

Editorial

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History and Philosophy of the Life Sciences has been appearing since 1979, a time of nearly four decades that has seen massive changes in academic publishing. Back then, contributions to the journal would reach the editorial office by post as manuscripts (in the literal, actual sense of the word) or typescripts. How the editorial team at the time—Mirko Grmek from the École pratique des hautes études in Paris as Editor, Bernardino Fantini as Assistant Editor, and Jean A. Gilder at the Stazione Zoologica in Naples as Editorial Secretary—managed the process of reviewing, editing and proofreading papers without the help of word processors and e-mail programmes, I cannot even imagine, but I assume that a lot of assistance in the last stages of manuscript preparation was still provided by the first publisher of the journal, the renowned Italian publishing house Leo S. Olschki. Open access to the journal was provided, simply and straight-forwardly, by subscriptions through publicly funded libraries. That, at least, is how I first encountered the journal, on the shelves of the Staatsbibliothek at Potsdamer Platz in Berlin, shortly before the Wall came down. One just had to go there to read, no usernames and passwords were required.

All this has changed. It is now authors and editors who are responsible for the professional formatting of their articles and it is increasingly authors as well, due to pressures exerted by private and public funding organisations, who bear the onus in providing open access in electronic form to the contents they produce. In return, publishers provide the electronic infrastructures for distribution, long-term storage, and accessibility of content on an unprecedented scale. Through consortia deals and on-line repositories, journals are made accessible electronically at a stroke to thousands of libraries world-wide.

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There was no way, even if we had wished there was, for *History and Philosophy of the Life Sciences* to survive as an international, high-quality journal without becoming part of this new (and sometimes brave) world of academic publishing. Keith Benson, Editor-in-Chief from 2005 to 2012, initiated this transition, first leading to an agreement with JSTOR in 2012 to provide electronic access to back-issues. I vividly remember strategizing with Keith in December 2011 over a dinner in a Turkish fish restaurant located in the middle of one of the few urban waste lands that are still left between former East- and West-Berlin. It took another two full years of negotiations with the Stazione Zoologica—led by Keith throughout 2012 until I took over from him in 2013—until publication of the journal finally came under contract with Springer, one of the leading academic publishing houses internationally. This is the first issue under the new publication regime, and gives me the enviable occasion to take stock and thank those, in the first place, who in the past have made this journal what it is.

History and Philosophy of the Life Sciences has always had a unique standing since its foundation in 1979. It is a truly international journal; its founding editor hailed from Yugoslavia but taught in Paris, and its first advisory board included, among many others from a variety of countries, Frederick L. Holmes from New Haven and Semen R. Mikulinsky from Moscow, thus effectively crossing what was still an Iron Curtain (and is in danger of becoming one again). From the very first issue, articles in the journal spanned the full range of biological and medical disciplines; pioneering studies in the history and philosophy of disease on the one hand, and the history and philosophy of molecular biology on the other, deserve special mention. Moreover, the title of the journal was programmatic. In studying the genesis of scientific knowledge, as Grmek explained in an article introducing the first issue, “the historian must constantly borrow from the philosopher, and vice versa” (Grmek 1979; my translation). The “and” in the title is not simply conjunctive, but aims at the integration of historical and philosophical approaches to the life sciences.

If I am confident that internationality and interdisciplinarity will stay in place as hallmarks of *History and Philosophy of the Life Sciences*, this is due to the efforts of many in the past. The biggest thank-you in this respect is due to Christiane Groeben who until last year ran the editorial office at the Stazione Zoologica in Naples as Managing Editor of the journal. Christiane’s association with the Stazione began in January 1969, when the Dohrn family was still heavily involved in running the institution. Peter Dohrn, grandson of the institution’s founder Anton Dohrn, had hired Christiane’s husband Walther as librarian, and asked Christiane to organize his family’s archive, which as a matter of fact was the institution’s archive. Christiane was responsible for the archives for the next 40 years, and it was in this capacity that she became involved with editing the journal. From 1985 to 1995, Christiane served as the journal’s book review editor, and then took over the editorial office in Naples when Jean Gilder departed to found a company assisting in the organisation of scientific conferences. Christiane’s role in running the journal may seem modest, but two factors should be kept in mind. First, the journal was published in four languages, French, English, German, and Italian, and until 2004 it was quite common to find contributions in all four languages within a single issue. Christiane

masters all of them and a bit of Spanish in addition. Anyone who has been publishing in more than one language knows the demands this poses on editing and proofreading academic texts, due to the diversity of conventions and styles in different languages.

