

Minutes of HAPOC 2nd General Assembly held during HaPoC 4, Brno, 6 October 2017

1. Meeting opening

Liesbeth De Mol opened the meeting where ca. 25 participants of HaPoC in Brno were present. Liesbeth provided a brief overview of the history of the commission. HaPoC is an interdivisional commission of the IUHPST (International Union of History and Philosophy of Science and Technology), supported by DHST (Division of History of Science and Technology) and DLMPST (Division of Logic, Methodology and Philosophy of Science and Technology) and was founded in 2011 and officially approved by DHST in 2013 and DLMPST in 2015.

2. New council update

According to the Commission Bylaws, after 4 years the Council has been renewed. 6 Nominations have been received, hence no elections were required. The new Council Members and their roles are as follows (marked with (*) are members present at the meeting):

- (*) Edgar Daylight (Siegen University)
- (*) Liesbeth De Mol (CNRS, Université de Lille)
- (*) Simone Martini (INRIA/University of Bologna)
- (*) Tomas Petricek (Alan Turing Institute), Vice-President
- Giuseppe Primiero (Middlesex University), President
- Viola Schiaffonati (Politecnico di Milano)

3. Activity in the last two years

Liesbeth provided an overview of the activities of the commission in the last two years. This includes:

- HaPoC organized HaPoP (History and Philosophy of Programming) Symposium took place in 2016 in Paris (with a special theme focusing on history and philosophy of operating systems).
- HaPoC organized a symposium held at ICHSTM, July 2017, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The symposium was organized by a local team and attended by Giuseppe Primiero. This was, in part, a good outreach activity to start diversifying the HaPoC membership.
- HaPoC organized a symposium on Legal, ethical and political issues of computing, at the UNESCO World Humanities Conference in Liège
- HaPoC held a special session at CiE (Computability in Europe) 2016 and 2017
- HaPoC supported a Summer School on Computer Simulation Methods, September 2017 at High Performance Computing Center Stuttgart (HLRS). This was not a HaPoC event, but we provided financial support for it. We might consider doing more of this form of collaboration – support others in organizing events relevant to the commission.

QUESTION: Will announcements for events like these be available earlier through hapoc.org web site?

At the moment, the call for papers get published on hapoc.org when available, but earlier plans for events (such as looking for help with organization) are not. We will consider more informal communication venue for very early announcements like this.

4. Upcoming planned events

Tomas Petricek will be co-chairing HaPoP 2018 in March in Oxford together with Ursula Martin. The meeting will be co-located with BSHM (British Society on History of Mathematics) meeting on History of Computing, which gives us an opportunity to cross-advertise and attract new audience. It will take place on Friday 23 March. We are also exploring the possibility of booking a room or another space for Saturday 24 March, so that those interested in more informal follow-up discussions where collaborations could be initiated can stay for one more day after the event.

The HaPoP meeting will have a special theme on “scientific progress with respect to programming”, i.e. whether programming follows a form of scientific method that allows it to increase its problem solving ability, but we will make it clear that this is not a required topic and authors are welcome to submit papers in other traditional areas.

An outline of other events was provided by Liesbeth De Mol:

- DLMPST meeting will be held in Prague in 2019 (we should make a special session proposal)
- DHST meeting will be held (also) in Prague in 2021 (we should make a proposal)
- There are plans for HaPoC Symposium in the UK in 2019

Anyone interested in helping out with any of these is welcome to contact members of the commission!

5. Update on publications

There are two upcoming publications organized by HaPoC:

- HaPoC post-proceedings from Pisa (2015) have been published
- HaPoP post-proceedings from Paris (2016) are work in progress and are expected to appear in summer 2018

6. Update on HaPoC membership

Liesbeth De Mol provided a quick summary of the HaPoC membership. According to profiles online, it seems that there is slightly larger number of members interested in philosophy than history (82 explicitly mention philosophy while 67 explicitly mention history). There also seems to be fewer historical talks at HaPoC.

This was briefly discussed – how can we encourage more historians to be an active part of the community? Is there an issue with the format of our events that makes them unfriendly to historians? Or should we advertise events differently and send calls for papers elsewhere? This is an issue that the commission will further investigate.

Following this, room was given for a more general discussion. How are attendees of the meeting happy with the structure of HaPoC? Is there anything we are missing?

Simone Martini: Mixture of communities is what makes the HaPoC interesting and we should strive to keep the mixture. If there is under-represented community, we should try to solicit contributions. Communication of HaPoC is not very effective.

Member: Also really happy with the convergence of people from different communities, will be going home very happy. However, if we had more people attending, we would do better. Should we have parallel sessions?

Liesbeth De Mol: We decided earlier that we do not want parallel sessions – we want to make people listen to each other across communities. One track encourages people to make effort to listen to people with other methods.

Helena Durnová: Could we let people organize themselves? So that there are topics with history, philosophy, etc. For example, the SHOT community uses a “commentator”. As a commentator, you are supposed to link the papers in your session together. People put in proposals for panels and then form session with 4 papers that are relevant to each other.

Tomas Petricek: (provided a brief summary of the format used in Salon des Refuse workshop; more information can be found at: <https://refuses.github.io>)

Elisabetta Mori: Loved the deep interdisciplinarity and would not come if this wasn't there. This is a good point of HaPoC. Like the fact that everything is mixed; you get to listen to lot of interesting things that you wouldn't listen to otherwise.

Edgar Daylight: Agrees too.

7. Financial updates and HaPoC web site

Liesbeth De Mol provided an update on the financial aspects of HaPoC. DHST has long tradition of supporting commissions and provides HaPoC with grants (\$2300/year). DLMPST has a new structure for funding where they provide up to \$1000 for a specific project. We pay for the web site, grants at HaPoC events and sometimes speakers when we organise symposia. We have around \$3000 in the bank.

The mention of web site evolved into a discussion on how this could be made more useful. In particular, it was mentioned that the web site encourages people to share their news, events and publications, but people do not do this.

Mate Szabo: When I add my publication, I'm aware that all 150 members will get a notification about this. This makes me wonder if I really should start doing this? If I upload 10 papers, will 150 people get 10 emails?

Robin Hill: Can we make notifications more fine-grained? Like, send only 1 publication email per week.

We concluded that the commission should investigate this – we would appreciate having a more experienced webmaster help us! If you are interested, please get in touch with the commission!

8. New projects

There are several new projects that were discussed:

- Robin Hill is contributing to an ACM Blog writing on History and Philosophy of Computing (available under <https://cacm.acm.org/blogs/blog-cacm>). There are several posts there already and Robin is looking for contributions! This is not a good place for writing about individual work, but it is great place for covering wider topics or work done by larger groups. If you're interested in contributing, contact Robin.
- Giuseppe Primiero is writing a column on computer science in The Reasoner (Philosophy of Science Journal). If you have a statement to make, contact Giuseppe!

9. Discussion on potential HaPoC journal

Another new project that is being considered is setting up our own HaPoC journal. Liesbeth De Mol explained the motivation – no venue is quite right for HaPoC. If you want to publish in journals on philosophy of logic, there will be too much emphasis on logic (etc.) In summary, it is very hard to find the perfect place. This has been discussed in the meeting and the following provides an outline of the discussion:

Robin Hill: This is a lot of work.

Member: Should the potential journal publish just event proceedings or something else? Liesbeth De Mol answered that it would be sufficient to publish proceedings.

Simone Martini: Besides being a lot of work on its own, there is even more work in getting the journal to appear in appropriate databases. My department, for example, is evaluated by bibliographic indicators and so the journal would have to have an impact factors.

Summary of a longer debate: This is really hard and there is a challenge between “doing the right thing” and doing it so that the metrics work out. However, doing this right would also make the conferences more attractive.

A member mentioned the Max Planck series (<http://edition-open-access.de>) as a potential publication venue. Another possible venue (fully open access) is Theoria (<http://www.ehu.eus/ojs/index.php/THEORIA>). Could we talk to them and see if there is a chance of long term arrangement?

Member: It is realistic to get started in a couple of years if we can get a support from a few established people and work with them to publish a few interesting things with us.

10. General Discussion

The meeting wrapped up with a more general discussion around the diversity of topics, publicity and web site:

Mate Szabo: HaPoC in Pisa was more diverse in terms of topics. Can we encourage this via invited talks?

Simone Martini: The publicity for HaPoC conferences should be run mainly by the HaPoC committee. The local organizing committee should complement the efforts. For example organizers of HaPoC Pisa gave us a list of mailing lists where we should post a CFP.

Liesbeth De Mol: We need a good webmaster. Juan M. Durán and Robin Hill mentioned that they could possibly help. One idea discussed was whether we could make the submission process easier, by sending the news via email to webmasters? We also should separate news (with automatic immediate notifications) and papers (once a month digest).

Elisabetta Mori: We could improve the web site by using nice HaPoC logo that Elisabetta Mori created for HaPoC 2015.

Tomas Petricek: The idea of having a mailing list was discussed, but no conclusion was made. (It might be useful, but it is adding yet another form of communication, which may be too much.)