

## CURRICULUM VITAE

### PERSONAL DATA

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Full name Ruth Gunhild ILLMAN  
Born 1976, Turku (Åbo), Finland  
Date of CV 22 September 2019

### CURRENT POSITIONS

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- **Director**, the Donner Institute for Research in Religious and Cultural History, Åbo, Finland. From 1.4 2013.
- **Docent** (Associate Professor) of History of Religion, Uppsala University, Sweden (appointed 29.5 2018)
- **Docent** (Associate Professor) of Comparative Religion, Åbo Akademi University, Finland (appointed 11.8 2006)

#### *Expert Commissions*

- **Member of Organisation Team**, Argumenta-project "Uskontolukutaito moniarvoisessa yhteiskunnassa" [Religious Literacy in multicultural societies], funded by Suomen kulttuurirahasto, University of Helsinki (2019-2020).
- **Member of Drafting Committee** for University Strategy 2020-2025, Åbo Akademi University (2019)
- **Member of Advisory Board**, Academy of Finland funded research project *The Impact of Religious Values on Chinese Social Life*, PI: Miikka Ruokanen (2018-2022).
- **Collaborator**, Academy of Finland funded research project *Learning from New Religion and Spirituality*, PI: Terhi Utriainen (2020-2024).
- **Member of Review Panel**, Publication Forum of Finland (JuFo), philosophy and theology (2018-2021)
- **Chair of Review Panel**, HS-K (Religious Studies, Ancient History, Classical Archaeology, Ethnology, Gender Studies), The Swedish Research Council (2017-2019).
- **Member of Academic Board**, The Inez and Julius Polin Institute for Theological Research, Åbo Akademi University (2018-2020).
- **Member of Scholarly Board**, Society for Swedish Literature in Finland (2017-2019)
- **Affiliated Researcher**, Center for the Study of Jewish Thought in Modern Culture, University of Copenhagen, since 2015

#### *Editorial Assignments*

- **Editor-in-Chief** of the peer-reviewed journal *Nordisk judaistik/Scandinavian Jewish Studies* together with Dr Karin Hedner Zetterholm (Lund University), from Vol. 27, 2016.
- **Editor-in-Chief** of the religious studies information portal *Katsomukset.fi* together with Prof. Tuula Sakaranaho and PhD Johanna Konttori, since 2019.
- **Referee**, *Religion (international peer-review journal)*, since 2018
- **Referee**, *Contemporary Jewry (international peer-review journal)*, since 2018
- **Referee**, *Nordic Journal of Religion and Society (international peer-review journal)*, since 2018
- **Referee**, *Temenos – Nordic Journal of Comparative Religion (international peer-review journal)*, since 2015
- **Referee** and member of Editorial Advisory Board, *Forum on Public Policy (international peer-reviewed journal of the Oxford Round Table)*, since 2009
- **Referee**, *Co-operation and Conflict. Journal of the Nordic International Studies Association (international peer-reviewed journal)*, since 2009

- **Referee** and **co-editor**, *Journal of Intercultural Communication* (international peer-reviewed e-journal), since 2006

*Positions of trust in society*

- **Board Member**, Signe and Ane Gyllenberg Foundation, Museum Board, since 2017
- **Board Member**, The Delegation for St. Henrik's Ecumenical Art Chapel, Turku, since 2009

*Other Current Academic Merits*

- Qualifying for position as **professor** according to expert opinions (given by Prof. Antoon Geels and Prof. René Gothóni) related to the appointment of a professor of Comparative Religion at Åbo Akademi University, 2009 (ranked second or third among the applicants).
- The arts and science project **Aboagora**, founding member (2011) and member of executive committee: <http://www.aboagora.fi>

