

1.	Record Nr.	UNINA990005299520403321
	Autore	Privitera, G. Aurelio
	Titolo	La rete di Afrodite : studi su Saffo / G. Aurelio Privitera
	Pubbl/distr/stampa	Palermo, : Aracne, stampa 1974
	Descrizione fisica	149 p. ; 22 cm
	Collana	L'Orizzonte ; 1
	Disciplina	884
	Locazione	FLFBC
	Collocazione	P2B 610 SAPPHO/S 02
	Lingua di pubblicazione	Italiano Greco antico
	Formato	Materiale a stampa
	Livello bibliografico	Monografia
2.	Record Nr.	UNINA9910817569903321
	Autore	Boos William
	Titolo	Metamathematics and the philosophical tradition / / William Boos ; edited by Florence S. Boos
	Pubbl/distr/stampa	Boston : , : Walter de Gruyter, , [2018] ©2018
	ISBN	3-11-057239-7 3-11-057245-1
	Edizione	[First edition.]
	Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (494 pages)
	Disciplina	121
	Soggetti	Philosophy Metamathematics Mathematics - Philosophy
	Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
	Formato	Materiale a stampa
	Livello bibliografico	Monografia

Nota di bibliografia

Includes bibliographical references and index.

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Sommario/riassunto

Metamathematics and the Philosophical Tradition is the first work to explore in such historical depth the relationship between fundamental philosophical quandaries regarding self-reference and meta-mathematical notions of consistency and incompleteness. Using the insights of twentieth-century logicians from Gödel through Hilbert and their successors, this volume revisits the writings of Aristotle, the ancient skeptics, Anselm, and enlightenment and seventeenth and eighteenth century philosophers Leibniz, Berkeley, Hume, Pascal, Descartes, and Kant to identify ways in which these both encode and evade problems of a priori definition and self-reference. The final chapters critique and extend more recent insights of late 20th-century logicians and quantum physicists, and offer new applications of the completeness theorem as a means of exploring "metatheoretical ascent" and the limitations of scientific certainty. Broadly syncretic in range, Metamathematics and the Philosophical Tradition addresses central and recurring problems within epistemology. The volume's elegant, condensed writing style renders accessible its wealth of citations and allusions from varied traditions and in several languages. Its arguments will be of special interest to historians and philosophers of science and mathematics, particularly scholars of classical skepticism, the Enlightenment, Kant, ethics, and mathematical logic.