

Vähäkangas Auli Maria

Born 31.5.1967 in Helsinki, Finland

University degrees

MTh, University of Helsinki 14.12.1992

ThD, University of Helsinki 13.12.2004

Docent in pastoral theology, University of Helsinki 20.5.2011

Pedagogical training

- University pedagogy I 5.5.2006
- University pedagogy II 16.5.2007
- Teacher's pedagogical training in adult education (60 ECTS) 20.5.2008 , Faculty of Education, University of Helsinki

Linguistic skills

- Finnish- mother tongue
- English- strong professional language, oral & written
- Swahili- fluent working language
- Swedish- fluent working language
- German – reading language

Current position

- University lecturer in pastoral counselling, University of Helsinki, Faculty of Theology 1.8.2013-

Previous professional appointments

- Acting professor in Practical Theology, Faculty of Theology, university of Helsinki 1.8.2012-31.7.2013
- University lecturer in pastoral counselling, Faculty of Theology 1.4.2009-31.7.2012
- Lecturer, Diaconia University of Applied Sciences (DIAK) 1.1.2009-31.3.2009
- Principal lecturer, DIAK 15.8.2008-31.12.2008
- Principal lecturer, DIAK 15.8.2007-14.8.2008
- Lecturer, DIAK 1.8.2006-14.8.2007
- Part-time teacher, DIAK 2005-2006
- Lecturer in practical theology, Makumira University College (MUCo), Tanzania 2003-2005
- Researcher, department of practical theology, University of Helsinki, 2002-2003
- Lecturer in practical theology, MUCo, Tanzania 2000-2002
- Lecturer in systematic theology, MUCo, Tanzania 1998-2000

Research project funding as a principal investigator:

- Youth at the margins: a comparative study of the contribution of faith-based organisations to social cohesion in South Africa and Nordic Europe (acronym YOMA), bilateral research project funding Academy of Finland and NRF of South Africa 2013-2016, 450.000 euros.
- Lammi case study of Youth at the margins: a comparative study of the contribution of faith-based organisations to social cohesion in South Africa and Nordic Europe (acronym YOMA) , Emil Aaltonen foundation, 2014-2016, 200.000 euros.

Research cooperation as a member of a team:

- Religion and Development – Nordic Perspectives on Involvement in Africa, 2011-2012 (Nos-HS funding).
- Interpreting African Christianity: Anthropology and Theology in Dialogue, 2009-2010 (Nos-HS funding).
- Religious communication, Symbols and Publicity, a multidisciplinary project at the University of Helsinki, 2011- (funding from University of Helsinki project assessment award)

Individual research funding

- Faculty of theology (research and travel grant) 2012 and 2013
- Tieteen ja Taiteen Kristillinen Tukisäätiö (research grant) 2000, 2005 ja 2008
- Kirkon Tutkimuskeskus (research grant) 2001 ja 2002
- Jenny ja Antti Wihurin rahasto (research grant) 2003
- Kirkon Tutkimuskeskus (travel grant) 2007

Examination of PhD and Licentiate research:

- Opponent in public defense of PhD thesis of Terese Bue Kessel: “Between God’s Sharing Power and Men’s Controlling Power; A Quest for Diaconal Empowerment and Transformation in Femmes Pour Christ in Cameroon”, the School of Mission and Theology (MHS), Stavanger, Norway. January 2014.
- Pre-examiner of PhD thesis of Terese Bue Kessel: “Between God’s Sharing Power and Men’s Controlling Power; A Quest for Diaconal Empowerment and Transformation in Femmes Pour Christ in Cameroon”, the School of Mission and Theology (MHS), Stavanger, Norway. October 2013.
- Opponent in public defense of PhD thesis of Helen Nambalirwa Nkabala: *‘There is no difference between Moses and Kony’: A Critical Analysis of the Contextual Use of Some Old Testament Texts and Motifs in the Early Years of the Lord’s Resistance Army*, the School of Mission and Theology (MHS), Stavanger, Norway. November 2012.
- Chairperson of doctoral thesis committee of Katri Kyllönen’s ThD theses Uskonnon rooli maahanmuuttajien konfliktien sovittelussa. Sovittelijoiden, maahanmuuttajien ja kirkon maahanmuuttajatyöntekijöiden näkökulma. 10.8.2012.
- Pre-examiner of ThD thesis of Heli Aaltonen: ”Fe y Esperanza. Women’s Road to Ministry and Leadership in the Lutheran Church of El Salvador 1952-2009.” University of Åbo Akademi, Finland. August 2012 and May 2013.

