

# Intrinsic, hence Real; Extrinsic, hence Unreal? The Modal and Sortal Properties of Continuants

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ABSTRACT: Eliminativist metaphysicians have recently explored various arguments, including those about over-determination, colocation, the problem of the Many and ontological parsimony, for dispensing with kinds and their token continuants. Further, David Lewis's missing "real temporary intrinsics" has paved the way to treating the sortal and the modal properties yielding the persistence conditions of continuants as unreal because they are extrinsic. In this paper I show, first, that none of the arguments mentioned above are decisive against the disputed entities. Second, I argue that the sortal/modal properties, while extrinsic, are also real, because they are constitutive of kinds. The general point is that modal conceptualism should not be conflated with a cheap version of semanticism. The position advocated here is based on closing the gap between the metaphysical and the epistemic perspectives.

KEY WORDS: Continuants, extrinsic, intrinsic, kinds, modal conceptualism.

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## 1. Eliminativist Arguments

We all know what continuants are: familiar macroscopic objects, tokens of kinds, whether natural or artificial, with sharp boundaries. Their persistence conditions are given modally, i.e., by specifying what changes they *could* and what changes they *could not* survive *qua* tokens of certain kinds. Continuants share a lot with the Aristotelian individual substances being such that if they did not exist, it would be impossible for any other things to exist.<sup>1</sup> So they ground the existence of entities of other kinds, e.g. events, accidents, etc. From a Kantian perspective, their kind-concepts

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<sup>1</sup> See Aristotle, *Categories*, 2b6–7, *Metaphysics*, 1019a2–4.

help to structure experience into intelligible units. Positing continuants and their kinds thus seems to have many virtues. Still, the eliminativists like Unger, van Inwagen, Merricks find the very idea of composite continuants repugnant and eliminate them in favour of simples which are occasionally arranged in certain “object-wise”.<sup>2</sup>

The eliminativist position undeniably simplifies matters of *persistence*; while, by positing continuants with kind-properties and modal persistence-conditions, there arises a host of uncomfortable questions. For example, there arises the question what status should be ascribed to these modal/sortal properties? Should we take them in a naturalist/realist sense, or, alternatively, should we take them to be mind- or language-dependent? Now this is a big issue with many ramifications. Fortunately, the dilemma can be addressed technically and more narrowly, due to its recent formulations. These have to do with the association of the features of being “real” and being “intrinsic” on one hand, and being “unreal” and “extrinsic” on the other. To use the least committing formulation, I take a property as intrinsic iff a thing can have it regardless of *how* the rest of things are in the world; otherwise it is extrinsic. Notice, I do not claim that the thing with intrinsic property should be a conceivably *lonely* object in the universe; that would require too much of our metaphysical intuition. It suffices to say that a thing’s having an intrinsic property does not depend on other things.<sup>3</sup>

The recent dispute about intrinsicness/extrinsicness has been fuelled mainly by disputes about persistence and real change; consequently, its main concern has been with property attributions relative to times.<sup>4</sup> David Lewis was the first missing “real temporary intrinsics” with the attribution of contingent properties to things in the endurantist frame. Since contingent properties are had by things only at certain times, therefore their attributions are typically relativized to times. But then the intrinsic feature of the properties taken simpliciter are lost, so is Lewis’s complaint. E.g. shapes are intrinsic properties; but whenever an object changes its shape, its time-relative attribution turns it to an extrinsic property. Thereby an association is established between features being intrinsic, *hence* real, and extrinsic, *hence* unreal.

Lewis’s argument is an unusual application of the standard notion of extrinsicness. For, “times” are not ordinary things on a par with those things whose involvement in the property attributions typically make properties

<sup>2</sup> See Unger (1979), van Inwagen (1990), Merricks (2001).

<sup>3</sup> The “having” of a property should not be taken in a relational sense, otherwise Bradleys regress ensues. See Lewis (2002).

<sup>4</sup> Without a full coverage of the topic, see: Lewis (1986a), (2002), Haslanger (1989), Zimmerman (2006).

extrinsic. As is known from Kant, “Time” is not a “thing”, at least not in the sense of being one of the ordinary things we encounter in experience. Rather, the case is that ordinary things must conform to the conditions of the spatio-temporal framework in order to become objects of possible experience. The use of the noun-phrase “Time” is misleading here, since the involvement of time(s) in the attribution of contingent properties is not involvement in the *local* sense. I shall explore this point later.

