Deportation vs. Sanctuary: The Rationalities, Technologies, and Subjects of Finnish Sanctuary Practices

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Abstract
Evangelical Lutheran parishes and their representatives have provided sanctuaries for asylum seekers for forty years in Finland. Yet this activity became widely publicly recognized only after the Finnish Ecumenical Council released the "Church as Sanctuary" document in 2007. The parishes are assisted by many civic organizations (e.g., women’s organizations, Free Movement Network, Amnesty International, and Finnish Refugee Council) in providing sanctuary. They share the same opponent: the state’s strict asylum policy. The various parties involved in Finnish sanctuary incidents can be divided into two groups using the terminology of the Foucauldian analytics of pastoral power: a state pastorate and the civic/church pastorate. The former tries to secure the vitality of its “flock,” the Finnish population, through strict control over asylum seekers. The latter pastorate challenges the state’s sovereignty to define its accepted members by offering alternative ways for asylum seekers to stay in the country and an alternative understanding of who this “flock” should include. In this article I analyze how these parties construct their subjectivities and the asylum-seeker’s subjectivity in the sanctuary incidents. Despite seeming opposition between the two pastorates, there are similarities in the ways by which they seek to clarify the inner soul-life of the asylum seekers and make them knowable and governable.

Résumé

The question of the day is: can the church offer sanctuary for the asylum seeker?

Pay attention to the spiritual condition of the applicant and take care of her/his daily endurance. [...] Start to clarify the situation of the applicant. Ask to see all the personal papers related to the application for asylum and to the situation of the applicant. [...] Discuss with the experts, especially lawyers familiar with the refugee justice.
Introduction

Finland is well known for its strict immigration and asylum policies. Two thousand people came to Finland as asylum seekers in 2006, but only 386 had their applications approved. Every year, most asylum seekers are turned away. Some are sent back to their countries of origin. Very recently there have been several publicized cases in which migrants, with the crucial aid of civic organizations and some parishes of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, have managed to stay in Finland and reverse deportation decisions in the end. Although with the forty years of history, truly, these kinds of cases, which I call “instances of sanctuary” following Randy Lippert and Hilary Cunningham, became public in Finland after the Finnish Ecumenical Council released its terms of reference called “Church as Sanctuary” in the summer of 2007. In addition, the Free Movement Network (Vapaa liikkuvuus-verkosto), the immigration workers of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Finnish Ecumenical Council, and women’s organizations have managed to raise public debate about asylum seekers’ rights.

As noted above and in several previous studies, sanctuary for asylum seekers is provided by individual citizens and their associations, but mainly by churches and their parishes in Finland. This role of the church is not new. Since the late Middle Ages and the beginning of modern times all Christian churches have visibly claimed to function as a sanctuary for the persecuted and oppressed in Europe. Victor Hugo’s novel The Hunchback of Notre Dame from 1831 is one of the most well-known historical tales about this topic. However, there is little historical evidence about the cases in which the churches and parishes have actually provided sanctuary for those threatened by the authorities, violence of other citizens, hunger, or disease. What is perhaps more important than the actual implementation of sanctuary is the central notion of care.

The key concept of this article is “pastoral power.” In brief, this refers to the ideas and practices of power that take place when some authorities, whether spiritual, secular, psychological, or social, seek to administer a group through the thorough knowledge of the souls and minds of its individual members. The term stems from pre-Christian and early Christian practices of soul-guiding in nomadic societies, where the pastor was metaphorized as the “shepherd” and the group as the “flock.” During 1950–2000, the Finnish state, municipalities, and recognized civic organizations were responsible for the “social-liberal pastorale of the souls” of the citizens and governance of the population in Finland. The flock in the welfare state has consisted of those with Finnish nationality, and very recently those with other kinds of permission to reside in Finnish territory on a relatively permanent basis. Those without nationality or other legal status have been external to the population, and thus to the official pastorate. However, as said, the civic organizations, several Lutheran parishes, and individual church activists have sometimes helped immigrants for Christian and humanitarian reasons by offering them accommodation, nutrition, and legal arrangements after the state’s deportation decisions. The main issue at hand regarding “sanctuary politics” is the question of who is to receive official sanctuary in the form of a permanent residence permit and who is to receive unofficial sanctuary from the church or civic organizations? This Finnish case provides a new perspective on the Foucaldian concept of pastoral power as it shows how, in the case of particular kinds of non-citizen categories, the main responsibility of the pastorate is either given to or appropriated by forces other than the state. This befits the basic rationality of neo-liberalism concerning the lessening of direct governance of individuals by public forces, but at the same time problematically challenges the sovereignty of the state.

There are four major parties involved in Finnish sanctuary politics: (1) the immigrant, (2) the Finnish state, (3) the Finnish Ecumenical Council and some Evangelical Lutheran parishes, and (4) civic organizations (e.g. local women’s organizations, the Free Movement Network, Amnesty International, and the Finnish Refugee Council). In this article, I observe how these parties construct their own subjectivities in power networks, and how they identify and either govern, the migrating subject or enable her/his self-governance. I connect the analysis of these subject formations to the analysis of the rationalities and technologies of pastoral power by different actors. I identify the reasons behind sanctuary practices of the parishes and organizations, and how, for example, they intervene in the bodies, minds, and lives of subjects threatened by deportation. I seek answers to the question of how different technologies and rationalities intertwine and resonate with each other.

