

EDITORIAL

Friedrich Stadler

Dear members and colleagues,

I am pleased to present to you the first issue of our web-based EPSA Newsletter, which will serve as an information forum for all EPSA related activities and as a platform for the communication between the SC and the members of EPSA. The Newsletter is scheduled to appear at least twice per year and will be extended by further sections if needed.

This first number contains reports by Mauricio Suárez and Henk de Regt as chairs of the Local Organizing Committees of our past two conferences in Madrid and Amsterdam with references to the proceedings already published (two volumes of EPSA07) and one volume for EPSA09 to be printed soon.

A preview of our forthcoming 3rd Conference in Athens (October 5–8, 2011) with the Call for Papers still running till the end of February 2011) is presented by the founding President Stathis Psillos, together with an account of the pre-history and first two years of the successful development of EPSA so far.

Another pleasing event is the publication of our new journal *European Journal of Philosophy of Science* (EJPS), which is announced by its Editor-in-Chief Carl Hoefer and Deputy Editor Mauro Dorato. This promising publication project is getting started with a permanent call for submissions and will be the scholarly medium in the field of philosophy of science in Europe and European philosophy of science for philosophers all over the world.



Entrance to EPSA Office at IVC, Vienna

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Editorial	
Friedrich Stadler	1
Report on EPSA07: The first Conference of EPSA	
Mauricio Suárez	3
Report on EPSA09: The second Conference of EPSA	
Henk W. de Regt	6
A (Pre-)History of EPSA	
Stathis Psillos	9
Launch of EJPS: A note from the editors	
Carl Hoefer & Mauro Dorato	11
For European Philosophy of Science	
Maria Carla Galavotti	13
A Note from the Publisher Springer	
Ties Nijssen	16

In addition, Maria Carla Galavotti, Steering Committee member of EPSA and Chair of the ESF Research Networking Program The Philosophy of Science in a European Perspective (PSE), is dealing with the encouraging interaction between EPSA and PSE, which has become manifest with the conferences as well as with some exciting publication projects.

Ties Nijssen, the representative of our Publisher Springer, refers to the recent publication activities and the forthcoming new membership arrangements.

As already announced, we are going to introduce biennial membership fees, which include:

- Subscription to EJPS
- EPSA Proceedings
- Reduced registration fees for our conferences

The new package of membership fees – to be confirmed by the next Assembly in Athens – is as follows for 2011–2012:

- Students: € 80
- Members with earnings below € 40.000 per year: € 120
- Members with earnings above € 40.000 per year: € 160
- Sponsors: € 400

In this regard we are pleased to announce that we succeeded in realizing an agreement with our American sister organisation, the Philosophy of Science Association (PSA), to incentivize a double EPSA and PSA membership: Individuals who are already members of the PSA can join the EPSA by paying reduced membership fees while benefiting from the same arrangements! The reduced EPSA-membership fees for PSA members are as follows:

- Members with earnings below € 40.000: € 100
- Members with earnings above € 40.000: € 140

(A similar model of reduced membership fees will be available to EPSA members who are members of PSA or wish to join the PSA.)

All members are invited to renew their membership as soon as possible according to these new rules via web. The whole membership management will be taken over by Springer with forthcoming May.

We will be pleased to welcome new members motivated by the new setting, of course. Therefore, we ask our members to draw the attention of their colleagues and friends in the field of philosophy of science to the new membership package, because the membership fees are the only regular source of income for EPSA so

far, and an increasing amount of members is a prerequisite for the flourishing future of our community. I am grateful to the members of the Steering Committee (Mauricio Suárez as my deputy, and to Theodore Arabatzis, Henk de Regt, Steven French, Maria Carla Galavotti, Gürol Irzik, Miklos Redei, Cristina Rolin, Matti Sintonen) for their nice cooperation and to Karoly Kokai as reliable Secretary of EPSA at the Institute Vienna Circle. Especially with regard to the Newsletter, thanks go to Daniel Kubly, who created this attractive new format of the EPSA Newsletter and who will serve pleasingly as an Editorial Assistant further on, the next issue to be released before the 3rd conference in Athens.