Now provided that the temporal/modal analogy holds, the dispute about intrinsicness/extrinsicness illuminated by the temporal case has a bearing on the status of the modal/sortal properties as well. For example, M. Rea thinks that the modal/sortal properties are all extrinsic, because “what a thing can and cannot survive depends on what kind of thing it is” and vice versa.<sup>5</sup> In Rea’s view conceptualism or conventionalism “leads to anti-realism” about material objects. But what is more pertinent to the present concern is that conceptualism also puts modal/sortal properties into a special perspective since these properties become relativized to the conceptual frameworks adopted and certain modes of presentation. This, however, seems to deprive these properties from the status of yielding the real nature of things.

I do two things here. First, I survey the main eliminativist arguments against continuants and their kinds and show that none of them is conclusive. Second, I show that these options opened for modal/sortal/temporalized properties to be *either intrinsic and real or extrinsic and unreal* are horns of a bad dilemma. My claim is that properties of the disputed classes are both *extrinsic and real*. Extrinsicity is not something we’d better avoid; when we select the modal profile of an object relative to a sortal, or some other mode of specification, we do not lose hold on reality. Modal conceptualism is not cheap conventionalism; Carnap’s initiatives may be elaborated on a bit differently, as I shall argue.

For ease of discussion I ignore here other applications of the intrinsic/extrinsic distinction such as its application in supervenience claims about putative intrinsic duplicates, or the special tailoring of the distinction to the needs of the counterpart theory. It is worth reminding that intrinsic properties are typically *non-relational*. For example, “unreal” Cambridge changes are often characterized as involving changes merely in the relational properties of things/persons, while “real” changes always concern *intrinsic* properties.<sup>6</sup> Also, intrinsicness is claimed to be the feature of *qualitative* properties, while features like spatio-temporal positions are clearly non-qualitative *and* extrinsic.

<sup>5</sup> Rea (2002), 95, quoted also by Thomasson (2007), 64–65.

<sup>6</sup> See Ujvári (2004).

## 2. The Untenability of Eliminativism

The main eliminativist arguments to be glossed briefly are: **1.** the argument from *ontological parsimony*; **2.** the argument from the *problem of the Many*; **3.** the argument from *colocation*; **4.** the argument from *over-determination*. Each of these arguments purports to support the claim that continuants and their kinds are dispensable in the metaphysical domain. While relying on standard criticisms of these arguments from A. L. Thomasson (2007), K. Bennett (2009) and K. Hawley (2008), I add my own perspective. I take it that the success of **1** depends on the success of the other arguments since one can be eliminative with respect to certain entities only if one is not thereby unduly eliminative with respect to genuine metaphysical problems; but this depends on the rest of the arguments. As to **2**, I shall show that it is a reduction argument for, and not against, the continuants. Concerning **3** I'll say that its nominalist solution earning acceptance nowadays is in perfect match with modal conceptualism that I support. Argument **4** about overdetermination can be successfully met, as follows.

According to **4** our explanation of a single case causation is overdetermined if we take a composite continuant object as causally responsible for an effect, on top of the causal efficiency of its simples arranged in object-wise in the particular mode of the object. Say, we refer to a "football" as casually responsible for the breaking of the window. According to the eliminativist, this is a redundancy, since there is nothing, over and above the concert of the simples-arranged-in-footballwise, which is casually relevant. The source of the argument is J. Kim's principle of explanatory exclusion set against dualism in philosophy of mind. Now, undoubtedly, the main or unique cause of an event has to be isolated in a singular casual explanation excluding also thereby the causal efficiency of other *independent* factors. But the point is that the football and the simples-arranged-in-footballwise are not two independent causal candidates. There is an analytic connection, as Thomasson points it out, between the "football" and the "simples-arranged-in-footballwise", since the latter depends referentially on the former. The expression "simples-arranged-in-object-wise" contains essential reference to the "object" specified by some sortal. Overdetermination would apply only if the candidates for the causal role were independent; but since they are not, **4** is flawed.

There is also a *metaphysical* rejoinder to **4** devised by Bennett. It says that rivalry obtains not only between the objects and the simples-arranged-in-objectwise. Also, there is the rivalry of several different but sufficiently overlapping sets of simples-arranged-in-objectwise, which can perform the same causal role. Say, there are slightly different sets of

simples making up the football, their difference being due to the *vagueness of constitution*. After all, the very same football could be constituted materially with some more or with some less leather particles. So, if there is overdetermination in singular causal explanation it applies to the eliminativist's account as well.

