

**State within state, civil servants in the pulpit:
public discussion on church asylum in 2007–2010 and 2015–2017.**

TALVIKKI AHONEN

This article examines the relation of political and religious spheres in the Finnish society in the light of media coverage of the Finnish church asylum movement. Church asylum is a practice that Christian parishes have utilized to prevent inhumane or possibly illegal deportations. The data of article consists of media articles from two different periods. A comparative research design allows the investigation of the different societal contexts and possible changes in the church-state-relations within the researched time spans. The data was analyzed using argumentation analysis, and it was divided into four argumentative categories. The observed categories were arguments on 1) relations among authorities, 2) law and ethics, 3) security, and 4) religion. According to the results, the Finnish churches are active, societal actors that take part in politics through direct action, influencing the public opinion, demonstrations, and amendment proposals. Churches still have a special position in the Finnish society, which is both respected and criticized. However, their authority seems to have basis on rather cultural and historical values, instead of actual religious norms.

Keywords: church asylum, sanctuary, undocumented, secularization, churches, argumentation analysis

Discussion topics in the plenary sessions of the Finnish parliament 1999–2014: LDA method topic modelling

PETRI LOUKASMÄKI
KIMMO MAKKONEN

Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA), a computational artificial intelligence method, is one of the most widely used among the methods known as “topic models”. We present and evaluate LDA models concerning speeches in the plenary sessions of the Finnish parliament and assess which number of topics is sensible in an exploratory analysis of the speech contents. As a novel methodological application of quantifying the co-occurrence of different topics in the speeches, we analyze the topics generated by the LDA with compositional correlation coefficients, which allows using the LDA in a similar fashion as two related methods, namely correlated topic models and dynamic topic models, assuming that the data is time-stamped and that the vocabulary remains mostly unchanged in the analyzed time frame. We present a case example by analyzing the correlation between a topic on municipal issues and state-municipalities’ relationship and topics on the parliamentary budget debate and the debate on politics and democracy. We notice a large difference before and after the 2011 elections: before, the discussion was about money, and after, during the debates on the Katainen government reform bill to amalgamate most municipalities of mainland Finland, about the democracy itself.

Keywords: LDA, topic model, parliamentary speech, compositional correlation