The empirical examples I use are from the study of Naze Aghai’s 2007 sanctuary case but also other recent sanctuary cases. I use media data that include newspaper articles from Helsingin Sanomat about the Aghai case; an episode of the television program The Human Factor; and data that the Finnish Ecumenical Council, parishes of the Lutheran Church, and civic organizations such as the Free Movement Network have produced about the sanctuary cases. I also interviewed a key representative of the Evangelical Lutheran Church and an employer of Turun Naiskeskus-Yhdistys who volunteers in St. Michael’s Parish, in which Naze Aghai was granted sanctuary.
Pastoral Power and the Government of the Population

Pastoral power is, I think, entirely defined by its beneficence; its only raison d’être is doing good, and in order to do good. [...] Pastoral power is a power of care.7

Modern governmentality has a background in pre-Christian and Christian forms of spiritual shepherding of the people based on knowing and continuous guidance. It has developed from the seventeenth century onwards. Foucault8 states that the modern state arose when Christian pastoral governmentality became a calculated and reflected practice. The emergence of this new kind of governmentality intertwined with the ideas and practices of government of the population. The government of the modern state, in which the pastoral term of the “flock” is referred to as the “population,” and the “member of the flock” as the “individual,” is biopolitical in its nature. The ideas of pastoral power brought to the practices and ideas of biopolitical government of the population, the perspective of and focus on the individual as a central core element of the population. Here the health and happiness of the population is seen to come from the health and happiness of the individual and this arrangement does not work if the inner soul-life of the individuals is not known and their aspiration for truth not properly conducted. The alliance of pastorate and biopower is crystallized in governmentality—the form of governance in which the “social” is simultaneously the resource and target of governance.9

This modern pastorate can be evinced being applied differently in different societal contexts. The principles of the pastorate become apparent when the differences in rationalizing and formulating the relationship between individual and community are observed. Who is taking care of the individual and how must the individual direct care at her/himself? In liberalism, the emphasis is on the individual, civil society, and the economy when it comes to the shepherding of souls, whereas in social liberalist welfare ideology, the state and its educational institutions—forms of what Foucault10 relates to disciplinary power—are of great significance.

In the diagram of pastoral power, the truth is first of all a central mediator between the shepherd and a member of his flock. Secondly, “the truth enlightens the subject; the truth gives beatitude to the subject; the truth gives the subject tranquility of the soul.”11 What the pastorate means for the individual who belongs to the flock, then, is that one must make her/himself as transparent and knowable as possible, seek the truth on this basis, and make this truth part of her/his ethos and the guideline of taking care of her/himself. This can be done through meditation (in the ancient Greek sense of the word)12 keeping a diary, ethical self-thinking, praying, drawing/painting, practicing physical exercise, and so on. One must also provide knowledge and tell the truth about her/himself to others, the shepherds. This can happen through a variety of technologies: everyday conversation, formal or informal interviews, confession, sharing one’s feelings in self-help groups, and talking to a mentor, teacher, psychologist, psychiatrist, or doctor. However, the pastorate does not require personal commitment and development from only the herded. The shepherd has to go through processes of stocktaking and human development as well.13 In the following sections we shall see how the shepherds need to clarify their own essence for themselves and to others (media, other potential pastorates, the flocks, experts, researchers, and so on) before they can take actions to help others.

The pastorate directs itself especially to those “at risk”—namely the unemployed, young people, children, lonely elderly people, mental patients, people suffering from depression, victims of violence, and immigrants—and especially to those with no confirmed path to integration to the society. As Randy Lippert14 shows, illegal immigration is a fruitful domain in which to analyze pastoral power today. In immigration policy and sanctuary practices—defined as “churches and communities harboring in a physical shelter individual migrants or migrant families faced with imminent arrest and deportation by immigration authorities and actively seeking to display the existence of their protection efforts”15—various forms and rationalities of power are in use at the same time, depending on the life situation and physical and mental condition of the immigrant. Although the coercive forms of power—that is, those understood as disciplinary and sovereign—are usually used by state authorities and non-coercive forms by church and civic organizations, the lines of demarcation of forms of power are not crystal clear in sanctuary cases. Instead, the analysis of sanctuary cases shows how different forms of power and various degrees of coercion intertwine in the modern pastorate.16

The Case of Naze Aghai

Finland is a country with a low immigration rate. At the end of 2007, the total number of people with foreign nationality in Finland was 132,632. Immigration into the country was approximately 22,000 people in 2006.17 The immigration of refugees, in particular, has been small when compared to other Western European and Nordic countries. In 2006, Finland accepted only 1,093 refugees.

Quite recently Finland has faced an increase in the number of so-called illegal immigrants. Although most of the
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asylum seekers whose applications for asylum are declined leave the country—some voluntarily and some non-voluntarily in a police cortège—there is a growing number who stay in Finland regardless of such rejections. Estimates of the number of these undocumented inhabitants vary from several hundreds to one thousand. Most of these people hide from the authorities and keep their place of residence secret through the help of relatives, friends, and other networks. However, some of those whose residence applications were rejected stay in the country with authorities’ awareness. This development of Finnish sanctuary cases can be understood through Paul Weller’s division of sanctuary into “concealment” and “exposure” forms. 18 Sanctuary as concealment was typical of the pre-2007 practices as their purpose was to hide the asylum seeker from mass media. The threat was that media attention would lead to more aggressive deportation actions by authorities. Sanctuary as exposure fits the recent sanctuary practices as the parish and church employees and civic actors think that publicity will obtain the goal of a residence permit for the asylum seeker.

