



Centaurus : Past and Future

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***Centaurus*: Past and Future.**

This issue is a milestone for *Centaurus*.

Scientific journals have gone through many major transformations over the years, reflecting changes in the scholarly, academic and publishing landscapes, and *Centaurus* is no exception, even though its history has its own particularities. The journal was founded in 1950 by a group of Danish historians of science and medicine and was initially published by the Copenhagen publishing house Ejnar Munksgaard under the name *Centaurus* and with the subtitle *International Magazine of the History of Science and Medicine*.¹ *Centaurus* was soon affected by the first wave of big acquisitions in the publishing industry. While the purchase of Alfred A. Knopf by Random House set the tone in 1961 (with Random House being bought by RCA in 1965 and changing owners many times since then), Munksgaard was acquired by a partnership between three different entities: Blackwell Scientific Publishers, B H Blackwell and Blackwell & Mott. From this moment on, *Centaurus* became part of a complex and continually changing legal and organizational structure of holdings and subsidiaries and took part in the international dynamic of consolidation in scientific publishing, which led to the current dominance of the “Big Three” scientific publishers: Elsevier, Springer-Nature and Wiley.

2006 was the most recent landmark year for the journal, when, on 6 September 2006, Robert Fox formally announced that *Centaurus* would become the official journal of the *European Society for the History of Science* and when, on November 17, it became known that Wiley would be *Centaurus*’ new publisher. This presented a major change in the profile and workflow of the journal, something that was expertly navigated by the journal’s new Editor-in-Chief at the time, Hanne Andersen. Now this period comes to a conclusion as the collaboration between Wiley and ESHS is ending. The current issue will be the last published by Wiley.

From 2022 onward, *Centaurus* will continue in a new way.

The ESHS has decided to relaunch its official journal under a slightly different name, *Centaurus: Journal of the European Society for the History of Science*, in collaboration with Brepols. While the journal will be different, the editorial board, the scope, the journal’s vision and mission, its governing principles and practices, all will remain the same. Responding to the most recent developments in academia and publishing, *Centaurus* will be fully Open Access, at no cost either to authors or readers. Going fully “diamond” Open Access is a major step and puts the journal at the forefront of academic publishing in the humanities. As ESHS president Theodore Arabatzis describes it:

‘We are thrilled to relaunch *Centaurus*, the official journal of ESHS, in partnership with Brepols, a distinguished publisher in the field of history of science. Our journal plays a central role in the life of our Society and is indispensable in fostering and disseminating excellent historical research on past science and related cultural practices. Our joint endeavor with Brepols is meant to turn *Centaurus* into a fully

¹ See Vermeir (2020) for the history of *Centaurus* from the perspective of its editors.

Open Access journal, at no cost to its authors, and, thereby, to make it freely accessible to the worldwide history of science community.’

As already noted, from 2022, the subtitle of *Centaurus* will change to “*Journal of the European Society for the History of Science*”. While the subtitle of the journal has changed a number of times since the 1950s to indicate new dimensions in its scope and profile (“*International Magazine of the History of Science and Medicine*”; “*Magazine of the History of Mathematics, Science, and Technology*”; “*An International Journal of the History of Science and its Cultural Aspects*”), this time, the subtitle cements the journal’s close relationship with the ESHS, indicating that the scholarly community instead of the publisher will govern the journal.

The first issue to be published with Brepols will appear in March 2022 and will showcase the continuity with our work in recent years. It will be a Spotlight Issue – that is, a collection of shorter papers on a topic of current interest – with the “end of epidemics” as its theme. This issue, edited by Erica Charters, will be a direct follow-up to the May 2019 Spotlight Issue *Histories of epidemics in the time of COVID-19* in *Centaurus* and a response to the article “How epidemics end” by Erica Charters and Kristin Heitman.² The second issue for 2022 will include a Special Issue on *Collections, Knowledge and Time*, edited by Martin Grünfeld and Karin Tybjerg, and will also build on work on material culture, collections and museums that has been promoted in past *Centaurus* issues.

The current issue of *Centaurus*, the last one published with Wiley, is filled to the brim with five Special Issue articles on the history of the (in)visibility of energy, four individual articles, an ESHS Contribution and many book reviews. Together with this issue, we are launching our second Virtual Issue – a collection of seminal papers previously published in the journal – that puts *Centaurus*’ past and ongoing historiographical contributions in the limelight. The Virtual Issue, entitled *Historiographical reflections on sciences in Europe* and edited by Ana Simões and Maria Paula Diogo, offers a selection of nine papers, five of which are introductions to special issues or spotlight sections. The Virtual Issue celebrates the 15-year long association between *Centaurus* and the European Society for the History of Science, as well as the ESHS’s partnership with Blackwell and Wiley. The selected papers show how both the ESHS and *Centaurus* have worked together in the last 15 years to consolidate a community of historians of science in Europe, and it provides inspiration for continuing to do so.

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