On The Necessity Of Laws Of Nature

Marius Cohen, Department of Brain and Cognitive Sciences, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev

In this talk, I will raise the question of the origin of necessity in the physical world. While we understand perfectly the origin of necessity in logic and mathematics (namely analytical deduction), we simply do not know where necessity in the physical world originates from. Answering the question by referring to laws of nature creates a circular explanation, as we refer to necessity in order to differentiate laws of nature from contingent regularities.

After arguing that this is a legitimate metaphysical question I will suggest that under an assumption to be discussed, physical necessity is merely mathematical necessity, nothing more. So there is no need to explain another kind of necessity, the origin of which is unclear. Physical necessity is the same familiar, well understood, analytical necessity.

January 8th (Wednesday), Building 54, Room 207, 13:30