the wish for mirror representation and the wish for expert rule (Papadopoulos 2002, 48) or a tension between “redemptive” and “pragmatic” democracy (Canovan 1999). Populism rears its head at times when the legitimacy of democracy is in crisis, but tends to be short-lived because its logic is the logic of a movement, of constituting a people, not of prolonged rule. Taggart (2004, 276, 284–286) refers to this as populism’s self-limiting quality, Canovan (1999, 14) even sees it as democracy’s self-repair system: populism provides temporary inspiration when the gap between hopes of redemption through politics and the reality of everyday pragmatic decision-making is too big.

Whereas Mudde sees populism as an ideology, Ernesto Laclau (2005a, 2005b) sees it as a mode of politicization. To him, populism is a logic of articulation resulting in the discursive construction of a people. In populism, “a *plebs* [...] claims to be the only legitimate *populus* – that is, a partiality [...] wants to function as the totality of the community” (2005a, 81). Here, a particular group attempts to present itself as universal, “the

people”, constructing “chains of equivalence” between different political claims and thus constituting the people as a political subject vis-à-vis the elite. To Laclau, populism is not a derogatory term, nor should populist movements be dismissed as simplifying or demagogic. Instead, for Laclau, the logic of populism is inherent in all politics. (Ibid., 18.) This is, for the purposes of this study, quite similar to Mudde’s conception, despite Laclau’s advanced discursive ontology and conceptualizations. Whereas Laclau talks of populism as a logic and Mudde as a “thin-centred ideology” (Mudde 2004, 544), Mudde, too, actually focuses on the populist logic in his definition, instead of its ideological contents. However, in his empirical work, Mudde studies right-wing parties, which unnecessarily limits his field of vision.

Indeed, the broad allegations of corruption against the Finnish political elite brought on by the election funding scandal, discussed previously, surely facilitated the PS’ ability to claim themselves as the representative of the “pure people” against the “corrupt elite”, in Mudde’s terms. However, while populism presents itself as a pure-hearted opponent to the elite, there is reason to believe that rural and urban populist strains within the PS are differentiated by where they claim these elites to reside. Rural populism, hypothetically, claims the oppressors are located in the affluent elites of cities, banks and corporations, whereas urban right-wing populism blames permissive, altruistic cultural elites for defending immigration, globalization and multiculturalism. In this study, such claims by PS candidates will be investigated by methodology discussed in the following.

3.2 Methodology

Methodology for this study will consist of a sociological content analysis (Saaranen-Kauppinen & Puusniekka 2006, ch. 7.3.2) of questionnaire answers by PS parliamentary candidates, informed by the justification theory of Luc Boltanski and Laurent Thévenot (Boltanski & Thévenot 1999, 2006; Luhtakallio & Ylä-Anttila 2011; Thévenot 2007, 2011a, 2011b). Content analysis involves creating categorizations of themes in texts that are relevant to the study at hand; coding, or classifying, excerpts of text into these categories; and interpretative readings of these categorized excerpts. The categorization and analysis is informed by a hypothetical model of urban and rural groups of PS candidates,

presented in the next chapter, which I base on the research on populism and PS presented above and on Boltanski and Thévenot's theory of justification.

The categorizations of the hypothetical model manifest themselves in different ways when processing the candidates' answers to different questions. This is why each question was analysed separately and a codebook created during analysis for each question, instead of drafting a codebook before the analysis phase. The analytical framework, based on studies of populism, the PS case, Finnish political culture and Boltanski & Thévenot's theory of justification, facilitates finding classifications in the data but does not dictate them beforehand, avoiding overly rigid preconceived interpretations. This approach also makes it possible to employ justification theory more intensively in the questions in which it is relevant for analysis and more loosely or not at all in analyses that do not benefit from it.

Because I am analysing party candidates acting within an established parliamentary polity, my interest lies not only in the way PS candidates justify their positions, but also in the positions themselves, including categorizations such as the political left and right. This means that a rigorous and systematic application of Public Justifications Analysis (Luhtakallio & Ylä-Anttila 2011), influenced by Political Claims Analysis by Koopmans & Statham (1999), would be unsuitable. However, incorporating justification theory is highly relevant because I am interested in the effects of political cultures and practices for the PS. This is why I have opted for a loose interpretation of justification analysis, which can be described as content analysis informed by justification theory.

To briefly explicate justification theory, Boltanski & Thévenot (2006) argue that in moral or political conflict, actors have to justify their positions to one another in communication, in order to reach a non-violent result to the dispute. They do this by basing their argument on universally accepted "orders of worth", or worlds of justification (civic, market, inspired, fame, industrial, domestic and ecological). In each of these orders, the worth of a person, argument or object is determined by different means. The orders are "different kinds of common good" (Boltanski & Thévenot 1999, 365), which means that appealing to them includes a conception of a common humanity, making it

possible for the other party of the dispute to measure worth on the same, common scale. The presumption for an actor that presents a justified claim is that the other party of the dispute can appreciate the justification and assess its worth similarly. This is one way how commonality is possible, an explanation for the social bond.

Boltanski & Thévenot have explicated seven worlds of justification, although they do not claim the list would be final and comprehensive, or that these worlds of justification would be used similarly in different cultural spheres. In the civic world, worth is determined by the good of the community and its general will. In the market world, worth is determined by competition and possession of goods that others lust. In the inspired world, worth comes directly from an external and exclusive source of worth, such as divinity, or a pure idea of beauty, for instance. In the world of fame, appreciation of others is the sole source of worth. In the industrial world, what is most efficient is most worthy, constituting a world of calculating positive and negative effects of rationally chosen options. In the domestic world, hierarchies, based on tradition and ancestry, define worth. Finally, in the world of ecology, biodiversity and environmentality determine worth. Reference to one of these types of worth is made when justifying an argument in the public sphere. (Boltanski & Thévenot 1999.)

Conceptualizing politics through this theory, Luhtakallio and Ylä-Anttila (2011, 44–45; Luhtakallio 2012, 13–16, 178–190) argue that industrial justifications are typical of Finnish politics. In this study, these different modes of justification will be coded from the data. For example, a candidate might justify an argument for the lowering of taxes by referring to the economy's capability of organizing society through competition, constituting a market-world justification; or justify an argument for restricting immigration by referring to the need to uphold the purity of national traditions and culture, constituting a domestic-world justification.

3.3 Hypotheses

My primary hypothesis is that in addition to European and domestic political developments; specificities of Finnish political culture, political history and the legacy of Fin-

nish populism affect the views and justifications of PS candidates. More specifically, I hypothesize that we can discern two strains in the party: first, a rural, traditional and Finnish type of populism (Canovan 1999; Helander 1971; MacRae 1969; Minogue 1969; Taggart 2004; Wiles 1969), influenced by the legacy of the SMP; and second, a modern European radical right populist strain (Eatwell 2003; Hainsworth 2008; Mudde 2000, 2004, 2007), fuelled by critical views on immigration and a new type of nationalism, more prevalent in cities. As noted previously (chapter 2.4), the PS' economic policy is rather left-wing, as was the SMP's. I expect to find more right-wing candidates in cities. The fact that the PS' rural strongholds are the same that used to be SMP strongholds in the 1970s and 1980s seems to point in this direction. Many of the most prominent and visible anti-immigrant candidates have been in cities (Jussi Halla-aho, Juha Eerola), but there have been also rural ones (James Hirvisaari, Teuvo Hakkarainen).

Traditional studies on populism (e.g. Helander 1971; MacRae 1969; Minogue 1969; Wiles 1969) have argued that populism is a rural phenomenon, where periphery rebels against the centres of elites, and even that the nostalgic "heartland" (Taggart 2004, 274) which populism harks back to is the "sacred farm" (MacRae 1969, 155), representing a consensual peasant community, an "agrarian *gemeinschaft*" (ibid., 156). The PS' upsurge, also, seems to have been most prominent in rural areas. However, the European populist radical right phenomenon, which I expect the urban PS to be a part of, is not rural in nature, and it does not seem that the urban PS would be very agrarian-nostalgic at all. Rather, I expect its nostalgia to be directed towards a pre-immigration, pre-globalization, ethnically homogeneous Finnish nation-state.

I have drafted a hypothetical table of the features of rural and urban populism in the PS, presented below. This is, of course, a simplifying and rough draft. Not all urban PS candidates are expected to be right-wing, for example, but right-wing policy is expected to be more prevalent and salient among urban PS candidates. Rural and urban PS populism should be understood rather as ideal types, expected to be more prevalent in the geographically corresponding candidate group than the other.

Table 1. Features of hypothetical ideal types of rural and urban PS populism

	Rural	Urban
Economic policy	Left-wing	Right-wing
Immigration	Not especially salient	Salient
Type of populist ideology	Finnish rural anti-elitist populism (SMP) (Canovan 1999; Helander 1971; MacRae 1969; Minogue 1969; Taggart 2004; Wiles 1969)	European radical right populism (Eatwell 2003; Hainsworth 2008; Mudde 2000, 2004, 2007)
Typical mode of justification (Boltanski & Thévenot 2006)	Civic, domestic	Market, domestic
“Heartland” (Taggart 2004)	The “sacred farm” (MacRae 1969), pre-neoliberalist welfare state (March 2007)	Pre-immigration, pre-globalization, ethnically homogeneous Finnish nation-state

It has been argued that arguments based on efficiency and a consensual political style are typical of Finnish politics in general (Luhtakallio & Ylä-Anttila 2011, 44–45; Luhtakallio 2012, 13–16, 178–190), explained by the strong connection between the Finnish civil society and the state. These spheres were not opponents, but rather integral components in building the nation-state. Associations were integrated into the decision-making system, thus creating political habits of rationally “taking care of common issues” instead of groups fighting for their own interests, and these habits still show in the Finnish conception of citizenship.

Should it be expected, thus, that the PS represents an opposite of pacific and rationalistic Finnish political culture, because as a populist protest party, it is an opponent of consensus and stagnation of mainstream parties? In Finnish populism, protest would manifest as anti-consensual, antagonistic, emotional ways of doing politics with fierce debates constructing stark polarizations. In this case, PS candidates should be expected to avoid the industrial-world justifications typical of Finnish politics. I do expect PS candidates to use these tactics to present themselves as an alternative to stagnation, but also

that the consensual and deliberative practices are so deeply ingrained in Finnish politics that even Finnish populists often play by these rules. After all, no party is “exclusively populist” (Taggart 2004, 270). These notions, I expect, apply to both rural and urban PS candidates.

3.4 Data

At least two particular requirements can be pointed out for adequate data to be used as material for analysis on a populist party. First, it should be representative of what is actually the focus of our study, in this case, the arguments and justifications the party presented before the 2011 parliamentary elections. Official policy papers such as electoral manifestos only represent the official view of the party office, not necessarily the candidates’ or voters’ views. For example, the 2011 parliamentary elections manifesto of the Finns Party was 69 pages long and very broad and detailed (PS 2011). It would not be wise to assume that voter decisions were based on a thorough reading of that paper. A suitable dataset for studying the party’s electoral success must include discursive acts closer to the voter, such as candidates’ published views. Second, if it is to represent the “supply” side available to voters (see Eatwell 2003), it should be unmediated. Using media data includes several problems. While mainstream media is an important political arena, and media representations matter, they can be and are accused of bias. This is especially true of populist parties that often criticize the media for elitism and anti-populism. Thus, non-mediated data is more desirable for this study.

A dataset that fulfils the requirements set above can be found in the Helsingin Sanomat Voting Advice Application (HS VAA) data. HS is Finland’s largest daily newspaper. In the run-up to the parliamentary elections of 2011, as in every major election since 2000, included on their website was a VAA designed to facilitate voters’ decisions by a multiple-choice questionnaire of opinion on topical political issues. The candidates answer this questionnaire first and are also allowed to submit text comments attached to their answers. The voter then answers the same multiple-choice questionnaire and the VAA calculates a compatibility percentage with candidates, giving the voter a list of most and least suitable ones, and a possibility to view their comments on the different questions.

VAA's have become very popular among voters in Finland during the 2000s, and while they are increasingly used elsewhere as well, Finland has an exceptionally long history of VAA use (Mykkänen 2011, 17). For the HS 2011 parliamentary elections application, candidates' participation percentages ranged from 70% in the Pirkanmaa constituency to 88% in the Helsinki constituency.

The candidates' selections as well as comments were released online by HS just before the election as open data to be freely downloaded, available for use by journalists, researchers and ordinary citizens (HS 6 April 2011). Such initiatives are most welcome, and in the spirit of open-source software writing and open access publishing can produce new knowledge both in the developing field of data journalism and in the more established arena of the social sciences. This kind of data of political candidates is unique and was not previously available, and to my knowledge, is not available for any other country. Research on VAAs has so far focused on voters' and candidates' ways of using them, not the data produced by them (e.g. Haukio 2012; Jaakola 2012; Ruusuvirta 2012; Vähämaa 2012). Collecting similar data as a survey would have been expensive and participation percentages would likely have been significantly lower.

From the dataset, I picked the PS candidates' comments to form the main data for this study. 202 PS candidates participated in the VAA with written comments, out of 238 total PS candidates, making the response percentage of PS 2011 candidates 85%. Not all candidates wrote comments to all questions, and the amount of respondents is presented with the analysis of each question.

