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**Abstract:** The article discusses if and in what sense semiosis can be regarded as an emergent process in semiotic systems. It discusses the conditions which should be fulfilled for semiosis to be characterized as an emergent process. It first summarizes a systematic analysis of the variety of emergence theories and concepts, elaborated by Achim Stephan. A model for explaining emergence based on S. N. