

Call for papers: KRISIS Special Issue, December 2010

"Crisis in economics—historical, philosophical and sociological reflections on economic science and its object(s)"

Abstracts due: April 1st 2010

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Krisis seeks submissions for a Special Issue with historical, philosophical and sociological reflections on economics and its object. The relationship between economics and its object—"the economy", or "the market"—has recently been problematised from a variety of perspectives. This can be seen not only in societal and political debates following the worldwide financial crisis and the predictive failure of economics regarding this, but also in wide academic circles. We call for papers addressing various issues pertaining to this "crisis in economics", focusing for example on one or more of the following three prominent *sites of contestation*:

Within the walls of academic economics. After a period in which neoclassical economics dominated the scene, we are at present witnessing how economics forms alliances with all kinds of other disciplines, from psychology to (evolutionary) biology and neuroscience. Behavioral economics is undoubtedly the most prominent manifestation of this trend. This development reshapes economics' field of objects and brings into being new observational practices. Simultaneously, this movement seriously threatens economics' old-time hero the *homo economicus*. Explicitly policy-oriented fields such as *neuromarketing* are also an offspring of this development.

Within social science at large. It is not only economists who turn to other disciplines; lately other disciplines have turned to economics too. Economic sociology takes as its point of departure the idea that economics frames its object in such a fashion that a host of things are left out of the picture that in fact play a crucial role in economic life—things as various as social norms, networks, national and organizational cultures, and so forth. From the point of view of Science and Technology Studies we find a like-minded interest in economics and its object. For example, under the label of "performativity" Donald MacKenzie has shown how the use of economic models of the behavior of options—developed in an academic environment—has co-determined the *fit* between model and reality for some time. This approach to economics not only borrows from philosophy, but might also offer it a (necessary?) impulse for renewal. It offers a range of epistemological and political-theoretical questions that receive hardly any attention within the highly methodological-oriented philosophy of economics.

Beyond academia: socio-political issues. Economics has also been challenged in political and societal debates ensuing from today's global financial crisis. Both the failure to foresee the crisis and the role of economic models and techniques in its coming about are much debated issues. It is not uncommon in such debates to explain the crisis (simplistically) with reference to the moral flaws of bankers, investors and entrepreneurs. Following this line of thought, the biggest political party in the Netherlands (the Christian Democratic CDA) recently launched the idea to make ethics courses mandatory for all economics and business students in the Netherlands. In this fashion, philosophers are indirectly invited to come and play a similar role in economic life to the one they have so enthusiastically embraced in the medical and bio-science sphere as bioethicists. The econethicist (a good neologism

is still wanting) should thus develop into the shepherd of a deviant herd of egoists.

More refined explanations of the latest crisis often refer to the complexity and high level of abstraction of economic models and the financial products based upon them which are so crucial to today's financial reality. The aforementioned criticism of the *homo economicus*—still central to much of economic thought—figures prominently here.

Krisis' special issue "Crisis in economics" aims to bring together work on economic science and its object(s) by scholars from a variety of disciplines. Historians, philosophers, economists, sociologists, science scholars, political scientists and so on are all invited to submit work. Various types of work are welcome: academic articles, essays, book reviews and interviews. In these submissions a variety of questions and approaches are welcome, ranging from the transformation of economics' field of objects and the correlated emergence of new observational practices, the intertwining of economic concepts, theories and devices with actual markets, to socio-political and normative issues on the power of economic techniques and technology.

Abstracts of no more than **1 page A4**, either in Dutch or in English, should be sent by **Thursday 1 April 2010** to CrisisOfEconomics@gmail.com. Further enquiries are welcome on this address too. Name and institutional affiliation of author(s) should be supplied, including full contact details of the main author. Submissions for academic articles will go through blind double peer review. The Guest Editors and *Krisis'* Editorial Board will review all other types of writing. Deadline for full final submissions is **15 August 2010**. Maximum length for full submissions is:

- 7000 words for articles;
- 5000 words for essays;
- 4000 words for reviews of more than one book;
- 2000 words for reviews;
- 5000 words for interviews.

About *Krisis*

Krisis is a bi-lingual (English and Dutch) interdisciplinary journal widely read in philosophical and STS circles. It has previously published works by authors such as Wiebe Bijker, Pierre Bourdieu, Jacques Bouveresse, Michel Foucault, Bruno Latour, Thomas Pogge and Richard Rorty.

Krisis provides a platform for articles that discuss issues in contemporary social, political and cultural thought, and also seeks to make the work of classic authors relevant to current social and cultural problems. Over the last 25 years *Krisis* has published original contributions in social and political philosophy, cultural theory, philosophy of science and technology, Science and Technology Studies and the partly Dutch invention of empirical philosophy.

While *Krisis* is a peer-reviewed journal with a high academic standard, it also seeks to uphold its function as a forum for current critical thought on public affairs. That is, *Krisis* is sensitive to the tradition of European philosophy that takes its role as public thought seriously, and does not overlook its naïve ambition to inform public discourse. *Krisis* continues actively to seek to contribute to wider societal debates, in the Netherlands and elsewhere.

More information on http://www.krisis.eu/index_en