In spite of the data being public and freely downloadable by anyone, including the names of candidates, I decided to remove names from direct quotes to avoid excessive focus on individuals. After all, the purpose of this research is to study rural and urban PS candidates as groups along with discourses that are always formed by several people, and the analyses are based on patterns in the data, contributed by several candidates. The identities of individual candidates quoted would not add to the analysis. Additionally, some are not public figures in the sense that politicians are, and might even have retired from pursuing public positions after candidacy not resulting in election. In many

cases, the candidates are nevertheless identifiable, but this study does not make them any more so than the fact that the comments including names are already published online. In the case of the group of right-wing candidates around prominent immigration critic and parliamentarian Jussi Halla-aho, candidates are named, because due to the fact that this group of individuals differs significantly from the PS mainstream, identities are relevant for analysis.

The questionnaire comprises of 31 questions that deal with a wide range of topical issues in Finnish politics, covering taxation and redistribution of income, minority rights, immigration policy, nuclear power, NATO membership and cultural issues such as whether it is acceptable to sing Christian hymns in schools. Included as background information are the candidate's name, constituency, province, age, gender, education, occupation, and a personal introduction by the candidate. The full questionnaire is provided in Appendix 1.

Out of the 31 questions, I selected seven, dealing with three themes, to answer the research questions and hypotheses. The first theme, discussed via an analysis of two questions, will be economic redistribution and social justice, because the PS' left-leaning position on these issues has been a noted exception from other European contemporary populist parties, and also because according to my hypothesis, this is a theme where rural and urban candidates should differ. Secondly, addressed by two questions, I will analyse regional politics of respondents. This is another theme where I expect the rural/urban divide to show, and one where the SMP's legacy should be visible. Finally, because issues of globalization, including immigration and European integration, have been identified as central for the PS and other contemporary populist parties, I analyse three questions on immigration and the Euro crisis as material for my third analysis topic. The responses to the analysed questions constitute a dataset of roughly 30 000 words, or 200 double-spaced A4 sheets.

The nature of the VAA questionnaire poses some limitations for analysis, however. The questions are very specific and have been formulated so that the respondent can choose one of the pre-selected options and does not have to give a free-text comment at all.

Because of this, the candidates' responses are very short, often consisting of just one or a few sentences. This makes it difficult to conduct broad interpretive analyses, as would be typical of discourse analysis, for example. However, the data does lend itself rather well for content analysis with the coding scheme based on justifications theory, the method used here.

Because of the brevity of the responses, I organized the data so that the answers by all respondents to one question constituted one document for analysis, rather than the responses to all questions by one candidate. This made it easier to familiarize with the particular discourse relevant to each question, reading the answers by all respondents to a question, and to focus on the most salient issues. Thus, the data was processed into seven text files which contain the answers by all respondents to each question. Each text file then represents a topical Finnish political discourse. This way, the data is organized as larger coherent wholes than if analysis would have been conducted one candidate at a time.

I attached the respondents' background variables to each answer and analysed the texts in Atlas.TI, a software package for qualitative analysis, which facilitates coding passages of textual data into classes and making searches based on the coding.

After classifying arguments based on justification worlds and the framework on populism presented previously, I examine the rural/urban hypothesis by quantitative comparisons of found categorizations in rural and urban candidates. Presenting quantitative descriptions of qualitative categorizations can be methodologically problematic, because qualitative coding is an interpretive process by the researcher and the resulting classification is always, to some extent, subjective. Quantification should not be allowed to blur this, and the reader should keep in mind that the percentages presented to compare the urban and rural groups are based on an interpretation. However, they do provide another layer describing the analysis, and even lend credibility to the qualitative coding if expected differences between urban and rural candidates are found.

The dataset only contained a very coarse indication of the candidates' geographical location (constituency/province), insufficient for my needs. Luckily, however, the municipalities of residence for all candidates are made available online by the Ministry of Justice (2011). This information was added to the VAA dataset to make the rural vs. urban comparison possible.

The division was made according to the classification of Finnish municipalities into rural ones, densely populated ones and urban ones, by Statistics Finland (2011a), based on population density⁵. 65% of the PS respondents were from urban municipalities, 18% from densely populated ones and 17% from rural ones, according to this classification. I decided that to simplify the analysis, the "densely populated" class would be combined with the "rural" group, to create a simple dichotomic urban/rural division.

The "densely populated" category was combined with the "rural" group and not the "urban" one because it can only be described as "densely populated" in the Finnish context, in a very sparsely populated country in general. To qualify as "densely populated", a municipality only needs to have a population centre of 4 000 and 60% of the population living in "concentrations" of at least 200. Thus, this category includes mostly small towns that can hardly be called "urban" on any internationally understandable scale and thus fit much better to the rural category. The categories and the municipalities included can be viewed online (Statistics Finland 2011a).

⁵ The criteria used by Statistics Finland are the following: "Urban municipalities include those in which at least 90% of the population lives in population centres [*taajama*] or the largest population centre has a population of at least 15 000." "Densely populated municipalities include those in which at least 60% but less than 90% of the population lives in population centres and the largest population centre has a population of at least 4 000 but less than 15 000." "Rural municipalities include those in which less than 60% of the population lives in population centres and the largest population centre has a population of less than 15 000, and municipalities in which at least 60% but less than 90% lives in population centres and the largest population centre has a population of less than 4 000." (Statistics Finland 2010a.) *Population centres [taajama]*, in turn, are defined as "concentrations of population of at least 200, where the distance of residential buildings is 200 meters at most" (Statistics Finland 2008).

Also, this re-grouping results in a category of 71 (35%) rural respondents and a category of 131 (65%) urban respondents, a more balanced division with enough respondents in both categories. The amount of respondents and response rate for each question is presented as a table in Appendix 2, along with tables of gender, educational level and age distributions of rural and urban respondents. It should be noted here, with regards to the analysis section of this study that is about to begin, that the rural candidates have lower educational levels and they are older as urban ones, as is true for the rural and urban general populations (Statistics Finland 2010b, 2011b). This should hypothetically mean more conservative views. Also, the rural group is even more male-dominated than the urban one. The gender distribution (66% male, 34% female) of total participating candidates is very similar to the one of voters (67% male, 33% female) found by Suhonen (2011, 66).

4 Analysis I: Economic Redistribution and Social Justice

This first analysis chapter will discuss questions of income equality, economic redistribution and social justice by looking at Question 1 of the HS VAA on income equality and Question 4 on child benefits. A comparison of rural and urban candidates will follow each analysis, and the chapter will end with conclusions on the nature of the PS' left-wing populism. Issues of redistribution are, of course, among the most fundamental in politics, but were selected for analysis also because they have been argued to be fading out of everyday politics and making room for issues on cultural values and identity, especially for populist parties (Eatwell 2003, 52–56; Rydgren 2007, 246). As one of my main hypotheses, I expect this to be true of the urban part of PS, which I have hypothesized to correspond to literature on the contemporary populist radical right, but for the rural candidates, I expect to find rather left-wing opinions infused with a rebellion against the wealthy elites of cities and underlining the plight of the rural poor, influenced by the legacy of Finnish rural populism (SMP).

4.1 Question 1: Income Equality

Since the mid-1990's, income inequality has increased rapidly. How would you respond to this?

The PS candidates' responses to the first question, on income equality, were predominantly left-wing, justified by civic world arguments, and often by an anti-elitist and poverty-emphasizing populism. However, the candidates also often stressed preserving "societal peace" (*yhteiskuntarauha*), a justification combining civic and industrial worlds, in claiming that curbing inequality is not only good for the community but also an efficient way to ensure the functioning of the machinery of society. The following quote combines many of the common justifications found in the data in one response:

In our country, we have 900 000 people that are officially poor. Unofficially, even more. That's too much. The people is being divided at an accelerating rate to those living on benefits and the top achievers [*'huippumenestyjiin'*], retiring at 60 with golden handshakes and left to enjoy yearly pensions of hundreds of thousands of Euros. At the same time, demands are made to raise the general pension age. [...] All the while the media is flooded with sad examples from African countries, where the people have taken to the streets for their rights. Finland will stay unified and competitive only if we can stitch together the income inequality that is already concerningly dividing the people. (M, 49, Vimpeli, rural)⁶

This respondent combined, in his claim for economic equality, the following justifications: societal justice (civic); appealing to poverty (civic); anti-elitism (civic); the danger of societal unrest (civic/industrial); economic competitiveness (domestic/market); and a threat to the unity of the people (domestic). These were the six major justifications used by the candidates in the debate on income equality in my data. Here, all of them were found presented by the same respondent. All of them were also used independently and in different combinations by other respondents.

Table 2. Codebook and respondents for Question 1 on income equality (%)⁷

	Rural	Urban	Total
Social justice (civic)	60	35	44
Poverty	31	23	26
Anti-elitism	25	13	17
Societal peace (civic, industrial)	21	18	19
Unity of the people (domestic)	10	9	10
Economic competitiveness (domestic, market)	4	10	8
(n)	(48)	(99)	(147)

⁶ Translating the candidates' responses was not always straightforward, as they contained concepts specific to Finnish politics, colloquialisms, grammatical errors and typing errors. I have attempted to retain the style of comments in the translations.

⁷ Because I did not code all respondents into any of the identified categories, and on the other hand, coded others into several, the sum of percentages may be more or less than 100%. This is also true of subcategories: the sum of percentages of subcategories may differ from the percentage of the main category.

First of all, the argument for income equality was most commonly justified by referring to social justice. These candidates had the view that fairly equal incomes were in some sense socially “right”, and growing income cleavages were socially “wrong”. The argument was based on the civic order of worth, where justification is drawn from the good of the community.

Increasing income inequality is unjust. Taxation must be used to level the differences, not to pile up wealth [*”eroja on tasattava, ei kasattava”*]. (M, 55, Siilinjärvi, rural)

I found such appeals to social justice in almost all responses that were for increased economic redistribution. From this category, I separated arguments that justified income equality by reference to poverty and arguments that justified it by reference to the unjust wealth of elites. I interpreted these as populist justifications, invoking the civic order of worth; but in a more populist mode of justification than the general social justice arguments, because they referenced caricatures of the extremes of the income scale, either the poor or the rich.

Appealing to poverty was the more common of these. This was typically an emotional and provocative justification, an appeal to “the struggle of the underclass”:

The objective must be that those living on minimum income can get out of misery up to an income level where they wouldn’t have to constantly ponder whether to take their medicine or eat. (M, 32, Helsinki, urban)

The differences in income between the highest earners and the poorest, the “true underclass” [*”suoranaisen kurjaliston”*], are huge. [...] Income differences invoke despair and pessimism in the poorest part of the people. [...] the poor cannot afford anything but the most necessary of necessities. (F, 35, Veteli, rural)

Some have money up to their necks [*”rahaa kuin roskaa”*] while others struggle from week to week in food handout queues. (M, 27, Kurikka, rural)

These comments appeal to moral emotions and conjure images of a poor, struggling underclass, which is pictured as the polar opposite to a rich elite. Usually, these both ends of the socio-economic spectrum were mentioned to emphasize the contrast. However, I coded “poverty” and “anti-elitism” separately, because some respondents emphasized one and some the other, or used only one of these arguments. This was also evi-

dent in coding later questions. The two arguments were often combined, but not always. I interpreted both as representing left-wing populism, because they emphasize extreme ends of the income scale and use simplified characterizations (such as “top achievers with golden handshakes” or “those living on benefits”) to construct the populist “elite vs. the people” narrative.

The EU was also mentioned with reference to poverty and the “struggle of the underclass”. It was depicted as the oppressor elite behind this injustice, so I interpreted it as a type of anti-elitism.

The Finnish welfare state has collapsed and people are being humiliated in EU food handout queues and the benefits office. (M, 58, Rovaniemi, urban)

Before the EU, income cleavages were small in Finland. The direction has been opposite since then. This development of the poor getting poorer must be stopped. As a result of the EU we have had new poverty that didn't exist before. (M, 44, Nousiainen, rural)

The anti-elitist respondents justified their income equality stance through a negation. The most pressing issue in these justifications was not necessarily poverty as is, or even societal injustice, but disproportionate wealth, acquired unjustly – the rich are unjustly rich and must be taxed more heavily or their incomes should be capped. These respondents often used colourful language in describing the elites.

Over-bloated pensions are to be banned, also golden handshakes and options. (M, 67, Kankaanpää, rural)

The ruptures of income and living standard cleavages must be stopped and the development turned towards reducing inequality, starting from (because of the moral example) those greedy executives of big business, who hoard corrupt bonuses and gigantic pensions through their good ol' boy networks, giving up their plunder of injustice [*”suuryhtiöiden abneet ökybonuksia ja jäättiläkkeitä hyvä-veli-verkon avulla kahmivat johtajat joutuvat tinkimään epäoikeudenmukaisista saaliistaan”*]. (M, 69, Kerava, urban)

The phrase “societal peace” was explicitly mentioned by many, and implied, by reference to increasing crime, unrest and other social problems, by even more. This created the fourth category of justifications I coded in response to this question. Many even mentioned preventing social unrest as the primary justification and did not mention so-

cial justice at all. Most, however, saw the issue as one of social justice, but also having practical calculable consequences with regards to the functioning of society, in which case I interpreted the justification as one where the civic world and industrial world are used in compromise.

