Editorial

Hans Rott · Hannes Leitgeb

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With this first issue of Volume 75, Hannes Leitgeb takes over the task of the Editor-in-chief of *Erkenntnis*. This is a good opportunity to have a brief look at the past years of this journal, and on the future that it may have before it.

Important changes within the group of Editors took place at the beginning of 2007. Unfortunately, Wilhelm Essler decided to resign in his office as an Editor of *Erkenntnis*, leaving behind Patrick Suppes and Wolfgang Spohn as the sole Editors who will now be joined by me in the newly formed Supervisory Board. On the other hand, the daily editorial work got redistributed from the sole responsibility of the Editor-in-chief to a group consisting of four more people, the Associate Editors Andreas Hüttemann (University of Münster), Krista Lawlor (Stanford University), followed by Berit Brogaard (University of Missouri, St. Louis) in 2009, Hannes Leitgeb (University of Bristol, now Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München) and Thomas Schmidt (Humboldt-University Berlin). This was, of course, an extremely substantial leap in the competences available for the editing of *Erkenntnis*. The hunting for reviewers, a very difficult task in times when everybody is overburdened, was done by the Associate Editors, usually for papers close to their areas of specialization. I would like to thank Krista and Brit, Andreas, Hannes and Thomas most cordially for having done a magnificent job as Associate Editors of our journal. It has been a great pleasure indeed to work with all of you! The tasks left over for me have been to survey, coordinate and send out all the final decisions, to compose the regular issues and organize the special issues.

While *Erkenntnis* gained a lot of additional strength in its group of Editors, the general editorial policy has not changed much. We have been trying to continue the

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work in Analytical Philosophy broadly conceived, with a strong emphasis on what is called “Theoretical Philosophy” in the German-speaking and Scandinavian countries. We could also observe some focus of the submissions in the areas of Epistemology (*Erkenntnistheorie* in German) and Philosophy of Science, but papers in other fields have been equally welcome, if not equally numerous. The Editors have now decided that it is time to give *Erkenntnis* some reorientation in its profile. Before Hannes Leitgeb will start explaining that, I would like to round off this look back with some statistics. Since philosophy is still a discipline that is thinking in longer terms than most other fields of research, it seems fitting to choose as the time-span considered the second half of the first decade of the new millennium. More precisely, all the figures below apply to the period from the beginning of 2005 to the time of writing (May 2011). I will only refer to the regular submissions in the category “original research”, excluding contributions to special issues and book reviews.

Within the period mentioned, *Erkenntnis* received 1,135 submissions, with the yearly numbers rising from 146 in 2005 to 215 in 2010; if 2011 continues as it began, we may expect more than 250 submissions in this year. Of these papers, 32.2% came from the United States and 16.1% from the United Kingdom, followed by Germany (6.6%), Canada (5.3%), Australia (4.6%), the Netherlands (3.3%), Sweden (2.9%), Israel (2.6%), Italy (2.5%), Spain (2.2%), Republic of Korea (2.1%), Belgium (2.1%), and 41 other countries. The Editors have been pleased with this distribution. While there is a slight bias in favour of continental Europe, the figures basically mirror the extent and quality with which analytic philosophy is being pursued in the respective regions.

In spite of the increase in manpower, we were not able to shorten the turnaround time of the submissions. In fact, the average turnaround time from submission to the first editorial decision increased from 4.5 months in 2005 to about 6 months at present. I find this an unsatisfactory development and apologize sincerely to those authors who had to wait particularly long for their decisions. We are determined to bring down the turnaround time significantly.

Only very few papers were excluded from the double-blind peer review process due to obvious problems of relevance or quality. Usually, we have been aiming at two reviews per paper; occasionally one review was sufficient for a decision, in particularly problematic cases three or more reviewers were asked for reports. The crucial importance of the reviewing process is highlighted by the fact that only four (out of 1,135!) submissions got accepted directly, without any changes. Almost all papers needed minor or major revisions, and the published versions have frequently been enormous improvements of the initial submissions. A list of more than 1,000 reviewers that helped to maintain the high quality *Erkenntnis* in the past 5 years is reprinted after this editorial. The Editors thank them all immensely.

The total acceptance rate of the papers that have received a final decision by now is 21.6%. It has increased in recent years, from 19% in 2005 to 23% in 2010. This increase was made possible, in spite of the rising numbers of submissions, by some restraint in the production of special issues. The quality of the regular submissions has been high, and having read all the reports, I can confidently say that the quality of the published papers has indeed been very high. Yet it is likely that the editorial policy will have to be more selective in the future.

Like Patrick Suppes and Wolfgang Spohn, I am enthusiastic about the fact that Hannes Leitgeb has been ready to take over the tasks of the Editor-in-chief of *Erkenntnis*. Still being less than 40 years old, Hannes has made a truly brilliant career as a philosopher and logician, in fields that match our journal's profile perfectly. I am certain that he will be equally competent, inspiring and successful in giving shape to the future of *Erkenntnis*. We couldn't have found anyone who is better suited for this job. Hannes, I wish you all the best!

Hans Rott

I would like to thank Hans Rott very much for all the hard work that he put into *Erkenntnis* since November 2001. His devotion to the journal derives from his true passion for philosophy, and that—as many colleagues would be able to confirm—could be felt in every kind of interaction one would have with him: as far as I am concerned, first as a referee for the journal, then as an author, still later as an Associate Editor, and last but not least, as I am very honoured to say, as a friend. Thanks so much, Hans, for serving the philosophical community in such a wonderful manner! Fortunately, Hans will continue to play a major role in all long-term decisions of the journal as a member of the Supervisory Board of *Erkenntnis*, where he will join Pat Suppes and Wolfgang Spohn.

Speaking about the future: The first change in the structure of the journal will be to introduce further Associate Editors. One reason for this decision is a simple pragmatic one: the ever-increasing number of submissions which we thus make sure we will be able to cope with efficiently. But yet another reason is that the new Associate Editors will complement the journal's existing philosophical expertise in lots of exciting ways. So I am very happy to announce that our present Associate Editors Berit Brogaard, Andreas Hüttemann, and Thomas Schmidt will be joined by Philip Ebert (University of Stirling), Michael Esfeld (University of Lausanne), Kristie Miller (University of Sydney), Marcus Rossberg (University of Connecticut), and Olivier Roy (Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München). Welcome to all of you!

Secondly, we want to re-emphasize in the future what has been distinctive of the journal in the past, right from its beginnings with Hans Reichenbach and Rudolf Carnap: the journal's commitment to doing philosophy in a scientific spirit. *Erkenntnis* intends to be the flagship journal again of all those philosophers, including so many young ones, who subscribe to clarity, rational argumentation, and (where possible) to the application of scientific methods when addressing philosophical questions and problems. In order to signal this more explicitly we will also change the original subtitle of the journal—*An International Journal of Analytic Philosophy*—into the more informative *An International Journal of Scientific Philosophy*. This is symbolic, of course, but we will make sure it will not *just* remain to be a symbol. Let us work together, philosophers and scientists, to approach the same set of aims, such as truth and progress, without reducing philosophy to science in any way and without downgrading its role to a mere service discipline for scientists. There is more to come, scientific philosophers: watch this space!

Hannes Leitgeb