According to the interviewed immigration worker of the Lutheran Church and the women’s organization worker, altogether approximately fifty people have received sanctuary since the first asylum seekers after World War II came to Finland in the beginning of the 1970s through the help of local parishes, individual church employees, and in some cases civic organizations. The number of applicants for such sanctuary has been clearly larger, but the Evangelical Lutheran Church and its parishes select the suitable asylum seekers among the applicants. Selection is based mainly on “trust factors”: parishes and church employees help those whose background stories are believable. However, selection is also based on “vulnerability criteria,” which relate to publicity. The secretary of immigration affairs of the Evangelical Lutheran Church revealed in an interview that almost all those selected have been women, as their mistreatment by immigration authorities is seen as the most egregious. These people generate the most sympathy among the public, supporters, and the media, and it is thus easier to get public legitimacy and help for their sanctuary than in the case of, for example, politically active men.

In one-third of all cases, provision of sanctuary and related activities designed to resist deportation have been successful. Before the Finnish Ecumenical Council published its instructions, “Church as Sanctuary,” in 2007, the cases involved mainly individuals without common working structures and networks, official status, and public attention. After the instructions—which already gained media publicity as a new kind of challenge to the state’s sovereignty to decide who can inhabit its territory—the number of sanctuary applications have increased. Many have gained wide media attention and an increasing number of cases have ended with positive results. One of the best-known public cases occurred in 2007, right after the publication of the instructions. The asylum seeker was Naze Aghai, a forty-three-year-old Kurdish woman from Iran.

In the beginning of this decade, Naze worked as a courier for the leftist Komalah party in Iran. In 2004, the government of Iran commenced a massive raid against leftist and Kurdish organizations and some of Naze’s party members were imprisoned. Police came to Naze’s home to ask her mother where Naze was. If they had caught her, they would probably have tortured her to obtain from her the names of the other party cell members. Her comrades advised her to flee the country immediately and seek asylum in Europe. After a one-and-a-half month journey, Naze arrived in St. Petersburg, Russia, in the car of a human trafficker. After waiting two more weeks, she was transported to Finland in a truck container. In February 2005, she applied for asylum in Finland.

Naze spent the first eight months of her stay in Finland in two different reception centres and started a Finnish language course before she heard the negative asylum decision from the Directorate of Immigration (currently the Finnish Immigration Service) in October 2005. At this time her health significantly deteriorated. In fact, the psychologist at the Crisis Centre stated that Naze required long-term treatment in a safe environment. The same was pointed out by the psychiatrist who recommended that, because of her mental state, Naze needed care in a Finnish hospital. Naze and her lawyer used these statements to make pleas against the state’s rejection of her asylum application. The decision was again negative and the high administration court denied permission for the plea. Following this, Naze went underground, only appearing in public after the Finnish Ecumenical Council published its instructions “Church as Sanctuary.” Subsequently, Naze applied for sanctuary from the St. Michael’s Parish in Turku. The parish organized an apartment and everyday provisions for Naze and also started to prepare a new application for asylum from the Directorate of Immigration.

Naze attended a new asylum interview at the Directorate of Immigration in August 2007. She felt comfortable after the interview and told her Finnish tutor (a member of the St. Michael’s Parish) she thought they had listened to her this time. While travelling to visit Naze’s lawyer, their car was stopped by the police. The police said that there was a warrant for Naze and she had to come to the police station to clarify the issue. Following this, Naze was again transported to a reception centre, this time in Helsinki. According to the chief police officer, there was a valid reason for Naze to be deported, and she had been taken into custody as a security...
measure of security, because she had, on one occasion, failed to attend a deportation interview. The employees of the centre told her that she should remain there until she was deported or there was a new decision from the Directorate of Immigration.

After that, Naze’s case went public, mainly because she was the first person who was granted sanctuary by the church after publication of the instructions. There was a continuous debate on the issue in the media, between leaders of St. Michael’s Parish, Free Movement Network activists, psychologists, the police, and officials of the Directorate of Immigration. The authorities claimed there was no direct risk to Naze’s health in taking her back to Iran. The activists and the parish employees cited humanitarian reasons, stating that deportation would mean torture and, possibly, death for Naze. Alongside the media, they accused the authorities and the Directorate of being incapable of making decisions in asylum cases because they could not recognize whether or not a person had a need for help through their methods. They also accused the authorities of being inhumane. The Free Movement Network organized several demonstrations in support of Naze in front of the reception centre and the Directorate of Immigration and an internet petition signed by thousands of people in a few days.

Despite public debate, accusations against the authorities, and organized activities, the Directorate of Immigration gave a new negative decision at the beginning of September 2007. According to this decision, Naze’s application for asylum was unwarranted and she could not come to Finland or any other Schengen country in the next two years. Naze’s supporters and lawyers pleaded immediately to the administrative court of Helsinki, which—after just three days—prevented the execution of the deportation and started to process Naze’s appeal. The court invalidated the Directorate’s deportation decision and in May 2008, Naze was granted temporary residence permission. She is currently living in Turku.

What kind of pastoral governance does Naze’s case represent? What were the rationalities and technologies of governance of the parties in this case of sanctuary politics? How did they define Naze’s subjectivity as an immigrant in the process? Who were the experts and what positions were adopted in this case? These are the questions to which I now turn.

