

# CURRICULUM VITAE



## Serafim Seppälä

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*Born 1970. Ordinated monk and priest in the Orthodox Church of Finland.*

*Hobbies: Armenian music and visual arts, Jewish Mizrahi music*

### DEGREES

- Matriculation examination, Toholammin lukio 1989
- Master of Arts, Helsinki University 1996 (Two main subjects: Arabic and Islamic studies, Semitic Studies)
- Doctor of Philosophy, Helsinki University 2002, Semitic Studies. Dissertation: *In Speechless Ecstasy. Expression and Interpretation of Mystical Experience in Classical Syriac and Sufi Literature.*

### ACADEMIC CAREER

- Lecturer, University of Joensuu, 2003
- Lecturer, University of Helsinki 2005–06
- Professor of Systematic theology and patristics (Orthodox studies), University of Eastern Finland (Joensuu) 2007–

### SCIENTIFIC BOARD MEMBERSHIPS

- The Finnish Graduate School of Theology, board member (2009–2011)
- The Finnish Patristic Society, Societas Patristica Fennica, board member (2012–), vice chairman (2017–)
- Finnish Institute in the Middle East, board member or vice board member (2003–)

### SUPERVISED DOCTORAL DISSERTATIONS

- Pekka Metso, *Divine Presence in the Eucharistic Theology of Nicholas Cabasilas*. University of Eastern Finland, 2010.
- Eeva Raunistola-Juutinen, *Äiti ja nunna. Ortodoksiset naiskuvat*. UEF 2012.
- Jaakko Olkinuora, *Byzantine hymnography for the feast of the entrance of the Theotokos*. UEF 2015.
- Ari Koponen, *The interruption of Christ: the language, beauty, and theological aesthetics of David Bentley Hart*. UEF 2019.

### OPPONENT IN DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

- Lauri Kemppainen, *Väkivallan ja rauhan ontologiat*, University of Helsinki 2016.

## PEER-REVIEWED ARTICLES IN ENGLISH

- Holy Spirit in Isaac of Nineveh and East Syrian Mysticism. – *The Holy Spirit in the Fathers of the Church*. Four Courts Press. Dublin 2010, 127–150.
- Music in the Temple of Jerusalem during the Time of the Apostles. – *Music, State and Nation. Proceedings of the Third International Conference on Orthodox Church Music*. ISOCM 2010, 27–38.
- The Place of Virgin Mary in the Ontology of Mystical Experience. – *Gotteserlebnis und Gotteslehre. Christliche und islamische Mystik im Orient*. Göttinger Orientforschungen / Syriaca. Harrassowitz-Verlag, Wiesbaden 2011, 131–145.
- Reminiscences of Icons in the Qur'an? – *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations 22:1*. Routledge 2011, 3–21.
- Is Virgin Mary a Prophetess? Patristic, Syriac and Islamic Views. – *Parole de l'Orient 36* (2011), 367–379.
- Baptismal mystery in St. Ephrem the Syrian and *Hymnen de Epiphania*, – *Ablution, Initiation, and Baptism in Late Antiquity. Texts and Rites in Judaism, Graeco-Roman Religion, and Early Christianity*. Berlin & New York: Walter de Gruyter 2011, 1139–1177.
- Will of Man and Will of God in the Poetical Vision of Narekatsi. – *The Mystery of Christ in the Fathers of the Church*. Dublin: Four Courts Press 2012, 161–178.
- Functions of Beauty in St. Basil the Great. – *The Actuality of St. Basil the Great*. Åbo Akademi 2012, 235–256.
- Theodore Abu Qurrah's Narrative Strategies for Dealing with Muslim Antagonists In *Maymar fī 'ikrām al-'ayqûnât*, – *Parole de l'Orient 37* (2012), 271–289.
- Interpretation of Mountains in Armenian Miniatures. – *Series Byzantina. Studies on Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Art*. Volume IX. Warsaw 2012, 113–128.
- Cappadocian Vision of Beauty: the Emergence of Byzantine Aesthetics. – *Saint Emperor Constantine and Christianity Volume II* – Свети цар Константин и хришћанство II. Niš (Serbia) 2013, 105–115.
- Is Existence a Song? Orthodox Remarks on the Relation between Music and Ontology. – *Unity and Variety in Orthodox Music: Theory and Practice. Proceedings of the Fourth International Conference on Orthodox Church Music*. ISOCM 2013, 29–42.
- Meditation in the East Syrian Tradition. – *Meditation in Judaism, Christianity and Islam*. – London: Bloomsbury Academic 2013, 107–122.
- "New Sinai" – Severus of Antioch on Virgin Mary. – *Begegnungen in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart. Beiträge dialogischer Existenz*. Berlin: Lit Verlag 2015, 137–146.
- Angelic Mysticism in John of Dalyatha, *Parole de l'Orient 41* (2015), 425–433.
- Genocide descending: Half-Jews in Poland and Half-Armenians in Turkey. – *International Journal of Armenian Genocide Studies* Vol 2, No 1, 2015, 38–57.
- The 'Temple of Non-Being' at Tsitsernakaberd and remembrance of the Armenian genocide: an interpretation. – *Approaching Religion 6/2* (2016), 26–39.
- The early history of religion (dis)proving its truth. The historical argument in Theodore Abū Qurrah and 'Abd al-Jabbār. – *Approaching religion*, Vol. 8, No. 2, 2018, 27–39.  
<https://journal.fi/ar/issue/view/5345>