**PREVIOUS ACADEMIC POSITIONS AND EXPERT COMMISSIONS**

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*Positions*

- **Vice-Director**, "Young Adults and Religion in a Global Perspective" Centre of Excellence at Åbo Akademi University, 2015-2018
- **Vice-Director**, "Post-Secular Culture and a Changing Religious Landscape in Finland" Centre of Excellence at Åbo Akademi University, 2010-2014
- **Postdoctoral Researcher**, the Donner Institute for Research in Religious and Cultural History, Åbo, Finland (1.4 2010-31.3 2013). The position comprised 80 % research, 20 % arranging of conferences and creating scientific networks.
- **Research Doctor**, Academy of Finland (1.3 2007-31.3 2010). Research work on creative interreligious dialogue among Jews, Christians and Muslims, location: Åbo Akademi University
- **Senior Lecturer of Comparative Religion**, Åbo Akademi University, Finland (1.8 2008-31.7 2009). Teaching and supervising students on Bachelor, Master and Post-graduate level in comparative religion, research work.
- **Research Fellow**, Tampere Peace Research Institute, University of Tampere (1.8 2005-31.3 2010, leave of absence due to Academy of Finland project). Research work on interreligious dialogue among Jews, Christians and Muslims in Finland.
- **Postdoctoral Researcher**, Åbo Akademi University, Finland (1.6 2005-31.7 2005). Research work on interreligious dialogue (funded by Oskar Öflund's Foundation)
- **Researcher**, Åbo Akademi University, Finland (1.8 2000-31.12 2004). Research work for doctoral thesis on cultural encounters and dialogue. Funded by scholarships 2000-2002, Graduate School of Cultural Interpretations, Academy of Finland, 2003-2004.
- **Co-operating Researcher**, Research Institute for Project Based Industry (PBI), Finland. Participating in the research carried out by the institute, responsible for scientific seminars 2002-2004. Supervising doctoral students.

*Expert Commissions*

- **Expert Reviewer** for the Research Council of Norway, call for research on national minorities in Norway (2017)
- **Member of Review Panel**, HS-K (Religious Studies, Ancient History, Classical Archaeology, Non-European Languages and Cultures, Ethnology), The Swedish Research Council (2016)
- **Editor-in-Chief** of the peer-reviewed journal *Temenos – Nordic Journal of Comparative Religion* together with Dr. Tiina Mahlamäki (published by the Finnish Society for the Study of Religion), from Vol. 47/1 (2011-2014).

*International Mobility*

- **Visiting Research Fellow**, Florida Southern College, Lakeland, USA (January 2011)
- **Visiting Research Fellow**, Swedish Theological Institute, Jerusalem, Israel (March 2010)
- **Visiting Research Fellow**, Universität Basel, Departement Religionswissenschaft, Switzerland (Nov-Dec 2009)

- **Co-operating Researcher**, Göteborg University, Gothenburg, Sweden. Several visits during 2001–2003 for seminars and academic co-operation with the research group LEO (“Managing Diversity”) at the Institute of Work Science.
- **Visiting Doctoral Student**, Uppsala University, Sweden (Aug–Dec 2002). Doctoral studies at the Faculty of Theology (funded by Nordisk Forskerutdanningsakademi, NorFa)

#### *Academic Opponent at Doctoral Dissertation*

- Nina Kokkinen, dissertation in comparative religion, University of Turku, 4.5 2019
- Jari Portaankorva, dissertation in comparative religion, University of Helsinki, 12.5 2018

#### *Member of assessment boards and PhD committees, docents and doctoral dissertations*

- Jewish Studies at Åbo Akademi University, Mia Anderssén-Löf (2017)
- Theology at Uppsala University, Niklas Holmefur (2016)
- Theology at Åbo Akademi University, Fredrik Portin (2016)
- Comparative religion at Åbo Akademi University, Janne Kontala (2016)
- Study of Religion at Tilburg University, Lieke Wijnia (2016)
- Theology at Åbo Akademi University, Anna Ortner (2015)
- The Study of Religions at Helsinki University, application for docent Mulki Al-Sharmani (2015)
- History of Religion at Uppsala University, Per Nilsson (2012)
- Comparative Religion at Åbo Akademi University, Marie-Thérèse Charpentier (2010), Kenneth Berger (2014).

#### *Academic Appointments*

- Evaluator for the appointment of a director for Kalevala-seura, Helsinki, spring 2019.
- Evaluator for the appointment of a university researcher in comparative religion at Åbo Akademi University, spring 2015.
- Evaluator for the appointment of a research coordinator, Åbo Akademi University Endowment, autumn 2014.
- Evaluator for the appointment of a university lecturer in comparative religion at Linköping University, Sweden, spring 2011.

#### *Reviewer of manuscripts for doctoral dissertation*

- Psychology of Religion, Uppsala University: Madeleine Guillo (2019).
- The Study of Religions at the University of Helsinki: Jari Portaankorva (2018), Helena Kupari (2014), Marjo Lorenz (2010).
- Comparative Religion at the University of Turku: Nina Kokkinen (2018)

#### *Supervisor*

- Supervisor of four doctoral theses in comparative religion at Åbo Akademi University and University of Turku (Nora Repo completed in 2012, Laura Wickström and JP Jakonen to be completed in 2019, Mercédesz Czimbalmos in 2021).

