

Being Inclined: Tendency, Inclination and the Metaphysics of Powers

By Mark Sinclair

What is it to be inclined to do something, to have a tendency or propensity to do it? If inclinations or tendencies do not provide reasons for an action, do they simply cause it, such that it would no longer be an action in the strong sense of the term? Or are inclinations somehow irreducible to both reasons and causes, at least if we understand causation as necessitation? Against the background of Felix Ravaisson's *De l'habitude* (1838), which offers an account of habit as inclination, this paper addresses these questions in response to ideas about powers as tendencies or inclinations in contemporary metaphysics. The paper argues that tendencies, at least in the psychological domain, cannot be conceived adequately according to notions of prevention and interference, and it also attempts to illuminate how Ravaisson's Aristotelian ideas offer important insights regarding the nature of powers in general.