If the current growth of income inequality continues, societal peace will crumble in the long run. (M, 57, Espoo, urban)

For societal peace and justice this must be reacted to by e.g. taxation. (F, 63, Vantaa, urban)

The notable increase in income inequality creates a base for societal unrest, crime and growing social problems. Curbing income inequality is the best pre-emptive social policy. (M, 37, Pyhtää, rural)

This is noteworthy because such justifications are evident also in other questions: dealing with the issue as one of social justice is avoided by relating to it as a rational issue that can be evaluated by its expected positive or negative effects, its worth measured in industrial terms. These respondents saw the issue as one of choosing the rationally best option that will lead to “unity of the people” and “stability of the society”. These are, of course, moral values also, but the choice is made with reference to considerations of effects instead of arguments on “what is right for the community”.

One interpretation is that this is a typical justification in Finnish politics, where justifications based on the industrial order of worth are the norm (Luhtakallio & Ylä-Anttila 2011, 44–45). Another one is that because many PS candidates are relatively inexperienced politicians, industrial justifications are seen by them as more convincing on political arenas than “gut-feeling” arguments.

National economic competitiveness, on the other hand, is an example of a justification in which the market world and the domestic world of justification are combined in compromise (Luhtakallio & Ylä-Anttila 2011, 42). I included it in the fifth justification category for this question and interpreted it as a nationalist variant of market liberalism. It was, perhaps unexpectedly, used as justification for both increasing and decreasing economic redistribution, exemplified by these two quotes:

The current large differences in incomes eats competitiveness, and can even threaten societal peace in the long run. (M, 61, Karkkila, rural)

Finland can prosper only through work. Earnings of those who work must consequently rise, in relation to people living on social benefit. (M, 41, Helsinki, urban)

The other variant of justifications coded in this category, in addition to those emphasizing Finland's national competitiveness, was that of economic competition on an individual level. This argument held that income differences are good, because they spur competition and reward achievers. This is a typical market-world justification. It must be noted that it is not necessarily an egoistic one, where only those who succeed would matter, but competition was seen as leading to better things for all, a common good in itself, a measure of worth. I interpreted these justifications based on competitiveness, either as a nation or individuals, as right-wing economic liberalism.

I don't see differences in incomes as a signal of injustice as such. The problem is not that some earn plenty, but that in lower income classes working doesn't pay off because of taxation and because of free income redistribution funded by taxes. Working should always and in all circumstances be profitable. I believe it is good that a person can get wealthy by honest work, at least in theory. This should not be prevented by unduly hard taxation. (M, 39, Helsinki, urban)

People make a big fuss about growing income cleavages for no reason. What's relevant is taking care that there's no poverty, be the highest income class as high as it may. (M, 33, Espoo, urban)

Having only small differences in income are no value in itself. More important is how those who earn least get along on an absolute scale. An ideal society offers equal opportunities for everyone. From there on, success in society is up to the individual. (M, 30, Helsinki, urban)

It was notable how wide-ranging the opinions of income distribution were on a left-right scale. It has been noted before that the PS seems to be predominantly a left-wing party with regards to its economic policy, but also that the range of opinions is wider than in traditional, mainstream parties (see e.g. Grönlund & Westinen 2012, 171; Borg 2012c, 198–199). This was also clearly visible in my analysis.

The sixth and final justification in the income equality question was that of inequality as a threat to the unity of the Finnish people. I interpreted this as a traditional nationalist

argument, one that could perhaps be interpreted as left-wing economic policy, because of its emphasis on economic equality, but on the other hand as right-wing because of its nationalism. This serves as an example of the problems of interpreting the candidates' political positioning on such simplistic scales as "left–right". In terms of justification worlds, this argument can be interpreted as a domestic world justification, but if nationalism is invoked in exclusionary and chauvinistic terms, interpretation is more complex, which is why I will return to nationalist justification later.

Social justice strengthens the nation unit [*Sosiaalinen oikeudenmukaisuus rakentaa kansakokonaisuutta*']. I am not in favor of development towards a flat income tax rate, which makes the rich richer but the poor poorer. Narrowing income gaps is also in the interest of the wealthy in the long run. Society exists to facilitate a life of dignity for everyone. (M, 40, Nurmijärvi, urban)

All in all, the respondents were mostly in favour of economic redistribution and using taxation to level income cleavages, justified by reference to civic worth. Some defended this position by simply referring to "social justice", while many combined this with industrial-world arguments on equality leading to a better functioning of the mechanisms of society. The more populist strain emphasized either the distress of the poor or the injustice that the elite are "filthy rich". However, I also identified a notable right-wing economic liberalist strain, appealing to the market world. These candidates felt that income differences are necessary to boost competition, increase incentives to work and make Finland as a nation competitive on global markets. Related to this was the thesis put forward by some that equal income dispersion strengthens the nation, which of course leads to the opposite policies, even though the justification is similar.

Moving on to comparing the rural and urban candidates, the anti-elitism described above figured more prominently in the rural group and was found in 25% of the rural respondents of this question but only 12% of urban respondents. With the poverty argument, the difference was not as clear-cut, but still there: the justification was used by 31% of rural respondents and 23% of urban ones. Arguments interpreted as populist seem thus to be more common among rural respondents.

Reading the rural and urban responses that I identified as anti-elitist side by side, it was evident that both made references to social justice. The existence of the high-earning elite was seen as unjust and unfair. These references to justice did not differ between the rural and urban groups. Some of the respondents presented more rationalizing and calculative formulations of this argument: the consequences of growing elites were emphasized, for example with reference to the growing bitterness of the people leading to societal unrest, or large relative income gaps leading to poor educational achievement for the less well off:

In Finland, income inequality has grown fastest out of all OECD countries, which describes the current state of Finnish politics [*nykyistä politiikan tahtotilaa*], everything for the rich, little or nothing for the less well off, entrepreneurs and the poor. Income gaps are not in anyone's interest, it increases the feeling of inequality, decreases consumption, and in the long run increases criminality and insecurity. Curbing income inequality lessens costs arising from marginalization and detrimental factors affecting lives such as mental well-being [sic, *ihmisen elämään haitallisesti vaikuttavia tekijöitä kuten henkistä hyvinvointia*"]. (M, 44, Vantaa, urban)

Here, justification theory helps to differentiate these claims from simple left-wing social justice arguments. While typical social justice arguments employ only civic justifications, these “rationalizing” arguments made a compromise between the civic and the industrial worlds. My hypothetical model led me to expect that I would find more such calculative conceptions of justice in the urban set. Such a difference could, however, not be discerned from the data.

With regards to my hypotheses, the results so far are inconclusive. On the one hand, the anti-elitist component of populism was found, as expected, more among the rural candidates. On the other hand, however, there was no difference in rationalizing of arguments, as one would expect.

What was most striking, however, was that all of the 12 identified right-wing liberal responses in the income equality question, invoking the market world, were by male candidates, and 10 of the 12 were urban. One of the most visible anti-immigration politicians in the party, Jussi Halla-aho, was one of them. It is sometimes argued that Halla-aho is the frontman of a right-wing, mostly urban, mostly male populist radical right

“bloc” in the party (e.g. SK 18.4.2011), which corresponds to my hypothesis of the difference between the rural and urban PS. This analysis seems to preliminarily confirm that estimate. The argumentation of this group seems to differ from the mainline PS. It is not the whole truth about the urban PS, however, neither according to my analytical model nor this preliminary result.

A vast majority of both rural and urban PS candidates expressed left-wing opinions, but the rural ones notably more often with populist justifications such as anti-elitism and appealing to poverty. The occurrences of right-wing opinions, advocating economic freedom, competition and individual responsibility, rather than taxation, redistribution and a strong welfare state, were put forward by the aforementioned urban male candidates. This supports my hypothetical model of left-wing populism being more typical for the rural PS and a modern (radical) right-wing populism for the urban, but with a crucial correction: the radical right populists seem to be a minority even within the urban PS.

4.2 Question 4: Child Benefit

Question 4, on child benefits, raised a similar discussion among the PS respondents than Question 1, on income equality, and a lively one at that. The discussion focused on economic redistribution and socio-economic strata, a classical left–right setting.

Child benefit is paid for each child living in Finland up to the age of 17 regardless of the parents’ income. What should be done with child benefits?

Table 3. Codebook and respondents for Question 4 on child benefits (%)

	Rural	Urban	Total
Anti-elitism	50	28	36
Poverty (civic)	40	23	29
Welfare state (civic)	19	29	26
Fertility for nationalism (domestic)	10	4	6
Right-wing liberalism (market)		5	4
(n)	(48)	(92)	(140)

I coded responses into five categories. The first category, the most frequent type of argument, was put forward by those who advocated significantly cutting or abolishing child benefits for the rich in an anti-elitist argument typical of left-wing populism. The argument can be summarized as “the rich already have too much”.

Child benefits are for living expenses during childhood, not for investment capital. (M, 68, Kärämäki, rural)

For the child's advantage the money has to be used for growth and development. Child benefits from the filthy rich [”*ökyrikkailta*”] to preventing of child poverty. (F, Ähtäri, rural)

Child benefit for high earners can be removed, because they have enough wealth for the upbringing of their children. (M, 56, Joensuu, urban)

I separated these justifications, emphasizing that the rich are getting too much, from the second category, which consists of those who stated that the poor and needy are getting too little, similarly to the analysis of Question 1, discussed previously. Both represent a typical left-wing populist argument. I coded them separately because some emphasized the anti-elitist argument that the rich are getting too rich, whereas some emphasized the plight of the poor. Many combined these, in which case I coded the quotations in both categories.

Many of the comments that I coded into the second category, those who appealed to poverty, opposed the practice that child benefit is treated as income when needs-testing for another state benefit, basic income support. In these cases, receiving child benefit can have a negative impact on basic income support. This practice was seen by the candidates as deeply unjust and contributing to the distress of the poorest. The following are examples of the “poverty” justification:

Child benefit for a poor person's child is used for clothes, shoes and general living expenses. Child benefit for a rich person's child can be saved to gain interest and wait for a time when the child needs money for education, for example. This is exactly how riches are transferred from generation to generation. Poor children have to take out loans for their studies and start their post-graduation lives already imprisoned by debt [”*velkavankueudessa*”] and often also unemployed. NOT RIGHT! (F, 60, Orimattila, rural)

This is exactly one of the issues where it's measured if Finland is a welfare state or not...should children suffer of lack in single-parent and unemployed families? Humanity is required of decision-makers. (F, 63, Lappeenranta, urban)

Whereas such arguments emphasizing social justice would typically be interpreted as civic justification, in some cases, especially in anti-elitist arguments, the left-wing populist justifications transcended the civic order of worth in excluding the elites from their conception of common good. The right to child benefits was to be denied from the elite, so the “pure people” of populism could continue to enjoy it, as was right and just. Here, the elite were excluded from the people, and functioned as its constitutive outside (Laclau 2005a). Thus, in this argument, the step was made out of the grammar of public justification where worth is measured publicly, into a world of conflicting interests that could not be evaluated by reference to a common measure of worth. The limits of justification will be further discussed later.

The third category, in contrast, consisted of left-wing but not populist arguments. These invoked the civic world of justification. There were some who argued that child benefits are for everyone, a universal benefit to be provided by society in the same amount to all families with children. This is a typical pro-welfare-state argument, consistent with the Nordic social-democratic model of universal instead of needs-tested benefits. On the other hand, some believed that there should be an income progression to child benefits, so that they would be larger for the poor, and smaller for those who earn more, to curb income inequality and strengthen economic redistribution. Both were, however, interpreted as representing a left-wing social democratic non-populist stance, with a minor difference in whether benefits should be paid universally in the same amount or progressively according to income. I coded them in the same category because both stances had the same civic justification of social welfare and levelling of socioeconomic cleavages. The conception of “the people” in these arguments was inclusive rather than exclusive, in contrast to the previously discussed anti-elitist arguments.

In some cases it was a matter of interpretation whether a comment should be coded into one of the first two categories of left-populist arguments or the third category of more moderate social-democratic style arguments emphasizing income equality. I interpreted

justifications as populist when they referenced either the distress of the poor or the riches of the wealthy specifically, and as social-democratic when they suggested the need for income equality without making specific reference to these characteristic extremes of wealth distribution. Some of these candidates also argued that it would be wrong to deny high earners of child benefit because they have contributed to it via taxation. This was an argument that firmly planted a response in the social-democratic non-populist category, arguing by reference to civic worth, because it differed dramatically from populist anti-elitists, who sought exclusion of the elites from the people. The following are examples of social-democratic civic justifications:

Child benefit is for the child. It is a benefit that must not be cut. Cuts for high earners are ethically wrong in my opinion. After all, they contribute to the running of this system by tax revenue. [...] What is a high income anyway? 5000e? They already pay most of everything. Kindergarten fees in full, for example. (F, 43, Espoo, urban)

Child benefit is a permanent value and is not measured in envy [*”Lapsilisä on pysyvä arvo, eikä sitä mitata katendella”*]. (M, 57, Pudasjärvi, rural)

The fourth category in the child benefit discussion was one of nationalism. These respondents argued that child benefits should exist to boost Finnish fertility. I interpreted this as an argument of classical nationalism, equating the nation with its capacity for reproduction, based on domestic justification.

Child benefit is a reward for rearing children, given to every mother. [...] Finland Needs Finns (M, 67, Loppi, rural)

Child benefit is a societal comment for children, domestic production, that is. (M, 37, Pyhtää, rural)

Finland needs children, children need child benefit. (M, 61, Kittilä, rural)

The fifth and final category found in the child benefit discussion was one of anti-redistribution. This included those who were against focusing benefits for those who need them financially because that would reduce their propensity for work, and those who were against child benefits in general for the same reason. This is a classical right-

wing liberalist argument emphasizing individuals' responsibility for their own livelihood, based on the market order of worth.