Friedrich Stadler (President of EPSA)



ABOUT THE AUTHOR Friedrich Stadler is Professor of History and Philosophy of Science (Joint Appointment) at the University of Vienna, Austria and Director of the Institute Vienna Circle (IVC). He holds a D.Phil. in history and philosophy (University of Salzburg). He has published on various topics in modern history and philosophy of science, with a focus on Logical Empiricism in the context of intellectual migration and exile studies, theory and methodology of contemporary history and historiography.

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**REPORT ON EPSA07:
THE FIRST
CONFERENCE OF EPSA***Mauricio Suárez*

The first conference of the European Philosophy of Science Association took place in 2007 in Madrid, at Complutense University (14-17 November). The conference constituted the official public launching of the new Association, and provided its first visible and tangible outcome. Since it was founded in 2006 the Association has had a warm and welcoming reception, which was reflected in the very enthusiastic and optimistic atmosphere at its first conference.

The Steering Committee (SC) first selects a Scientific or Programme Committee (PC) for the conference. It was decided that two members of the SC would chair the PC, and that members of the community, including some from outside Europe, would be invited to fill in the remaining positions, under a reasonable representation by country, styles, and gender. Members of the

SC would not submit papers themselves, in order to allow for the largest number of submissions to be represented at the conference. All these decisions were made with the goal to maximise the exposure and reach of the Association, and to open it up to the community at large. As a result a large number of philosophers across the world, particularly in Europe, have in one way or another already been involved with the organisation and scientific decision-making aspects of EPSA. The Association is cutting edge in this regard and its conferences are amongst the most genuinely open and encompassing high quality philosophy of science events at the present time.

A Local Organising Committee (LOC) is set up for each conference. Madrid was chosen as the venue and it fell upon me to act as the Chair of the LOC. It was a daunting task for

there were no models or guidelines to follow. Some of the most important decisions, such as venue and catering facilities, had to be made in advance of any knowledge of the size of the conference, or its specific requirements. I remember it was assumed at the time that we would be very successful if we had up to 80 speakers at the conference, so decisions were initially made for a conference of around 100 delegates!

The call for papers was launched in March 2007 and was enormously successful. Over 400 contributions from all over Europe in all kinds of disciplines and areas were submitted. This was a bit unexpected! It meant much more work than envisaged from the PC and its Chairs, Mauro Dorato and Miklós Rédei. I have to say that they took it all with tremendous grace. In fact, we were all excited by the success. There was a great feeling of initiative and a willingness to work hard. At any rate, it was immediately clear that the conference would be larger than planned. As an anecdote, I still keep some amusing emails from Mauro and Miklós begging me to please expand the number of available talk



slots. This was not trivial for it meant either increasing the number of parallel sessions, which required finding additional rooms in the building, or expanding the dates of the conference. We first went up to 120 and eventually settled on 160. This seemed to be the right ratio of acceptance for a high quality conference anyway. But eventually 175 talks were accepted, since the quality of submissions had been so uniformly high. It must still have been very hard for the PC to select only 175 contributions for presentation at the conference; but as a result the quality of talks was extremely high. As for the organisation of the conference, I remember those previous months as some of the most worrying, yet exhilarating and invigorating, of my professional life. Many of those improvised decisions set the trend for future conferences of the Association, and it is very nice to see that it has led to even better and bigger events.

The selection continued after the conference in order to prepare a publication to celebrate the launch of the Association. In 2009 EPSA

struck a global agreement with Springer, which included the publication of two volumes of select papers from the conference. These appeared eventually, in late 2009 and early 2010, each containing 29 papers. The first volume is entitled “Epistemology and Methodology of Science” and contains the most general essays in the philosophy of science. The second volume is entitled “Philosophical Issues in the Sciences” containing the specialised material in the philosophies of physics, biology, economics, chemistry and others. Both are offered at discounted prices for members of EPSA.

