PREFACE

The present volume is a continuation of the series *Contemporary Philosophy*. As with the earlier volumes in the series, the present chronicles purport to give a survey of significant trends in contemporary philosophy.

The need for such surveys has, I believe, increased rather than decreased over the years. The philosophical scene appears, for various reasons, more complex than ever before. The continuing process of specialization in most branches, the increasing contact between philosophers from various cultures, the emergence of new schools of thought, particularly in philosophical logic and in the philosophy of language and ethics, and the increasing attention being paid to the history of philosophy in discussions of contemporary problems, are the most important contributing factors. Surveys of the present kind are a valuable source of knowledge of this complexity. The surveys may therefore help to strengthen the Socratic element of modern philosophy, the intercultural dialogue or *Kommunikationsgemeinschaft*.

So far, seven volumes are published in this series, viz. *Philosophy of Language and Philosophical Logic* (Vol. 1), *Philosophy of Science* (Vol. 2), *Philosophy of Action* (Vol. 3), *Philosophy of Mind* (Vol. 4), *African Philosophy* (Vol. 5), *Medieval Age Philosophy* (Vol. 6/1 and Vol. 6/2), and *Asian Philosophy* (Vol. 7).

The volumes are, for various reasons, of unequal length. The obvious shortcomings, especially of Vol. 5 on African and Arab Philosophy, will to some extent be compensated for in the volumes to come, *Aesthetics* (Vol. 9) and *Philosophy of Religion* (Vol. 10).

The present volume on *Latin American Philosophy* (Vol. 8), containing thirteen surveys, shows the variety of philosophical approaches in that region. In addition to valuable contribution to international discussions, especially of topics in Logic and Philosophy of Language, quite a few philosophers attribute to philosophy also a more local and regional task: How can philosophy contribute to the working out of a cultural identity for Latin America. Victims of European colonialism for hundreds of years, this task cannot be neglected.

The chronicles are as a rule written in English, French and German. In the present volume eight surveys are written in English, four in French and one in Spanish. The bibliographical references, with some exceptions, follow the pattern introduced in earlier volumes. The bibliographies themselves usually

follow at the end of each chronicle arranged in alphabetical order. The bibliographies are selected and arranged by the authors themselves.

I regret that the publication of the present volume has been delayed. Doubts as to whether the chronicle series should be continued are a major reason. The chronicles were all submitted in 1997/98.

I am most grateful to a number of persons who in various ways have assisted in the preparation of this new series. My thanks are first of all due to Mrs. Kari Horn, who undertook the laborious task of retyping the manuscripts and the bibliographies written on paper in different foreign languages into modern word processing. Without her help the volume would have been much further delayed. (Most of the manuscripts were not sufficiently distinct for scanning). I am also most grateful to the Secretariat, especially to Ms. Catherine Champniers, at the *Institut International de Philosophie* in Paris. They have done the final proof-reading as well as put up the indices.

My thanks are also due to the *Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique* (Paris), and to the *Conseil International de la Philosophie et des Sciences Humaines* (UNESCO), and to the staff at Kluwer Academic Publishers (Dordrecht).

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