

The Second International Conference of the German Society for Philosophy of Science (GWP.2016), 8-11 March 2016 *

The GWP organizes a conference every three years where all fields of philosophy of science are represented. The GWP conferences are mainly intended to strengthen the connection between German philosophers of science as well as their connection to the international philosophy of science community. The inaugural conference of the GWP was held in 2013 at the University of Hanover. The second international conference of the German Society for Philosophy of Science (GWP.2016) took place at the campus of the Heinrich Heine University Düsseldorf from March 8 to 11, 2016. It was hosted by the Düsseldorf Center for Logic and Philosophy of Science (DCLPS). One additional aim of this year's conference was to bring together philosophers of science working in philosophy of the natural sciences, the social sciences, and the humanities. This was also the main reason for the conference's title: "Philosophy of Science Between the Natural Sciences, the Social Sciences, and the Humanities."

The conference featured contributed papers and symposia covering all subfields of philosophy of science. The main sections were General Philosophy of Science (approx. 30%), Philosophy of the Life Sciences (approx. 20%), Philosophy of the Natural Sciences (approx. 15%), and Philosophy of the Social Sciences and the Humanities (approx. 10%). There were also sections on other fields of philosophy of science and also on more specific topics (all in all approx. 25%). In particular, these were Causality, Confirmation, History of Philosophy of Science, Mechanisms, Philosophy of Mathematics, and Values in Science. The 7 Symposia were on Absences in Biological and Medical Explanations, Constitution, Genetics and Culture, Philosophy of Science and Engineering, and Quantum Gravity.

GWP.2016 had more than 150 participants (approx. one third were women and about one fifth were students or graduate students), who came from 16 European

* This is a draft. The final version of this report is published under the following bibliographical data: Christian A., Feldbacher-Escamilla, C. J., & Gebharder, A. (2017). The Second International Conference of the German Society for Philosophy of Science (GWP.2016), 8-11 March 2016 [Conference report]. *Journal for General Philosophy of Science*, 48(2), 289-291. doi:10.1007/s10838-016-9358-4. The final publication is be available at <http://link.springer.com>.

and 6 non-European countries. There were 6 plenary lectures given by invited speakers, 62 contributed papers, and 7 contributed symposia (with 19 symposia talks). All in all, GWP.2016 featured 87 talks. The plenary lectures were given by Rainer Hegselmann (Bayreuth), Paul Hoyningen-Huene (Hanover), Michela Massimi (Edinburgh), Stathis Psillos (Athens), Alexander Rosenberg (Duke), and Gila Sher (San Diego).

The conference started with Alexander Rosenberg's talk entitled "The Biological Character of Social Theory." Rosenberg argued that the social sciences actually are a subdivision of biology, since they mainly study Darwinian processes understood in a non-nativist (i.e., not gene-reductionist) way. As support for this claim, Rosenberg tried to illustrate that Tinbergen's famous approach to biological inquiry can, in principle, also be applied to inquiry in the social sciences.

The second day of the conference began with Michela Massimi's talk "A (Possibly) Even Better Best System Account of Lawhood." Massimi's talk started with the question whether laws govern natural phenomena. One prominent answer to this question is Lewis's account, according to which nomic facts reduce to non-nomic facts. Massimi discussed van Fraassen's objections to Lewis's best system account of lawhood and argued for an improved version of Cohen and Callender's relativized Mill-Ramsey-Lewis account.

On the same day, Rainer Hegselmann gave the JGPS Lecture (generously sponsored by Springer, the publisher of the Journal for General Philosophy of Science). His talk was entitled "Thomas C. Schelling and James M. Sakoda – How to Become an Unknown Pioneer?" He presented a socio-historical case study on two pioneers of agent based computer simulations involving checkerboard models. In particular, he explained how it is that Thomas Schelling became so famous for his work on understanding segregation, even though Schelling's results can be shown to be a special case of earlier results obtained by James Sakoda, who is nowadays only remembered for his work on origami paper folding.