If child benefits were to be progressive according to parents' income, an increased salary would not mean an increase in real income, because child benefit would accordingly decrease. This would lead to a welfare trap, where additional work would not be rewarded. (M, 39, Helsinki, rural)

The general picture painted by a thorough reading of PS candidates' views on child benefits was one of strong support for the welfare state and economic redistribution. While some infused nationalistic elements for Finnish fertility in their comments, child benefit was mostly seen as a welfare tool to alleviate economic inequality. The justifications for this position, however, differed. While many candidates presented fairly moderate arguments for societal justice via income-progressive or universal benefits, even larger were the groups where this position was justified by a strong disapproval of the "filthy rich" or pleas to consider the distress of the poor, "suffering children" that needed "clothes and shoes". In these arguments, the good of the elites could not be combined with the good of the people, which the candidates claimed to represent. These are typical populist justifications, constructing the people by excluding the elite, and indicate strong grounds to view these PS candidates as left-wing populists. This is a type of populism advocated already by the SMP in the 1970s with their eyes on the rural poor suffering from the consequences of economic and industrial modernization and urbanization. However, I also found right-wing liberalist justifications in support for cutting child benefit to increase incentives for paid work, based on the market order, though in much lesser numbers.

I then applied the division to rural and urban candidates to the analysis. Firstly, anti-elitism ("child benefits for the rich should be cut") was revealed to be more prevalent in the rural group than the urban one. I classified 47% of rural respondents to this question as anti-elitist left-populist, whereas the percentage for urban respondents was 28%. This was also found in the second left-wing populist category, that of appealing to the plight of the poor. This argument was used by 37% of rural respondents and 23% of urban ones. This corroborates my hypothesis that a left-wing type of populism is more typical

of the rural wing of the PS than the urban one, which would, again, be more of a right-wing nature.

However, with the third category, that of supporting child benefit by non-populist, civic world arguments favoring income redistribution typical of social democracy, this balance is shifted. I coded 29% of urban respondents to this category, and 18% of the rural ones. This would suggest that a redistributive, moderate, social democratic left-wing position, rather than right-wing economic liberalism, is rather typical of urban respondents to this question.

The fourth category of argument, supporting child benefits in a nationalistic bid to boost Finnish fertility, was fairly rare, and fairly evenly distributed among the rural/urban divide.

The fifth one, consisting of market-world right-wing arguments about redistribution decreasing incentives to work, was rare as well, found in only five responses. However, it is noteworthy that all five were urban candidates, and four of them were men in their 30s. Three of them were the same three that had similar right-wing liberalist justifications in the previously analysed question regarding income inequality.

In these discussions, regarding economic equality and redistribution, these candidates form a team of urban right-wing economic liberals. They have also been rather visible in the media, giving a face to this group of PS politicians; representing precisely the type of PS argumentation I have hypothesized to be typical of the urban PS. However, they form a very small faction of PS candidates in my data. Even in the urban group, they are a very small minority. It cannot be said that the urban candidates would be very right-wing as a group. On the contrary, they carry mostly left-wing opinions in these questions of economic redistribution, just like rural candidates. The difference is that the rural group relies more on simplified characters of “the rich” and “the poor”, appealing emotionally, and even excluding the rich from the people to which common worth is applicable. The urban candidates in my data seem to be more mainstream and more moderate, basing their argumentation on the civic world of public justification. To some

extent, this might be explained by the lower educational levels of the rural candidates. The rural candidates may be less politically experienced, as well. All in all, in the income equality and the child benefit question, both rural and urban candidates seem to be strongly for the welfare state, but the rural ones argue for it in a more populist fashion. A right-wing “bloc” was pinpointed in the urban data. However, this “bloc” was isolated, and the mainstream of the urban candidates was far from right-wing.

March (2007, 67) argues that for contemporary European left-populists, the mythical “heartland” their nostalgic ideology harks back to is a pre-neoliberalist welfare state of roughly 20 years ago. This seems to be an accurate description of PS candidates in both rural and urban areas, constituting the majority of respondents. They point to increasing income inequality and poverty, which is blamed on the EU and financial elites, and want to reverse this development. This type of populist argument is even more typical of rural than urban PS candidates. In the cities, there is a right-wing bloc, but it constitutes only a minority of the urban PS. Both rural and urban candidates mostly see growing income inequality as a threat. Fears of the collapse of the welfare state under economic pressure signal a strong commitment to social welfare ideals.

5 Analysis II: Regionalism

Regional politics should be one of the key areas for analysis, given a hypothesis of an urban/rural divide within the PS. If my hypothesis of the rural PS being more attached to their SMP rural populist roots than the urban PS holds, they should be expected to favour strong regional policy and municipal democracy, opposed to a state-centric system potentially controlled by the urban elite. Urban parts of the party, however, are not expected to put much stress on this. Grönlund & Westinen's survey research (2012, 174) found that PS voters emphasized regional politics less than all the other parties, except for the Greens, which runs contrary to my hypothesis, but with some doubt about the reliability of their indicator. My results indicate that for the candidates, regional politics is an issue of major salience.

Questions 27–30 of the questionnaire discussed regional and municipal politics, and out of them, I selected questions 28 and 30 for analysis, dealing with the structure of the municipal administration system in Finland and distributing tax revenues across municipalities. Rural and urban candidates will again be compared at the end of analysis of each question.

5.1 Question 28: Consolidating Municipal Administrations

The amount of municipalities has been reduced by consolidation to 336. The aim is efficiency in administration, as many small municipalities are struggling to cope with producing the legally required services. What would be the right amount of municipalities?

The background for the first question selected for analysing regional politics is government policy that attempts to reduce the amount of municipal administrations for efficiency reasons. This is to be done by mergers (*kuntaliitokset*) of existing municipalities. Municipal administrations have to provide certain services to their population, such as health care, emergency services and police, legally required by the state. To fund these services, municipalities raise municipal tax, but also receive state subsidies. Providing these services in sparsely populated municipalities is expensive, which is why the state has taken up a policy strongly advocating the consolidation of peripheral municipalities,

for purposes of efficiency through larger administrative units. In some cases, the state can force the municipalities to merge, even if the local administration disagrees.

The overwhelming majority of respondents were strongly opposed to “forced” consolidations (*pakkoliitokset*) of municipalities by the state, and this was the most common theme discussed in responses, even though the question was not explicitly about state involvement. However, some respondents did voice explicit support for the state actively reducing the amount of municipalities. Since the respondents were so clearly divided between two positions, and both sides used similar justifications, I coded the responses to this question first to those opposed to and those defending state-led consolidation and present justifications separately for these two sides.

Table 4. Codebook and respondents for Question 28 on municipal administrations (%)

	Rural	Urban	Total
Opposed to state-led consolidation	80	68	73
Regional democracy and services (civic)	20	32	27
Economic efficiency (industrial)	18	22	20
Anti-elitism	8	7	8
Local way of life (domestic)	4		2
For state-led consolidation	14	12	13
Regional democracy and services (civic)			
Economic efficiency (industrial)	6	3	4
Anti-elitism			
Local way of life (domestic)		3	2
(n)	(49)	(69)	(118)

The most commonly used justification by respondents opposed to state-led consolidation of municipalities was a civic-world regionalist argument demanding regional democracy, independence and local services.

The decision making power must be kept with the inhabitants of the region. The current system must be demolished. Funding for legally required services must come from the state treasury instead of municipal tax. Who creates the law must pay for it. This would mean equal treatment for the whole population. (F, 53, Helsinki, urban)

The amount of municipal administrations is not an end in itself, instead how they manage economically and socially, produce local welfare for their residence and further democracy. (M, 44, Vantaa, urban)

Industrial world justifications were the second most common, and were notably used both for and against consolidations. Those who were opposed to state-led mergers argued that they do not actually lead to the savings the defenders of the practice based their argument on. Examples of both follow.

I have heard a saying "by cutting overlap we free people for productive work". Until this day I have not seen what overlap has been cut and how people have been freed for productive work. I don't believe in these fairytales [*"En usko tällaisiin satuihin"*]. Forced consolidations MUST NOT BE DONE! If municipal administrations merge voluntarily, that's their business, but not by forcing consolidations. (M, 49, Vimpeli, rural)

It is clear that administrative costs are reduced by enlarging units. This means larger municipalities, optimum roughly 30 000 – 50 000 inhabitants. (M, 65, Pieksämäki, rural)

The third category of justification was that of anti-elitism. These respondents saw that consolidations only benefited elites. Specifically, it was often mentioned that public servants employed by municipalities enjoy a five-year notice, which means that they cannot be laid off in five years despite possible redundancies due to municipalities merging. This anti-elitist argument was often combined with an industrial justification. The five-year notice was blamed for consolidations not leading to savings.

The amount of municipalities should not be cut because bureaucracy employees cannot be cut due to mergers. Has the purpose of municipality administration consolidation been to secure jobs for public servants for five years at a time. (M, 54, Utajärvi, rural)

A fourth and final justification I found in the data was one of protecting local values and customs of a municipality. It emphasized that municipalities are not just administrative regions, but homes to their inhabitants, with local cultures. This is a typical domestic argument, denouncing industrial worth from the realm of local tradition.

The way of life and values of residents must also be taken into account, a municipality is not a production unit, but a home [*”kunta ei ole tuotantoyksikkö, vaan koti”*]. Everything cannot be measured in money. (M, 37, Pyhtää, rural)

This justification was used by only two rural candidates opposing consolidations, but notably also two urban candidates defending them. Those candidates mentioned local cultures as something that must be taken into account in consolidations to preserve them, even though consolidations were necessary on economic grounds.

In merging municipalities, however, we must take into account the municipalities' own traditions, however, such as names etc. The significance of traditions must not be underestimated in consolidations. (M, 41, Helsinki, urban)

What is most noteworthy here, however, is the strong dominance of civic and industrial arguments over domestic ones. This is in contrast to the domestic nationalist responses of candidates for questions of globalization, analysed in what follows. Whereas nationalism was justified – as we will see in analysing the next theme – with tradition; regionalism was instead justified with efficiency. Even those who opposed municipal consolidations on grounds of regional independence very often did so with industrial world arguments appealing to efficiency, the same ones typically used by those who defended them, stating that savings cannot really be achieved by merging municipalities. In other words, the opponents of mergers accepted the logic of efficiency as the basis of measuring worth, but argued that the measuring had not been conducted properly. Also, with regards to Grönlund & Westinen's (2012, 174) results of regional politics having little relevance for PS voters, the discrepancy with my findings of the PS candidates' strong opposition of consolidating municipalities needs to be noted. This opposition was justified based on regional independence, local democracy and the upkeep of local services even in peripheral areas. I found 73% of respondents to this question to be opposed to the state merging municipalities. Perhaps there is a division between the urban and rural candidates in this issue? This will be discussed next.

I coded 80% of rural respondents and 68% of urban respondents as opposing state-led municipal consolidation, and 14% of rural and 12% of urban respondents in favour of it. This does not seem like a significant difference between the two groups. Neither can

one be seen in justifications for these positions. The noteworthy difference seems to be that 32% of urban candidates presented civic-world justifications of regional independence, democracy and services, compared to just 20% of rural ones. This seems peculiar, perhaps, but it might be simply because many rural candidates presented no justifications *at all*, merely stating “no to forced consolidation”. This, of course, reveals the limitations of the data, with many responses being rather short and blunt.

No to forced consolidation!!! (F, 47, Mäntsälä, rural)

No to forced consolidation! (M, 59, Nousiainen, rural)

No forced consolidations! (F, 63, Äänekoski, rural)

To conclude, there seems to be strong support for regionalism and significant opposition to the state being active in merging municipalities, on the grounds of local independence, democracy and services, both among rural and urban PS candidates. This might be explained by conservatism and traditionalism, wanting to uphold traditions and cultures not only on the national level but the regional as well. However, specific mention of local values, customs and cultures was surprisingly rare. Instead, arguments were also often justified by referring to the industrial order of worth, arguing that claimed savings cannot actually be achieved via mergers, something typical of Finnish politics (e.g. Luhtakallio 2012, 13–16, 178–190), and something that seems to be typical of Finnish populism as well.

5.2 Question 30: Regional Levelling of Tax Revenue

Question 30 was about the state redistributing tax revenues to less wealthy regions. I expected the rural/urban divide to be very visible in answers to this question.

The state redistributes tax revenue so that money is distributed from the wealthy municipalities to the less well-off ones. This system guarantees a tax revenue level for every municipality that equals 91.86% of the average tax revenue of Finnish municipalities. The biggest net payers are Helsinki and Espoo, which pay roughly 500 million of their municipality tax revenue to be transferred to less well-off municipalities. How would you respond to this?

The low response rate to this question likely has to do with its lengthy and complicated formulation, and the fact that it was the second-to-last question in the rather long questionnaire.