The conference itself was divided in five sections: General Philosophy of Science, Philosophy of Natural Sciences, Philosophy of Social Sciences, Formal Methods in the Philosophy of Science, and Social and Historical Studies of the Philosophy of Science. Within the first section, General Philosophy of Science, there were sessions devoted to nearly every topic actively pursued in philosophy of science today, such as causation, realism and confirmation, reduction-



ism, structuralism, experiment and observation, prediction, models and representation, and simulation. The second section, Philosophy of Natural Sciences, concerned mainly philosophical aspects of physics and the biomedical sciences.

Most of the philosophy of physics talks discussed conceptual issues regarding space-time theories—such as the interpretation of special relativity, the relationship between geometry and matter, and the question of general covariance- or quantum-theories—including historical issues, reflections about ontology, and debates regarding the implications of Bell’s inequalities. There were also discussions about classical physics, statistical mechanics and about the role of symmetries in physics. The sessions devoted to the biomedical sciences included among others papers on ethical issues in biology and conceptual problems of evolutionary theory. The third section, Philosophy of Social Sciences, had contributions discussing issues internal to many of the social sciences, particularly economics and social psychology, as well as more general methodological issues such as the scientific status of the social sciences. The fourth section on Formal Methods was mainly concerned with philosophy of mathematics and logic but also with the



application of logical tools in the study of scientific knowledge. Finally, in the last section of the conference, devoted to the social and historical aspects, there were papers on the Vienna Circle, Carnap and Feyerabend, as well as many case studies ranging from experimental and laboratory techniques to issues of gender and values in science.

The three invited lectures aimed at an overview of the state of philosophy of science in Europe. Anne Fagot-Largeault (Collège de France), in her lecture entitled “Styles in the Philosophy of Science”, characterised a number of diverse styles currently in practice, including analytical philosophy of science, formal methods, and historical epistemology. She ended her lecture by inviting further interaction between these traditions. Ilkka Niiniluoto (Helsinki) is precisely one of the greatest and leading members of the formal methods tradition. In his lecture, entitled “Theory-Change, Truthlikeness and Belief-Revision”, he gave a detailed account of the evolution of attempts to characterise scientific knowledge formally through a notion of truthlikeness. The third and closing plenary speaker was Michael Friedman (Stanford), who gave a talk entitled “Einstein, Kant and the A Priori”. The talk was devoted to the role of relative a priori principles in the history of physics and mainly

theories of space-time from Kant’s time onto the advent of general relativity. One of the very nice things about Friedman’s talk was that it signified a ‘closing of the circle’. Philosophy of science was born in Europe; for contingent historical reasons its focus of action moved to North America after the Second World War. But maybe it is time for the pendulum to bounce back!

Another highlight was the first general Assembly of EPSA. We had our first elections: in a climate of friendly collegiality (which went well into the evening!) a new Steering Committee was elected, and Stathis Psillos (University of Athens) was chosen as President. Venues were also announced for the next two conferences (Amsterdam in 2009 and Athens in 2011). The weather stayed with us throughout the conference. We had some gorgeous sun (it was also very cold!), so we could hold most lunches outdoors – not a mean feat in late autumn. What I most remember now is the many happy faces, the excited and grateful smiles. That’s a great memory – for which I thank you all.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR Mauricio Suárez is Associate Professor in Logic and Philosophy of Science at Complutense University of Madrid. He earned his BSc in Astrophysics from the University of Edinburgh (1991), and his MSc and PhD in philosophy of science from the London School of Economics (1992 and 1997 respectively). He has published on various topics in the philosophy of science, with a focus on philosophy of physics. Personal Website: <http://fs-morente.filos.ucm.es/docentes/suarez/inicio.htm>