#### *Other Work Experience*

- **Columnist**, *Åbo Underrättelser*, since 2014
- **Assistant Editor-in-Chief**, *Finsk Tidskrift* (2001–2004). Editorial work at academic journal.
- **Acting Editor**, *Meddelanden från Åbo Akademi* (May, 2001). Journalistic work at the internal newspaper of Åbo Akademi University.
- **Journalist**, *Åbo Underrättelser* (1998–2001). Freelance and acting journalist at local Swedish-language newspaper.

#### *Career Breaks*

- Parental leaves: 20.8 2004–31.5 2005, 1.11 2006–31.12 2007 and 8.6 2012–10.6 2013.

## **EDUCATION**

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- **Doctor of Theology** in Jewish Studies at Åbo Akademi University, Finland. Dissertation: 30.11 2018. Grade: *Passed with honours*
- **Docent** (Associate Professor) of History of Religions, Uppsala University, Sweden. Appointed 29.5 2018.

- **Master of Theology** at Åbo Akademi University, Finland, 2015. Major subject: Jewish Studies.
- **Bachelor of Theology** at Åbo Akademi University, Finland, 2013. Major subject: Jewish Studies; minor subject: information studies.
- **Docent** (Associate Professor) of Comparative Religion, Åbo Akademi University, Finland. Appointed 11.8 2006 (excellent teaching skills)
- **Doctor of Philosophy** in Comparative Religion at Åbo Akademi University, Finland. Dissertation: 18.6 2004. Grade: *Laudatur* (excellent)
- **Licentiate of Philosophy** at Åbo Akademi University, Finland, 2003. Grade: *Laudatur*
- **Master of Arts** at Åbo Akademi University, Finland, 2000. Major subject: comparative religion; minor subjects: philosophy, history. Grade: *Eximia cum laude approbatur* (very good)
- **Matriculation examination** at Finnish higher secondary school (Katedralskolan i Åbo), 1995.

*Other Studies* (at Åbo Akademi University):

- Training course in computer skills (2001, 2011); Presentation skills in English (2001)

*Pedagogical Education*

- University pedagogy, basic studies (25 credits) completed in 2009, Åbo Akademi University and Turku University, Finland. Includes an Ope.fi-portfolio (2 credits) documenting the knowledge of and abilities of academic teachers to use Internet in their teaching. Overall grade: 4/5.
- Teaching skills assessed by pedagogical board three times (2006, 2008, 2009) at Åbo Akademi University. Grade for each assessment: *excellent teaching skills*.

*Language skills*

- Swedish: mother tongue, spoken and written skills excellent
- Finnish: spoken and written skills very good
- English: spoken and written skills very good
- German: spoken and written skills good
- French: spoken and written skills basic
- Biblical Hebrew: written skills basic

## **TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

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- As university lecturer in Comparative religion at Åbo Akademi University (2008-2009) I have had comprehensive educational responsibility regarding implementation of the course programme and examination on Bachelor, Master and Doctoral level together with other teachers. I have independently developed syllabus for, lectured and administrated grades (in Swedish and English) for several courses since 2001.
- I have lectured at the following universities (selection): Leo Baeck College, UK; Uppsala University, Sweden; Florida Southern College, USA; University of Lapland, Finland; University of Turku, Finland; Royal Institute of Technology, Sweden.
- I have also lectured at a wide variety of organisations, schools and societies, such as the International Red Cross; UNIFEM Finland, the Finnish Medical Society Duodecim, the Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma; Turku Philharmonic Orchestra; Science Forum (Helsinki).
- I have assessed 7 Master's Thesis (comparative religion, pedagogy) at Åbo Akademi University and University of Eastern Finland.

*Production of Teaching Material:*

- The course book *Kultur, människa, möte. Ett humanistiskt perspektiv* (Lund: Studentlitteratur, 2005; Second Edition 2016) co-authored with Peter Nynäs. Used as course book in comparative religion and intercultural communication at Åbo Akademi University and several universities in Sweden.

- The course cook *Metodkompassen. Kulturvetarens metodhandbok* (Åbo Akademi: 2004), co-edited together with Lena Marander-Eklund and Blanka Henriksson. Used as course book by several departments at Åbo Akademi University.

#### **KEYNOTES AND INVITED ADDRESSES (SELECTION)**

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"Music and Religious Change. Jewish Perspectives"

Keynote speaker at *Musica Sacra Maastricht*, Maastricht, Netherlands, 2019

"Art as Dialogue: Exploring sonically aware spaces for interreligious encounters"

Keynote speaker at *Fuller Seminary Missiology Lectures 2018*, Pasadena, USA, 2018

"Nordisk judaistik/Scandinavian Jewish Studies: 40 years of Academic Dialogue"

Keynote speaker at the conference *The Jewish Tradition: Does it Matter?*, University of Oslo, 2018.

