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The philosopher **Jaakko Hintikka** died at the age of 86

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08.13.2015 14:04

Logician and philosopher **Jaakko Hintikka**, died Thursday after a brief illness at the age of 86 in Porvoo, Finland. Hintikka's death announced on the University of Helsinki.

Hintikka was born in the rural municipality of Helsinki in 1929. He has a doctorate in mathematical logic at the University of Helsinki in 1953.

He was appointed to the age of 30 Professor of Moral Philosophy at the University of Helsinki. After a career on the Finland Hintikka moved to the United States, where he served as professor of philosophy, inter alia, Stanford and Boston universities.

According to the University of Helsinki Hintikka was an internationally renowned Finnish researchers. He made his international breakthrough possible worlds semantics and epistemic logic of the inventor.

In the last years of his life Hintikka lived in Porvoo, along with his wife, philosopher **Ghita Holmström-Hintikka** with.

Hintikka's death, first reported on Hufvudstadsbladet.

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In Memoriam: Jaakko Hintikka (1929-2015)

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There's a [brief notice here](#) in Finnish (though Google translate does a pretty good job with it). Hintikka taught at the University of Helsinki, Stanford University, Florida State University, and Boston University, where he was professor emeritus. He made seminal contributions to mathematical and philosophical logic, but also wrote widely on other topics in philosophy. I will add links to English-language memorials as they appear.

UPDATE: Philosopher Brad Wray kindly sends along the English-language announcement from Helsinki:

It is my sad duty to tell the news that the Finnish logician and philosopher Jaakko Hintikka died at the age of 86 after a brief illness on August 12, 2015. In the previous week, he participated actively as a speaker in the CLMPS and LC at the University of Helsinki, including the congress banquet on last Friday.

Jaakko Hintikka was born on 12 January 1929 in the Helsinki county (Vantaa) in Finland. He studied mathematics (with Rolf Nevanlinna) and philosophy (with Georg Henrik von Wright) at the University of Helsinki since 1947, and defended his doctoral dissertation on distributive normal forms in 1953. After his Ph.D. studies he worked as junior fellow at Harvard University in 1956-59, and became in 1957 (independently of Stig Kanger) the founder of possible world semantics. In 1962 he published his groundbreaking work *Knowledge and Belief on epistemic logic*. In 1959 Hintikka was appointed, at the age of 30, professor of Practical Philosophy at the University of Helsinki. In 1964 he became also professor of philosophy at Stanford University which - with Patrick Suppes and Dagfinn Føllesdal - was one of the leading centers of philosophy of science and philosophical logic. Hintikka's new interests included inductive logic and semantic information. He shared his time between Stanford and Helsinki until the end of the 1970s. In 1965 Hintikka started his work with D. Reidel's Publishing Company (later Kluwer Academic Publishers) in Holland as the editor-in-chief of the journal *Synthese* and the book series *Synthese Library*. This activity, which has continued until 2002, made Hintikka the most influential editor of philosophical works in the English speaking world.

In 1970 Hintikka was appointed to a Research Professorship in the Academy of Finland which allowed him to establish a research group of younger Finnish scholars working mainly in logic, philosophy of science, philosophy of language, and history of philosophy. As a teacher and supervisor, Hintikka has been highly influential though the richness of his new ideas and research initiatives. Many of the former students of Hintikka have been appointed to chairs in philosophy (Risto Hilpinen, Raimo Tuomela, Juhani Pietarinen, Ilkka Niiniluoto, Simo Knuuttila, Veikko Rantala, Juha Manninen, Lauri Carlson, Esa Saarinen, Matti Sintonen, Gabriel Sandu).

In 1978 Jaakko Hintikka divorced his first wife Soili and married an American philosopher Merrill Bristow Provence (1939-87). In 1978 Jaakko and Merrill were appointed at the Florida State University in Tallahassee. After Merrill Hintikka's death in 1987 Hintikka married a Finnish philosopher Ghita Holmström. In 1990 Hintikka became professor of philosophy at Boston University and moved to Marlborough, MA. He retired from Boston in 2014 and moved back to Finland.

Besides his activities in research, teaching, and publication, Hintikka served in many important positions in international organizations, among others vice president of Association for Symbolic Logic in 1968-71, vice president of the Division of Logic, Methodology and Philosophy of Science of the International Union of History

and Philosophy of Science (DLMPS/IUHPS) in 1971-75 and president in 1975, president of the Charles S. Peirce Society in 1997, and the chairman of the organizing committee of the Twentieth World Congress of Philosophy in 1998. As a proof of the appreciation of Hintikka's work, a volume dedicated to him in the Library of Living Philosophers was published in 2006.

Hintikka's publications cover an exceptionally wide range of topics. During his career in more than 60 years he has published about 40 books or monographs, edited 20 books, and authored more than 300 scholarly articles in international journals or collections. His main works deal with mathematical logic (proof theory, infinitary logics, IF-logic), intensional logic and propositional attitudes, philosophy of logic and mathematics, philosophy of language (game-theoretical semantics, quantifiers, anaphora), philosophy of science (interrogative model of inquiry), epistemology, and history of philosophy (Aristotle, Descartes, Kant, Peirce, Frege, Wittgenstein).

ILKKA NIINILUOTO

CLMPS 2015, Chair of the Local Organizing Committee
University of Helsinki

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