

LECTURE 11: AUFBAU §170–183

1. Empirically/Constructionally real objects

- (a) A physical body is called *real* if it is constructed as a class of physical points which are located on connected bundles of world lines and is placed within the all-comprehending four-dimensional system of the space-time world of physics. (§170)
- (b) Criteria for reality (§171)
 - i. Belongs to a comprehensive system of regularities
 - ii. Intersubjective
 - iii. Temporally conditioned
- (c) Carnap is concerned with how language is actually used
 - §173 “...according to general usage, physical bodies must be called real.”
 - §174 “We have considered the concept of the real-typical, not from a substantive or systematic point of view, but only relative to linguistic usage.”
 - §178 “It is occasionally said that there is a (usually tacit) realism at the bottom of the practical procedures of the empirical sciences, especially of physics. However, we must here clearly distinguish between a certain kind of language usage and the assertion of a thesis.”
 - p. 300 “The practical procedure of the empirical sciences is ‘realistic’ only in language, not in the metaphysical sense.”
- (d) the boundary between real and unreal is vague
 - §173 “...this boundary is rather arbitrary and frequently vacillating.”
 - “This is an especially good indication of the *arbitrary* and *accidental boundary of the concept of the real-typical*.”
 - i. Physicists often speak as if *events* and *states* are also real.
 - ii. For aggregates, no clear criterion of reality
- (e) the boundary should be set by *convention*
 - §174 “The purpose of our discussion is, mainly, to show that we are here not concerned with a question of fact, but with (the lack of) a convention.”
 - what would Carnap say about the debate between mereological nihilists and universalists?

2. Real-typical objects

- an object is *real-typical* if it makes sense to say that it is real, or not.

3. Metaphysically real objects

§175 Should we ascribe “reality” in a special sense to the empirically real objects?

This question, “is extraconstructional and hence extrascientific; it is metaphysical.”

This concept of “reality” is nonconstructible: “...one can show in each such case that the concept which is so defined does not agree with the concept as it is meant by realism as well as by idealism.” (§176)

4. Two aims of science

(a) The construction of objects

§179 “The first aim is reached through convention.”

(b) The investigation of the nonconstructional properties and relations of objects.

§179 The second aim is reached through experience

5. Carnap on science and religion

§181 “We do not here wish to make either a negative or a positive value judgment about faith and intuition (in the nonrational sense). They are areas of life just like poetry and love.”

§181 Faith, “does not come into a relation with any knowledge within the limits that we have so far staked out; it can neither be confirmed nor disconfirmed by any of it; there is no road from the continent of rational knowledge to the island of intuition.”