Introduction

Rudolf Carnap (1891–1970) and W. V. Quine (1908–2000) are arguably the most important philosophers of the analytic tradition in the twentieth century. A fairly standard account of their respective places in the development of analytic philosophy is that Carnap rose to prominence in the first half of the century, and by 1950, he and the other logical empiricists had become the dominant trend in analytic philosophy, especially in the philosophy of science. Typically, Carnap and the other logical empiricists have been taken as the heirs to Russell and British empiricism more generally. This story continues with Quine coming to prominence in the second half of the century with his refutation of the analytic/synthetic distinction in his 1951 “Two Dogmas of Empiricism.” With this paper (along with the 1962 publication of Thomas Kuhn’s The Structure of Scientific Revolutions), Quine displaced logical empiricism as the dominant trend in analytic philosophy and his naturalism took over, reopening the path to the analytic metaphysics that Carnap and his followers had so railed against. Carnap and Quine then are largely seen as the opposing halves of twentieth-century analytic philosophy.

Recent scholarship has however brought into question this rather simplistic account of Carnap and Quine’s philosophical relationship and their roles in the development of analytic philosophy, though it has in no way decreased their importance to the tradition. Much of Quine’s work is still viewed as a response to Carnap with much of the tradition that followed the publication of “Two Dogmas” being viewed as a response to Quine. The standard account, however, has been problematized in a number of ways. First, beginning in the 1980s Carnap’s previously thought failed philosophical program began to see some important reassessment. In particular, the dominant reading – due largely to Quine himself – of Carnap’s Aufbau as the culmination of Russell and British empiricism has been shown to be flawed. Instead, the work has been shown to emerge out of Carnap’s neo-Kantian background and to have little to do with traditional
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Cartesian epistemological concerns with certainty. Similarly, Carnap’s appeals to and account of the analytic/synthetic distinction have also been reconsidered. On the standard account, his appeal to the distinction has often been understood – again due in no small part to Quine’s reading of it – as providing empiricism with an account of mathematical certainty. Recent scholarship has again shown Carnap standing outside of such traditional epistemological concerns and instead replacing epistemology with what he described instead as the logic of science. His appeal to the analytic/synthetic distinction was all part of his attempt to give a proper methodological and anti-metaphysical account of the sciences.

Quine, due perhaps to a philosophical career that lasted until his death in 2000, has typically been treated as more of a contemporary analytic philosopher than as an historical figure. But more recently, he, too, has been subjected to focused historical attention. In particular, he has emerged perhaps as a much more systematic philosopher – his entire body of philosophical work being understood now as part of a project to work out his naturalism – than previously thought. Also, emerging has been the influence on him by philosophical predecessors such as C. I. Lewis, Bertrand Russell, and, of course, Carnap. What has emerged is that Quine is perhaps better understood in dialogue with these philosophers than with much of the analytic philosophy that followed them and that to a significant degree, he gave rise to.

Despite the historical reevaluation of each of Carnap and Quine, they are still generally viewed as philosophical opponents – again, with their dispute over the analytic/synthetic distinction taking center stage. The essays in this volume – in various ways – question the interpretive strategy of viewing them primarily as opponents. Instead, it is urged here that the many and important differences between Carnap and Quine can be better understood by viewing them as largely sympathetic to each other with their differences emerging as they both strove to achieve a scientific approach to philosophy. For example, the analytic/synthetic distinction then emerges as a question of whether it can be made properly scientific sense of. The approach of this volume to Carnap and Quine is not entirely without precedent. One of the most important early examples of this approach is Richard Creath’s 1987 “The Initial Reception of Carnap’s Doctrine of Analyticity,” where he describes Quine’s early engagement with Carnap over the notion of analyticity as a largely sympathetic one. Despite many views to the contrary, Creath shows that Quine’s 1936 “Truth by Convention” is not so much an early rejection of the analytic/synthetic distinction as an attempt to work out certain weaknesses that Quine saw in Carnap’s account of...
analyticity. Another more recent example of this approach is Gary Ebbs’s 2014 “Quine’s Naturalistic Explication of Carnap’s Logic of Science.” Many commentators have distinguished Quine from Carnap by seeing Quine as attempting to carry out something of the traditional empiricist idea that our best theories of nature are justified by sensory evidence and so, are likely to be true. Instead, Ebbs argues that Quine’s epistemology can only be understood by seeing him as incorporating while also transforming Carnap’s rejection of this traditional empiricist view. Many other examples also exist, including Ricketts, Hylton, and Verhaegh. While there are many precedents for the approach urged in this volume, this is the first single collection to take it as a basic interpretive strategy for understanding Carnap and Quine, both as individual philosophers and in relation to each other. Previously, this approach could only be found scattered through the literature on these two figures. It is the aim of this volume to bring together early proponents of this approach with some more recent interpreters to demonstrate how looking at Carnap and Quine as figures sympathetic to each other is a profitable interpretive strategy not just for bringing to light the sort of deep philosophical commitments that they shared but also for better understanding the nature of their disagreements.

