



## **Organism and the Origins of Self (Boston Studies in the Philosophy and History of Science)**

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"De la vaporisation et de la centralisation du Moi. Tout est la." Charles Baudelaire (journal entry) This anthology is my visit to Oz. On sabbatical in 1988, I chose to reeducate myself in general biology, first broadening my erudition as an immunologist, and then extending that horizon into evolutionary biology and embryology. I was particularly attracted to reflections on the nature of the self as an organismic concept. I went in search of reorientation as a confused physician scientist, and came back with this book. Baum's Wizard of Oz presented opportunities for growth, and herein lies the purpose of this volume: in providing updated statements concerning the nature of the organism from both scientific and metaphysical perspectives, we might ponder the philosophical basis of our research in the hope of gaining insight into our endeavor, not to mention the possibility of its enrichment; it is this contemplative view of our research which offers a unique dimension to this anthology. To that end, the project follows my idiosyncratic prejudices. The anthology derives in large measure from the symposium, "Organism and the Origin of Self" held at Boston University, April 3-4, 1990, under the auspices of the Boston University Center for the Philosophy and History of Science, with generous support of Robert Cohen and Jon Westling, and the organizational skills of Deborah Wilkes. The Symposium presented three versions of the Self from the vantages of embryology, evolution and medicine.

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