REPORT ON EPSA09: THE SECOND CONFERENCE OF EPSA

Henk W. de Regt

In October 2009, 21st-24th, the Second Conference of the European Philosophy of Science Association took place at VU University Amsterdam, The Netherlands. EPSA09 was attended by more than 250 participants (including speakers) from many different countries. Among the participants were not only Europeans but also many people from overseas (mainly from the USA, Canada and Australia). EPSA09 was organized by a Local Organizing Committee chaired by Henk de Regt and Hans Radder (VU University Amsterdam). The call for papers resulted in the submission of 293 contributed papers and 34 symposium proposals, from which the Programme Committee, chaired by Stephan Hartmann (Tilburg University) and Samir Okasha (University of Bristol), selected the best papers in a wide range of subfields.

The result was a programme that reflected the broad spectrum of phi-

losophy of science and contained many interesting, high-quality papers and symposia. The final programme featured 186 papers in 6 parallel sessions: 20 symposia (with about 4 papers per symposium) and 106 contributed papers.

The full programme of EPSA09 is available online at <http://www.epsa.ac.at/2009/index.htm>.

The Call for Papers listed eight sections in which papers and symposia proposals could be submitted.



View of Amsterdam

Here are the numbers of papers and symposia that were accepted for presentation in the respective sections:

- **General philosophy of science:** 41 papers, 5 symposia
- **Philosophy of the physical sciences:** 16 papers, 6 symposia
- **Philosophy of the life sciences:** 23 papers, 5 symposia
- **Philosophy of the cognitive sciences:** 4 papers, no symposia
- **Philosophy of the social sciences:** 8 papers, no symposia
- **Philosophy of the applied sciences:** no papers, no symposia
- **Formal philosophy of science:** 5 papers, 3 symposia
- **Historical, social and cultural studies of philosophy of science:** 5 papers, 3 symposia

Thus, by far the most papers were in the section of general philosophy of science, followed at some distance by the sections philosophy of the life sciences and philosophy of the

Tweede congres van de Europese Vereniging voor Wetenschapsfilosofie

epsa

Second conference of the European Philosophy of Science Association

INVITED SPEAKERS:

Martin Carrier, Bielefeld
Mary Morgan, London
Elliott Sober, Madison



PROGRAMME COMMITTEE

Stephan HARTMANN (Chair), Tilburg
 Samir OKASHA (Chair), Bristol
 Daniel ANDLER, Paris
 Theodore ARABATZIS, Athens
 Anouk BARBEROUSSE, Paris
 Jeffrey BARRETT, Irvine
 William BECHTEL, San Diego
 Helen BEEBE, Birmingham
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 Tomasz PLACEK, Cracow
 Hans RADDER, Amsterdam
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 Kyle STANFORD, Irvine
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 Michael STOELTZNER, Columbia
 Laszlo SZABO, Budapest
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LOCAL ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

Henk DE REGT (Chair)
 Hans RADDER (Vice-Chair)
 Lieven DECOCK
 Sara DE WIT
 Delene ENGELBRECHT
 Peter KIRSCHENMANN
 Huib LOOREN DE JONG
 Gerben MEYNEN

October 21-24, 2009, Faculty of Philosophy,
 VU University, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

More info at: www.epsa09.org
 Email contact: info@epsa09.org

physical sciences, including mathematics. The other sections featured fewer papers and symposia, but in general the programme gave a good and fairly representative picture of the various subfields and approaches in philosophy of science. Only in the section Philosophy of the applied sciences no papers or symposia were selected for presentation. A selection of papers presented at the EPSA09 conference will be collected in a vol-

ume edited by Henk de Regt, Samir Okasha and Stephan Hartmann. This volume, which will be published by Springer in the summer of 2011, will contain about 38 papers on a wide variety of topics and will provide an excellent impression of the current state-of-the-art in philosophy of science.

