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par les soins de
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Université d'Oslo

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edited by

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Preface

The present publication is a continuation of two earlier series of chronicles, *Philosophy in the Mid-Century* (Firenze 1958/59) and *Contemporary Philosophy* (Firenze 1968), edited by Raymond Klibansky. As with the earlier series the present chronicles purport to give a survey of significant trends in contemporary philosophical discussion. The time space covered by the present series is (approximately) 1966–1978.

The need for such surveys has, I believe, increased rather than decreased over the last years. The philosophical scene appears, for various reasons, more complex than ever before. The continuing process of specialization in most branches, the emergence of new schools of thought, particularly in philosophical logic and the philosophy of language, the convergence of interest (though not necessarily of opinion) of different traditions upon certain problems, and the increasing attention being paid to the history of philosophy in discussions of contemporary problems are the most important contributory factors. Surveys of the present kind are a valuable source of knowledge of this complexity and may as such be of assistance in renewing the understanding of one's own philosophical problems. The surveys, it is to be hoped, may also help to strengthen the Socratic element of modern philosophy, the dialogue or *Kommunikationsgemeinschaft*.

So far, four volumes have been prepared for the new series. The present chronicles in Philosophy of Science (Vol. 2) follow the chronicles in the Philosophy of Language and Philosophical Logic (Vol. 1) and are themselves followed by chronicles in the Philosophy of Action (Vol. 3) and Philosophy of Mind (Vol. 4). Each volume contains, as a rule, fifteen chronicles each 25 pages

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long However, this rule has been broken in all volumes. In some cases it turned out to be impossible to receive chronicles in time for the date of publication. In others the authors, if they thought it necessary in view of their topic, were allowed to exceed the allotted number of pages. For these reasons certain philosophical disciplines, particularly the Philosophical Logic of Volume 1 and the Philosophy of Action in Volume 3, are covered less satisfactorily than others, apart from the fact that the volumes are of unequal length.

Most of the chronicles, as to be expected, are written in English, some in French and none in German. The German contributors thought it necessary to write in English in order to be read. This is, I think, a most regrettable state of affairs. It means that major parts of the philosophical community will no longer have access to important sources of the history of philosophy in their original version.

The topics surveyed in the four volumes belong squarely within the Western philosophical tradition and do little justice to philosophies or ways of thinking in other cultures. This should be kept in mind in the preparation of further volumes. The idea of a trans-cultural philosophy is still very unclear.

Bibliographical references, with a few exceptions, follow the pattern introduced in *Philosophy in the Mid-Century*. The publications discussed in each chronicle are indicated by reference numbers in square brackets, corresponding to the order in which they appear in the text. The bibliographies themselves follow at the end of each chronicle arranged in alphabetical order.

The bibliographies are selected by the authors themselves and contain as a rule only those works they took to be of special interest for the topics under discussion.

I am most grateful to a number of persons, who in various ways have assisted in the preparation of the new series. My thanks are first of all due to the former president of the Institut International de Philosophie, Georg H. von Wright, who, in addition to having written the introduction to Part 2, Philosophical Logic, of Volume 1, has given valuable suggestions concerning the topics to be surveyed as well as the contributors to all volumes. The former editor of the Chronicles, Raymond Klibansky, who has devoted much of his eminent scholarship and his time to the editorial

work of the earlier Chronicles, provided me with much useful experience, Espen Schaanning, M.A., undertook most conscientiously the unpleasant task of reviewing the methods of reference and the bibliographies to make them comply with the given model. The secretary of the Institute of the History of Ideas, Wenche Karin Nesse, has with admirable patience typed numerous letters in various languages and otherwise assisted in the preparations.

My thanks are also due to UNESCO for their financial support and to Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, The Hague, for their willingness to publish the Chronicles. The Secretariat of the Institut International de Philosophie deserves special recognition for its most helpful assistance in administrative matters. The Secretariat has also been responsible for the contact with UNESCO and the Publisher.

Finally, I want to thank all the scholars from various countries, whose contributions have made it possible to complete the new series of Chronicles.

University of Oslo, February 1981

Guttorm Fløistad