ABSTRACT

La conferenza di Quine del 1946 sul nominalismo, di *Peter van Inwagen*

Quine's 1946 lecture *Nominalism* is a superb exposition of his early views on ontological commitment. In my opinion, they are presented more clearly in this lecture than in *On What There Is*. I go on to illustrate these views in connection with the problem of finding nominalistically acceptable paraphrases of two sentences: 'Some zoological species are cross-fertile' and 'There are three times as many dogs as there are cats'. Various philosophical problems are examined that arise from the paraphrases taken into consideration. I conclude that the value of the lecture does not lie in its contribution to the "nominalist paraphrase project" (a project impossible to carry out), but rather in what it adds to our understanding of how ontological disputes should be conducted.

Quine e Tarski sul nominalismo, di *Paolo Mancosu*

Quine and Tarski were kindred philosophical spirits. They rejected the analytic/synthetic distinction and shared a strong distaste for modal notions. Moreover, they both had nominalistic leanings. In this article I trace the nominalistic engagement of these two giants of contemporary analytic philosophy. Using recently discovered material from the Quine archive at Harvard, I begin by describing Quine's engagement with nominalism up to 1940. I then summarize the impact of the 1940-1941 discussions on nominalism between Carnap, Quine and Tarski and mention their influence on Goodman. The third part of the article deals with Quine's allegiance to nominalism and his subsequent reluctant acceptance of Platonism. The fourth part focuses on Tarski's defence of nominalism in Amersfoort in 1953. In the conclusion, Quine's and Tarski's approaches to nominalism are compared with some contemporary nominalistic programs (Field, Hellman, etc.).

Al nominalista non manca proprio nulla? La dispensabilità dell'insieme vuoto in mereologia, di *Vincenzo Latronico*

Quine's commitment to nominalism has always required set theory to be replaced by an ontologically less dubious tool for the analysis of predication, one that is usually

mereological in nature, akin to the Calculus of Individuals he and Goodman developed in a seminal paper on nominalism. The problem Quine himself always acknowledged as central in any such replacement arises with the mereological "translation" of numbers. I show here that Quine's proposed translation strategy, even when successful, raises even more serious issues since it requires mereology to supply a substitute for the empty set. After proving the indispensability, given Quine's translation, of such an entity, I demonstrate that an exact mereological replica of the empty set (the "null object") cannot be admitted without engendering contradictions. I conclude by discussing some paraphrases of the usual mereological axioms that prima facie might seem to be compatible with the null object and assessing their implausibility.

Il buono, il brutto e il cattivo. Disambiguare il naturalismo di Quine, di *Susan Haack*

Quine's 'epistemology naturalised' has been profoundly influential, but it is also highly ambiguous. Quine seems at times to claim only that epistemology is not a purely a priori enterprise but an empirical study, continuous with the sciences of cognition; at others, that epistemological questions can be turned over to the sciences to resolve; and on other occasions, that epistemological questions are misconceived and should be replaced by scientific investigation into cognition. What is argued here is that the first and most modest version of Quine's epistemological naturalism is potentially fruitful, the second and more ambitious indefensible, and the third and most ambitious not only false but disastrous.

Significato stimolo o esemplare? La doppia faccia dell'olismo di Quine, di *Roberta Lanfredini*

This article compares Quine's naturalized epistemology with the network models of Hesse and Kuhn. They have much in common but differ in a number of important points. In this respect, three issues are considered here: a) the epistemological role of sensible features of our experience; b) the link between external stimulus, behaviour and meaning; and, lastly, c) the connection between reductionism in epistemology and reductionism in philosophy of mind.

Uso, significato e riferimento, di *Sascia Pavan*

This article is an exposition of W.V. Quine's doctrine of the indeterminacy of translation of terms. The aim is to provide a clear formulation of this doctrine, to distinguish it from the much stronger claim that the translation of sentences is indeterminate, and to outline the arguments put forward by Quine. The most systematic of these is reconstructed in detail, namely the argument from proxy functions. Finally, it is argued that the ultimate ground of the doctrine is the acceptance of the semantic primacy of sentences. The claim that meaning has to be identified with language use is also discussed.

Naturalizzazione, mente e conoscenza, di *Giancarlo Zanet*

A controversial issue regarding Quine's naturalised epistemology is that it may involve some form of reductionism. This article focuses on one of these forms, analysing the interplay of his philosophy of mind and epistemology. It aims to show that if we take into proper consideration the way in which the version of anomalous monism embraced affects his conception of mental states like sensations and propositional attitudes, Quine's philosophy of mind should be regarded as anti-reductionist. Through a discussion of his theory of perception, I try to argue that what is entailed by it is, in a sense only partially accepted by Quine himself, that neither perception nor observational language can be strictly reduced to their stimulatory conditions. By pointing out the relevance that Quine attributes to the mechanism of empathy as a means for ascribing propositional attitudes, a further interesting argument is provided to underline that, within a naturalized epistemology, there is room for a non-reductive description of mind in some ways close to the results of the hermeneutic tradition.