- Pre-examiner of PhD thesis of Helen Nambalirwa Nkabala: *'There is no difference between Moses and Kony': A Critical Analysis of the Contextual Use of Some Old Testament Texts and Motifs in the Early Years of the Lord's Resistance Army*, the School of Mission and Theology (MHS), Stavanger, Norway. April 2012.
- TM Yrjö Rossin lisensiaatintutkimuksen "Situational Learning in Ministry: The Arusha Programme of Theological Education by Extension (TEE) and its Evaluation in 1974-2004" tarkastaja. Univ. of Helsinki, Faculty of Theology, June 2013.

Other academic activities

- Finnish Doctoral Programme of Theology, vice chair, 2012-2013.
- Finnish Doctoral Programme of Theology, board member, 2012-2013
- Member of A2 development committee 2012-2013
- Representative of faculty of theology in Development studies working group in the University of Helsinki, 2011-
- Faculty board, University of Helsinki faculty of theology 2010-2013
- Students' assessment committee, University of Helsinki faculty of theology 2010-2012
- North-South-South Higher Education Institution Network Program academic coordinator 2009-2010
- Curriculum planning team (DIAK) 2008-2009
- Distance learning development team (DIAK) 2007-2009
- Team leader of teachers of theological studies (DIAK) 2008-2009
- Board member of Finnish Theological Literature Society (STKS) 2011-
- Door to the Study of Diaconia-international diaconia portal editorial team member 2010-2012
- Secretary of the Society for Diaconia Research 2010-2012
- Circle of Concerned Women Theologians, Tanzania chapter 1998-2005
- Tanzania Theological Colloquium- ecumenical research network 2001-2005

Memberships in academic organizations:

- International Council on Pastoral Care and Counselling (ICPCC)
- International Association for the Research and Study of Diaconia and Christian Social Practice (ReDi)
- American Academy of Religion (AAR) being a member in three groups in AAR: Practical Theology Group, International Development and Religion Group and African Religions Group
- International Association for Mission Studies
- Diakonian tutkimuksen seura (Society for the Study of Diaconia)

Referee in Journals:

- Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae (Church History Society of South Africa)
- Teologinen Aikakauskirja
- Diakonian tutkimus
- Africa Theological Journal

Planning and organizing of conferences:

- YOMA 1st working conference and start of the international research project Pretoria, October, 2013
- The annual symposium of the Finnish Doctoral Programme of Theology, Joensuu 2013. Topic: What makes Theology?
- The annual symposium of the Finnish Doctoral Programme of Theology, Helsinki 2012. Topic: Global Theology.
- Suomalaisen teologisen kirjallisuusseuran symposium, Kristillisyyden elämäntapana, 14.11.2013
- Ignatian spirituality today- symposium, Helsinki Deaconess Institute, August 2013.

Academic papers in conferences and guest lectures:

