



Linguistic Content: New Essays on the History of Philosophy of Language

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Philosophy of language has a rich and varied history stretching back to the Ancient Greeks. Twelve specially written essays explore this richness, from Plato and Aristotle, through the Stoics, to medieval thinkers, both Islamic and Christian; from the Renaissance and the early modern period, all the way up to the twentieth Century. Among the many topics that arise across this 2500-year trajectory are metaphysical questions about linguistic content. A first focal

point of the volume is the issue of which broad ontological family linguistic contents belong to. Are linguistic contents mental ideas, physical particulars, abstract Forms, social practices, or something else again? And do different sorts of linguistic contents belong to different ontological categories-e.g., might it be that names stand for ideas, whereas logical terms stand for mental processes? The second focal point is the metaphysical grounding of linguistic content: that is, in virtue of what more basic facts do content facts obtain? Do words mean what they do because of natural resemblances? Because of causal relations? Because of arbitrary conventional usage? Or because of some combination of the above?



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