



Seminar

MIRJA HARTIMO

Erik Allardt Fellow, SCAS.

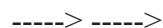
Docent, Theoretical Philosophy, University of Tampere and University of Helsinki

The Phenomenology of Sciences and Humanities

Tuesday, 1 April, 11:00 a.m.

In the Thunberg Lecture Hall
SCAS, Linneanum, Thunbergsvägen 2, Uppsala
www.swedishcollegium.se

S W E D I S H
C O L L E G I U M
for ADVANCED STUDY



ABOUT MIRJA HARTIMO

Mirja Hartimo received her Ph.D. in philosophy from Boston University with the thesis “Edmund Husserl’s Phenomenology and the Development of Mathematics in the Late Nineteenth Century” (2005). Since 2006, she has worked as a post-doctoral researcher at the University of Tampere and the University of Helsinki, most recently at the Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies (HCAS) in 2012-2013.

Hartimo has published several journal articles on Husserl and mathematics. Among these are “Husserl and the Algebra of Logic” in *Axiomathes* (2012); “Husserl’s Pluralistic Phenomenology of Mathematics” in *Philosophia Mathematica* (2012); “From Geometry to Phenomenology” in *Synthese* (2008); “Towards Completeness: Husserl on Theories of Manifolds 1890-1901” in *Synthese* (2007); and “Logic as a Universal Medium or Logic as a Calculus? Husserl and the Presuppositions of ‘the Ultimate Presupposition of Twentieth Century Philosophy’” in *Southern Journal of Philosophy* (2006). She has also edited the book *Phenomenology and Mathematics* (Springer, 2010), and another one with Sara Heinämaa and Timo Miettinen, entitled *Phenomenology and the Transcendental* (forthcoming, Routledge). Hartimo is a review editor of *Journal for the History of Analytical Philosophy*.

During her stay at SCAS, Hartimo will explore the phenomenological point of view to the sciences and humanities in general.

ABSTRACT

Phenomenology is a philosophical discipline originally founded by Edmund Husserl (1859-1938). Husserl’s initial motivation was to provide non-psychological foundations for mathematics so that the senses of logic, mathematics and also mathematical physics could be understood and reflected upon. By embracing more and more new features of human experience, the method generalized into a study of any experience from the nature of perception to our vocational lives, from embodiment to the role of tradition and the life-world. In his last works Husserl described the sciences and humanities to be thoroughly embedded in the life-world. According to him, the scientific objectivity is constituted by means of the subjective life-world experiences.

Instead of discussing his results, however, this talk will focus on Husserl’s *methodology* with an aim of reflecting upon whether phenomenology could offer us an interesting and useful approach to study contemporary sciences and humanities. It is argued that Husserl’s approach is a combination of several distinguishable aspects. First, it includes examination of activities in terms of their “*senses*.” This means that the sciences are examined in terms of the goals of the scientists. To find those out, one should “enter a community of empathy” with the scientists. At the same time, the phenomenologist is supposed to clarify these goals and the used concepts, by examining their *constitution*. The purpose of this is to find out the presuppositions of these goals and whether the examined activity is genuine. Thus it enables critical reflection of the activities. Furthermore, especially in his last texts, Husserl emphasizes the need to take into account the historical genesis of the activity in question. This enables the phenomenologist to uncover the role of the tradition that may conceal the original sense of the activity. The three methods together form an approach of *internal criticism* with which the activities can be critically reflected upon and renewed in accordance to their own senses and thus without a recourse to any a priori postulated external standards or mechanisms.