1. Religious diversity among community care volunteers in Tanzania with an emphasis on Muslim experiences, University of Johannesburg, South Africa, 4.11.2013.
2. Transforming masculinities: Male care volunteers in Tanzania, University of South Africa, Pretoria, South Africa, 28.10.2013.
3. Religious support for youth at the margins, "Second Class Citizens?" Nordic-Baltic Summer Meeting, Helsinki, 28.6.2013.
4. Youth at the margins project presentation, Impact of Religion conference, Uppsala, Sweden, 21.5.2013.
5. Religious diversity among community care volunteers in Tanzania, Impact of Religion conference, Uppsala, Sweden, 22.5.2013.
6. Transforming masculinities: Male care volunteers in Tanzania, Nordic Africa Institute, Uppsala, Sweden, 22.5.2013.
7. "Male volunteers in Tanzania" Religion and Development, Nordic Perspectives on Involvement in Africa. Sofia. Helsinki. 3.12.2012.
8. "Muslim volunteers in a Christian palliative care programme" Migration, Human Dislocation, and the Good News: Margins as the Center in Christian Mission. IAMS, Toronto, Canada. 17.8.2012.
9. "Poverty in Africa", Citizenship Transformations in a Global World, Helsinki, 10.2.2012
10. "Bereavement in multicultural contexts." Nordic Specialist Course in Palliative Medicine. Helsinki. 26.1.2014.
11. "Potilaan, omaisen ja lääkärin suru". Palliativisen lääketieteen erikoistumiskoulutus. Turku 18.4.2013.
12. "Bereavement in multicultural contexts." Nordic Specialist Course in Palliative Medicine. Helsinki. 26.1.2012.
13. "Bereavement and spirituality" Nordic Specialist Course in Palliative Medicine. Helsinki. 26.1.2012.
14. "Contextual pastoral counselling among the terminally ill AIDS patients in Tanzania", AAR, Atlanta, Georgia, 2010.
15. "Christian Couples Coping with Childlessness" Swedish Missiological Institute, Uppsala, 2010.
16. "Communality in a support group", Interpreting African Christianity workshop, Helsinki, 2010.
17. "Toivon häivähdyksiä ylivelkaantuneen ja hiv-positiivisen arjesta". Diakonian tutkimuksen päivä 2009.
18. "Pastoral anthropology", Interpreting African Christianity workshop, Copenhagen, 2009.
19. "Dynaamista afrikkalaista naisten teologiaa" Diakonian tutkimuksen päivä 2008.

20. "Social construction of hope in the context of HIV/AIDS" Conference on Diaconia and Poverty, Oslo, 24-25.9.2008.
21. "Social capital of HIV positive peer support group", NCSR conference, Turku, 14-15.8.2008.
22. Opetushenkilökunnan tutkimusmetodikoulutus (Iringa University College, Tanzania) 2008
23. "sosiaalinen pääoma ja vapaaehtoisuus hiv-positiivisten ryhmässä ja sairaalan saattohoitoringissä Tansaniassa" Diakonian tutkimuksen päivä 2007.
24. Kommenttipuheenvuoro Prof. Maluleken luento: "Postcolonial Mission: Oxymoron or Paradigm Shift". NIME, Turku, elokuu 2007.
25. "Social capital of an Alpha support group" AASR, Gaborone, Botswana, 2007.
26. "Church as a healing community", NCSR, Århus, elokuu 2006.
27. "Temporality in model narratives", New Scholars Symposium, Lontoo, 2005
28. "Shame, guilt and church discipline" Tanzania Theological Colloquium, 2004.
29. "The Crisis of Christian Marriage" Tanzania Theological Colloquium, 2003.
30. "Responses to Prayer Healing in the ELCT Northern Diocese", Tanzania Theological Colloquium, 2001.

Other public talks:

1. Moderator in a panel discussion on Euthanasia 4.2.2014, organized by the organization of Students' of Theology (TYT) at the Faculty of Theology.
2. Dynamic Christianity in Africa from pastoral theological point of view, 27.1.14, a seminar organized by religious teachers' association, Helsinki.
3. Youth and psychiatric health seminar, Diocese of Helsinki, 2012.
4. Training of volunteers on pastoral counselling in St. Thomas community in Helsinki, 2011.
5. The channels of social support for HIV positives in Tanzania, Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission. SLS. 2010.
6. The Stigma of HIV in Tanzania. Finnish Church AID. 2006.
7. The joys and sorrows of women in Northern Tanzania. The Helsinki Christian College. 2005.
8. Coping with Childlessness in Tanzania Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission. 2004.
9. Coping with Childlessness in Tanzania. NGO for social support of childless people in Finland (Lapsettomien tuki ry.) 2003.

Other relevant education:

- Lutheran World Federation Consultation on Theological Education in the global South, Rome, 1999.
- AIDS counsellors' training organized by Medical Aid International in 2004.
- Advanced pastoral training, Diocese of Helsinki, 2009.