One could object that while Bennett successfully copes with overdetermination by invoking the vagueness of constitution, she generates thereby the problem of the Many, another argument in the eliminativist's arsenal. But, remember, my claim was that the problem of the Many is a *reductio* proof for continuants. The main thrust of the argument with the Many, as I take it, is that instantiation of a kind in a concrete composite object can not to be tied to any one of the possible mereological sums of the bodily parts of the object because composition is vague. A given rabbit would be the same instance of rabbithood even if it lost one more hair or one tooth of it grew a bit longer. There is variance in mereological realization but just one single kind-instantiation takes place, since kind-instantiation is compatible with the abundance of mereological possibilities. In other words, kind-instantiation does not supervene on any of the possible mereological sums of the bodily parts making up a given continuant.

For the eliminativist, however, the story runs like this: whenever there is an *F* composite thing present, then, simultaneously, there are countless many sufficiently overlapping *F*-things present, each of which claims identity with the *F*-thing which is clearly uncomfortable. No such problem arises if concrete things are not taken as instances of *kinds*. No kinds, no problem of the Many.<sup>7</sup>

Unconvinced by this reasoning I do think that kind-concepts govern our regimentation of things, both epistemologically and metaphysically, and, as a consequence, the argument of the Many is a *reductio* support for the claim that kind-instantiation is not to be identified with the literal exposition of all the mereological possibilities. The reason being, simply, that kind-instantiation does not supervene on mereological realization. And the vagueness of constitution sufficiently explains why the instantiation of a kind is compatible with the abundance of mereological possibilities. So, I think that Bennett's argument against overdetermination is sound and is consistent with my reading of the problem of Many.

Let us turn now to **3** about *colocation*, and more specifically, to its nominalist treatment. As is familiar, objectors to colocation argue that by postulating kinds the very "same" object would count as several but collocated *qua*-objects, which is unintuitive, once the same spatio-temporal

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<sup>7</sup> About the problem of the Many see: Geach (1980), Unger (1980), Lewis (1993), Sattig (2010).

region is occupied (spatial version: Wiggins 1968, mereological version: Merricks 2001). Merricks, Zimmerman, Heller, Lewis, Noonan, Inwagen, Burke, etc. refuse colocation. Objectors to colocation deny sortal properties since they are not yielded with material constitution. The dispute often takes the form whether constitution is, or is not, identity.<sup>8</sup> Wiggins and Simons, for example, maintain that colocation obtains only as a relation between a sortal and its material constitutor. Objectors to colocation also warn us that truth claims involving the application of sortal/modal properties would be truth-claims without truth-making facts. Now undeniably “truth-without-truth-makers” sounds quite anti-realistically requiring explanation.

A popular mode to evade the problem is to embrace a *nominalist solution* to **3**. It consists in taking modal predicates in a context-dependent way. More specifically, the nominalist claims that modal predicates express different properties depending on the mode of presentation of the subject the predicate is applied to in the propositional context. For example, if “Lump” is the subject term, then “squeezable” expresses a property not violating the persistence conditions of the subject under the selected subject term. However, if “Goliath”, the statue made of a lump of clay, is the subject term, “squeezable” expresses a property that does violate persistence-conditions of the subject under the selected subject term. On the basis of Abelard’s writings, Harold Noonan has coined the term “Abelardian predicates” for such cases of modal attribution.<sup>9</sup> The virtue of this solution is that the nominalist need not posit collocated objects in order to explain certain cases of non-substitutivity in modal contexts. Instead, he can claim that difference in the modes of presentation of the subject invites different modal properties expressed by the same modal predicate.

While being sympathetic to this nominalist move, one might still feel uncomfortable about its standard exposition. After all, a modal predicate like “squeezable” has a fixed generic meaning common to all its possible cases; its intension or sense does not vary with the particular modes of presentation of the subject terms. The differences, one thinks, are due to differences in the *application conditions* of the *same* property rather than to differences brought forth by the expressive power of modal predicates. What will be then distinctively special about modal predicates? Well, on a charitable reading the nominalist need not deny the generic meaning of modal predicates. Simply, he can point out that from a nominalist perspective properties are determined by their extensions, actual and/or counterfactual. Now a modal property is determined, on the nominalist-

<sup>8</sup> See Noonan (1993), Johnston (1992), Fine (2003).

<sup>9</sup> See Noonan (1991). The same position is spelled out in his recent paper (2008).

Abelardian view, on the extension of quasi-intensional objects, i.e. objects-under-some-mode-of-presentation. “Squeezable”, interpreted on the extension of things *qua* artefacts, yields a persistence-violating property, while interpreted on the extension of things *qua* material stuffs it yields a persistence-preserving property. Thus the nominalist solution to colocation is shown to be exempt from the charge of ignoring the generic meaning of predicates.

As we have seen, none of the objections to kinds and continuants surveyed here has proved to be decisive. Now we are permitted to talk about continuant-kinds and tokens once the obstacle has been removed.

### 3. Modal/Sortal Properties’ being both Real and Extrinsic

An objector may grant us the license to such talk while indicating the price of the nominalist solution. He can argue, for example, that we cannot but downgrade modal properties by taking them to be *extrinsic* features relativized to modes-of-presentations of the subjects of predication rather than taking them to be genuine, real *intrinsic* features. Now we are back to the familiar dilemma set forth at the beginning: are modal/sortal properties intrinsic, *hence* real, or, extrinsic, *hence* unreal? If modal/sortal properties depend on the modes-of-presentations of things, they do not seem to constitute the real, intrinsic natures of things. They yield only extrinsic properties relative to our conventions, so is the claim. Since we negotiate them into the things, the question of persistence seems to be a matter of our semantic decisions.

Do we have to buy into this reading? I argue that we do not have to; the disputed properties can be shown to be both *real and extrinsic*. To remind, extrinsic properties are those whose attribution requires the involvement of, or, the reference to, things other than the subject of predication. Eo ipso, no properties of *lonely* objects could be extrinsic. This is not to say, of course, that extrinsic properties have an explicit relational structure. To be a roof, or to be a grocer, for example, would qualify as extrinsic properties according to this criterion. The other things involved in the attribution of such properties are on a par with the subject of attribution: other artefacts, persons, and plums, etc. That is, extrinsicness involves further things on the *local level*, comparable with the status and level of the subject of attribution. But in Lewis’s argument about temporary intrinsics, the very fact that reference must be made to “time” is supposed to turn properties, otherwise intrinsic when taken simpliciter, into extrinsic and hence unreal. “Shape” is intrinsic but the bent shape of Socrates sitting only for a while would turn this determinate property extrinsic.



The mistake in Lewis's argument is that "time" is not an entity on a par with ordinary things whose involvement makes certain properties extrinsic. Time is an *Un-Ding*, as Kant has already explained; our "objectual" colloquial style misleads us here: time, just like space, are not "what"-s, but they are short for a metaphysical condition for being an object of possible experience. It is part and parcel of the notion of being an object of possible experience that the object conforms to the conditions of spatio-temporality, plus further conditions about being regimented in a conceptual framework, etc. Consequently, the involvement, in property-attributions, of these condition-implying special entities belonging to the *global* metaphysical level does not turn the properties in question "extrinsic" and "unreal".

Lewis's argument has been criticised on various grounds. But no one has exposed his/her objection along the lines sketched here. Suppose it is granted, with Lewis, that reference to an overall condition like temporality, does make a difference to the status of the attributed property by making it extrinsic. Then the same must hold to all the other overall conditions of knowledge and property-attribution. Thus we get a special class of extrinsic properties which count "extrinsic" only on a charitable reading. Whether they are covertly "intrinsic" or weakly "extrinsic", these properties are constitutive of things as subjects of attribution; hence they have a full entitlement to being real features. I have in mind properties like "being an object of possible experience", "being an object of a certain kind", "being the subject of predication under-a-certain-mode-of-presentation", etc. These require reference to *general framework conditions of experience, knowledge, and language*. Hence, they should not be treated as ordinary relational properties in the local sense, not constituting the real nature of their relata. These special extrinsic properties *are* constitutive of the real nature of things. In this sense they are nearly "intrinsic", or, alternatively, "extrinsic" in a weak and special sense. Putting aside the terminological refinement, the upshot is that extrinsicness in this special global sense cannot question the reality of such property attributions since without these framework conditions no thing is available to us as object of knowledge.