The volume is divided into four parts. The first, “Carnap, Quine, and Logical Empiricism,” considers the varied relations that Carnap and Quine had to logical empiricism. Setting the stage for many of the papers that follow, Sander Verhaegh, in his “Carnap and Quine: First Encounters (1933–1936),” turns to the very beginning of Carnap and Quine’s philosophical relationship, examining Quine’s visit to Europe during academic year 1932/33, during which he spent five weeks in Prague with Carnap. Verhaegh details what initiated Quine’s trip, the events leading up to his arrival in Prague, and finally the momentous philosophical exchange between Quine and Carnap that began there and that would carry on for the rest of Quine’s career, even after Carnap’s death in 1970. Following up on Verhaegh’s contribution, is Thomas Uebel’s “On Quine’s Guess about Neurath’s Influence on Carnap’s Aufbau.” Here again we have Quine in dialogue with Carnap but this time by way of fellow logical empiricist, Otto Neurath. Uebel focuses on some speculations of Quine’s about how Neurath’s criticisms of Carnap’s Aufbau gave rise to Carnap’s physicalism. Particularly relevant to the aims of this volume is Uebel’s account of how

1 In the summary of the volume that follows, I have in places drawn heavily from contributors’ submitted abstracts. For this, I thank them for their assistance with this Introduction.
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all of Neurath, Carnap, and Quine ultimately converge upon physicalism, though by different routes. Part I of the volume concludes with my contribution, “Frameworks, Paradigms, and Conceptual Schemes: Blurring the Boundaries between Realism and Anti-Realism.” Here, I argue that despite Quine and Kuhn’s reputation for bringing to a close the era of Carnap and logical empiricism as dominating philosophy of science, all of Carnap, Quine, and Kuhn share in rejecting traditional realist and anti-realist analyses of ontology. They all reject a version of what Putnam called metaphysical realism and then also resist making the move to an equally extra-scientific anti-realist position. For all of them, science itself is to be the final arbiter of what there is.

Part II of the volume turns to consider Carnap and Quine in relation to American pragmatism, as a possible common philosophical influence on each of them. Yemima Ben-Menahem begins the discussion with her “Pragmatism in Carnap and Quine: Affinity or Disparity?” noting that Quine’s remark from the end of “Two Dogmas of Empiricism” concerning the pragmatism of himself and Carnap invites drawing a connection to American pragmatism. She carefully distinguishes, however, Quine’s use of “pragmatism,” which has a rather general sense, from the more specific features of American pragmatism. Only with this distinction carefully in place can we then get an accurate sense of the influence of American pragmatism on each of Carnap and Quine. Perhaps surprisingly, she concludes that the pragmatist influence, particularly that of William James, may have been stronger on Quine than it was on Carnap despite Quine’s own disavowals of it. We next turn to James Pearson’s “Objectivity Socialized.” Here, Pearson examines a challenge from Charles Morris to Carnap’s philosophy and a related challenge from Donald Davidson to Quine’s that they both neglect the social nature of inquiry. Ultimately, Pearson argues that those of us who wish to pursue Carnap and Quine’s scientific vision of philosophy must recognize the ineliminable role that other inquirers play in our own investigations. Lydia Patton concludes Part II with her “Whose Dogmas of Empiricism?” Building on recent work that emphasizes certain broad areas of agreement between Carnap and Quine, Patton questions whether Carnap was really Quine’s main target in his “Two Dogmas of Empiricism.” Examining the influence of pragmatism on both Carnap and Quine, she concludes that Quine’s opposition to the “conceptual pragmatism” of Clarence Irving Lewis was a deeper motivation for his positions in “Two Dogmas” than his opposition to Carnap’s linguistic defense of analyticity.