The plenary sessions included three invited lectures and a roundtable

discussion on the future of European philosophy of science. The first invited speaker was Martin Carrier (Bielefeld, Germany). In his lecture 'Knowledge, politics, and commercialization: science under the pressure of practice' Carrier discussed two worries about application-oriented, commercialized research: its biased research agenda and its allegedly too lax methodological standards. While he admitted that the agenda of application-oriented science is indeed biased, he argued that the second worry is unfounded. Mary Morgan (London, UK) gave a plenary lecture entitled 'The inferential scope of facts', which presented results from her research programme How well do 'facts' travel? Morgan investigated the re-usage of what she called 'middle-level facts', the bits of knowledge that are established on the basis of data points, but are not yet established phenomena. In the third invited lecture, Elliott Sober (Madison, USA) asked: 'Did Darwin write the Origin backwards?' His talk investigated the relation between two central concepts of Darwin's theory of evolution: natural selection and common ancestry.

In addition, EPSA09 featured a plenary roundtable discussion 'Philosophy of Science in Europe: Past, Present and Future'. The panel members, who represented various European organizations, expressed their views on the present state of philosophy of science in Europe and the prospects for the future. In the subsequent debate several suggestions were made as to how the position of

philosophy of science in Europe could be strengthened. During the conference the meeting of the General Assembly of EPSA was held and a new Steering Committee was elected. The many opportunities and challenges for EPSA were debated in a lively discussion, and various ways to further strengthen philosophy of science in Europe and to foster interaction between philosophers of science in different European countries were envisioned. One way to achieve this goal may be the establishment of closer ties between EPSA and the various national societies for the philosophy of science.

In sum, EPSA09 was a success in almost every possible respect. In general, the conference reflected the broad range of topics and subfields in philosophy of science as practiced in Europe and elsewhere. The newly introduced symposium format was a success: the symposia on the programme presented coherent, high-quality work and featured many high-profile scholars. Finally, most participants appreciated the fact that the conference was held on a university campus and not in an anonymous conference hotel. As in Madrid, where the first EPSA-conference was held, this contributed to the lively academic atmosphere that was characteristic of the conference.



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<http://www.wijsbegeerte.vu.nl/nl/organisatie/medewerkers/Medewerkers-m-s/dr-h-w-de-regt/index.asp>

A (PRE-)HISTORY OF EPSA

Stathis Psillos

*(Former President of EPSA
2007–2009)*

The formation of a European forum for the philosophy of science had been something that I had been thinking about since the early 2000s. There had been various informal discussions in conferences in Europe, but the prevailing view seemed to be that actions like this were premature or even unnecessary—given the existence of various national associations and on-going research projects and groups. But the idea persisted, based as it was on the thought that philosophy of science in Europe had grown to be a considerable force of quality and innovation. It was my encounter with Bengt Hansson in Lund in April 2005 that moved things to a different level. Bengt saw very clearly that the creation of a professional association in Europe could act in many beneficial ways. It could foster research collaborations; break national and cultural barriers; help with the integration

of smaller or more isolated philosophy of science communities; give the opportunity to younger researchers to disseminate their work. Above all, having some sort of connection with EU research funding bodies, Bengt saw very clearly that philosophy of science—qua an established intellectual endeavour within the broad camp of Humanities—might need support and defence in the years to come.

In July 2005, Bengt and I circulated an e-mail message to various European philosophers of science (meaning: philosophers of science who worked in European Universities) and tried to make a case for the “establishment of something like a European Society for the Philosophy of Science”, laying emphasis on the need “to make the relevance of philosophy more visible”. As instruments for the development of this Society, we suggested a biennial conference and a society-owned journal. The message ended with a call to an informal meeting proposed to take place during the conference of the European Society of Analytic Philosophy in Lisbon in August 2005. The reaction was

generally enthusiastic, though (to my amazement) there were voices of dissent, or better voices urging the need to proceed very cautiously. The informal meeting did take place in Lisbon on Sunday the 28th of August 2005 with about 30 participants and the consensus was that the time was ripe for a professional philosophy of science association in Europe.