**Two Pastorates of Finnish Sanctuary Politics**

As already seen, parishes, individual church employees, and civic organizations act hand in hand in Finnish sanctuary cases, trying to secure their position as defenders of humanity, with the state and its immigration policy and authorities being their common opposition. Generally these parties can be divided into two groups according to how they conduct the subjectivity of asylum seeker and their basic reasoning for providing shelter to humans. The behavior and discourses of the state authorities represent the biopolitics of the nation, the security and well-being of the Finnish population being their main frame of reference, and they use sovereign (deportation) and disciplinary (imprisoning and education) technologies in governing immigrant subjects. Citing Foucault’s terminology, one may say that the administration of immigration affairs is an apparatus of security and that deportation is a technology of security. For the state pastorate the asylum seeker is a form of insecurity or disorder for the flock, i.e., the population.

The church and organizations use technologies of care: mental, social and legal aid, and housing, to address and meet the basic needs of asylum seekers. The pastorate of the church and civic organizations is founded on the idea of promoting human well-being, the church doing so in line with the biblical principle of love for one’s neighbour, women’s organizations wanting to secure women’s rights to their lives and bodies, and the civic approach of the Free Movement Network being in line with leftist critique of the unequal global distribution of wealth. For the church–civic pastorate the asylum seeker is a member of the flock as long as she or he stays truthful to supporters and follow the rules and procedures of the sanctuary process.

This division is largely congruous with the sanctuary politics of Britain, the United States, and Canada as Hilary Cunningham, Susan Coutin, Paul Weller, and Randy Lippert have shown. The churches and other such nominally apolitical actors involved in the politics of migration through sanctuary have the state and its juridical-political discourses and practices as their main opponent. In reference to these studies it might be argued that the basic arrangement between the pastorates and the rationalities guiding their activities are relatively similar everywhere. So seems to be the subjectification and treatment of the asylum seeker by both pastorates.

Despite the above-mentioned distinct differences between the pastorates, there is a significant similarity between them and a factor common to the whole framework: both pastorates build on and work with reference to the neo-liberal rationality of governance and problematics of the subject and truth. I discuss this aspect in the next sections.

**Sanctuary and Advanced Liberalism**

According to Foucault, traditional liberal governance—emerging after the more regulated and disciplinary regime of governance of the seventeenth and mid-eighteenth centuries—is based on the idea that the state must not intervene in the economy and life of the citizen too much, and that the
state is not the ultimate source of biopolitical values such as the well-being and happiness of the population. Instead of control, the state's role is to allow and manage the function of "the system of natural liberty,"22 which is seen to be formulated in the spheres of the economy and civil society.23 When writing about the governance of the post-Reaganist and post-Thatcherist "advanced" liberal democracy, Nikolas Rose24 says that the formula of a new rule is taking shape, leaning on the ideas of nineteenth-century liberalism and twentieth-century welfarism. It unites the governance of the individual through regulation of one's choices and aspirations—one's freedom, if you will—and through moral relations among persons. What is characteristic of this "advanced liberal" governance is the state's constant tendency to improve and develop the ways of governing through problematizations and critique coming from economics, civil society, and scientific experts, and extending the role of the communities in governance.25

The idea of a constant improvement of governance is a key principle of the Finnish migration policy,26 and the tendency of constant evaluation, auditing, and improvement of governance is very much present in Finnish sanctuary politics. It is something that connects these two pastorates to each other. In accordance with the basic rationality of advanced liberal governance, the immigration authorities are committed to collect feedback from their interest groups and somehow implement it in their actions. According to the Evangelical Lutheran Church's secretary of immigration and some of its parishes by the immigration authorities. First of all, the authorities have asked the local parish workers to monitor and give feedback on their own activities and monitor the development of health of individual asylum seekers. Secondly, the Evangelical Lutheran Church—because of their international social networks born of their missionary work—has been asked to monitor, evaluate, and report the destiny of the deported asylum seekers in their countries of origin and sometimes to report about the conditions of these countries, before a deportation decision is made.27

After Naze's case the Advisory Board of the Finnish Immigration Service with external members was created. Now the authorities have to negotiate custodial practices with the experts of the other public organizations dealing with immigration, several NGOs, and immigrant interest groups. This creates tensions in the processes of governance because the participants have different rationalities, intentions, and expectations. The goals imposed by administrations often shift, as in the case of Naze when she was finally given a residence permit instead of being deported. However, in Naze's case, the feedback of the church and communities was not taken directly into account by the authorities. Instead it became effective in the actions of the immigration authorities through the intervention of the Supreme Administrative Court—one of the juridical bodies evaluating and judging the work of authorities in Finland.

The mass media has an extremely significant position in this reflexive governance of immigration affairs since it is the forum in which activists from parishes and civic organizations can criticize the ideas and practices of the administration. The improvement of media relations was one of the key aspects of the work of parishes, spokesmen of Evangelical Lutheran Church, and the civic organizations in Naze's case, and they managed to win the media to their side in the very early phase of the publicity of the case. During the process, practically all the editors of the main Finnish newspapers and current affairs programs on the main TV channels criticized the migration administration.

The governmental rationality of advanced liberalism is also present in Finnish sanctuary politics in that both the pastorates aim at the well-being of the people and at minimizing their dependency on the state and direct public administration. Although the state interferes in the life of asylum seeker by using relatively harsh techniques such as imprisonment and deportation, its teleology is to ensure and secure the freedom of the recognized citizens of its territory, their communities and ways of life, including economic performance. In the high-level administrative rhetoric, this is sometimes connected to the prevention of crime and terrorism: "There are also people suspected of terrorism living in Finland, and their potential intentions cannot be taken slightly."28 The hypothesis of the administration, here, states that if the authorities manage to keep the external risks and threats at a minimum, it does not have to interfere in the lives of the free citizen more than necessary.