Deacons in *Acts of Thomas* and related Syriac Literature. – *Deacons and Diakonia in Early Christianity: The First Two Centuries*. Mohr Siebeck 2018, 227–243.

Anathematized Church fathers – a gateway to ecumenism? – *Review of Ecumenical Studies* 11 (1) 2019. DOI: <http://10.0.9.174/ress-2019-0002>

Angels in the Life of Adam and Eve and Syriac Testament of Adam. – *Life of Adam and Eve: Using Jewish Traditions and Confronting Gnostic Reversed Exegesis*. Studies in the reception history of the Bible 9. Åbo Akademi University 2019. 143–175

Dreams in the East Syrian Mysticism. – *Parole de l'Orient* (45) 2019.

Forsaken or not? Patristic argumentation on the forsakenness of Jews revisited. – *Review of Ecumenical Studies* 11 (2) 2019. <https://doi.org/10.2478/ress-2019-0014>

The concept of deification in Greek and Syriac. – *Review of Ecumenical Studies* 11 (3) 2019. 439–455. DOI: [10.2478/ress-2019-0031](https://doi.org/10.2478/ress-2019-0031)

Liturgical Representations of Jerusalem in Eastern Christian Traditions. – *Understanding Spiritual Meaning of Jerusalem in Three Abrahamic Religions*, Leiden: Brill 2019. 139-160.

Three enemies in John Chrysostom's *Adversus Judaeos*. – *Homilies in Context*. Studia Patristica Fennica 9. Suomen patristinen seura 2020, 29–77.

A movie with the structure of Byzantine liturgy: *Megalexandros* by Theo Angelopoulos. – *ISOCM Journal* 2020.

Aristides and Athenagoras on Angels: from Christian–Jewish Polemics to Universalism. *Papers and Monographs of the Finnish Institute at Athens*, 2020. 127–141.

Return to Mosaic Torah? Torah in the Christian–Islamic polemics of Theodore Abū Qurrah and ‘Abd al-Jabbār” (Forthcoming in 2020/21, Brill)

Threat of Conversion in the Earliest Syriac Writings on Islam?  
(Forthcoming in 2021, Brill)

Portrayal of Jews in Syriac and Early Byzantine Mystical literature.  
(Forthcoming in 2021, Peeters)

## OTHER ACADEMIC ARTICLES IN ENGLISH

The Idea of Knowledge in East Syrian Mysticism. – *Studia Orientalia* 101, Helsinki 2007, 265–277.