No further action was taken, however, until May 2006, when Henk de Regt, Mauro Dorato, Stephan Hartmann, Berna Kilinc, Miklos Redei, Matti Sintonen, Mauricio Suárez and myself took an initiative to meet at the London School of Economics on the 27th of September of 2006 with the agenda of setting up what was decided to be named: European Philosophy of Science Association (EPSA). In this meeting, a provisional steering committee of EPSA was formed (with the above named 8 philosophers of science plus Maria-Carla Galavotti and Friedrich Stadler), the statutes of EPSA were drafted and the decision for the first EPSA conference was taken. This would take place in Madrid from the 15th to the 17th of November 2007. The

declaration of the London meeting invited all philosophers of science of “join us in this endeavour”. In the early days of October 2006, EPSA was officially registered in Vienna—an act that was meant to be symbolic as well as practical. Matti Sintonen was voted by the founding steering committee as the President of EPSA.

The Call for Papers for the first EPSA conference was announced in February 2007. Mauricio Suárez was appointed Chair of Local Organising Committee and a heavy-weight Programme Committee was lead by Mauro Dorato and Miklos Redei. The time until the actual conference was quite short and everybody worked very hard to make the conference the great success it was. EPSA had now had actual members and the first General Assembly meeting took place in Madrid on the 16th of November 2007. During this lively meeting, there was the first election of the officials of EPSA. One of the things that the newly elected Steering Committee discussed was the prospects of an EPSA-led academic journal. Long, and occasionally difficult and tense, discussions and negotiations ensued, but the happy result was the establishment of the European Journal of Philosophy of Science in June 2009, edited by Carl Hoefer (with Mauro Dorato as the

deputy editor). A few months later, in October 2009, the 2nd EPSA conference was held in Amsterdam. The chair of the Local Organising Committee was Henk de Regt and the Programme Committee was led by Stephan Hartmann and Samir Okasha. Also, the new Steering Committee was elected. The second Conference made it clear to everybody that EPSA was here to stay. Within the space of few years, EPSA had gained considerable respect and prestige.

The 3rd EPSA conference will take place in Athens between the 5th and the 8th of October 2011. (See <http://epsa11.phs.uoa.gr>) We very much hope that it will be at least as successful as the previous two conferences. Greece is currently under an enormous financial and economic crisis and the working people and the pensioners of Greece have seen an unprecedented deterioration of their well-being as well as of the welfare state. Worse is forecast to come within 2011. The very nature of the University as a public space of knowledge, research and education might be at stake. The Humanities might well be the first to pay the price of the transformation of universities to super markets of impact-generating knowledge. But the philosophy of science community in Greece is ready to welcome philosophers of science from around the world in Athens in October and to

show how thriving and rich our discipline is. An intellectual cornucopia is not the antidote to financial austerity. But it may well be the key to hoping that a better world is possible.

The European Philosophy of Science Association is genuinely multi-perspectival. It transcends national borders and aims to foster excellence and opportunity. It is here to be the home of all philosophers of science.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR Stathis Psillos is Professor of Philosophy of Science at the University of Athens, Greece. He holds a University Degree in Physics (University of Patras, Greece), MSc degree in History and Philosophy of Science (University of London, Kings College) and a PhD in Philosophy of Science (University of London). He has published on scientific realism, causation, explanation and the history of philosophy of science.

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LAUNCH OF EJPS: A NOTE FROM THE EDITORS

Carl Hoefer
(Editor-in-Chief of EJPS)
and *Mauro Dorato*
(Co-Founder of EPSA and
Deputy Editor of EJPS)

As we write these words, the first issue of the European Journal for Philosophy of Science (EJPS) is about to be published online, and members of EPSA should receive a hard copy quite soon. Maybe it is already on your table, and you have read some of the very first papers ...

