

On Emergence and Emergent Powers

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In the first part of this talk, I shall try to clarify the nature of emergence. After having distinguished between two varieties of emergence (strong and weak) and after having recalled some existing formulations of emergence, I shall demonstrate that emergence is nothing but partial and qualified dependence of the emergents on their bases. However, partial and qualified dependence will be interpreted in two distinct ways, in order to distinguish between strong and weak emergence.

In the second part, I shall introduce my own view of emergence. In my opinion, powers are the entities to be primarily taken as emergents. Moreover, one could make sense of the emergence of emergent powers by distinguishing between the mere possession and the activation of a power.

Eventually, I shall try to show that an emergentist theory based on emergent powers is (*a priori*) less metaphysically controversial than one based on other sorts of entities (properties, laws of nature, etc.).