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Quantum States for Primitive Ontologists: A Case Study

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Abstract

Under so-called primitive ontology approaches, in fully describing the history of a quantum system, one thereby attributes interesting properties to regions of spacetime. Primitive ontology approaches, which include some varieties of Bohmian mechanics and spontaneous collapse theories, are interesting in part because they hold out the hope that it should not be too difficult to make a connection between models of quantum mechanics and descriptions of histories of ordinary macroscopic bodies. But such approaches are dualistic, positing a quantum state as well as ordinary material degrees of freedom. This paper lays out and compares some options that primitive ontologists have for making sense of the quantum state.

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