Angelology of St. Isaac the Syrian, *St Isaac the Syrian and His Spiritual Legacy*. – New York: St Vladimir's Seminary Press 2015, 97–113.

Documentary and Artistic Perspectives on the Armenian Genocide in the Golden Apricot Film Festival. *International Journal of Armenian Genocide Studies* Vol 3, No 1, 2016, 105–115.

## SELECTED MONOGRAPHS

- Paratiisi on idässä. Lähi-idän kristittyjen ja syyrialaisen kirjallisuuden historiaa sekä kokoelma syyrialaisen isien opetuksia.* Suomen itämainen seura, Helsinki 1999. [364 s.]
- Kerubin silmin. Luostareissa, luolissa, erämaissa ja pylväillä kilvoitelleiden syyrialaisen askeettien historiaa.* Suomen itämainen seura, Helsinki 2002. [382 s.]
- lisak Niniveläinen: *Kootut teokset.* Valamon luostari 2005. [914 s.]
- Tuomaan teot. Johdanto ja käännös.* Suomen eksegeettisen seuran julkaisuja 91. Helsinki 2006. [294 s.]
- Vapaus.* Helsinki: Kirjapaja 2007.
- Araratista itään. Kauneuden ja kärsimyksen Armenia.* Helsinki: Kirjapaja 2007.
- Theodoros Abu Qurra: Ikonien kunnioittamisesta. Käännös ja johdanto.* Maahenki 2008.
- Kultainen Jerusalem. Pyhän kaupungin idea juutalaisuudessa, kristinuskossa ja islamissa.* Kirjapaja 2008. [574 s.]
- Elämän äiti. Neitsyt Maria varhaiskristillisessä ajattelussa.* Maahenki 2010. [394 s.]
- Kauneus. Jumalan kieli.* Kirjapaja 2010. [264 s.]
- Armenian kansanmurhan perintö.* Like 2011. [395 s.]
- Valo jää. Dostojevski, Gibran, Kazantzakis ja Jumalan mysteeri.* Kirjapaja 2011. [343 s.]
- Missä on liikaa, sieltä puuttuu jotain. Juutalaisen huumorin maailma.* Kirjapaja 2012.
- Naiseus. Varhaiskristillisiä ja juutalaisia näkökulmia.* Kirjapaja. Helsinki 2013.
- Ikonien filosofia.* Kirjapaja. Helsinki 2014.
- Vaienneita ääniä. Kunnianosoitus kadonneelle kulttuurille.* Kirjapaja. Helsinki 2015.
- Taivaalliset voimat. Enkelit juutalaisuudessa ja varhaiskristillisyydessä.* Kirjapaja. Helsinki 2016.
- Keisarin edessä. Kaksi ateenalaista apologiaa.* Helsinki: Gaudeamus 2017.
- Öster om Ararat: En bok om skönhetens och lidandets Armenien.* Skellefteå: Artos 2017.

## PEER-REVIEWED ACADEMIC ARTICLES IN FINNISH

- Gilgul – juutalainen sielunvaellusoppi. Flumen saxosum sonans.* Åbo Akademi 2010, 247–268.
- Ortodoksinen kristillisuus ja juutalaisuus: paradigmaattisia yhtäläisyyksiä. – *Lähetysteologinen Aikakauskirja (LTA)* nro 14, 2011.
- Kristuksen opetusten teologia: ortodoksinen näkökulma. – Joonas Salminen (toim.): *Jeesuksen opetukset.* Suomalaisen teologisen kirjallisuusseuran julkaisuja 273. Helsinki 2012, 138–148.

Ruumis patristisena kysymyksenä. – *Ruumiillisuus varhaiskristillisessä teologiassa*. Studia Patristica Fennica 1. Helsinki 2014, 7–24.