"Music as Interreligious Dialogue: A Non-Binary Approach"

Keynote speaker at the conference *Musik in Interreligiösen Begegnungen*, Swiss Theological Society, Basel, Switzerland, 2017.

"Fältforskning kring kulturmöten och religionsdialog"

Keynote speaker at the annual national PhD Course in Comparative Religion at Tvärminne, Finland, 2016.

"In the Image. Imagination and Creativity as Tools for Interreligious Dialogue"

Keynote speaker at the PhD course *The Problem of Evil and Images of (In)Humanity*, University of Copenhagen, Denmark, 2016.

"Singing a Wordless Niggun. Contemporary Jewish Perspectives"

Invited speaker at the seminar *Music, Religion and Identity*, Tilburg University, the Netherlands, 2016.

"Reframing Religion in Finnish Scholarship"

Keynote speaker at the *European Association for the Study of Religion*, conference in Helsinki, 2016.

"Music as a Driving Force for Religious Change. The Case of Niggunim"

Invited lecture at Leo Baeck College, London, UK, 2016.

"Musiken som drivkraft för religiös förändring: en fältstudie i dagens judiska London"

Invited lecture at Forum for Jewish Studies, Uppsala university, 2016.

"Mera mångfald, vidgade vyer?"

Invited speaker at the Day of Comparative Religion, Finnish Society for the Study of Religion, Turku, Finland, 2016.

"Perspektiv på interreligiös dialog"

Keynote speaker at a conference on the role of interreligious organisations in crisis work and in counteracting violent extremism, Gothenburg, Sweden, 2015.

"Religion and Food: Thoughts on Quasi-Religious Foodways"

Speaker at the multicultural performance art and science event *Language Eating*, Wäino Aaltonen Art Museum, Turku, Finland, 2015.

"Soft landing after turbulence?"

Participant in closing panel discussion at the 18:th Symposium of the *Nordic Network for Intercultural Communication*, Helsinki, 2011.

"Engaging Faith. Toward a Practical Theology of the Arts"

Guest lecturer at *Florida Southern College*, Lakeland, USA, 20.1 2011.

"Rajankäyntiä ja vuoropuhelua Euroopassa – kulttuurien ja uskontojen rinnakkaiselo"

Invited speaker at *Forum for Culture and Religion 2010*, Turku, Finland, 2010.

"Abrahams barn möter i litteraturen"

Invited speaker in the lecture series *Jewish Culture* in Turku City Library, Turku, Finland, 2010.

"Challenges of Pluralism in the Post-Secular Age"

Invited speaker at the seminar *Exploring the Post-Secular*, Åbo Akademi University, PCCR Centre of Excellence in Research, Turku, Finland, 2010.

"Rethinking Social Inclusion and the Web 2.0: What's in Store for Language Education?"

Invited speaker at webinar arranged by the EU project *Language Learning and Social Media – Six Key Dialogues*, Turun Yliopisto, Turku, Finland, 2010.

"The Changing Faces of Dialogue. Art as an Arena for Interreligious Encounters"

Invited speaker at the conference *Dialogue and Law as Tools of Muslim Integration into European Societies*, Utrecht University, the Netherlands, 2010.

"Dialog mellan religioner idag"

Invited speaker in a lecture series on religion and world-views in Turku City Library, Turku, Finland, 2009.

"When Language Is Not Enough': A Muslim Perspective on Music and Interreligious Dialogue"

Invited speaker at the seminar *Music and Islam*, Turun Yliopisto, Turku, Finland, 2009.

"Konst och kreativ religionsdialog"

Invited speaker at a seminar on religion and place (*Uskonnon paikat*), *The Finnish Society for the Study of Religion & the Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma*, Helsinki, Finland, 2009.

"Forskningsetik i skrivprocessen"

Invited speaker at a seminar on research ethics for doctoral students in comparative religion in Finland, *The Finnish Society for the Study of Religion*, Turku, Finland, 2008.

"Interpreting Interreligious Dialogue"

Invited speaker at the seminar *Islam in Finland. Muslims and Researchers in Dialogue*, Åbo Akademi University, Turku, Finland, 2008.

"Övertygad men öppen. Den dialogiska världsbilden"

Invited speaker at a seminar on worldviews in transition arranged by Åbo Akademi University Library, Åland University of Applied Sciences and Mariehamns litteraturdagar, Mariehamn, Åland, 2008.

"Dialogue between Religions and Cultures: What Can We Do to Reduce that the Religions Divide People?"