Part III looks at Carnap and Quine’s views on logic and language with a particular emphasis on the notion of translation. Gary Ebbs opens this
section with his “Reading Quine’s Claim that Carnap’s Term ‘Semantical Rule’ Is Meaningless.” According to Ebbs, many informed readers of Carnap (and Quine) have taken Quine’s objections to Carnap’s account of analyticity in terms of semantical rules to have failed. Ebbs counters this, arguing that Quine actually saw himself as applying Carnap’s own philosophical standards more strictly than Carnap himself did. Quine was, as he later reported, “just being more carnapian than Carnap.” Ebbs’s careful analysis of Section 4 of “Two Dogmas of Empiricism” shows Carnap conflating two senses of “semantical rule.” Although the first is clear, Quine sees it as being of no use in defining analyticity. The second, though integral to Carnap’s method of defining analyticity, Quine shows to be left unexplained by Carnap’s definitions. Paul Roth then turns the discussion toward the indeterminacy of translation with his “What Does Translation Translate? Quine, Carnap, and the Emergence of Indeterminacy.” Roth observes that both Carnap and Quine see an element of practical choice in our scientific theorizing but that they diverge on its significance, particularly with regard to a theory of meaning. From Carnap’s standpoint, linguistic frameworks are practically adopted without any prior constraints and then provide for a theory of meaning. In contrast, Quine sees a theory of meaning presupposing a more general assumption that all meaningful elements stand in a systematic relation before translation begins. Without this assumption, there is no work for a theory of meaning to do. In this sense, the dogmas of empiricism can only do explanatory work if the meaningful elements are already systematically linked in a way that translation might recapture. Next, in his “Quine and Wittgenstein on the Indeterminacy of Translation,” Andrew Lugg examines the similarity of Quine’s indeterminacy thesis with views of Wittgenstein’s, arguing that Quine and Wittgenstein are, for all their differences, reasonably regarded as battling a commonly held philosophical conception of the determinateness of translation. In conclusion, Lugg brings us back to Carnap – perhaps Wittgenstein’s most important successor and Quine’s most important predecessor – and argues that he largely agreed with Quine and Wittgenstein, his reservations about many of their views notwithstanding. Richard Creath concludes this part of the volume with his “Turning Point: Quine’s Indeterminacy of Translation at Middle Age.” He argues that Quine’s indeterminacy of translation as presented in his Word and Object (1960) represents a turning point in his thinking. While Quine may have started out as a disciple of Carnap’s, in the 1940s and ’50s the most salient feature of Quine’s work is a deep asymmetry between intensional and extensional concepts. Creath argues that the arguments for
the indeterminacy of translation undermine this asymmetry and initiate changes to the role of ontology and reference, to the status of simplicity, to Quine’s understanding of analyticity and synonymy, and to the character and centrality of his epistemology, ultimately including even a return to a two-tier epistemology. While the changes do not amount to a wholesale rejection of earlier views, in the aggregate, they were significant and brought Quine’s position back much closer to Carnap’s.

Part IV concludes the volume by examining Carnap and Quine’s views on ontology and metaphysics. Roberta Ballarin begins this section with her “Carnap and Quine on Ontology and Categories,” joining recent debates over Quine’s understanding of Carnap’s “Empiricism, Semantics, and Ontology.” While a number of commentators have argued that Quine’s account of Carnap’s paper in terms of the category/subclass distinction is simply a misunderstanding of Carnap, Ballarin argues that it is not. Instead, she argues that Quine was correct to construe Carnap’s external questions of existence as all being category questions. She then, however, dissents from a second claim of Quine’s — that answers to internal category questions of existence are trivial and analytic. Here, she dissents from a view of Ebbs, who has recently argued that Quine was right on both points. Ballarin shows that epistemic considerations that support Quine’s first point, undermine his second point. Next, Peter Hylton takes up Carnap and Quine’s views on ontology in his “Carnap and Quine on the Status of Ontology: The Role of the Principle of Tolerance.” While both Carnap and Quine see their disagreement over the status of ontology as a legitimate philosophical undertaking as ultimately rooted in their disagreement over the analytic/synthetic distinction, Hylton argues that this cannot be so since Quine comes to accept a notion of analyticity without changing his views on ontology. Instead, Hylton argues that the more fundamental point underlying the disagreement about the status of ontology is Carnap’s advocacy of the Principle of Tolerance, which Quine never comes to accept. Finally, Gary Kemp concludes the volume with his “Carnap, Quine, and Williamson: Metaphysics, Semantics, and Science.”