As to the *temporal* case, F. Jackson has already dismissed Lewis's quest for "real temporary intrinsics", i.e. "real" in the sense of not requiring reference to times. Jackson has pointed out that the *contingent* intrinsic properties are precisely those that apply to things at certain times and there is no further genuine intrinsicness on the top of this.<sup>10</sup> The temporal constraint does not expel them from the class of real properties.

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<sup>10</sup> See Jackson (1994).



Extrinsic properties inherit much of the traditional bias against relations since they are often identified as relational properties.<sup>11</sup> Aristotle said that relations are “the least real from all sorts of entities” since “they require many things” (the *relata*) for them to apply (*Metaphysics*, 1088a). Leibniz also took relations only “*entia rationis*” belonging to the realm of ideas. Leibniz distinguished the “extrinsic denominations” of individuals from “intrinsic” ones: the former contains reference to another individual apart from the one named. And he rightly insisted that there cannot be purely extrinsic denominations of the individuals since there must be a monadic ground of reference.

The bias against relations is misguided, however, in the present context. Extrinsic properties are not directly relational, as Lewis points out. He says that the “intrinsic”/“extrinsic” division is the result of an “intentional classification” where the structural features of the properties do not play a role. By contrast, “relational” applies only to “structured properties”.<sup>12</sup> To illuminate the point, “being a dentist” is an extrinsic property since no lonely person in a one-man universe could be a dentist; it has a relational kin though, like “*x* being the dentist of *y*”. In sum, the relational bias cannot work against the reality of extrinsic properties.

Truthmaking is also explored to disputes about the status of the modal/sortal properties. Here the strategy is to question the modal/sortal propositions by pointing out that they lack appropriate candidates for the truth-making role. Hence, all the putative truths of propositions of the disputed class would be *truths-without-truthmakers* which is clearly incoherent. For example, there are no truthmakers to claims about *qua* objects, i.e. objects specified under a given sortal. It is not clear, say, what would make it true that a “man” under the sortal “official person” is essentially such that he has a certain scope of authority; while under the sortal “person” simpliciter he is essentially such that he lacks this property. The lacking of truthmakers of modal/sortal propositions undercuts the reality claim of modal/sortal properties embedded in such propositions.

One way of evading the truthmaking challenge is to treat modal truths as factorizable into an analytic component and an empirical component; the former being essential and necessary but also being only about language and logic; while the latter being contingent and informative but also, being about the world, hence lacking necessity. This position has been devised as a due response to Kripke’s putative “necessary a posteriori”

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<sup>11</sup> Francescotti takes the relational aspect decisive in the definition of “extrinsic”. See Francescotti (1999).

<sup>12</sup> See Lewis (2002: 431).

truths.<sup>13</sup> Unfortunately, factorizing as a justificatory strategy is far from being helpful in elucidating the *constitutive* aspect of modal/sortal properties. Without this aspect, however, one cannot account for these properties' status. Therefore I suggest to turning, instead, to the fine-grained conception of facts, our familiar propositional truthmakers. This conception is more suitable for epistemic and hence, modal purposes than the coarse-grained conception of facts. As is known from the Frege-Church view, facts can be given a fine-grained analysis, by taking them short for facts-under-certain-modes-of-presentation. The refined analysis with facts-under-certain-modes-of-presentation rather than facts simpliciter arises with explaining epistemic contexts where the substitutivity of identicals does not in general hold. For example, little Paul may know the fact that he has two eyes under the mode of this fact being presented to him as "Paul has two eyes". While he may reject, at the same time, to know the same fact under the mode of presentation of "the number of Paul's eyes is the even prime number", not knowing that 2 is the sole even prime number.<sup>14</sup> So, the suggestion is to shift from the usual extensional truthmaker, the "fact", to the intensional truthmaker, the "fact-under-certain-modes-of-presentation". The fine-grained notion of fact seems to supply us with a truthmaker in the case of truth claims involving modal/sortal properties. This is not to say that I find the very notion of truthmaking and the available truthmaker theories impeccable. I do not even think that conformity to some truthmaking principle is an indispensable metaphysical requirement. All I want to say is that truthmaking does not mean an insurmountable difficulty for the reality status of modal/sortal properties.