As you can imagine, the first months of preparation of this and forthcoming issues have been intense but rewarding, and we are very anxious to look at the final product. Finally, not only can Europe count on a European Philosophy of Science Association, but also on an official journal of the Association, aiming at establishing itself very soon among the first-rank journals.

As of today, EJPS has received more than 115 manuscripts via its efficient

electronic submission system: considering that we only advertised a call for submissions briefly, in 2009, the number is very satisfactory. We have received papers in virtually every area of philosophy of science, from general philosophy of science to the philosophy of special sciences (physics, biology, cognitive sciences), to formal philosophy of science. The nationality of authors is mixed, as is desirable, given our aim to become a truly international journal.

Some of our final decisions have been tough, but always they are taken with the goal of ensuring that EJPS publishes high quality articles. EJPS will start with 3 issues a year, but at the rate good papers are being received, we will probably be able to

move to 4 issues per year in volume 2 or 3. In addition to regular issues with diverse articles, we are also aiming to publish themed issues, devoted to the future of philosophy of science as well as the practical application of our discipline to science



Volume 1, Issue 2 of the EJPS

and its interactions with society at large.

In closing this first report, we want to take the opportunity to thank wholeheartedly the Springer staff that have been working with us, who have been very cooperative and efficient in solving the numerous problems that must be tackled in creating a journal. We also thank our tireless associate editors (Franz Huber, Michela Massimi, Samir Okasha, Edouard Machery and Jesús Zamora), our distinguished editorial board, and the numerous referees that helped us invaluablely in evaluating papers as quickly as possible. Finally, we want to thank the whole Steering Committee of the EPSA, its current president (and also Stathis Psillos, the founding President) for their hard work and cooperation in the launch of EJPS.



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Mauro Dorato is Professor of Philosophy of Science in the Department of Philosophy of the University of Rome 3. He holds a University Degree in Mathematics and a University Degree in Mathematics (University of Rome), as well as an M.A. and a Ph.D in Philosophy (Johns Hopkins University). His areas of interest include the philosophy of time, laws of nature and the relationship between physics and metaphysics. He is Deputy Editor of the *European Journal for the Philosophy of Science* (EJPS).

Personal Website: <http://host.uniroma3.it/dipartimenti/filosofia/personale/doratoweb.htm>

FOR EUROPEAN PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE

Maria Carla Galavotti

Science Foundation greatly contributed to raise awareness that there is a strong community of philosophers of science in Europe, namely the “Historical and contemporary perspectives of philosophy of science in Europe”-Network coordinated by myself and active between 2001 and 2004, and the “Philosophical and foundational problems of modern physics”-Network coordinated by Miklos Redei and active between 2003 and 2005.

The two Networks were followed by a more ambitious project, the “The philosophy of science in a European perspective” (PSE) Networking Programme for which an application was submitted to the ESF in 2006, to have it approved in 2008. Promoted by a group including Friedrich Stadler, Gereon Wolters, Miklos Redei, Dennis Dieks, Jeremy Butterfield and myself, the project intended to build on the results of the preceding Networks to voice European re-

search in the field and strengthen relationships among researchers and research centres in various European countries. The PSE was approved for five years (from May 2008 to April 2013) during which a number of initiatives are planned, including two large conferences (one at the beginning and one at the end of the project) and a number of workshops. The PSE will also produce a series of books reflecting the work done year by year. The first book has already been published under the title *The Present Situation in the Philosophy of Science*, ed. by F. Stadler, D. Dieks, W.J. Gonzalez, S. Hartmann, T. Uebel, and M. Weber (Springer 2010) and received a warm review by Stathis Psillos in *Metascience*. The second volume will appear in Spring 2011 under the title *Explanation, Prediction, and Confirmation*, ed. by D. Dieks, W.J. Gonzalez, S. Hartmann, T. Uebel, and M. Weber.