Table 5. Codebook and respondents for Question 30 on municipal tax redistribution (%)

	Rural	Urban	Total
Pro-periphery	74	52	60
Anti-Helsinki (anti-elitism)	44	20	28
Rural values (domestic, inspiration)	6	2	3
Efficiency (industrial)	6		2
Pro-Helsinki		16	11
Anti-rural (market)		10	6
"No antagonism"		7	4
(n)	(34)	(61)	(95)

I coded the responses into three main categories: Those who were for redistribution of tax revenue from wealthy urban municipalities to poorer rural ones (pro-periphery), those who were against this system (pro-Helsinki) and those who emphasized unity and avoidance of any rural vs. urban antagonism on the matter.

I further differentiated from the pro-periphery respondents three particular justifications for this argument. First, there were those who stressed the unjust accumulation of wealth and population in the Helsinki region in an anti-elitist argument typical of rural populism. Second, some emphasized “rural values” such as peace “away from the hurry and noise of cities”, in an argument that I interpreted as infusing domestic and inspired orders of worth. After all, the “peace of the countryside” was considered by these candidates as an external source of worth that cannot be attained by any other means. It could, also, be interpreted as engaging with a familiar commonplace which escapes public justification – I will come back to this. Finally, a group of candidates underlined efficiency in an industrial-world justification.

Out of the pro-Helsinki category, against municipal tax redistribution, I differentiated specifically anti-rural responses, those who blamed the rural municipalities for their own poverty, a market justification.

To describe these categories, firstly, some of the respondents that I coded in the pro-periphery category were not coded into any of the specific subclasses, but instead left in the general category. These respondents generally based their argument on a civic-world moral justification of fairness. It was seen as right for the more wealthy municipalities to pay “their share” for the less affluent ones. Also, many candidates cited a wish to “keep the whole of Finland inhabited”, fighting fears of deserted countryside villages with no population or services left after people have moved to the cities.

The only possibility for poor municipalities to produce all of the services required by law is the system of redistributing tax revenues. [...] Factors contributing to the bad situation of municipalities include the age structure of the population, economic structure and distances, not bad economic choices. A living countryside is also for the benefit of whole Finland. (F, 63, Äänekoski, rural)

TAKING CARE OF REGIONAL POLITICS HAS BEEN VERY SLACK. CONCENTRATIONS OF POPULATION HAVE BEEN ALLOWED ESPECIALLY IN THE CAPITAL REGION. SO REGIONAL INCOME STRUCTURE DISTORTIONS HAVE HAD TO BE LEVELED. (M, 36, Nokia, urban)

A subcategory of the moral defence of the redistribution system was an anti-elitist one, underlining the injustice of the accumulation of wealth in the capital region of the country.

The capital region is a concentration that benefits from the whole of Finland. Thus tax revenue must be redirected from there to areas out of which the capital region has sucked the blood out of, so to speak. (M, 44, Turku, urban)

The municipalities of the capital region get so much indirect “location benefits” due to their status from different sources and different functions, which due to the nature of the matter stack up here, that they can afford a system like the one we have now. (M, 69, Kerava, urban)

There were also a few industrial justifications stressing that it is efficient to level the development of municipalities country-wide by this sort of redistribution. Also, some respondents cited values of the countryside as a reason to keep it lively.

The countryside needs to be kept inhabited at any means necessary. A human being has to have a place to go to relax and cool off in peace [*”päästä rauhoittumaan”*], away from the hurry and noise of the cities [*”pois kaupunkien kiireeltä ja melulta”*]. (M, 62, Polvijärvi, rural)

Arguments defending the Helsinki region, in contrast, were more straightforward, with less variance in justifications. They were mostly made by candidates from the Helsinki region who simply saw no fair reason for giving up Helsinki taxpayers’ money to fund poorer rural regions.

There are many problems in Espoo as well, for example, that should be tackled. I don’t see any sense in the biggest cities having to function as the biggest payers, when funding isn’t sufficient even for their own needs. (F, 32, Espoo, urban)

However, some did use quite strong wordings in their opposition to rural municipalities receiving these tax redistribution payments, typically stating that the system should function according to the rules of the market. Examples of passages I interpreted as an anti-rural attitude included:

500 million or a thousand euros per Helsinki resident is a tough price to pay for a reindeer herder from Ranua being able to go to the pub on public transport [*”kova hinta maksettavaksi siitä, että ranualainen poromies voi käydä baarissa julkisilla kulkuneuvoilla”*]. Finland was transformed after the wars from an agrarian society into an industrial one, and gradually from an industrial society into a postmodern society with open offices and a service economy [*”postmoderniksi avokonttori- ja palvelulinkeinoyhteiskunnaks?”*]. We must not fight the inevitable historical development by keeping the most uninhabitable regions inhabited by force. (M, 30, Helsinki, urban)

The levelling system is unjust especially for the capital region. Helsinki takes in the most immigrants and because of the levelling system hundreds of millions are poured to other municipalities. The levelling system should be fixed to be fairer and municipalities in trouble should be encouraged to be self-sufficient. Municipalities in constant decline should be supported by other means. (M, 24, Tampere, urban)

These responses run counter to a traditional interpretation of populism as a protest of rural periphery against elitist centres (e.g. MacRae 1969), and to the left-wing populist mainstream of the party. These respondents saw the concentration of wealth into urban centres in the south of Finland as natural and just. Worth was measured by these candidates on a market-world scale. All of these respondents were from urban municipalities.

Not all urban candidates, however, were against the redistribution system, even if the most radical opponents were all urban. In fact, I coded 52% of urban candidates as “pro-periphery”, and 20% even “anti-Helsinki”. All of the rural respondents were in favour of the system or even demanded increasing the redistribution.

This led me to question the specific implementation of the rural/urban division of data. Often, the “urban” candidates in favour of supporting rural municipalities were not from the Helsinki region, but smaller cities, and perhaps identified themselves more as representatives of rural than urban Finland. The divide in respondents to this question is actually more of a “greater Helsinki region vs. the rest of the country” division. However, for other questions such a division would most probably have been unbalanced.

Additionally, the division seen within the urban group is again noteworthy. The six responses I coded as anti-rural, that is, strongly opposed to redistribution of taxes to poorer municipalities, all turned out to be by male candidates, all but one in their 20s or 30s, already noted in analyses of other questions as market liberals. Again, it seems that the division between rural and urban PS is not that significant, but within the urban group, there is a segment that differs from the rest of the candidates. In analyses of earlier questions, it has been noted that this segment is more right-wing in economic policy, using market-world justifications, and in what follows, it will be noted as more strongly opposed to immigration, justifying their position on industrial-world claims. In this question as well, the opposition to municipal tax redistribution can be interpreted as a right-wing liberal position, but what also needs to be noted is its strong opposition to rural populism. In addition, the responses invoked market-world justifications in their appeal to let the municipalities manage themselves and fall if not capable of doing so.

All in all, PS candidates were mostly strongly in favour of supporting the economic and administrative independence of peripheral rural municipalities, and the issue was quite salient, a result that contradicts Grönlund & Westinen’s findings (2012, 174). The administrative independence of municipalities was defended with industrial justifications, arguing that no significant savings would be achieved by consolidations, in a manner typical to Finnish politics (Luhtakallio & Ylä-Anttila 2011, 44–45) whereas supporting

their economies was defended on grounds of populist anti-elitism. In their comments, these respondents placed the corrupt elite in the capital region. However, there were candidates who were strongly against financial support for peripheral municipalities, and this position was often justified by referring to justice measured on the marketplace. These candidates represent a stark contrast to the rural pro-periphery populism of the majority of PS candidates.

It should be noted that justifications referencing the unjust position of elites, placing worth in the purity and wisdom of the “ordinary” people, typical for populism according to many scholars (e.g. Laclau 2005a, 2005b; Mudde 2006; Taggart 2004), seem typical of the PS. This anti-elitist populism was in many issues identified as more typical of rural candidates. Such a justification was placed in my analysis within the civic order of worth, grounded in the worth of the collective and its general will. However, in its opposition to the elite, it has exclusion in its very core. This is why I have coded it as anti-elitism in all of the questions, instead of plainly as civic justification. For example, let us reflect back to the question on child benefits. The matter of whether benefits should be extended to all citizens universally, or just the impoverished *people*, differentiated social-democratic respondents from anti-elitist-populist ones. I will return to a discussion on nationalist populism later.

6 Analysis III: Globalization

Because issues of globalization have been identified as central for the PS and other contemporary populist parties, I selected three questions on immigration and the Euro crisis as material for the final analysis topic. The first question is about immigration policy, the second about the tradition of singing a Christian hymn in schools in springtime, and the third about the Euro crisis. A comparison of rural and urban candidates is included with the analysis of each question, and after analysing these three questions, a chapter reflecting on nationalist justification follows.

It is hypothesized that the candidates will have conservative nationalist views on these issues, but cultural issues related to immigration are expected to be more salient for urban respondents than rural ones. Urban respondents are expected to back their arguments with justifications of cultural incompatibility and economic efficiency, based on domestic and industrial orders of worth, whereas rural respondents are hypothesized to present justifications more grounded on classical nationalism, stressing the domestic order of worth.

6.1 Question 25: Immigration

During the parliamentary term 2007–2011, immigration policy was tightened by several separate decisions. Do you feel that Finland's current immigration policy is too strict, agreeable, or too slack?

I first coded the PS candidates' answers to the immigration question thematically to see which themes related to immigration they found most salient. Then, I coded justifications for these arguments, and finally, compared rural and urban candidates.

Table 6. Codebook and respondents for Question 25 on immigration (%)

	Rural	Urban	Total
Themes			
Family unification policy	10	20	17
Work-related immigration	20	12	15
Immigrant criminals	17	6	10
Justifications			
Efficiency (industrial)	15	20	19
Finns first (domestic)	10	7	8
Cultural incompatibility (domestic, industrial)	10	4	6
(n)	(41)	(83)	(124)

The most often mentioned themes in the immigration answers were, in order of frequency, family unification policy (*perheenyhdistämiset*), work-related immigration (*työperäinen maahanmuutto*) and immigrant criminality. Out of these, family unification policy was discussed in a negative voice while work-related immigration was accepted and immigrant criminality presented as a threat.

Family unification, a policy which permits and funds immigration to Finland for family members of already accepted immigrants, was unequivocally criticized by the PS candidates for promoting much too slack immigration policy. The opinions ranged from arguing that the criteria for family unification procedures should be tightened up to arguing the practice should be ended altogether. A common cause for concern was the spending:

Family unifications have exploded. 5000 to 6000 applications are waiting in the immigration bureau. Finland is the only country in the world that flies family members to Finland – with taxpayer money. (M, 24, Tampere, urban)

“Work-related immigration” was cited very often, in a somewhat approving light, mostly as contrast to “welfare refugees” (*elintasopakolaiset*), those who are accused of seeking refugee status “only” for a better standard of living, not because of actual distress. The importance of work in the immigration issue was notable. The question of who should be allowed to come was very strongly connected to whether they were “coming for work”, and even then, Finns should be given a chance for those jobs first.

Immigration policy is not simple, instead it should be divided into work-related immigration and refugee policy. Work-related immigration is acceptable as far as there are no Finns to do that work [...] Refugee policy, on the other hand, has totally failed, bringing welfare refugees into our country. (M, 42, Ulvila, rural)

Crime committed by immigrants was a prevalent topic. Explicitly racist arguments about immigrants being criminals were rare. Most commonly, it was argued that immigrants found guilty of crimes should be deported. The frequency of this argument in the data does suggest a presumption among many candidates that immigrant criminality is common and needs to be dealt with.

Criminals need to be rejected already at the border. We don't need criminal asylum seekers in Finland. (F, Rovaniemi, urban)

In one answer, the fear of criminal immigrants was combined with welfare chauvinism (Kitschelt 1995; Mudde 2000) so that even Finnish *prisons* were seen as a resource of the welfare state not to be abused by non-native Finns:

We have to get foreigners convicted of serious or repeated crimes out of our country. If they sit their sentence in a Finnish prison, they unnecessarily burden the prison institution. Finnish prisons are meant mainly for Finnish prisoners. (M, 45, Rääkkylä, rural)

After a thematic glance, I coded the responses for justifications. The most common ones were an industrial-world, calculative, “rational” take on immigration; a domestic-world “Finns first” justification; and a “cultural incompatibility” justification, which blended domestic and industrial justification in arguing that best results would be achieved by keeping cultures apart. Here, I will address the industrial justification for immigration. I will return to “Finns first” nationalism and the “cultural incompatibility” argument in chapter 6.4, discussing nationalist justification.

An industrial justification for immigration arguments was put forward by a number of candidates. Here, the candidates argued that the immigration issue was to be solved rationally, calculating its positive and negative effects. Most argued that this calculation should be made from the viewpoint of Finland and its national interest, a combination of industrial and domestic orders of worth, but some also used this argument to support

developmental aid instead of immigration, to “help them where they are, where the help is more efficient” instead of “bringing them here”, referencing efficiency of help rather than the Finnish interest. In any case, in most of the answers, immigration was viewed as an issue where positive, negative and neutral effects should be evaluated and calculated and decisions made on the basis of this calculation, instead of current, misguided policy, which was often referred to as “Finland functioning as the social office for the world”. This referred to Finland acting emotionally or morally in a much too altruistic manner to help the needy of foreign countries while leaving its own nationals in poverty.