Sortal properties depend on the conceptual framework adopted, as we have seen. The dominant reading of Carnap's position about this matter might also create the illusion that these properties are not "real"; i.e. not real *as* features capable of determining the nature of things.<sup>15</sup> Typically, those who see sheer conventionalism in the conceptualist understanding of modal metaphysics, rely on Carnap's dictum that the adoption of a conceptual framework is a practical, external issue without claim to reality. To quote: "to be real in the scientific sense means to be an element of the system; hence this question cannot be meaningfully applied to the system

<sup>13</sup> Advocates of the position are, among others, Peacocke (1999), Thomasson (2007), Sidelle (1989).

<sup>14</sup> The fine-grained notion of facts is gaining recognition in the philosophy of mind as well. Tim Crane, following Mellor, uses the expression "facta" for the intensional variant of "fact" in the context of the knowledge argument. See his (2003), in Hungarian, especially 114–115.

<sup>15</sup> Obviously, Platonic realism about abstract entities, including properties, is not relevant to the present issue.

itself”.<sup>16</sup> The message is clear, I think: there is no unrelativized sense of being “real”, without the presupposition of some framework system. Any meaningful question about the reality of items of some sort applies only against the background of a system. This is Carnap’s position with regard to ontology. As a consequence, question about reality does not apply to the framework system itself: the “alleged statement of reality of the system of entities is a pseudo-statement without cognitive content”.<sup>17</sup>

In his critical analysis of Carnap, Soames extends this position about ontology to the enterprise of explanation. From the emphatic denial of the reality of the ontological question, repeated by Carnap, Soames concludes that “from here it is a short step to the conclusion that the cognitive contents of empirically equivalent theories couched in the two languages are the same ... [hence] the choice between the two theories is purely pragmatic, not cognitive in nature”.<sup>18</sup>

I think that the sense in which the choice of a framework is non-cognitive is different from the sense in which the choice between empirically equivalent theories is. The latter claim is obviously the formulation of the classical verificationist position: one can assess theories by their verifiable empirical consequences and if they share the same consequences, *in virtue of sharing the same cognitive content*, then the choice between them has no cognitive import. This verificationist point is different from the ontological point about the non-cognitive character of ontological questions formulated without the antecedent specification of some framework. By overlooking this difference, one would hastily conclude with Soames, then, that whatever is practical or pragmatic with Carnap, is “not cognitive in nature”.

But this is a hasty conclusion. Although framework systems are not “theories” in an outright form, they are nevertheless theoretically loaded, so that the adoption of conceptual frameworks with sortal concepts and modal persistence conditions *is a cognitive issue*. Not the least because it is a precondition for empirical theories with cognitive content that a framework be adopted in which those theories could be formulated. So, what paves the step from ontology to explanation is not their shared non-cognitive nature, let alone the fact that “non-cognitive” equivocates between two senses as I have shown. As is familiar, Carnap takes the “internal” issues, i.e. issues formulated within a framework to be the analytic consequences of the adopted framework. This comes with his “ambitious concept of ‘analyticity’”, as Soames has put it. However, I am inclined to

<sup>16</sup> See Carnap (1956: 207).

<sup>17</sup> Carnap (1956: 214).

<sup>18</sup> Soames (2009: 431).

take the “ambitious concept of analyticity” as an understatement for the *constitutive role* of the adopted framework.

It seems reasonable, therefore, to say that the framework principles do have *cognitive* consequences, precisely because they are partly constitutive of kinds, sortals. Different framework principles yield different sets of truths about things identified as tokens of the adopted kinds, sortals. So, sortal properties are real, in the sense of being constitutive of kinds and the same applies to modal properties specifying the persistence conditions for tokens of these kinds. Sortal/modal truths about things have cognitive consequences.

Nothing validates, therefore the shallow reading of conceptualism sounding something like this: “the choice of framework is a matter of convention hence it is not cognitive in nature”. This is an illegitimate combination of parts from two different Carnapian dicta, the one about ontology, the other about explanation. It is illegitimate, because the choice of a framework being pragmatic does not tell against its principles’ having a cognitive import.

To conclude: we do not have to seek a dilemma there, where there is none. It is not the case that modal/sortal properties are “unreal” and “extrinsic”, so they do not contribute to determining the nature of things. To the contrary, they are *both real and extrinsic*. “Real”, because their attributions have cognitive consequences; they create the joints nature is to be cut at. “Extrinsic”, because they refer, tacitly though, to framework principles. The solution I recommend here to solve the false dilemma is based on closing the gap between the metaphysical and the epistemological perspectives.

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