Reducing direct state power is also part of the nature of church work and civic organizations in this context. Their existence, basic purpose, and work tend to—mostly unconsciously—increase the power of civility over state forces. By resisting the state authorities, members of the parishes and civic organizations perform their civility and
free citizenship. This touches upon the relationship between the immigrant and the authorities/state, too. By hiding the asylum seeker from the state authorities and by demonstrating on behalf of this person, they construct, maintain, and increase the distance between the state and the immigrant. In other words, they tend to secure people’s freedom against repressive state power.

The Art of Being Free Equals the Art of Telling the Truth

The person being guided has something to say. He has something to say and he has to say a truth. Only what is this truth that the person led to the truth has to say, what is this truth that the person directed, the person lead by another to the truth, has to say? It is the truth about himself […], indispensable for salvation. 29

The second issue that both pastorates share is the problematic of the free subject and truth. The state and public authorities aim at fashioning free subject-citizens out of asylum seekers. This is done through different administrative procedures, such as interviews, background checking, and residence permission application and its acceptance or rejection. In the case of people not considered as eligible for being free within Finnish society, the technique of deportation is used to protect the position and rights of the “qualified free citizens.” The truth-knowledge on the subject has a significant role in this process and the asylum seeker is made into an object and subject of knowing in various ways. Sometimes, this even takes slightly ridiculous forms: for example, the police and officials of the Institute for Migration asked Naze questions such as, “What is the difference between socialism and communism?” and “Who was Friedrich Engels?”

The asylum seeker must make her/himself as transparent an object of knowing as possible for the authorities through telling her/his life-story in the asylum investigation and giving the authorities access to all documents that can prove her/his story. This is the first “test” in the process of becoming a visible and ethical subject who lets the authorities identify her/him in the necessary ways and is truthful in her/his self-identifications. For Naze the main problem was that she could not prove herself to the immigration authorities:

The applicant [Naze Aghai] was neither intimidated, arrested, imprisoned, abused nor tortured in her country of origin because of the political activities. The applicant’s story about the persecution targeted at her in the country of origin has been vague, superficial and discrete. 30

However, this subjectification and objectification of knowing is the most important technique of the opposite pastorate, too. This was especially so in the case of the paid and voluntary parishioners who were responsible for organizing sanctuary for Naze. The claim was made that to help and care for her, these shepherds must know everything as truthfully as possible about Naze. The other strong justification for “knowing all” is the credibility of the parishes helping the deported: if they help people who seek asylum with false reasons, their recognition as a sanctuary provider will suffer in the eyes of the authorities and the “great public.” 31

One of the first things that an asylum seeker applying for sanctuary has to face is the discussion with the helpers from the parish. The purpose of this conversation is to give the whole picture of the life-story of the asylum seeker to the shepherd and give her or him the possibility of evaluating whether this story is true. If the story is not plausible or the parish sees the case as possibly harmful for itself, they can reject the sanctuary appeal of an asylum seeker. What helped Naze in her case was that she had already participated in the activities of the women's organization which co-operates with the St. Michael’s Parish, and thus had made herself visible and knowable:

I had known Naze Aghai for some time because she had participated normally the activities of the women's center. I knew her distress and believed her. And I also knew about the situation of the women in Iran, and especially the situation of the politically active women. 32

This pastoral knowing is liberal in its nature. Through the knowing, the shepherds can empower asylum seekers to become free subjects who can take responsibility for and control over themselves. This means that if the asylum seeker is dependent on someone and someone else’s knowledge, she/he can not be free in a true sense.

I am happy when I am successful in my work. And then the empowering of the women … when they start to take their own lives into their own hands. In the case of asylum seeking in particular, it is certainly extremely stressful because you are constantly at someone else’s mercy. If you constantly ask for help from others, you cannot control your own situation. 33

In the case of the state pastorate, the liberal ethos of the autonomous and free subject touches upon recognized members of the population, not the deported asylum seekers. In the contexts of the pastorate of the church and communities, this ethos is the ultimate goal of the knowledge-action directed at the migrant in sanctuary. In both cases, this has an impact on the asylum-seeking subject’s understanding, experience, and action upon her/himself. For example, in the same episode of the TV program Inhimillinen tekijä, in
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which the executive director of Turun Naissokeskus-Yhdistys, Raija Ala-Lipasti, talks about how and why she was involved in giving Naze sanctuary, a former refugee from Iran, Mahabad, tells her story about the long process of bringing her husband to Finland. She described her situation and marriage, not only to the immigration authorities, but also to the lawyer of the Finnish Refugee Council (an NGO helping refugees and asylum seekers), the activists of the parishes, and other experts from the civic organizations. In the TV show she describes how she thought about her situation and story over and over again, day and night, trying to make herself look plausible in the eyes of the shepherds. She says she felt that telling the truth was her obligation to herself, to the listeners, and to her husband.