Finland needs to be open to immigration that is neutral or beneficial in quality. We need to be strict when effects are negative, which Finland unfortunately hasn't done. Bad immigration is not a force of nature, but a political choice. Finland cannot be the social office for the whole world, because that would wreck those facets of the Finnish welfare state even ordinary immigrants appreciate. I am for an opportunistic immigration policy, beneficial to Finland, of which for example Canada can serve as an example. I would employ a citizenship test, a language test and a scoring system. As we demand more, we must also offer more – language training must be clearly improved. [...] We should favor groups that integrate better according to experience. (M, 24, Espoo, urban)

The policy must be strict regarding the kind of immigration that has negative effects on Finnish society. Finland cannot afford nor does it have the duty to function as a global social office. Instead, Finland must be open to immigration that has neutral or positive consequences. (M, 33, Espoo, urban)

This industrial justification for immigration policy was discussed especially in the context of “work-related” immigration, which was seen as positive for Finland (as long as Finns did not want the jobs) and contrasted with refugee policy, which was portrayed as “negative” and “failed”. The view that these decisions were to be made with Finnish interest in mind was either explicated or taken for granted, making the “work-related immigration” argument a combination of domestic and industrial orders of worth. Virtually no mention of refugee policy as humanitarian help of war-stricken and distressed refugees was made. It seems almost that to the respondents, refugee policy had no human-rights dimension, only a dimension of economic efficiency, either (firstly) for Finland or (secondly) the country of origin of the refugee. It could be argued that all “work-related immigration” arguments are ones based on the industrial order of worth. However, I only included those that specifically referred to calculable effects or efficiency.

Proceeding to compare rural and urban respondents to this question, 63% of urban respondents and 58% of rural ones commented on it. The slightly lower response rate among rural candidates might indicate support for my hypothesis of immigration issues being more salient for the urban PS, but the difference is small.

I expected to see anti-immigration industrial justifications consistent with radical right populism from the urban candidates, and this was indeed the case. 20% of urban candidates presented industrial justifications to the immigration issue, compared to 14% of rural candidates. On the other hand, while the previously located arguments about “immigrant criminals” were found in both urban and rural respondents, 17% of rural respondents used them, compared to only 7% of urban ones.

Crime has increased because of foreigners [*’ulkolaisten’*, translates also as *outsiders*] getting into the country too easily. (M, 62, Polvijärvi, rural)

The “immigrants as criminals” argument, found in the rural PS candidates, can be seen as a simplifying “*they* are a threat to *us*” argument typical of populism, whereas the rationalistic, calculative take on immigration is typical of the new radical right, emphasizing the economic cost of immigration or the incompatibility of cultures. This supports my hypothesis of the geographical divide of the PS into rural populism, characterized by simplified “us vs. them” dichotomies, and urban radical right populism, more calculative and rationalistic in nature.

Immigration policy must be rationalized! [*’Maahanmuuttopolitiikkaa on järjeistettävä’*] Finland must prioritize caring for Finns. [...] After everything has been done to further that cause, we must next attempt to employ immigrants already staying here. Only then can we take new immigrants. Even then, we must make sure that those who come have the basic requirements to cope here. This can be arranged by assuring sufficient Finnish skills already in the departure country [...] The costs of this kind of rationalized immigration policy would be notably lower than now. (M, 47, Vantaa, urban)

On the whole, the PS candidates justified their critical opinions on immigration policy mostly with industrial–domestic arguments based on calculating negative and positive influences of immigration for Finland. While the immigrants’ position was rarely mentioned, when it was, it was typically argued that they can be better helped in their home

country, again a justification of efficiency. Urban candidates used these industrial justifications more often than rural ones, who in contrast presented more emotional nationalist arguments. Immigration issues were salient for both, however, unlike hypothesized.

6.2 Question 24: Suvivirsi

Question 24 was directly related to the immigration debate and was, to an extent, straightforward to analyse because of the candidates' unanimous view on the issue. All respondents defended Finnish tradition in their comments but with different justifications. I will describe these justifications below, followed by a comparison of rural and urban candidates.

Should Suvivirsi be sung at schools' spring festivities?

Suvivirsi ("Summer hymn") is a spring-themed hymn traditionally sung by pupils in Finnish schools' spring festivities (*kevätjuhla*), ending the semester and marking the beginning of the summer holiday season. Because its lyrics are Christian in content, it has been argued that it is not suitable for a secular event such as a school spring festival, and that singing a Christian hymn is offensive to students of other religions. Some schools have opted to remove the hymn from their festivity programmes or to arrange an alternative event for students of other faiths. Critics of multiculturalism have taken up these measures as an example of an undesired "giving up of national traditions" as a concession to immigrants. Despite being considered by some as a quintessentially Finnish tradition, the hymn is of Swedish origin.

Table 7. Codebook and respondents for Question 24 on Suvivirsi (%)

	Rural	Urban	Total
National tradition (domestic)	51	82	71
Individual rights (civic, domestic)	29	17	21
(n)	(35)	(60)	(95)

The PS candidates unanimously argued that *Suivirsi* is an important part of Finnish tradition and its position as part of spring festivities should be upheld regardless of its religious content. It has been sung for decades and is something that is a part of Finnishness, they argued. Many thought that the hymn's Christian content is irrelevant, and singing it is not practicing religion. Many even said, in a domestic-world justification, that they are not Christians themselves, but value the tradition that the singing of the hymn constitutes.

Finland's future is built on traditions and the achievements of our nation. Traditions are beautiful and patriotic. (M, 61, Vantaa, urban)

Finnish traditions are part of our culture, which we should respect, not be ashamed of. Teaching in schools is not denominational teaching of religion. (M, 57, Helsinki, urban)

There are things that belong so strongly to tradition, that their abolishment does not create equality, but something quite else. I, for one, am not a religious zealot [*Minäkään en hihbuloinnista perusta*], but *suivirsi* does not have anything to do with that in my opinion. (M, 44, Turku, urban)

However, there was a variant of this argument combining the domestic justification with a civic justification of equal rights. These comments stated that the tradition must be upheld, but those of a non-Christian faith do not have to observe it.

I doubt they keep guard in spring festivals who's singing and who's not. (M, 41, Vihti, rural)

Non-Christians are to be exempt from the event. They can have their own event after the singing of *Suivirsi*. That's equality. (F, 54, Muurame, rural)

No-one has to sing a religious hymn, but Finnish traditions must be upheld. (M, 30, Honkajoki, rural)

This argument combining domestic and civic world justifications of "we'll keep to our traditions but you are free to not observe them" often teetered on the edge of a racist argument, however. On the one hand, it emphasized equal rights to traditions and religion, but when stated in a provocative "if you don't like it, get out of here" fashion, it

was clear that the respondent did not really want to emphasize his support of equality, rather his critical view of immigrants.

If Finnish traditions are a problem for an immigrant, the immigrant can move elsewhere. (M, 39, Helsinki, urban)

A few responses were overtly discriminatory, such as ones claiming that having to see Muslim traditional dress was in some way a painful experience, that all Muslims subordinate women or implying that Muslims are somehow inclined to “hurt animals or children” in their traditions.

If Finns have to look at the religious dress of muslims and the subordination of women under the guise of religion, so we can without worry sing *suvivirsi* once a year! IS THIS QUESTION SOME SORT OF JOKE??? (F, 53, Helsinki, urban)

Sure, you don't have to sing the hymn if you don't want to, or you feel like it doesn't fit with your culture. We mustn't give up our traditions because of immigrants. Aren't Finns offended by being prohibited of observing your own traditions in your homeland? When in Rome, do as the Romans do, and *suvivirsi* has been sung in schools in springtime for a long time. And must be sung in future. They can have their own festivities in madrasahs as long as they don't hurt animals or children. (F, 46, Kajaani, urban)

All in all, PS candidates felt very strongly about defending this particular Finnish tradition, mostly basing their argument on a domestic world justification of national tradition but also a justification combining domestic and civic world justifications in emphasizing tradition on the one hand but freedom of religion on the other.

Comparing urban and rural candidates, the urban response rate for this question was 46% and the rural 49%. The low numbers are likely explained to some extent by the fact that this question was number 24, since response rates seem to drop towards the end of the questionnaire. There is no significant difference between the rural and urban rate, despite my expectation that this issue, representing a cultural question related to immigration, would be more salient for urban candidates. In fact, the small difference in the response rate is in the opposite direction. Looking at the rural/urban division of the categories coded above, it should be noted that rural candidates used the “individual rights” argument combining civic and domestic justification much more often (29%) than urban

ones (17%), whereas urban respondents overwhelmingly (82%, as opposed to 51% of rural candidates) justified their stance on a simple domestic “national tradition” argument. I hypothesized that rural candidates would be more inclined to use civic world justifications and urban ones would be more anti-immigrant in the vein of the contemporary European radical populist right, and these results fit the hypothesis rather well.

In conclusion, the candidates felt very strongly that national traditions such as Suvivirsi are important in themselves and should be defended. Urban candidates took a tougher line on this, while rural candidates based their opinion more often on an argument of individual rights. However, on the basis of this data it was often difficult to interpret when a respondent was underlining rights to freedom of religion and when the argument was actually intended as an aggressive “if you don’t like it, get out of here” line.

6.3 Question 10: The Euro Crisis

With the other Euro countries, Finland has taken part in bailing out countries in crisis by hundreds of billions of Euros. In the spring 2010, Finland agreed to lend 1,6 billion Euros to Greece. Additionally, Finland promised to back up the 750 billion loan standby package of the European stability mechanism by over 8 billion Euros, if needed. Finland may still have to increase the amount of its loan securities. What are your views on this?

The final question to be analysed, Question 10, was about one of the most discussed election themes, one that is still very topical, the Euro crisis. Unsurprisingly, the PS candidates were strongly against the Euro bailouts. I found no responses in favour of the economic support packages. Justifications for this position, however, were varied. While some underlined that the economy should be let function undisturbed by its own rules, others focused on the moral right- and wrongdoers of the situation. Some found the crisis countries themselves were to blame, some saw the fault was of the bankers or the EU itself.

Table 8. Codebook and respondents for Question 10 on Euro bailouts (%)

	Rural	Urban	Total
Anti-South (domestic, market)	17	26	23
Anti-elitism (civic)	14	15	15
Market liberalism (market)	5	15	12
(n)	(42)	(84)	(126)

The most common argument was one of moral disapproval of the crisis countries, condemning them as irresponsible and underlining the formidable economic policy of North European countries. Examples of such an argument, stressing the difference between Finland and the crisis countries, include the following:

Supporting the Greek crisis is truly a mistake, because they themselves had driven the country's economy into that state. It would be easier to understand, if it would be because of for example an eruption of Mount Etna, the reason we're helping, but it's not. Especially now that they want more time for a payment that has barely been received, does not give a very reliable picture of willingness to repay. (F, Lempäälä, urban)

Even though we have joined the monetary union, which was a mistake in itself, it does not oblige us to support countries that have recklessly gotten into debt. It's like giving a drink to a drunkard to cure his hangover [*'kuin antaisi juopolle krapularyypyn helpottamaan olot*']. Soon more booze (read: money) will be needed anyway to make it better again. (M, 58, Sipoo, rural)

Pouring free cash out of the purses of our taxpayers to fraudster countries [*'huijarimaille*'] (Greece) and countries that have dealt with their own issues badly (Ireland, Portugal etc.) is unfathomable stupidity. Finland rose out of the recession of the early 1990's by its own, even though it did hurt. No greeces etc. shoveled money at us. (M, 69, Kerava, urban)

In the arguments including praise of the economic conduct of Northern countries, following the rules of a market economy was seen as a moral value in itself, typical of a market world justification. This was often combined with nationalist pride of the Finnish economy, constituting a combination of market and domestic justifications.

Irresponsibly have countries with weak economies been taken into the monetary union. If only Northern European countries, with model economies, would have been included, this kind of bubble wouldn't have appeared quickly. (F, 49, Järvenpää, urban)

Germany, Holland, Scandinavia and the Baltic countries would be a sufficiently sized economic community. We would have all the benefits of a common currency, but would not have to suffer from the negligence of countries that deal with things badly. The culture of economic discipline is common around the Baltic Sea area. The currency could be called the mark [*markka*]. (M, 36, Kotka, urban)

Several candidates even referenced the Finnish Winter War as an example of Finnish resilience at times of hardship, citing the Finns' ability to recover from the war "without outside help" and requiring similar efforts from countries facing economic crisis today.

Finland handled its war debts and immigrants from karjala by itself. (M, 55, Mikkeli, urban)

The blame was not always placed in the crisis countries themselves, however. Some highlighted the responsibility of banks and bankers, some even specifically noting that the citizens of the crisis countries are not the ones to blame. Examples of the anti-elitist argument blaming banks or bankers include the following:

Here we are again supporting porker banks and their henchmen [*syöttöporsaspankkeja ja niiden takapiruja*]. Cannot go on like this. (M, 56, Salo, urban)

Now we saved the banks and the citizens in these countries, too, suffer. These countries should have tightened the belt a long time ago even though it might have felt miserable but maybe we would have avoided ending up where we are now. (M, 45, Turku, urban)

Arguments that underlined the markets' ability to heal themselves if they are not interfered with were also found, such as here:

Bailout package policy is not just ethically wrong, it is also bad economic policy. We cannot socialize bankers' losses to taxpayers. Greece should have been let go bankrupt, which it eventually will anyway. Finland should under no circumstances increase its amount of economic promises. (M, 24, Espoo, urban)

To summarize, a strong attempt at building a frontier between the "honest" Finns with "economic discipline" and an Other was typical of the PS candidates' responses to the Euro crisis. This Other was sometimes portrayed as the "dishonest" and "lying" Greeks and other nationalities of the affected countries, sometimes as "greedy bankers". At the same time, the moral integrity of Finns, along with other Northern Europeans was un-

derlined. Many, however, did not deal blame, but rather demanded leaving the market alone to fix its own illnesses.

