

External Relations, Causal Coincidence and Contingency

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Many contingent facts concern objects standing in relationships by accident, prominent among these being spatiotemporal relationships, often taken as the paradigm of externality in relations. Yet the ontological basis for these facts is elusive. Closer ontological scrutiny reveals an underlying tissue of internal relationships leaving only modest scope for real, irreducible and basic external relations. In this paper we will examine the interwoven ontological origins of spatiotemporal relations, causal coincidence and contingency, in an effort to determine the extent to which the world is irreducibly relational.