Thus, whether the result is deportation, sanctuary, or legal asylum, the asylum seeker must learn how to be a free and truthful subject. One must know her-/himself, and then take care for her-/himself on the basis of this knowledge, this is a process of becoming the object of particular knowledge and learning to think about oneself and acting upon oneself in communication with others on a particular basis. Although the fundamental motive of this kind of subjectivation by the church and communities is different from the governance of the immigration authorities, the technologies are the same: getting the refugee to expose everything about her-/himself through interviews, discussions, and document checks or the threat of checking. What separates these pastorates is that church and civic organizations require that a person come voluntarily to them and tell her/his story; in a kind of manifestation of a true liberal subjectification, whereas the state interferes in the situation of the person in question and checks her/his backgrounds and identifies her/him whether this is wanted or not.

The art of speaking has always been an extremely important part of the Christian pastorate. This primarily developed on the level of the pastor. In early Christianity, the master's speech referred to and was based on the Revelation and the Scripture. A good pastor taught the biblical truth and the pastor-and-pupil relationship was concealed by divinity. In Finnish sanctuary politics, teaching the substantial truth is not as important for the pastors as teaching how to tell the truth and always be truthful in every situation, no matter what. Both parish employees and immigration authorities, as well as lawyers, remind the asylum seeker about this all the time. The question is not about indoctrination, but about giving the shepherds a chance to learn the truth about the new member of the flock. The art of telling the truth is a complex set of words, narrations, discourses, intonations, moments of silence, use of evidence such as photographs and personal documents, and so on. It consists not only of moments of learned and rehearsed telling practices, but also of more unpredictable and unrehearsed things such as feelings and emotions and their expressions (crying and laughter, for instance).

Especially the lawyers emphasize the art of telling the truth even more than others because they think the question of truth is in the very core of their work and in the question whether the asylum seeker's story is plausible or not. They are the ones considered able to distinguish a genuine need for help and asylum from a false one through listening to the story of the asylum seeker again and again. As mentioned above, and as can be seen from the following, the art of telling the truth consists of unpredictable elements, and lawyers have to be sensitive in recognizing the significance of those elements in regards to truth telling. Sari Sirva, a lawyer for the Finnish Refugee Council, describes her work with the asylum seekers' plausibility when answering the editors' question about how she can distinguish the genuine refugee from the "phony and even criminals" and why she finally believed Mahabad in the case of bringing her husband to Finland:

Well, this question of plausibility is kind of a lifetime question, which every lawyer has to deal with. But if a person is honest, truthful and tells her/his story in detail, even though she/he does not have documents with her/him—which is very common—and if one gives a reliable description, which is in line with the things known from her/his country of origin, then we start to be aware that the story is true or not. [...] After we managed to go through all the documents and the official side of the interview, I listened to Mahabad and there was funny little coincidence. Mahabad was about to phone her husband, and was with her own thoughts. Then, she suddenly said that "it is a pity that my eyebrows are not that decent because my husband is not here to pluck them." I smiled quietly and thought that if this is not a close marital relationship then nothing is. These kinds of beautiful stories came through from Mahabad's speech.36

Why is this question of truthful identification so essential for pastoral power taking place in sanctuary politics? This problematic can be approached through application of the ideas presented by Foucault in his essay "The Dangerous Individual." For individualizing governance, it is necessary that the subject give enough "supplementary material" for the others to conduct her/him by "confession, self-examination, explanation on oneself, revelation of what one is."38 Without it, the administrators cannot conduct, monitor, and discipline the individual in the required way and, thus, one may become a "dangerous individual." If one does not play the game along these rules, s/he is pushed to do so. In the Finnish sanctuary cases, the threat of deportation pushes the asylum seeker to "play the game by the official
Asylum seekers have many ways of practicing their share of this identification process. Common for the guidance of these manifold identifications is that the individuals have to think of themselves along the lines of “what is my past like” and “who am I now?” After this phase of “know yourself,” one has to share this self-knowledge with the shepherds. Often, either the asylum seeker personally or her/his shepherd introduces this self-knowledge to the public through media, too. In the modern context of pastoral power, the shepherd has an important role in “giving voice” to the asylum seeker, introducing her/him possibilities to state her/his opinions and versions of the migration story in public and in interviews conducted by the immigration authorities. This public revelation often happens because of the personal need for “healing” of the individual in question and “making oneself whole again.” Mahabad, who fought for many years to get her husband (an asylum seeker) to Finland, published a book of her experiences after several years. Her answer to the interviewer’s question of what the making of this book meant for her was:

It has meant very much. First of all, it has been very therapeutic that I have been able to go through my whole life. I have been able to get familiar with my life in a completely different way. […] It has been a really giving and positive experience.45

**Forms and Technologies of Expertise in Sanctuary Politics**

As noted by Mitchell Dean and by Peter Miller and Nikolas Rose, amongst others, emergence of the events in the history of the government intertwine with the problematizations brought about by the formation of new forms and positions of expertise. This is the case with Finnish immigration policy, too. Tightening and inter-European unification of the regulation of asylum seekers, in addition to the increased demands for the reflexive forms of government, made way for the non-public actors to also get involved in the immigration politics more than before.43 The position of the state authorities, their knowledge and ways of formulating knowledge, has been questioned and recognition of the citizen-driven and grassroots expertise has become a central question in sanctuary politics. “The question of the day,” thus, is also: who can be the shepherd expert and which forms of expertise are recognized in the field of asylum seeking?

