

In this paper, I set out to do two things. The first corresponds to the theme nature and looks to the past. There, I address an argument, unique in the history of philosophy, that Avicenna offers for the existence of nature as a causal power in bodies. I clarify the context of this argument, showing that one target of the argument is Ash'arite kalam, a school of theologians who endorsed Occasionalism (OC) - the doctrine that (1) no body is powerful and that (2) only God is powerful. The second thing I do corresponds to the theme norm and looks to the contemporary scene. There, drawing on a part of the Avicennian argument laid out against OC, I consider, and reject, a dispositionalist account (DP) of the relation between powers and their manifestations – a view recently proposed by philosophers Steven Mumford and Rani Anjum. On that view, causal powers are related to their effects neither purely contingently nor necessarily; rather, they are said to only dispose towards them, where the dispositional relation is supposed to be irreducibly midway between contingency and necessity. The Avicennian criticism I offer of DP is two-fold; first, that the dispositional relation must ultimately reduce to necessity and hence it can't be basic. Second, the DP view violates the principle of sufficient reason (PSR). The upshot of this critique: causal powers, as Avicenna states, necessitate their effects.