Invited speaker at the conference *Possibilities of Peace in Kashmir. Youth in Dialogue*, Turku, Finland, 2007.

"Erilaisuuden monta mahdollisuutta – kulttuurikohtaaminen rajanylityksenä"

Invited speaker at the meeting of *Unifem* on the International women's day, Turku, Finland, 2007.

"Teknik, ekonomi, kultur"

Invited speaker together at the autumn gathering of Svenska Tekniska vetenskapsakademin (Swedish Technical Academic Society of Finland), Turku, Finland, 2005.

"Promoverades tal"

Speaker (as a representative of the doctoral graduates) at the Doctoral Conferral banquet, Åbo Akademi University, Turku, Finland, 2005.

"Vanitas Vanitatum?"

Invited speaker at annual banquet, the association for students of History *Kleio*, Åbo Akademi University, Turku, Finland, 2005.

"Plenary presentation of current research"

Guest speaker at the yearly meeting, *Finnish Society for the Study of Religion*, Helsinki, Finland, 2005.

"Industrihumaniora – erfarenheter från fältet"

Guest speaker at the symposium *Rum för humaniora*, Åbo Akademi University, Finland, 2005.

#### **AWARDS & PRICES**

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- Humanities Deed of the Year 2017 (Vuoden humanistiteko), for Aboagora, University of Turku

- Docent of the Year (selected by the Association for docents at the Universities in Turku), 2016
- Selected to Oxford Round Table, sessions on religion and interreligious encounters, University of Oxford, 2008 and 2012
- Per Brahe Research Award, Åbo Akademi University Foundation (12 000 €), 2004
- Captain Kurt Wallenius' Friendship Award, Student Union at Åbo Akademi University, 2001
- Brahe Wings nr. 399 (honorary medal), Student Union at Åbo Akademi University, 1999

## **SCHOLARSHIPS & RESEARCH GRANTS**

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### *Personal grants*

- Research Doctor, Academy of Finland 2008–2010, 180 000 €.
- NorFa (Nordisk Forskerutdanningsakademi), mobility grant, Uppsala University, 25 300 NOK (2002)
- Naisten Tiedesäätiö (Research Foundation for Women), 3000 € (2006)
- Oskar Öflund Foundation, 3000 € (2005)
- Otto A. Malm Donation Fund, 5300 € (2002)
- Research Institute of Åbo Akademi University Foundation, 78 000 FIM (2001)
- The Olin Research Grant (Åbo Akademi Student Union), 78 000 FIM (2001)

### *Publication grants (main applicant)*

- NOP-HS publication grants for *Nordisk judaistik/Scandinavian Jewish Studies*: 72 000 SEK (2016), 60 000 SEK (2017), 180 000 SEK (2018–2020); For *Temenos. Nordic Journal of Comparative Religion* 200 000 NOK (2012–2014), 165 000 NOK (2015–2017).

### *Project Funding*

- Inez and Julius Polin Institute for Theological Research (ÅAU): for a research project on vernacular Judaism, 70 000 € (2019) 70 000 € (2020). Main applicant.
- Ella and Georg Ehrnrooth Foundation: for a publication project on vernacular Judaism, 31 000 € (2018). Main applicant.
- ÅAU Foundation: for the Centre of Excellence in Research "Young Adults and Religion in a Global Perspective", 1 000 000 € (2015–2018). My role: vice-director. Main applicant: Peter Nynäs.
- Kone Foundation: for the arts and sciences project *Aboagora* ([www.aboagora.fi](http://www.aboagora.fi)), 10 000 € (2011, 2012). 200 000 € (2019–2022). Main applicant for working group.
- Svenska kulturfonden: for *Aboagora*, 10 000 € (2011), 8 000 € (2016, 2017, 2018). Main applicant for working group.
- ÅAU Foundation: for the Centre of Excellence in Research "Post-Secular Culture and a Changing Religious Landscape in Finland", 1 250 000 € (2010–2014). My role: vice-director. Main applicant: Peter Nynäs.

## **MEMBERSHIP IN ACADEMIC SOCIETIES**

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- Kalevala-seura (membership by invitation only)
- Society of Swedish Literature in Finland (SLS)
- European Association for Jewish Studies (EAJS)
- European Society for Intercultural Theology and Interreligious Studies (ESITIS)
- International Society for the Sociology of Religion (ISSR)
- Finnish Peace Research Association
- International Academic Network "Children of Abraham"
- Nordic Network for Intercultural Communication (NIC)
- The Finnish Society for the Study of Religion (SUS)
- The Society for the Study of Ethnic Relations and International Migration (ETMU)

## **INTERESTS**

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- Certified swimming teacher