According to Foucault,44 the pastoral power, or pastormanship, is exercised well when the conduct of the soul and self-knowledge of the others with the goal of saving them in this or the next life is linked to the conduct of the pastor’s own inner life. Not just anyone can be a shepherd or pastor; instead it is the one who has proved her/his ability to care for others and keep watch over them. How can this be done? First of all, through the spiritual growth that can be achieved through meditation and other such techniques of deepening self-knowledge and self-care following this knowledge. This is the only way that one can become the pastor of others and take responsibility for and care for their overall well-being. Indeed, as the booklet entitled “The Church as Sanctuary” guides the employee of the parish: “Take care of your own endurance.” After having proven this, the pastor does not direct her/his care only towards him-/herself, but toward others, too. “The bad shepherd only thinks about a good pasture for his own profit, for fattening the flock that he will be able to sell and scatter, whereas the good shepherd thinks only of his flock and of nothing else.”46

Secondly, the position of the pastor can be achieved through good and charitable acts. A person can become a pastor in a particular context after demonstrating her/his ability to keep watch on and do good for others in unrelated or related contexts. Thus, the pastor is someone who has proven to be a good-willed person, someone who unashamedly collects knowledge on his flock, does good and cares for them, and keeps watch over them so that they do not fall into temptations or be attacked by external and evil forces.

A way to implement this is through “sacrifice” of him-/herself for the flock or shepherded. The church and community members organize accommodation for asylum seekers, feed them, collect information on them, look for public support for them, and participate in the official hearings of the asylum seekers. One important technology used in becoming a pastor through sacrifice is to regularly visit people living in sanctuary. These visits serve the function of acquainting oneself with the asylum seeker, collecting information about her/him, exploring the risks of deportation, and guiding and improving the immigrant’s
actor. One part of the renewal was the aforementioned instigation and the organization started to develop itself towards becoming a “more helpful, open and active societal member” of Immigration during and after Naze’s case in 2007. In explaining how hard this actually, this has been very sensitive in implementing their pastorship. Employees of the reception centres and Immigration Service have complained of the staff of Finnish Immigration Service and its reception centres—get their pastorship through applicable education, work experience, and their work assignment. They must be experts in knowing the immigration legislation and in being able to distinguish cases in which there is a true need for help from the false asylum applications. This knowledge is achieved through careful reading of personal travel documents and listening to life-stories.

As shepherds, the immigration authorities’ task is to keep watch over the flock of the Finnish population, including those without nationality but with official permission to inhabit the territory. For them, the asylum seekers appear as potential threats to this flock. However, they are also potential new members of the flock, and thus authorities have to be very sensitive in implementing their pastorship. Employees of the reception centres and Immigration Service have complained in the media how hard this actually. This has been the case especially after the tough critique of the Directorate of Immigration during and after Naze’s case in 2007. In 2008, the newly named Finnish Immigration Service was instigated and the organization started to develop itself towards becoming a “more helpful, open and active societal actor.”

One part of the renewal was the aforementioned creation of the Advisory Board of the Finnish Immigration Service and the attempt to let the interest groups influence the processes and practices of the organization through it. The Immigration Service has also promised to improve its feedback procedures and create standards with which to measure customer satisfaction and, furthermore, placed itself under external auditing. One part of the development process is to improve the customer service attitudes of the employees. Thus, the shepherd of the immigration authority does not just have to be an expert in immigration affairs and legislation today, but an expert in customer service, too.

Those who gain the pastorship informally are the employees of the parishes, community volunteers, and voluntary activists of civic organizations and movements. They represent something that can be called an “open expertise,” and which is common for the governance of advanced liberal societies. They are “the experts of everyday life” who form the basis of the moral authority of communities and dissemination of the morality. These experts guide people at risk in the “soft ways.”

Lippert describes the work of the Canadian church and community shepherds, and the ways in which they tend to be present in every moment in the life of the members of their flock; the same can be said for their Finnish colleagues. It might even be said that kind of self-sacrifice is an important part of the continuous initiation ritual in which one becomes a shepherd and strengthens her/his subjectivity as such. The executive director of Turun Naiskeskus-Yhdistys, Raija Ala-Lipasti, describes in her interview in *Inhimillinen tekijä* how she was, or at least aimed at being, present at every juncture that Naze had to face in her sanctuary process. She was seemingly sorry that she could not go to the asylum interview due to the fact that it is supposed to be attended exclusively by the authority, the asylum seeker, and her/his lawyer. Nonetheless, she was present when Naze went to apply for sanctuary from the parish leader, when she moved to her sanctuary apartment, and when the police stopped Naze after her second asylum interview.

We walked at the altar and the vicar was standing there. And then there were a couple of parish employees. And he [the vicar] welcomed the woman [Naze]. Naze asked, in Finnish—she rehearsed how to say it in Finnish—“I ask for sanctuary here.” And the vicar replied that “we are ready to provide sanctuary for everyone who needs it.” […] Naze really got an apartment from the parish. Then there were so many people willing to help that there were almost too many supplies and the like. So much that it almost did not fit into the apartment. Then, we kept a list of things that were still missing. Very soon we managed to collect all the furniture, lamps, sheets, a bed and so on. Money for food came from the parish. […] I was not able to attend [the asylum interview]. The lawyer was there with Naze, and when she came out she was really happy. She said that for the first time she felt that she was really listened to and understood. But when we left there to go to the see the lawyer and then to Turku, the police arrested us. There was a warrant for her and we went to the police station [foreign police of Malmi, Helsinki] to clarify that the matter. And I took … first of all the police officer was very aggressive when he asked us to enter his room. When I came, he asked “what are you here for?” I said that, well, I am her mentor. And then I took Naze by the hand when
she started to breakdown there. [...] And then the police officer said—I have never experienced such treatment—"take your hands off, step back!" 