In comparing urban and rural candidates' responses to this question, I found no significant differences in the anti-banker anti-elitist argument, which I coded in 15% of urban responses and 14% of rural responses. A more notable difference was seen in the argument blaming the crisis countries, which I coded in 26% of urban responses and 17% of rural responses. However, I found the market-world argument on the economy healing itself in 15% of urban and only 5% of rural responses. Again, there seems to be a right-wing economic liberal bloc within the urban PS. Taking a closer look at the 13 identified urban candidates with market-world justifications, we again find Jussi Halla-aho, a well-known right-wing MP, together with 11 other men. Barely any women are found in this group.

In total, the PS candidates had strong views on the Euro crisis issue. Having Northern countries bail out weaker economies of the South was seen as morally reprehensible, and the respondents believed the Southern countries or bankers should be held responsible for their own failures. However, the condemnation of the crisis countries themselves was more prevalent in cities. Also, out of those respondents who believed the crisis countries and banks should be allowed to go bankrupt and the market be left to fix things on its own, a large majority was urban.

6.4 On Nationalist Populism

Analysing the three questions on globalization, above, has shown that the PS candidates use nationalist arguments in defending selective immigration policy, Finnish tradition and economic sovereignty. Domestic justifications were often used in conjunction with industrial and market justifications, when candidates argued that *efficiency for Finnish interest* should be the basis of policy. Nationalism has many facets, however. The candidates used a variety of different ways of invoking nationalism, and in this chapter, I will discuss them via Thévenot's (2007, 2011a, 2011b) sociology of engagements.

A typical argument in the data was the cultural incompatibility argument, based on a presumption that some cultures simply should not be mixed, and that we would all be better off living in separate, homogenous culture spheres:

Finland is too easy to get into. Immigration should be limited, so that only those with the same type culture can get to Finland, so these problems would not arise. (F, 40, Kuusamo, rural)

A similar argument asserted that even if non-Finns should be excluded from rights guaranteed for Finns, they should be entitled to certain rights based on their own nationality or ethnicity. This was evident, for example, in some of the PS candidates' claims that developmental aid should be opposed because we are all better off when each country takes care of its own citizens.

Internationality is unquestionably a good thing and mustn't be confused with glorification of multiculturalism. "When in Rome, do as the Romans do" [*"maassa maan tavalla"*] is an excellent expression. I myself think it means that an immigrant must adopt Finnish practices and, above all, Finnish law. Everyone has a right to exercise their own religion, as long as it doesn't require the input of the Finnish taxpayer, and doesn't affect Finnish traditions e.g. in schools. (F, 30, Tuusula, urban)

In these cases, the candidates acted within the regime of public justification and based their justifications on the domestic order of worth. This worth was seen as universal. In this type of justification, other nationalities are expected to have their own hierarchies based on tradition and ancestry. This is pluralist "identitarianist" nationalism, acknowledging other nationalisms (Betz & Johnson 2004, 316–320). Membership in a nation is seen as a common good, justified via tradition and ancestry, and to be respected by all nations in their own way. Despite wishing to exclude foreigners from the Finnish nation, respondents believed they should be included in the traditions and benefits of their respective nations. These respondents raised the argument of nationalism onto a higher level of generality than that of Finnish nationalism, onto the level of valuing a plurality of nationalisms, which was used as a public justification.

Personal interests and ties are excluded from public justifications. The seven orders of worth in the grammar of public justification are, after all, "different kinds of *common good*" (Boltanski & Thévenot 1999, 365, my emphasis), which means that they are uni-

versal: appealing to them includes a conception that the other party can appreciate worth on the same measure. Not all engagements include such a conception, however. Also typical in the data was a “Finns first” argument, which implies that Finns should come before other nationalities or ethnicities. Here, a common and universal good is **not** referenced and instead the respondent sees his or her claim as one of national interest equal to the interests of other nations, to be compromised upon instead of agreed upon. This was often seen in responses discussing work-related immigration, such as here:

Immigration should not be allowed as long as Finns are unemployed. First we employ the Finns and only then others. (F, 67, Rovaniemi, urban)

Work-related immigration is acceptable, as long as we take into account unemployed Finns. (M, 63, Espoo, urban)

Rather than being a public justification based on universal domestic worth, such an argument sees Finns as a group with a legitimate interest that it plans to further, competing against other groups (nationalities, in this case) with equivalent competitive interests. It does not raise nationalism to the level of generality of a universal value, to stress a plurality of nationalisms. Instead, it stresses the Finnish interest. In such an argument, reaching an agreement by justifying based on common measures of worth is not the goal. Here, the candidates invoked a grammar of liberal individuals (Thévenot 2011a, 12–14).

Within the grammar of liberal individuals, disputes are of an interest-politics kind. Individuals (or in this case, nations) are seen as pursuing their own interests, and disputes are settled not by agreeing on a common good, but by creating *compositions* (Thévenot 2011a, 9–10), which can, for the purposes of this research, be simplified as compromises between the different interests. Each party of the dispute receives an appeasement of their interests, but the dispute is not agreed upon by agreeing on common worth. Instead, within the liberal grammar, interests are equal in worth, and every individual has an equal right to further their interest.

Another way of grasping these grammars is that they correspond to “regimes of engagement” (Thévenot 2007, 409), or “ways in which that which is exterior to the human

being is treated: the objects around them, the environment” (Wagner 1999, 348). They are “states of being human” (ibid.), “or, in Anglo-American terminology, [...] forms of ‘agency’” (ibid.), or “cognitive formats” (Thévenot 2007, 409). Each state of being human, or regime of engagement, corresponds to a particular grammar, that is, mode of communication.

I expected most candidates to act within the regime of public justification, as parliamentary politics typically demands its participants to argue with public justifications on a general level instead of personal engagements. This demand is also typical of Finnish politics, even on a non-parliamentary, grassroots level, as found by Lonkila (2011) and Luhtakallio (2012). This is why I based my coding scheme in my analysis on public justifications. As shown above, however, some candidates operated on a lower level of generality in their arguments, with a grammar of liberal individuals. Furthermore, some did not raise the level of generality of their argument even to the level of the grammar of liberal individuals, and instead engaged on a grammar of personal affinities.

The grammar of personal affinities relies on personal relationships that are excluded from disputes within the grammar of justification and the grammar of liberal individuals. In the grammar of personal affinities, communication relies on personal ties to commonplaces, which can be literally physical places or, more abstractly, common, shared areas of cultural meaning. (Thévenot 2011a, 14.) When referring to commonplaces of the regime of familiar engagements, respondents do not raise the level of generality to the regime of public justification (Thévenot 2007, 415). Commonplaces need no justification. They cannot be grasped through a grammar of justification, nor via a liberal grammar of equivalent competing interests, because the good they maintain is that of feeling at ease, at home, comfortable (Thévenot 2011b, 49). Cultural artefacts, such as the *Suvivirsi* in my data, are shared commonplaces. This is evident in the candidates’ relationship to them: when discussing them, the “limits of justification” (Thévenot 2011a) are crossed and arguments can no longer be justified on a public level, and are instead related to in a very personal manner. In fact, these commonplaces were never related to within a regime of justification, as their generality cannot be sufficiently raised. The relationship to such commonplaces is a personal engagement. The candi-

dates quoted below clearly do not attempt to engage in a public justification over *Su-
vivirsi*, but instead feel it is something *of their own* that has been insulted, which is why
it provokes such an emotional response.

If Finns have to look at the religious dress of muslims and the subordination of
women under the guise of religion, so we can without worry sing *su-
vivirsi* once a
year! IS THIS QUESTION SOME SORT OF JOKE?? (F, 53, Helsinki, urban)

Totally unbelievable that someone would even question this. (M, 57, Espoo, urban)

Give me a break!! [“*No huh huh!*”] (M, 45, Kouvola, urban)

Lonkila (2011, 31) asks whether the typical Finnish way of requiring all political argu-
ments to operate on such a level of generality that arguments are publicly justified has
led to neglecting some research questions and themes. This is indeed a relevant question,
not only for research, but for politics as well. The remarks presented in this chapter
about PS candidates engaging within a regime of personal affinities lead us to question
whether the differences in the level of generality hinder meaningful political debate.
Because the generally accepted way of doing politics is one of raising the argument onto
a level of generality where its worth can be publicly assessed, arguments that instead
base themselves on personal ties and commonplaces are not accepted. This is one way
in which the gap between the PS and mainstream Finnish politics can be interpreted,
and highlights why fruitful communication across this gap is so difficult. For example,
the PS itself embraces the label of “populism”, attaching itself to localized “heartlands”
(Taggart 2004), which are, in essence, commonplaces of local tradition. Mainstream
politicians condemn this for being old-fashioned and demagogic, because in their view,
politics should be conducted with publicly justifiable measures of worth, which the
“heartlands” of populism as familiar commonplaces clearly are not. This is a conflict
between regimes of engagement, between levels of generality. The PS have a different
way of engaging in politics than mainstream parties, making it easy for mainstream par-
ties to condemn the PS for using a grammar “not suitable for serious politics”, whereas
PS candidates see mainstream politics as difficult to understand and operating on a level
of generality that is too high, escaping familiarity.

7 Conclusions

More often than not, politicians and social scientists will argue that the era we are living in is an era of change. Politicians argue so because promises of redemption at times of crisis or stagnation help them gain votes, and social scientists because it lends credence to their analyses. I, too, have claimed that the PS' rise is symptomatic of the end of an era of consensus in Finnish politics, because I argue that studying this perceived change can be useful. After all, PS politicians have argued that a change is upon us and needs to be responded to. Voters, also, seem to have understood this, considering election results.

However, there is a tendency to try to understand change by attaching labels to things. While labels, or categories, are invaluable tools that help us in analysing the world, relying on them too much can narrow our field of vision. This is why I believe it is not sufficient to study a political change by attaching a label such as “rural populism”, “radical right populism” or “left-populism” to it. While I cannot escape using such labels altogether, what I can do is attempt to go deeper than that, to analyse the processes behind the phenomena marked by these labels.

The public and politicians, after all, use these labels too, to make sense of a complex world. While scholars attach a label of “populism” to political movements that underline the righteousness of the general will of the people against the corrupt elites, these political movements use labels such as “the rich”, “the culturally incompatible”, “the distressed poor”, “the fraudster countries” or “the greedy bankers” to categorize their political environment. Labels generalize a world of infinite possibilities into categories that are easier to process. What I hope this research has achieved is to shed some light into how and why the PS candidates used the labels they did in the run-up to the 2011 parliamentary elections to justify their arguments and discuss with the voters. Clearly, they were successful in capturing something in these labels and using them in justifying their positions in a way that could be accepted by many, considering the amount of votes they received. In what follows, I will draw together my findings of this political process. In doing so, I will use some of my own labels and some I have drawn from academic literature.

I set out to answer the following questions: **How is Finnish political culture and history visible in the way the European populist phenomenon takes its shape in the PS? Is the PS geographically divided to a rural part with SMP rural populist roots and an urban part in line with the contemporary European populist radical right?** I hypothesized that rural candidates would, in the vein of the legacy of the SMP, match the literature on rural populism, while the urban candidates could be analysed by research on the contemporary populist radical right. The rural populist side would be more left-wing and justify their positions with civic and domestic arguments, while the urban side would consist of right-wing candidates justifying with market and domestic arguments. Rural populists were expected to hark back to the “sacred farm” (MacRae 1969) as their mythical heartland (Taggart 2004), whereas for the urban PS, the heartland would be a pre-globalization, pre-immigration Finland. Such questions could be answered by an analysis of the HS Voting Advice Application, exceptionally published as open data online. From my data, I picked PS candidates’ responses to seven questions on three themes: economic redistribution, regionalism and globalization.

In questions of economic redistribution and social justice, PS candidates voiced their opinions strongly in defence of the welfare state. However, rural candidates used anti-elitist justifications typical of populism more often, whereas a right-wing liberalist position favouring market competition and achievement was more popular in cities, even though it constituted a minority even in the urban group. This was fairly in line with the hypotheses and was found in both the more general question on income equality and the more specific one discussing child benefits.

Moving on to the second theme, regionalism, most respondents supported the independence and autonomy of peripheral municipalities strongly and opposed state-led mergers. This was true of both urban and rural candidates, but even a larger majority of the rural ones. They justified their arguments primarily with the industrial order of worth, that is, efficiency, in a typically Finnish way. Candidates argued that state-led initiatives to merge municipal administrations were ill-founded because actual savings would be marginal or non-existent. Often, this was combined with civic justifications highlighting democracy on a local level. Justifications appealing to local ways of life and traditions

were rare. There was, however, a significant urban faction of candidates who were in favour of state-initiated mergers of municipalities and based their arguments on economic efficiency, which highlights the dividedness of the party on this issue.

