

Title: Ontology of Emergentism on Mind-Body Problem

Abstract:

Emergentism, a belief in emergence between higher-level properties and lower-level properties, has brought up since the beginning of 19th century. Applying Emergentism on philosophy of mind, property dualists believe that the world is constructed by one kind of substance, physical substances, with two distinct kinds of properties, physical properties and non-physical properties. Non-physical properties (mental properties) supervene on physical substances but they are not reducible to physical properties. The most significant non-physical properties are qualia. Contrary to property dualism, physicalists insists on the ontological idea that everything is basically physical and causation is physically closed.

The common belief about mentality is that mental phenomena are higher-level properties regarding the supposition of multi-level world view. The picture of this world view indicates that the natural world is divided by “levels.” What are “levels”? What does it mean that mental properties are higher-level properties? What is the ontology of multi-level world view?

The purpose of this paper is to discuss the ontology of multi-level world regarding emergentism. Do mind and body belong to different levels, meaning that emergence works between higher levels and lower levels? The other consideration is that mind and body are different properties at the same level, meaning that emergence explains the function connecting mind and body. If we can get the idea of “multi-level world” clear, it will help us to understand “reduction” and “emergence” in a more proper way.

Keywords: emergentism, higher-level properties, lower-level properties, higher-order properties, lower-order properties, property dualism, physicalism, non-reductive physicalism.