



*International Society for the
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Contents

President's Report

Michel Morange

In Memory of Werner Callebaut (1952-2014)

Gerd B. Müller

ISHPSSB 2015. Montréal

Frédéric Bouchard and Christophe Malaterre

Announcement from the Program Co-Chairs

Mark Borrello and Rob Wilson

Changes in journal discounts for ISHPSSB members

Laura Perini

President's Report

The death of Werner Callebaut was a shock for all of us. Gerd Müller was a close friend of Werner and collaborated with him. Müller has kindly agreed to discuss the richness and diversity of his contributions. Rachel Ankeny and other members of the Society have proposed to create a "Werner Callebaut Prize". I would have preferred succeeding Werner next July in Montreal. Unfortunately, I had to do it far earlier than anticipated.

Life has to go on. The next meeting nicely takes form. The Council and members of the different Committees will work to continue the actions that Werner initiated. It is probably the best way to honor his memory.

Michel Morange
President

In memory of Werner Callebaut (1952–2014)*

Werner Callebaut, the Scientific Director of *The KLI Institute*, Professor of Philosophy, President of the *ISHPSSB*, Editor-in-Chief of *Biological Theory*, and dear colleague of innumerable members of the academic community, died in Vienna, Austria, on November 6, 2014, at the age of 62. We deplore the loss of a brilliant intellectual, a philosopher in its full meaning, and a sparkling mobilizer of ideas.

Werner was born in Mechelen, Belgium, on October 7, 1952. His early leaning towards learning and knowledge came to the fore already when, as a schoolboy, he was digging for Roman archaeological remains in his family's backyard and developed a liking for academic publications. He was notorious for getting on his teachers' nerves by "knowing too much." After visiting high school at the Koninklijk Atheneum Vilvoorde, he went on to study philosophy at Ghent University, where, in 1983, he received his PhD with a thesis entitled "Contribution to a General Theory of Rationality on Evolutionary Foundations — With an Application to the Organization of Scientific Knowledge." He subsequently pursued an academic career that led him via the Universities of Brussels, Limburg, and Ghent to Hasselt University, where he became a Professor of Philosophy in 1995. Following

* This text will appear in lieu of an editorial in the upcoming issue (10/1) of *Biological Theory*.

two visiting fellow periods at the Konrad Lorenz Institute for Evolution and Cognition Research (KLI), he moved to Austria and, in 1999, became the Scientific Manager and eventually the Scientific Director of the KLI while continuing a part time affiliation at Hasselt University and offering courses at the University of Vienna.

Rarely have I met anyone who understood the workings of science better than Werner did. Equally profoundly, he understood and was unflinchingly critical of the conceptual deficits in science. Werner's ambitious philosophical quest derived from an early-formed conviction that a narrowly humanities based approach to the philosophy of science needed to be overcome. While learned in classical philosophy, logic, ethics, and epistemology, it was his firm opinion that "real" philosophy of science needs to be concerned with, and based on, science. He became a role model for this attitude by extensively studying theoretical and empirical evolutionary biology, from where he derived his view that epistemological naturalism was the inevitable philosophical consequence of Darwinian theory. He fought strongly for this naturalized approach and, influenced by the work of Herbert Simon, extended it to the philosophy of economics, exploring the evolutionary study of human decision making. Furthermore, in his philosophical examinations of the theoretical content of biology, Werner used his method to address the multiple challenges from different fields of biology to the standard theory of evolution, devising a perspectivist take to handle incompatible models in scientific practice. To him, perspectives represented analyses at different levels of a system that, necessarily, can coexist at the same time but lose explanatory rigor when they are combined. Together with Ron Giere, Bas van Fraassen, and Bill Wimsatt, Werner advocated a



Werner Callebaut (1952-2014)

philosophy of science according to which science cannot – as a matter of principle – transcend the human perspective. He integrated these views and applied his own version of scientific perspectivism to the conceptual issues associated with the modeling of complex, multilevel, and multiscale phenomena. He suggested that this approach could be extended to a perspectivist kind of theoretical biology.

Werner's scientific achievements are numerous indeed. With his 1993 book *Taking the Naturalistic Turn* he laid the foundation for another major step in the philosophy of science, following the linguistic, the Popperian, and the Kuhnian turns. In the introduction he remembers: "I was going to show the world that it could be done" – and he did. Essentially, the book combines – in a new literary form – interviews in which different scholars separately answer questions on key issues in philosophy of science, but the responses are intertwined in the form of fictitious conversations among the interviewed and with the interviewer – Werner himself. Through this new mode of presentation, it became possible to highlight an emerging tendency towards a new theory of science, one that would be substantially informed by the biological sciences instead of the traditional predominance of physics. Thus Werner's name will always be linked to a philosophy of biology that is intimately based on a naturalized epistemology.