In his talk entitled "Are there Good Arguments Against Scientific Realism?", Paul Hoyningen-Huene discussed two famous arguments put forward for scientific realism: the no-miracles argument and the continuity argument. To illustrate the former, Hoyningen-Huene referred to a just recently confirmed novel prediction of the existence of gravitational waves derived from the theory of general relativity. Such a

prediction might look like a miracle if one does not suppose the truth of the underlying theory. However, Hoyningen-Huene stressed that there is not really a debate about the truth of the general theory of relativity among physicists. His second point was that the future is always horribly underdetermined and one can never know how theories will fare in the future.

Gila Sher's talk entitled "Truth and Scientific Change" examined how scientific change affects the concept of truth and outlined a new account to overcome problems which might arise due to scientific change such as the inference from the failure of past scientific theories to the failure of present and future theories. One of the realist approaches to address this conclusion from pessimistic meta-induction relies on the concept of approximate truth. Sher argued that the difficulties that come with this solution could be overcome by a dynamic conception of truth.

The GWP.2016 conference was closed by Stathis Psillos' talk "Induction and Natural Necessities." Psillos tried to refute necessitarian arguments for the view that there is no problem of induction if necessary connections are allowed in one's ontology. In particular, he discussed David Armstrong's proposed explanationist solution and Brian Ellis's proposed dispositional essentialist solution to the problem of induction.

GWP aims at establishing connections to other societies with a focus on philosophy of science in and outside of Germany. One way of expressing these connections consists in workshops and symposia mutually organized at the societies' conferences. At this year's GWP conference, there was a symposium of the Société de Philosophie des Sciences (SPS) on the topic "From Genetics to Culture – Lines, Gaps and Bridges" organized by Christian Sachse.

During the conference the meeting of the General Assembly of GWP was held. Besides minor modifications of the society's constitution, also a new Committee was elected. Gerhard Schurz (DCLPS, Düsseldorf) was elected as the new President, Ulajana Feest (Hanover) was reelected as Managing Director, and Alexander Gebharter (DCLPS, Düsseldorf) was elected as Treasurer. The General Assembly agreed that the main aims of the GWP – especially the support of young academics, the representation of philosophy of science in the media, and the national and international exchange between philosophers of science – should be pursued and further developed in the future.

There will also be a special issue of the Journal for General Philosophy of Science (JGPS) as well as a volume in the European Philosophy of Science (EPSA) book series (published by Springer). Both will contain selections of papers presented at the conference.

GWP.2016 was sponsored by the Heinrich Heine University Düsseldorf and the Düsseldorf Center for Logic and Philosophy of Science (DCLPS), the German Research Foundation (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft; DFG), and the Journal for General Philosophy of Science (Springer). We thank all of them. The GWP organizers were Holger Lyre (Magdeburg), Ulrich Krohs (Münster), Thomas Reydon (Hanover) and Uljana Feest (Hanover). The Local Organization Committee consisted of Gerhard Schurz (chair), Alexander Christian, Christian J. Feldbacher-Escamilla, Alexander Gebharter, David Hommen, Nina Retzlaff, and Paul Thorn.

Finally, the organizers would like to kindly thank the plenary speakers, the symposia organizers, as well as the many contributed speakers for their efforts and valuable contributions which made GWP.2016 a full success. The conference covered a wide range of current topics in philosophy of science and we are confident that GWP.2016 has further increased the international visibility of philosophy of science in Germany. We are very much looking forward to the next conference of the German Society for Philosophy of Science, which will be held in 2019.

Further details on GWP.2016 (such as the full program, videos of the plenary lectures, etc.) are available at the conference website: <http://gwp2016.wissphil.de/>

Alexander Christian
Christian J. Feldbacher-Escamilla
Alexander Gebharter
Philosophy, DCLPS