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*Explication and Carnap's 'Empiricism, Semantics and Ontology'*

Carnap's conception of an 'explication' was developed in the mid-forties, and it became central to his view of how philosophical problems can be addressed. Carnap's most widely read paper is his 'Empiricism, Semantics and Ontology' (1950, ESO hereafter), but this paper makes no mention of the notion of explication. Despite this, I argue that an understanding of Carnap's views on explication are essential for a proper understanding of ESO. Carnap states that the major aim of ESO is to justify the use of abstract objects in semantics. Discussions of ESO tend to focus on the possibility of different *frameworks* or the distinction between *internal* and *external questions*, leaving Carnap's central aim largely unaddressed. This is in part because Carnap's argument for his central claim is incredibly brief. To understand this argument requires, first, an understanding of Carnap's previous reasons for rejecting questions of semantics and ontology. Second, it requires recognizing the double role played by explication in the semantic systems for mathematics.