In theoretical and evolutionary biology, Werner will be remembered as an early supporter of the extended version of evolutionary theory currently in the making, having himself contributed to it with his conceptualizations of biological modularity (together with Diego Rasskin-Gutmann) and the Organismic Systems Approach (together with Stuart Newman and myself) – much distinct from DST, by the way. Based on his observation that the classical "Modern Synthesis" never had been a "synthesis" in the true meaning of the term and, thus, had no essence, he saw the reform of this nearly a century old framework of evolutionary theory as an ongoing project, but not as the kind of iconoclasm the traditionalists shakingly fear. He argued that the current dialectical (horizontal and lateral) extensions of the Modern Synthesis theory will inevitably require major conceptual reshuffling. This, he felt, is likely to go beyond gradual "extensions of" the existing framework but, instead, will result in a pluralistic and non-reductionist Extended Synthesis that is built on many more factors than the classical Synthesis.

Lately, Werner was much concerned with the conceptual and societal consequences of "big data biology", including the various facets of bioinformatics, systems biology, omics biology, and synthetic biology. He was not only critical of its essentially ahistorical approach but also took seriously Carl Woese's warning that "a society that permits biology to become an engineering discipline, and that allows science to slip into the role of changing the living world without trying to understand it, is a danger to itself." He advocated rigorous opposition to such postmodern tendencies. Likewise, Werner will remain known for his contributions to Evolutionary Economics (for which he was preparing a special issue in *Biological Theory*) and the "bounded rationality" principle he cherished. Other themes he had focused on at various stages of his career, on all of which he left salutary marks, included reduction and emergence, limits of adaptation, the interaction of development and evolution, biological information, and evolutionary approaches to culture.

Werner's service to the community was substantial. As a university professor he loved to teach and always prepared extensive readings for his students. It was difficult for him to imagine that not everyone taking his courses was prepared to read several hundred pages by next week. In addition to his teaching, Werner served in numerous committees, both at the university and the EU level. He took seriously his role as the Editor-in-Chief of *Biological Theory* and served on several more editorial boards of scientific journals. An efficient facilitator, he organized and co-organized innumerable conferences, symposia, workshops, lectures, and other events. One of his favorite ones being the EASPLS summer school, which due to his initiative was held at the KLI Institute for the first time this year. He was a member of the Belgian Society for Logic and Philosophy of Science, the British Society for the Philosophy of Science, the Centre National de Recherche en Logique, the European Association for the Study of Science and Technology, and the History of Science Society.

Since 2013, Werner had acted as the president of the International Society for the History, Philosophy, and Social Studies of Biology. For him his beloved "Ishkabibble" was almost an extended family. With much excitement he was planning, during his presidency, to cope with some of the pressing issues for the society, such as its "uncontrolled growth" (due to its formidable success), which he had felt was stretching the limits of its organizational capacities. He had also

planned to work on reaching a better balance of philosophers, historians, and social scientists at future meetings. And, always striving for improvement, he had meant to increase the international representation in the society, reaching out to scholars from Eastern Europe and other regions. He was greatly looking forward to the 2015 meeting at Montreal, where he had expected to announce some of his plans for future development.

Werner's contributions as the scientific director of the KLI were fundamental. He and I founded the Altenberg Seminars (a thematically structured lecture series at the University of Vienna), the Altenberg Workshops (a series of exclusive workshops on selected topics that impact the advancement of biological theory, of which more than 30 were held so far), the Vienna Series in Theoretical Biology (a book series on theory and philosophy of biology with MIT Press), and collaborative summer schools with fellow institutions — one being the above mentioned European Advanced Seminar in the Philosophy of the Life Sciences (EASPLS) (organized together with Egenis, SEMM, IHPST, IUFE, and several others) and one in *EvoDevo* (together with the Istituto Veneto di Science, Lettere ed Arti). But the enterprise most closely linked to Werner, the one to which he devoted all his enthusiasm and energy over the past few years, was the scientific journal devoted to the conceptual integration of evolutionary, developmental, and cognitive science. It had been his dream, since his student days, to run his "own" journal, and so he worked hard at replacing the former KLI journal *Evolution & Cognition* with a much broader and much more international format, *Biological Theory* — first working with MIT Press and later with Springer. His tireless efforts brought the journal to an unparalleled level of perfection and scientific quality.