The expertise of the church and movement activists is not only professional or experience-driven expertise, but expertise of the heart, too. In the same way as it was for the good Christian shepherd of ancient times, for the church shepherd, the will to help and empower comes from the love for one’s neighbour in the modern-day sanctuary cases. For the civic-organization shepherds, these things come from general humanity and solidarity. For both parties of this pastorate, the sanctuary work is like a vocation. The executive director of Turun Naïskeskus-Yhdistys answered the interviewer’s question about what encouraged her to continue to provide sanctuary to the deported asylum seekers:

Well, I did not know how I could have stopped doing this … Generally I see it in the way that we are here in the world for each other. I have been helped. [...] And I give it back. I think that the people who I have supported will help others, and I have already seen it happen. [...] My life is such that I know that I live for what I’m doing in the moment. I have all pieces together in my life. 

In the same way as the shepherd of the sheep flock was an example for the ancient pastorate, the good pastor in sanctuary cases becomes especially attentive when the health of a member of the flock is at risk.55 Thus, one can notice that the biopolitical rationality also functions under this pastorate formed by church and civic actors, and not only under the state or public administration as they control the movements of the population. Naze’s case is again one example of how the health, happiness, and wealth of the individual, population, and communities are not only taken care of by the public administration, but more and more by the individuals, communities, and their organizations themselves. This is especially the case with people that the state and its forces reject from its sphere of care, such as deported asylum seekers.56

Conclusion

As shown, there are different forces, practices, rationalities, and discourses, technologies of governance, interest groups, and experts trying to shape the subjectivity of the asylum seeker and trying to act upon her/him for a particular end. From these, I have formulated two pastorates: one targets the Finnish population, which is constituted by recognized citizens and inhabitants. In the case of deported asylum seekers, the pastorate takes care of this flock, trying to keep suspicious elements out of its sphere. Here, the immigration administration aims at securing the normality and the balance of the population in the territory of Finland. The second pastorate consists of the church and parish workers, activist movement, and communities in favour of providing sanctuary to the deported. Its basic rationalities are Christian love for one’s neighbour and humanitarian and global social equity. Although these pastorates are contradictory to some extent, there are (biopolitical rationalities that unite them. Both aim at protecting the vitality and well-being of the flock. This is despite the fact that the understanding of what this flock is varies. For the state pastorate, the deported asylum seekers do not belong to the flock, for the church and civil pastorate, they do.

Although the state pastorate leans partly on sovereign and disciplinary rationalities of power and uses technologies of governance familiar to these regimes,57 it also consists of features of advanced liberal governance: the subject-concerning rationality in state governance is that people forming the population and communities must be able and capable to practice their freedom correctly. This means that the ideal constitution of the society consists of self-regulating and responsible subjects, the lives of whom the state does not need to actively interfere in—this rationality is also mirrored in the present government’s immigration policy program.58

The action of the aforementioned social movements and the church are the embodiment of the “advanced” liberal rule, according to which interference on behalf of the state in affairs of civil society and citizens must be kept to a minimum.59 In this sense, the church, social movements, communities, and NGOs are one technology for governing the asylum seekers. This is not necessarily the kind of means the immigration authorities or legislation would suggest, however.

What also unites these two pastorates is their request for “the true identification” of the asylum seeker. This recurs in the statements of the immigration authorities, state and NGO lawyers, and parish activists again and again. They urge the immigrant to identify her/himself for their own good and for the good of the asylum application process. This is done through encouraging the migrant to think about her/his story, and through interviews, more informal discussions, and checking documents and other evidence supporting one’s migration story. “We cannot help you if you do not help us by telling the truth about yourself?” seems to be the leading slogan in the work of all these parties. Immigrants concentrate on thinking about themselves and their life history, and then trying to “translate” this thinking into a guideline for their behaviour as asylum seekers. Although their own views and speech rarely end up as such in the media, through this meditation they are then more prepared to reveal their inner life to all the pastors.
Deportation vs. Sanctuary

NOTES
5. The Finnish Ecumenical Council (FEC) is a national ecumenical organization for the churches, Christian communities, and parishes in Finland. FEC has eight member churches, with the Evangelical Lutheran Church being the largest. Some 80 per cent of the Finnish population belongs to it.
7. Ibid., 126–127.
8. Ibid., 165.
12. Ibid., 357.
16. Ibid.
22. Burchell, “Peculiar Interests.”
27. Notes from the “Church as Sanctuary”—practice in parishes network meeting, February 23, 2009.
28. Sitra, Riskien hallinta Suomessa (Helsinki: Sitra 2002), 42. Sitra (the Finnish Innovation Fund) is an independent public fund which works under the supervision of the Finnish Parliament. Sitra is well-known for funding applied research, in many cases by the authorities themselves or by researchers directly under their supervision.
29. Foucault, Hermeneutics of the Subject, 363–364.
31. Notes from the Evangelical Lutheran Church evaluation meeting of the asylum discussion, April 19, 2008.
32. Raija Ala-Lipasti (Executive director of Turun Naiskeskus-Inhimillinen tekijä, February 2, 2008.
33. Ibid.
34. Cf. Foucault, Hermeneutics of the Subject.
35. Ibid., 355–370.
38. Ibid., 126.
45. Suomen ekumeeninen neuvosto.
54. Ibid.
57. See e.g. Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*.

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