Finally, to discuss the third theme, the globalization questions took up immigration, national tradition and the Euro crisis. I found that most PS candidates had very sceptical views on immigration. They argued that decisions should be made on the basis of a calculation of consequences for Finland and its economy, and openly criticized altruistic motives. Especially the urban candidates underlined this “industrial” stance to immigration policy. For the second question on globalization, regarding a Christian-themed song as part of public schools’ spring festivities, the candidates strongly defended the position of this national tradition. This was, again, true especially of urban candidates. Finally, regarding the Euro crisis, the respondents were strongly opposed to Finland supporting the crisis countries. This position was justified either by blaming banks and bankers, blaming the crisis countries themselves, or by underlining the markets’ capability of dealing with such issues. Blaming the Southern crisis countries and emphasizing market responsibility were more typically urban justifications, whereas anti-banker anti-elitism was used equally by both geographical groups.

I identified market-oriented right-wing economic liberalist responses, notably differing from the mainstream of PS candidates, from a group of respondents. In more than one question, they were found by Jussi Halla-aho, Tomi Antila, Juho Eerola, Simon Elo, Juhani Mönkkönen and Teemu Lahtinen. All are men, urban and under 40. Three of these six candidates (Halla-aho, Eerola and Lahtinen) were among the 13 PS candidates who signed an “immigration critical election programme” (Nuiva Vaalimanifesti 2011), and two of the six (Halla-aho and Eerola) were elected. This group of candidates differs notably from the political mainstream of the PS, which is why I have identified them here.

While the mainstream of the PS was, indeed, left-wing in their economic policy, they had strong nationalistic views, typically associated with the political right, in questions of immigration, national cultural heritage and European economic integration. Mouffe

(1999) has attributed the recent popularity of radical right populism to alternative-lacking consensual politics, while remaining hopeful of similar advancements on the left. The PS are fuelled by their opposition to the consensual acceptance of globalization. In their nationalism and conservatism, however, they are decidedly non-socialist, and clearly not what Mouffe placed her optimism in, citing “a globalization aiming at a different world order, where inequalities would be drastically reduced, and where the concerns of the most exposed groups would be addressed” (ibid., 71). The PS candidates I studied wish for such advancements in a nationally exclusive fashion.

With these results, a critical reflection on the data used should be noted. Parliamentary candidates of a party, especially a fairly young protest party, form quite a broad and heterogeneous group for study. On the one hand, this is an advantage, because by studying justifications of candidates, one can search a deeper understanding than just by studying elected representatives, who do not constitute the whole picture of the party. On the other hand, however, the criteria for candidacy are not very strict, and the data includes marginal candidates that did not receive much media attention or votes. If one were to include an analysis of which candidates were elected, it would be possible to analyse both the “supply” side of the party, what was offered to the voters, and the “demand” side, or which claims were deemed most appealing by voters.

The research at hand does confirm my hypotheses to a certain extent, but with some crucial corrections. First, the ideal-typical and dichotomic nature of the hypothetical model is inaccurate and blurs our understanding of some key features of urban and rural PS candidates. While there indeed are more opinions corresponding to radical right-wing populism amongst the urban PS candidates, they constitute an isolated bloc. A vast majority of the urban candidates in the 2011 parliamentary elections are better described as left-populists, if a label needs to be attached. The “heartland” for most of them is clearly not pre-globalization rural monocultural Finland, but a pre-neoliberalist welfare state (March 2007, 67). There was, indeed, the group of candidates advocating market-liberal right-wing policy, and that group was urban, but it was a minority. The difference between the mainstream of rural candidates and urban candidates was not that notable in policy on a left–right scale, but rural candidates did indeed posit populist anti-

elitist arguments more often. These referenced the unjust position of elites, placing worth in the purity and wisdom of the “ordinary” people, typical for populism (e.g. Laclau 2005a, 2005b; Mudde 2006; Taggart 2004).

Secondly, a gender aspect was entirely missing from my hypothetical model, but turned out to be essential. Just as important as the rural/urban divide in pinpointing the radical right populist bloc within PS candidates was gender. Almost all excerpts of responses that I coded as liberalist right in economic terms, or radical right in terms of nationalist identitarianism (Betz & Johnson 2004, 316–320), or otherwise pinpointed in the radical right populist group, were by men. Mostly, they were by the group of men focused on immigration issues formed around the controversial candidate Jussi Halla-aho. This finding could be interpreted through an analysis taking gender into account. How, exactly, cannot be answered in the constraints of this study, but is of crucial interest for further research.

However, and constituting the third and final critical correction to the hypothetical model, there were differences between the rural and urban candidates in the usage of justifications in several questions, but results regarding this were inconclusive. For example, rural candidates opted more often for domestic justifications in the immigration question, whereas urban candidates used industrial ones more often, but in the Suvivirsi question on national tradition, urban candidates used domestic justifications more often. Both rural and urban candidates sometimes used industrial justifications to “escape” stances based on human rights or civic justification. This varied from question to question, and would require further study.

However, a difference in justification that could be discerned was that rural candidates used populist arguments, making reference to caricatures and extremes to construct a people vs. the elite setting, more often than urban ones, as hypothesized. Analysis of populism through a frame of political sociology would benefit from moving from an analysis of the regime of public justification to a more thorough utilization of Thévenot’s later sociology of engagements (Thévenot 2007, 2011a, 2011b). I found examples of appeals to familiar cultural commonplaces, consistent with Thévenot’s re-

gime of personal affinities. These examples highlighted the difficulty populist political actors face in employing the grammar of familiarity in a polity that expects raising the level of generality of issues onto the public level and using a grammar of public justification. Instead of dismissing populism as “primitivist” (MacRae 1969), simplifying or demagogic, we should note that the PS’ populism often speaks of things in a grammar of personal *closeness*, which is generally not accepted of political argumentation on a parliamentary level. In speaking of their personal affinities to national commonplaces, the candidates used a grammar that is not generally accepted in the mainstream polity, making communication between these spheres difficult. This is a new way to conceptualize populism through a toolkit of political sociology and is worth further thought.

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Appendix 1. Helsingin Sanomat Voting Advice Application Questionnaire for Parliamentary Elections 2011

Background

1. Constituency
2. Party
3. Surname
4. First name
5. Age on election day
6. Gender
7. Independent candidate, yes/no
8. Province
9. Education
10. Introduction
11. Local councillor, yes/no
12. Member of parliament, yes/no
13. MEP, yes/no
14. Occupation
15. Website
16. RSS Feed

Questions

1. Since the mid-1990's, income inequality has increased rapidly. How would you respond to this?
2. In 2009, the parliament passed a law that legalizes intrafamily adoption for gay and lesbian couples. Should gay and lesbian couples also have the right to adoption from outside the family?
3. In spring 2010, the government granted two nuclear power licenses. The third applicant, Fortum, was denied one, but hopes to receive permission from the next government to replace two reactors in the Loviisa plant. Should Fortum be granted the license?
4. Child benefit is paid for each child living in Finland up to the age of 17 regardless of the parents' income. What should be done with child benefits?
5. The social and health ministry is preparing a so-called elderly people law, which will possibly include consistent quality requirements and a service guarantee for elderly care. Should the "care guarantee" for elderly people be written in the law, obligating municipalities to provide a subjective right to care for elderly people?

6. The retirement age is currently 63–68 years. The lower limit should be a) lowered, b) kept as it is, c) raised by one year or d) raised by more than one year.
7. Finns currently retire, on average, at under 60. The most significant reason for premature retirement is incapacity for work. In addition to supporting coping at work and improvements to work welfare, other means have been suggested to raise the average retirement age. Which means would you prioritize?
8. Pensions are raised by the so-called folded index. This means that the consumer price index is weighted at 80% and the wage trend at 20%. Because of this system, used since the mid-1990's, pensioners' income has not risen at the same rate as wages. What should be done with the folded index?
9. The government formed after the election may decide to make cuts to state spending. A list of different-sized savings suggestions already made in the electoral discussion follows. Which would you choose first?
10. With the other Euro countries, Finland has taken part in bailing out countries in crisis by hundreds of billions of Euros. In the spring 2010, Finland agreed to lend 1,6 billion Euros to Greece. Additionally, Finland promised to back up the 750 billion loan standby package of the European stability mechanism by over 8 billion Euros, if needed. Finland may still have to increase the amount of its loan securities. What are your views on this?
11. The discussion of taxing the financial sector and obligating it to take part in paying for the costs of the crisis has grown increasingly salient with the financial crisis. The European Commission has suggested a global financial transaction tax, which would apply to bond, stock, currency and derivative trading. What are your views on this?
12. Which tax hikes would you be prepared to implement?
13. The state uses taxation not only for revenue but also to further different societal goals. The actions of citizens can be guided with different exemptions from taxation. In 2009, exemptions cost 13 billion Euros. This is roughly a fourth of the state budget. Money spent on exemptions has to be raised by hikes in other taxes. Which tax exemptions would you cut first?
14. What should be done with tax-exempt mortgage interest payments?

15. Plotted land is taxed, whether built or unbuilt. Should forest land and arable land be taxed as well?
16. In Europe, male conscription is implemented only in Greece, Cyprus and Finland. What should be done with conscription?
17. Should Finland apply for NATO membership?
18. Should Finland emphasize human rights and the state of democracy more in its foreign policy regarding China and Russia?
19. Early this year, Russia banned foreign ownership of land near its borders. Russians can buy land and property in Finland with almost no restrictions. Russians have bought thousands of properties in Finland during the past few years. What should be done about this?
20. Finland is committed to the UN objective to raise developmental aid spending up to 0.7% of GNP by 2015. Last year, Finland spent 965.6 million Euros on developmental aid, which is 0.55% of GNP. What should be done with developmental aid?
21. If Finland was on Facebook, which three countries should it send friend requests to first?
22. The weapons law was tightened in the autumn of 2010, e.g. the age limit for handguns was raised to 20 years. What should the new parliament do with the weapons law?
23. In addition to their first language, schoolchildren are taught at least two languages, one of which is the one of Finland's two official languages, Finnish and Swedish, that is not the student's first language. Should studying the other official language be made optional?
24. Should Suvivirsi be sung at schools' spring festivities? [A traditional Finnish spring-themed song thought by some to be unsuitable for multicultural schools because of Christian religious content in its lyrics.]
25. During the parliamentary term 2007–2011, immigration policy was tightened by several separate decisions. Do you feel that Finland's current immigration policy is too strict, agreeable, or too slack?

26. The Saimaa ringed seal is critically endangered. Its total population is currently roughly 270, and some estimate its extinction highly likely. The Saimaa ringed seal protection in the last few years has been based mostly on voluntary action, such as voluntary fishing restrictions. How should protection be organized?
27. In the last few years, municipalities have outsourced services to private companies and third sector actors. The pressures for outsourcing are mounting. What is your view on outsourcing municipal services?
28. The amount of municipalities has been reduced by consolidation to 336. The aim is efficiency in administration, as many small municipalities are struggling to cope with producing the legally required services. What would be the right amount of municipalities?
29. Consolidating the administrations of the Helsinki metropolitan area cities has been debated for quite some time. The supporters of the plan argue that consolidation would be beneficial to land use and transport planning. Helsinki's administration supports consolidation, but the neighboring cities, Espoo and Vantaa are against it. The future parliament and government can have their say on this. What should be done?
30. The state redistributes tax revenue so that money is distributed from the wealthy municipalities to the less well-off ones. This system guarantees a tax revenue level for every municipality that equals 91.86% of the average tax revenue of Finnish municipalities. The biggest net payers are Helsinki and Espoo, which pay roughly 500 million of their municipality tax revenue to be transferred to less well-off municipalities. How would you respond to this?
31. Mention three parties that should be in the next government.

Translations by author of this study.

Appendix 2. Tables

Table 9. Rural and urban response rates to each question (%)⁸

	Rural	Urban	Total
Analysis I: Economic Redistribution and Social Justice			
Question 1: Income Equality	68	76	73
Question 4: Child Benefit	68	70	69
Analysis II: Regionalism			
Question 28: Consolidating Municipalities	69	53	58
Question 30: Regional Levelling of Tax Revenue	48	47	47
Analysis III: Globalization			
Question 25: Immigration	58	63	61
Question 24: Suvivirsi	49	46	47
Question 10: The Euro Crisis	59	64	62
N	71	131	202

Table 10. Gender distribution of rural and urban respondents (%)

	Rural	Urban	Total
Male	69	64	66
Female	31	36	34
N	71	131	202

Table 11. Age distribution of rural and urban respondents (%)

	Rural	Urban	Total
Did not answer	8	8	8
-29	4	8	11
30-39	10	14	21
40-49	28	24	41
50-59	30	22	39
60-69	20	20	33
70-		5	6
N	71	131	202

⁸ The percentages are calculated of the total number of respondents that answered the questionnaire by written comments, and were thus included in this study, shown on the bottom row. As 85% of all PS candidates did so, a response percentage calculated of total PS candidates would be slightly lower.

Table 12. Educational level distribution of rural and urban respondents (%)⁹

	Rural	Urban	Total
Did not answer	6	8	7
<i>Kansakoulu/alle</i> (primary school or less)	6	4	4
<i>Perus-/keskikoulu</i> (secondary school)	4	3	3
<i>Opistoaste</i> (vocational training)	23	18	19
<i>Lukio/ammattikoulu</i> (upper secondary school or vocational school)	28	23	25
<i>Alempi korkea-aste</i> (lower university degree)	13	20	17
<i>Ylempi korkea-aste</i> (higher university degree)	15	18	17
<i>Tutkijakoulutus</i> (Doctorate)	6	7	6
N	71	131	202

⁹ Because educational systems differ, and the classification used in the data includes obsolete historical educational institutions, translations are not precise.