Pyhä Henki itäsyrialaisessa mystiikassa. – *Pyhä Henki varhaiskristillisessä teologiassa*. Studia Patristica Fennica 2. Helsinki 2015, 29–57.

Syyrian Der Zor: armenialainen Auschwitz ja taistelu muistosta. – *Teologinen aikakauskirja* 1/2015, 148–162.

Liturginen liike Bysantissa: Germanos Konstantinopolilaisen liturgiakommentaarin tulkintaa. – Peter Peitsalo (ed.): *Liturgia, taide ja estetiikka. Liturgy, the Arts, and Aesthetics*. Helsinki: Hymnologian ja liturgiikan seura. *Hymnos* 2015, 59–71.

Luterilainen kirkko ekumeenisessa peilissä. – *Armon horisontit. Huomisen luterilaisuus*. Kirjapaja 2016, 211–222.

Kuinka kirjaimellista on kirjaimellinen tulkinta? – *Luominen varhaiskristillisessä teologiassa*. Studia Patristica Fennica 5. Helsinki 2016, 65–78.

Suitsuttamisen merkitysulottuvuuksia bysanttilaisen ja syyrialaisen liturgian kommentaareissa (700–900). – *Näkökulmia varhaisen kirkon liturgiaan*. Studia Patristica Fennica 6. Helsinki 2017.

Kansallisen hengellisyyden luominen varhaisessa armenialaisessa historiankirjoituksessa. – *Ortodoksia* 2018, 36–73.

Jumala tiedon kohteena: Theodoros Abu Qurra ja Johannes Diakoni. – *Luterilaisuuden ytimessä*. Toim. Matti Kotiranta. Suomalaisen teologisen kirjallisuusseuran julkaisuja 288. Helsinki: Suomalainen teologinen kirjallisuusseura 2018, 209–230.

Yliolevaisen kolminaisuuden koraaleja? Hart, Bach ja musiikin metafysiikka. – *Filosofina historiassa*. Toim. Teuvo Laitila & Ilkka Huhta. Studia missiologica et oecumenica Fennica 62. Helsinki: Luther-Agricola seura 2018, 52–67.

Diakonissan rooli ja tulevaisuus Armenian apostolisessa kirkossa. – *Diakonian tutkimus* 2/2018, 34–59.

Hajoavan muistin monumentit: Julfan hautakivien transformaatio. – *Thanatos* 2/2018. 127–162.

Erämaaäitien sanat ja niiden tulkinnat. – *Teologinen aikakauskirja* 2/2019, 60–74.

Jumalansynnyttäjän ristin juurella: patristiikan ja ikoniteologian rajankäyntiä. – *Ortodoksia* 2/2019, 149–176.

Ortodoksinen missiologia. – *Ekumeeninen missiologia*. Kirkon tutkimuskeskus 2020.

Islam kanonisessa kirjallisuudessa. – *Ortodoksia* 2020.

## OTHER ARTICLES IN FINNISH

- hundreds of them!

## EDITORIAL ACTIVITIES

*Synaksarion*. 12 volumes. 2003–2019.

Ikoni & kulttuuri, chief editor (2019–)

## BOOK REVIEWS (selection)

Ihidayutha. *Acta Orientalia*, Oslo 1997.

Concept of Sainthood in Early Islamic Mysticism. *Acta Orientalia*, Oslo 1998.

West Syrian Liturgical Theology. *Sobornost* 26:2, Oxford 2004.

The Book of Steps. The Syriac Liber Graduum. *Sobornost* 27:1, Oxford 2005.

Second Century Apologists Revisited. In Defence of Christianity. Early Christian Apologists. *Patristica Nordica Annularia* 2016, 116–117.

Eastern Rome and the Rise of Islam: History and Prophecy. *Patristica Nordica Annularia* 31 2016, 131–134.

## PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES

A paper given in each, except: (\*) no paper, (\*\*) two papers given, (\*\*\*) Keynote lecture

- IX Symposium Syriacum. 20–23. Sept. 2004. Beirut, Lebanon.
- VII Conference of Christian Arabic Studies. 24–25 Sept. 2004. Beirut, Lebanon. (\*)
- Orthodox Monasticism in Finland and the Baltics. 22–24. Sept. 2005. Exarchic Monastery of St. Mary of Grottaferrata, Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople. Grottaferrata, Italy.
- Saint John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople, 1600<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of his death. International Scientific Symposium. 13–18 Sept. 2007, Ecumenical Patriarchate, Phanar, Istanbul. (\*)
- Gotteserlebnis und Gotteslehre. Christliche und islamische Mystik im Orient. 18–19. Apr. 2008. Institut für Spezialforschungen der Universität Göttingen, Abteilung Ökumenische Theologie unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der orientalischen Kirchen- und Missionsgeschichte. Göttingen, Germany

- Ablution, Initiation, and Baptism in Late Antiquity. Sept. 2008. Cultural Institute of Norway. Rome, Italy.
- X Symposium Syriacum. 22–25 Sept. 2008. Granada, Spain.
- VIII Conference of Christian Arabic Studies. 26–27 Sept. 2008. Granada, Spain.
- VII International Patristic Conference. 13–16. Nov. 2008. Maynooth, Ireland.
- Music, State and Nation. Third International Conference on Orthodox Church Music. 8–14. June 2009. University of Joensuu, Finland.
- Mariologinen konferenssi. 17–18 Apr. 2010. Helsinki, Finland
- Art of the Armenian Diaspora. 28–30 Apr. 2010. Muzeum Zamoskie. Zamosc, Poland
- The Society of Biblical Literature 2010 International Meeting. (\*\*) 25–29 July 2010. Tartu, Estonia.
- The Actuality of St. Basil the Great. International conference, 20–23 Sept. 2010. Åbo Akademi University.
- The Armenian Genocide and Scandinavian Response. International Conference dedicated to the 150th anniversary of Fridtjof Nansen. 20–21 April 2011. Yerevan, Armenia
- Spirituality and the Life Cycle. Loch Lectures. 25–26 May 2012, Ouranopolis, Greece
- Saint Emperor Constantine and Christianity. Свети цар Константин и хришћанство. 30 May 2013, Niš (Ниш), Serbia.
- ПРЕПОДОБНЫЙ ИСААК СИРИН И ЕГО ДУХОВНОЕ НАСЛЕДИЕ. 10 Oct 2013. Moscow, Russia
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Valamo International Symposium on Health and Culture. (\*\*\*) 3 Dec 2014.
- Comparative Analysis of 20th Century Genocides. 8 July 2015. Yerevan, Armenia.
- Art Approaching Science and Religion. (\*\*\*) 11 May 2016, Åbo, Finland.
- Jews in a Changing world. 10<sup>th</sup> International Conference. 26 April 2017. Riga, Latvia.
- Life of Adam and Eve. 22 May 2017. Åbo Akademi
- Fifth Finnish Colloquium of Middle East and North Africa Studies. 29 May 2017. Joensuu.
- The Challenge of the Mosaic Torah in Judaism, Christianity and Islam. 16 Aug 2017.
- Religious Polemics and Encounters in Late Antiquity: Boundaries, Conversions and Persuasion. 23–24 Aug 2018. Åbo Akademi
- Music and the Sacred. Nov 2018. Helsinki
- XVIII International Conference on Patristic Studies Oxford University 19– 24 Aug 2019
- Symposium on Saints and Sainthood – Past and Present. UEF 17.10.2019
- Children and Nation: Forcible Child Transfer and the Genocide Convention through a Historical and Contemporary Lens. Yerevan, Armenia. ~~June 24–26, 2020~~ **POSTPONED**
- XIII Symposium Syriacum. Paris. ~~6–8 July 2020.~~ **POSTPONED**
- XI Congrès d'études arabes chrétiennes. Paris. ~~9–11 July 2020.~~ **POSTPONED**