

Editorial

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When, in 1969, the “Zeitschrift für allgemeine Wissenschaftstheorie/Journal for General Philosophy of Science” was founded, the three editors Alwin Diemer, Lutz Geldsetzer and Gert König were pursuing two intentions. In the first place, they wanted to ameliorate the problem that Germany lacked a “scientific platform for an international discussion on the philosophy of science”. Secondly, the Anglo-Saxon tradition of philosophy of science was not merely to be duplicated. Rather, the new journal was to offer a forum for a *general philosophy of science*, which would also accentuate the hermeneutic theory of science typical of Germany: “With regard to this situation, this new journal aims at contributing to the development of a *general philosophy of science* which covers the humanities as well as the social and natural sciences”.

In the course of time, ZaWT/JGPS turned into JGPS/ZaWT, thus indicating the growing international circulation and reputation that the journal enjoyed, without losing sight of its main aims and its tradition. After the early death of Alwin Diemer in 1986, Lutz Geldsetzer and Gert König cultivated this tradition with prudence, patience and dedication until the end of 2008. Their special concern was the promotion of young talented, not yet established scientists. JGPS was a helpful stepping stone for many of them. By the end of last year, both colleagues resigned because of age and—in consultation with Springer—assigned the editorship to us. At this point, we would like to give our sincere thanks to the former editors for their longtime years of work on behalf of the international community of philosophy of science and for the confidence they put in us as their successors. It is a great challenge which we are delighted to meet.

This break, however, also signifies a demand to take reasonable and sometimes even necessary alterations into account. During the past decades, both the research area of philosophy of science and its publishing organs have become more complex. For some time now, this area has been increasingly diversified: the growing impact of history, sociology and a certain tendency towards pragmatic approaches seem to outrank the former systematic controversies. Research in philosophy of science is becoming very specific concerning its methods and subjects. It is gaining in linguistic precision and taking on new possibilities for application which are relevant for other areas as well.

Viewed against this background, it seems essential to us that, on the one hand the process of diversification be advanced by exemplary analyses and trend-setting research

and, on the other hand, that the increasing specificity of research be accompanied by a strengthening of integrative elements of scientific reflection. Today, *general philosophy of science* does not only offer many opportunities to discuss and develop different methods, but also to reflect on the relations of these methods and to analyse the interaction of systematic and historical approaches. In times of globalised networks of scientific knowledge it is most important that philosophy should continue to strive for an integrative understanding of science and its applications.

In the light of these developments and the tradition mentioned above, we would like to develop JGPS by further evolving its scientific quality, its international standing and its up-to-dateness. Some of our longer-term considerations in these respects should be communicated to our readers: future publications of JGPS will remain predominantly in English, though exceptions will be made for articles in German or French, if justified by their topics. A double-blind peer review is taken for granted in order to assure the high quality of all articles published in our journal. We will invite guest editors for special issues on current and relevant topics for *general philosophy of science*. We will also set up reports on the status quo of philosophy of science in different countries, especially within Europe. In addition, we will install cross-national reports on recent trends in philosophy of science in various areas (physics, biology, humanities, sociology etc.). Conference reports will inform the readers of JGPS about important international events in philosophy of science. Relevant publications of all areas of *general philosophy of science* will be discussed in single or collected reviews and review essays. Starting with this issue, Dr. Michael Anacker (Bochum) will support us as review editor in order to organize representative reviews of high quality.

Concluding, we would like to thank you, the readers of JGPS, for your interest and confidence in this journal in the past. At the same time, we would like to ask for your participation and support in the future: Submissions of new articles and proposals for reviews and reports are most welcome. The editors of JGPS are looking forward to your suggestions and will do their best in the common interest of *general philosophy of science*.

Bochum and Wuppertal in July 2009,
Helmut Pulte and Gregor Schiemann