The professionalism with which Christiane tackled this task leads me to the second factor. Christiane, as most readers of this journal will know, is exceptionally well-connected within the international community of students of the life sciences. She has published extensively in the field, especially on the history of the *Stazione Zoologica*, and often with international co-authors, among them Michael T. Ghiselin; she is one of the co-founders of the International Society for the History, Philosophy, and Social Studies of Biology; and she has been a member of the board of directors of the biannual Ischia Summer School on the History of the Life Sciences since its beginning in 1978, a role that I will come back to at the end of this editorial. It was Christiane's involvement in *History and Philosophy of the Life Sciences* that guaranteed a continuous international presence to the journal, despite its often turbulent history.

This is especially true for the crucial year 2005, when the journal went through a major crisis. The *Stazione Zoologica* was unable to provide any further financial support to the editorial office, and negotiations with Taylor & Francis, who had published the journal since 1985, about a new arrangement collapsed. Initially, the *Stazione's* president, Giorgio Bernardi, decided to discontinue the journal, but then changed his mind and asked Keith Benson, who had followed Bernardino Fantini as Editor-in-Chief, to assist the *Stazione* to save the journal from imminent ruin. Again, Christiane played a critical role by helping in striking a deal with Giannini Editore, a Neapolitan publishing house with a long tradition (among others they printed for Alexandre Dumas).

Giannini had been printing the journal all along since its foundation in 1979, and this is where the second big thank-you is in place. Without the probably unique combination of dedication to high quality, business acumen, and generosity that this family-run company embodies, *History and Philosophy of the Life Sciences* would simply not exist. Readers of past issues will know that consuming the journal was not only intellectually satisfying (in so far as it was at all), but the quality of the paper and the clarity of the typographic layout made it an aesthetic experience as well.

There are more people that deserve thanks: Massimiliano Maja, who did a stellar job as book review editor since 2005 and continued his work despite all uncertainties with undiminishing efficiency and conscientiousness (Pierre-Olivier Méthot has taken over his role now); Ties Nijssen from Springer who believed in the journal and miraculously never gave up the hope that a deal could be reached; Graziano Fiorito, Deputy Director of the *Stazione Zoologica*, who supported our efforts by steering us around the many bureaucratic shoals that lay in the way; Marco Cinquegrani, Managing Director, and Claudia di Somma, head of library, who took care that Italian and European regulations were not violated; the President of the *Stazione*, Roberto Danovaro, who provided decisive support in the final phase of negotiations; and finally, the members of the Advisory and Editorial Board of the journal who were always ready to lend their support when necessary. Without the

dedicated professionalism of all these people, and their confidence in the scholarly value of *History and Philosophy of the Life Sciences*, the transition to Springer would never have happened.

This first issue published by Springer is a fitting tribute to Christiane's long and continuing engagement with *History and Philosophy of the Life Sciences*, and I would like to dedicate it to her. Under the guest-editorship of Philippe Huneman and Maël Lemoine, the issue assembles papers given by early career scholars at another summer school, the European Advanced Seminar in the Philosophy of the Life Sciences, held with support from the Brocher Foundation in Hermance near Geneva in September 2012. Promoting young scholars—be it by guiding them through the archival holdings of the Stazione Zoologica, by bringing their papers into an acceptable, professional form as Managing Editor of *History and Philosophy of the Life Sciences*, or by acting as co-organizer and, effectively, local host (and what a host!) of the Ischia Summer School—has always been the main motivation of Christiane's varied activities. Early participants in the summer school included Gar Allen, David Hull, Bob Olby, Timothy Lenoir, Hans-Jörg Rheinberger and, I am sure, many other luminaries in the field (I have not been able to locate records; Keith Benson, who participated in 1982, tells me that one of the attendants back then, Peter James, went on to “impersonate” Charles Darwin). It is easy to imagine that it was Christiane's presence, among other factors, that inspired these people to continue their varied and distinguished careers in the history and philosophy of the life sciences.

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Reference

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