

## EDITORS' INTRODUCTION

The five essays in this volume deal with the bases of politics and the basic methodological issues of political science. Their aim is to open new perspectives and suggest new methodological strategies for political analysis. The similarity of the essays tends to expire with this joint mission: they reflect varying and in many respects even contrasting commitments to different epistemological and methodological views. They also reflect the different degrees of completion of the authors' personal projects, the progress of their endeavours to transfer something new into the methodological discussion of political science.

Despite epistemological and methodological disparities the essays have a common background which, on an intellectual plane, unites them. They reflect — within the microcosm of a small national community of political scientists — those centrifugal forces which have been felt in the social sciences of the Western countries during the last 10–15 years. Research and teaching in social sciences have fragmented and epistemological, methodological and theoretical disputes increased under impacts from different directions: phenomenology, hermeneutics, Marxism, structuralism and discourse theory. The essays in this volume explicitly reflect these impacts and present fragmentation in political science. We do not have to perceive this fragmentation as a disorder, because there are some basic epistemological and methodological issues which underly this seeming fragmentation and which can be systematically related to each other. As such one can mention the problems of being-in-the-world, consciousness and intentionality; constitution of the subject, knowledge and language; and the role of historicity. Although the essays do not directly deal with these issues, they can be read on a continuum reaching from experiencing politics (the first essay) via the politics of consciousness and knowledge (the subsequent two essays) to more concrete problems of political and scientific practices as they are reflected in the development of political science (the last two essays).

Finally, all the essays are meant jointly to further the cause of what Paul Ricoeur has called speculative thought, which ». . . employs metaphorical

resources of language in order to create meanings; and answers thus the call of the 'thing' to be said with a semantic innovation. A procedure like this has nothing scandalous about it as long as speculative thought knows itself to be distinct and responsive because it is thinking». These essays do not present new, speculative thought, but they try to generate new methodological and theoretical innovations by applying earlier and present speculative thought to analyses of both concrete political activities and their meta-analytical and metapolitical regulation.