

President Elect's Report and Plan of Action (Theodore Arabatzis)

Report

My two-year stint as President Elect has been a period of apprenticeship, where I familiarized myself with the inside workings of the ESHS under the expert guidance of Ana Simões and Toni Malet. I've collaborated closely with them and other officers of ESHS on most of the issues having to do with the functioning of our Society and its future development. It's been a wonderful learning process and I'm immensely grateful to Ana and Toni for all the things I've learned from them. Our collaboration took place during two live meetings in Lisbon and Athens, and through innumerable email exchanges and virtual sessions.

For a detailed record of what has been accomplished during the past two years, I refer the members of the ESHS to the meticulous and extensive report of Ana Simões, who has worked tirelessly for implementing her pluralist vision for our Society. Suffice it to mention here that the issues that occupied us the most included the Society's membership, the improvement of its website, its official journal – *Centaurus*, its relations with cognate societies (such as SHOT) and institutions (such as the MPIWG), the awards and financial support offered by the Society to senior and early career scholars, and, last but not least, its 2020 conference in Bologna. I've made or supported nominations for the Early Career Plenary Lectures, the Gustav Neuenschwander Prize, the *Centaurus* editorial board and the selection committee for its special issues. I was also a member of the selection committee for the awarding of travel grants to participants of the Early Career Network Conference in Paris and I refereed abstracts for the Bologna Conference.

In my nomination statement for President-Elect I promised to work towards cultivating relations between the ESHS and historically inclined philosophical groups, such as the *Committee for Integrated History and Philosophy of Science* (&HPS), *The International Society for the History of Philosophy of Science* (HOPOS), and the *Society for Philosophy of Science in Practice* (SPSP). Following up on that promise, in the in-between meeting of ESHS, organized by Ana Simões in Lisbon in October 2021, I made two proposals, both of which were accepted by the Scientific Board:

First, I proposed that we invite members of &HPS, HOPOS, and SPSP to submit proposals for the Bologna meeting.

Second, I suggested “History of Science and the Humanities” as a theme for the in-between meeting of ESHS that will take place in Athens in the fall of 2021.

In accordance with these proposals, I contacted some of the leaders of those groups/societies and asked them to spread the news about the Bologna Conference to their members and encourage them to submit abstracts. Judging from the final program of the Conference, these promptings have been moderately (but not adequately) successful. I've also explored the possibility of getting the Research Centre for the Humanities (<https://www.rchumanities.gr/en/>) involved in the organization and hosting of the in-between meeting of the Society in Athens and the response of the Centre was very

positive. So the Athens meeting will be co-hosted by the Department of History and Philosophy of Science at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, where I teach, and the RCH.

Statement

Having witnessed the extraordinary commitment to the Society of its current and past Presidents and the dedicated hard work they've put into it, I face my presidential responsibilities with considerable trepidation. I can only promise to do my best to further the aims of the Society and meet the challenges it confronts, building on the extraordinary accomplishments of its past Presidents and other Officers.

With my colleagues who have governed ESHS, I share a common vision: to foster first-rate historical research on past science and related cultural practices; to support young scholars, who nowadays find themselves in dire professional circumstances; to support scholars from the less privileged parts of Europe, who often lack adequate resources to engage in academic research; to encourage theoretically informed approaches (anthropological, philosophical, psychological, and sociological) to history of science; to engage in mutually beneficial dialogue with cognate fields, such as other branches of history, the history of technology, the philosophy of science, and STS; and to reach out to as many audiences as possible, including the scientific community at large.

As President of the ESHS I will work towards carrying out that vision, in close collaboration with the Vice-President, Ana Simões, and the new President Elect. The Society's journal, *Centaurus*, is central to the implementation of that vision. *Centaurus* has made extraordinary progress under the leadership of Koen Vermeir, both in terms of the quality and quantity of the articles published, as well as the punctuality of publication. It still faces two challenges, though. The first is to make sure that ESHS will continue to play a significant role in the running of the journal, by exercising control over its academic content and quality. The second is the opportunities and perils posed by the Open Access (OA) initiative that was launched by the European Commission in 2018, the so-called Plan S. Both of these challenges are lucidly laid out in Ana Simões's report. Let me just stress that, as regards the future OA policies of *Centaurus*, an absolute minimum is to ensure that no author, and especially no member of ESHS, without the institutional backing or the financial means to pursue an OA publication will be excluded from publishing in *Centaurus*.

A further aim of my presidency will be to secure further the position of history of science within the wider landscape of the humanities. The humanities are in a precarious situation worldwide and, especially, in Europe, as testified to by the limited funding opportunities allocated to it by European funding agencies. We should take advantage of the "in-between" character of our discipline, the opportunities it affords for creating a bridge between the humanities and the natural sciences, in order to cultivate connections between these two different scholarly worlds.

To that effect, as I mentioned above, I've suggested "History of Science and the Humanities" as a topic for the in-between meeting in Athens, scheduled to take place in the early fall of 2021. The aim of that meeting will be to discuss how history of science fits within the evolving constellation of humanistic disciplines and, more generally, the challenges faced by the humanities in the contemporary academic world.

Furthermore, I will explore further possibilities of collaboration between ESHS and cognate societies, such as *&HPS*, *HOPOS*, and *SPSP*. One such possibility, which I've already proposed to the *&HPS Committee* and has been well received by it, is to organize one-day HPS events as "add-ons" to future ESHS conferences.

In closing, I would like to thank wholeheartedly Ana Simões, Toni Malet, Simone Turchetti, Koen Vermeir, and the other officers of ESHS for a smooth, collegial, and fruitful collaboration. I look forward to working with Ana Simões, the new President-Elect, and the other officers of the ESHS for fulfilling its mission.

Theodore Arabatzis
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