PSE is run by a Steering Committee whose members include Diderik Batens, Claude Debru, Javier Echeverria, Michael Esfeld, Jan Faye, Olav Gjelsvik, Theo Kuipers, Ladislav Kvasz, Adrian Miroiu, Ilkka Niiniluoto, Tomasz Placek, Demetris Portides, Wlodek Rabinowicz, Miklos Redei (co-chair), Friedrich Stad-

ler, Greg Wheeler, Gereon Wolters (co-chair), and myself (chair).

The distinctive feature of the PSE Networking Programme lies in gathering scholars engaged in research on five major areas in philosophy of science, mirrored by its five-team structure: (1) “Formal methods in the philosophy of science” led by Stephan Hartmann, (2) “Philosophy of the natural and life sciences” led by Marcel Weber, (3) “Philosophy of the cultural and social sciences” led by Wenceslao Gonzalez, (4) “Philosophy of the physical sciences” led by Dennis Dieks, (5) “History of the philosophy of science” led by Thomas Uebel. Besides carrying out foundational studies in disciplines like physics and biology which have traditionally been the object of philosophy of science, PSE focuses on disciplines with a “borderline” scientific status, such as medicine, archaeology, law and cognitive science. In addition, PSE keeps an eye on the historical dimension of philosophy of science, which was born in Europe and is deeply rooted in European culture.

By the time the project of PSE was conceived and the application put together, it was clear to its proponents that the time was ripe for the



SC meeting of the PSE-ESF Programme
 "The philosophy of science in a European perspective", September 21, 2009

creation of a European association akin to the US-based Philosophy of Science Association (PSA). This was explicitly stated in the project submitted to the ESF, which also mentioned launching a new journal. Plainly, this conviction was shared by many, as in 2006 the European Philosophy of Science Association (EPSA) took shape thanks to the efforts of a number of people including Stathis Psillos, Bengt Hansson, Stephan Hartmann, Mauro Dorato, Matti Sintonen and Henk de Regt. Being PSE's main proponent at the time, I was asked to join the Steering Committee of EPSA in a spirit of cooperation towards the common goal of strengthening philosophy of science in Europe. The indisputable success of EPSA's initiatives (the conferences held in Madrid in 2007 and Amsterdam in 2009) testifies to the fact that an association of European philosophers of science met the widely felt need for an opportunity to convene every other year in some place for a conference where European researchers could learn what is

being done at various places where philosophy of science is cultivated.

PSE and EPSA promote complementary initiatives: while EPSA organises large conferences with few invited plenary speakers and a large range of parallel sessions of contributed papers, PSE's conferences and workshops host only invited papers by senior experts and junior researchers on topics of interest. The synergy of EPSA's and PSE's activities is enhancing the impact of European philosophy of science on the international scene.

To conclude this brief note, let me address a question raised by Stathis Psillos in his review of the first book of PSE's series, when he observes that the expression "European philosophy of science" conceals an oscillation between speaking about philosophy of science in Europe and implying that philosophy of science can be done from a European point of view. As he maintains, philosophy of science in Europe is not just alive but is facing "a bright future", yet is

there really a European way of doing philosophy of science? According to Psillos "the key to a European perspective is precisely the transgressing of the sub-disciplinary boundaries and the fostering of genuinely integrative approaches and agendas" (Metascience: DOI 10.1007/s11016-010-9461-9). While I share this claim, I wish to call attention to an additional element characterizing the European approach to philoso-



phy of science, namely an awareness of the historical depth of problems and concepts, which guides research aimed at disclosing their interconnections with other problems and concepts. I regard this awareness as the hallmark of European philosophy of science, inspiring a distinctive “global” approach to problems. Even when a particular problem is addressed, it is done with an eye to the wider debate (past and present). The ongoing cooperation between EPSA and PSE is likely to shed more light on the issue of whether there really is a distinctive European way of doing philosophy of science. Meanwhile it will serve to invigorate European research in the field.



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Ties Nijssen

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