While Quine is often taken to have broken the Viennese straitjacket of Logical Positivism, which rejected metaphysics, as an a priori but non-analytic, substantive discipline, allowing speculative metaphysics to be reborn, Kemp thinks this is incorrect. As he explains, for all their much-discussed disagreements over analyticity and ontology, Quine shared

2 The rather picturesque phrasing of the “the Viennese straitjacket” is Gary Kemp’s.
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Carnap’s more fundamental commitment to “scientific philosophy”: to the idea that legitimate philosophy is the work of handmaidens, site managers or accountants of science. Their primary role is to act to clarify, precisify and make explicit the methods and deliverances of science. Kemp then brings Carnap and Quine to bear on more recent analytic trends towards metaphysics by specifically contrasting Carnap and Quine’s scientific philosophy with recent work by Timothy Williamson. Kemp stresses Carnap and Quine’s considerable distance from Williamson; and that from Quine’s point of view as well as from Carnap’s, this recent ascendance of metaphysics will seem a departure from science without sufficient justification.
PART I

_Carnap, Quine, and Logical Empiricism_
CHAPTER I

Carnap and Quine
First Encounters (1932–1936)

Sander Verhaegh

1.1 Introduction

Carnap and Quine first met in the 1932–33 academic year, when the latter, fresh out of graduate school, visited the key centers of mathematical logic in Europe. In the months that Carnap was finishing his *Logische Syntax der Sprache*, Quine spent five weeks in Prague, where they discussed the manuscript “as it issued from Ina Carnap’s typewriter” (Quine 1986a, 12). The philosophical friendship that emerged in these weeks would have a tremendous impact on the course of analytic philosophy. Not only did the meetings effectively turn Quine into a Carnapian “disciple” (Quine 1970a, 41), they also paved the way for their seminal debates about meaning, language, and ontology – the very discussions that would change the course of analytic philosophy in the decades after the Second World War. Yet surprisingly little is known about these first meetings. Although Quine has often acknowledged the impact of his Prague visit, there appears to be little information about these first encounters, except for the fact that the Quines “were overwhelmed by the kindness of the Carnaps” and that it was Quine’s “most notable experience of being intellectually fired by a living teacher” (Quine 1985, 97–98). Neither their correspondence (Quine and Carnap 1990, 108–120) nor their autobiographies (Carnap 1963a; Quine 1985, 97–98; 1986a, 12–13) offer a detailed account of these meetings.

In this essay, I shed new light on Carnap’s and Quine’s first encounters by examining a set of previously unexplored material from their personal and academic archives.1 Why did Quine decide to visit Carnap? What did

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1 I would like to thank Peter Hylton, Nathan Kirkwood, and Sean Morris, as well as audiences in Chicago and Glasgow for their valuable comments and suggestions. This research is supported by The Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (grant 275.20.064).

1 In addition to material from the Rudolf Carnap Papers at Pittsburgh’s Archives of Scientific Philosophy (hereafter, RCP) and the W. V. Quine Papers at Harvard’s Houghton Library (hereafter, WVQP), the present paper is based on a study of fifty-seven boxes of new material (private...
they discuss? And in what ways did the meetings affect Quine’s philosophical development? In what follows, I address these questions by means of a detailed reconstruction of Quine’s year in Europe based on a range of letters, notes, and reports from the early 1930s.²

1.2 Cambridge

Quine visited Europe between September 1932 and June 1933, a trip that was funded by a Frederick Sheldon Traveling Fellowship. At the time, a year in Europe was by no means unusual for Harvard’s best and brightest. Already in his first year in graduate school, Quine sketched the European route to a professorship in a letter to his parents:

I feel as though [I] have a good chance spending the year after next in Europe … The usual thing for the favored few here seems to be: get Ph.D., then be sent to Europe … then come back and be an instructor here at Harvard for a year, and then pick your place! (May 27, 1931, DBQ21)

Quine was well aware that he was one of Harvard’s “favored few.” Some of the most prominent philosophers residing in Emerson Hall – A. N. Whitehead, C. I. Lewis, and Henry Sheffer – were clearly fond of the ambitious logician, who was trying to complete both his M.A. and his Ph.D. in two years. In several letters written during his first year of graduate school, Quine speaks about his excellent “stand-in with Sheffer, Whitehead and Lewis” (May 21, 1931, DBQ21). Indeed, Whitehead told Quine that he “was the first pupil he had ever had whom he believed to understand exactly what they [Russell and Whitehead] had been up against in the Principia” (March 16, 1931, WVQP, Item 1215).

Quine did not only seek a Sheldon Fellowship in order to boost his chances on the job market. There were also good philosophical reasons to visit Europe. Quine had come to Harvard in September 1930, after graduating from Oberlin College with a major in mathematics and honors in mathematical philosophy. At the time, he believed that Harvard would be the best place for an aspiring logician; he had extensively studied Whitehead’s Introduction to Mathematics and read about Sheffer’s stroke function in Russell’s Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy (Quine 1986a, 7–8).

Due to limitations of space, this paper mostly discusses the first encounters from Quine’s perspective. For a reconstruction from Carnap’s perspective, see Verhaegh (2020b).