"Scientific director" was only one of the hats Werner wore. He organized lectures, symposia, and workshops, handled the fellowship applications, sent them out for review, etc. But, at the same time, he was a fatherly figure for countless junior fellows, visitors, and students, who took everybody who came through under his wings. Everyone had to have had "Stelze and a Krügl" before leaving Vienna! There was no issue that could not be discussed with Werner, and thus, together with Eva Lackner and Isabella Sarto-Jackson, he represented the infamous KLI task force that would handle any problem, from broken laptops to broken love. What a pity that he was unable to take seat in his

dedicated office in the new KLI Institute building at Klosterneuburg, for which the door plate was ready, appropriately saying "Assessore."

Werner was a cosmopolitan, both in the scientific and the cultural sense. Fluent in four languages, he easily moved between cultures and traditions in light conversation and academic discourse. He possessed an overwhelming anecdotal knowledge. Remember how he sat under Bill Wimsatt's desk? Or how a certain professor would not take any questions after his talk? Or how he had lost his backpack, his laptop, his cellphone — all through intricate circumstances that happened to coincide at different locations on this planet? He would have sold his future for a good story — maybe he did. What Salman Rushdie once said about his deceased friend Chatwick equally applies to Werner: "to be together with him meant to listen willingly." We all were willing.

Of Werner's many endearing personality traits one stood out formidably: His extremely social attitude and helpfulness, rooted in a deeply felt conviction of *Egalité*. This was true at all levels, whether in academic, or social, or even financial matters. He was convinced that human beings needed to assist and support each other, and he was bitterly disappointed when he discovered that the behavior of his conspecifics sometimes didn't match his standards. But that wouldn't prevent him from continuing his altruism. During his career, for instance, Werner must have written hundreds of letters of recommendation, and many of them brought success for the person he had written for. Or another example: he spent several days — and nights — helping with the copy editing of a large conference program booklet of nearly 400 abstracts last summer, although he was in no way responsible for the organization of that event. He read and corrected every single entry and, I am sure, many participants were surprised about what a nice abstract they had written — some may even have discovered the real point they were going to make in their presentation.

Werner was devoted to an intellectual life. He wanted to read, think, write, talk. Besides the massive reading load associated with his research and editorial work, he was an avid consumer of literature and newspapers. Not content with reading for himself, he read at the same time for his friends and colleagues, keeping their interests in mind. I will thoroughly miss his weekly delivery of newspaper clippings! Naturally (no pun

intended), one of the themes that occupied him most was the threat to the intellectual kind of university as we knew it. We would frequently greet each other (half) jokingly with "tout est perdue" – all is lost – by which we meant the disappearance of the knowledge based university in exchange for an efficiency seeking enterprise. Despite (or maybe because of) his expertise in economics, Werner was a strong critic of the economized university model now in fashion. He loved to quote Münch's 2011 dictum: "When the scientific enterprise becomes transformed into economics, you need economics to explain the workings of science." The world Werner has left corresponds no longer with his ideal world of academic freedom, where knowledge, understanding, intellect, debate, criticism, etc. were the fundamental qualities. Certainly it was no coincidence that a 2011 symposium in his honor at Hasselt University was entitled "De toekomst van wetenschappelijke vrijheid" – "The future of academic freedom." He confided that the depressing answer was: none.

We owe Werner a lot. His sharp wits, his encyclopedic knowledge, his critical stance, and his ever-caring attitude will be sorely missed. We will remember him standing in contemplation of a philosophical problem or an object of interest, often times – unfortunately – smoking one of his inevitable Gauloises cigarettes: the red ones, not the blue ones! Unwavering, he stood for freedom in academia, equal rights in society, and the primacy of science (for which "modularity" was a proxy). "Liberté, Egalité, Modularité" was our battle cry.

Gerd B. Müller

Chairman

The KLI Institute

ISHPSSB 2015. Montréal

Time to submit abstracts!

The organization of ISHPSSB 2015 is now well under way. All relevant information can be found on the conference website: ishpssb2015.uqam.ca, but let us remind a couple key dates:

- The conference is planned from Sunday July 5th afternoon till Friday July 10th, 2015.
- The call for abstracts is open since early October and up until January 15th, 2015.

- And «early bird» registration will start in January 2015.



MONTRÉAL 2015
JULY 5 - JULY 10

To help you with the preparation of your trip, we have listed several accommodation options, with negotiated rates (<http://ishpssb2015.uqam.ca/>). Transportation and practical information, in particular about passports and visas, can also be found on the conference website (<http://ishpssb2015.uqam.ca/>). If you need assistance with invitation letters, please let us know well in advance.

The meeting will take place in downtown Montréal. It is hosted by the University of Québec in Montréal (UQAM), which is at walking distance from the numerous restaurants and hotels of the Quartier latin. The financial district and its shopping areas are just a few subway stations away, and so is the old-Montréal district and its harbour by the Saint Laurent river. The campus is also conveniently situated nearby one of the major subway nodes, the Berri-UQAM station, which is directly served by the airport shuttle-bus.

Please visit the website for more information and for regular updates. And let us know if there is anything we can do to make the meeting even better!

We are looking forward to welcoming you in Montréal!

Frédéric Bouchard and Christophe Malaterre

Chairs of the Organizing Committee



A view of Montreal

Announcement from the Program Co-Chairs

We're very excited about the upcoming meeting in Montreal this summer and want to encourage the ISH community and beyond to get your submissions for **ORGANIZED SESSIONS** in early this year. Here is the link <<http://ishpssb2015.uqam.ca/>>. We're experimenting with rolling admissions in order to allow session organizers to select preferred day/time slots. The earlier you submit, the more likely you'll be to have your session when you like! Please take full advantage of the [ISH 2015 bulletin board](#) to make connections and organize sessions! (<http://ishpssb.onefireplace.com>). We're incredibly excited to announce our plenary speakers Sandra Harding and Ford Doolittle. It's going to be fantastic meeting. Get it done before the holidays!

All the best,

Rob Wilson and Mark Borrello

Program Co-Chairs

Montreal 2015

Changes in journal discounts for ISHPSSB members

Currently, when members initiate or renew an ISHPSSB membership they do so on a web platform that gives them the option of subscribing to three journals at discounted rates. Since *History and Philosophy of the Life Sciences* moved to Springer, all of the discounted journal subscriptions we offer our members are now connected to one publisher,

presenting an opportunity to make some changes to the subscription process as well as in the options our members will have. These changes will take effect January 1 2015.

First, a change in subscription process: ISHPSSB members will subscribe directly with Springer. You may do this at any time during your ISHPSSB membership. Use the following link, and fill in the boxes to indicate your membership in ISHPSSB: <http://www.springer.com/generic/order/journals+subscription?SGWID=0-40514-12-128793-0>.

Second, the number of journals available at discount rates has increased from three to five. After January 1, ISHPSSB members are eligible for discounts to the following journals:

- *Biology & Philosophy*
- *History of Biology*
- *Biological Theory*
- *Acta Biotheoretica*
- *History & Philosophy of the Life Sciences*

The final change involves payment, which you will make directly to Springer. Each of the journals will be offered at USD 50.00, plus tax and shipping. Depending on the journal, your local tax, and your shipping option, this may amount to an increase from our previous flat charge, which ranged from USD 50.00 to USD 62.00.

Laura Perini

Treasurer

The Backpage

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Are you subscribed to the ISHPSSB Listserv <ISHPSBL>?

If not, you may have missed information posted for members which became outdated by the time this Newsletter was ready. Subscribe online by following these instructions:

Send an email message to:

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with the following in the body of the message:

SUBSCRIBE ISHPSBL YourFirstName YourLastName

Check for updates online: <http://www.ishpssb.org>

This listserv is maintained by Trevor Pearce. If you want to submit something, write to him under:
ishpssbmoderator@gmail.com

Have you renewed your membership?

ISHPSSB members typically renew their memberships when they register for the biennial meeting. Those who do not attend a meeting sometimes fail to renew. To renew your membership, go to:
<http://ishpssb.onefireplace.com>.

If you experience any difficulties, please contact Anya Plutynski at secretary@ishpssb.org

As a benefit, members receive a variety of journals at reduced rate, including ISIS and JHB.

If your membership has expired some time ago (approximately 6 months), you may be put in the “archives” of the membership database. In order to be removed from the archive, you must contact Anya Plutynski at secretary@ishpssb.org

Credits

This newsletter was designed and edited by David Suárez and reviewed by Maria Kronfeldner, Michel Morange and Anya Plutynski. We thank specially to Gerd Müller for his beautiful text and to all the people who worked really fast to finish their reports and announcements for the society.

The logo of the society was generously contributed by Andrew Yang.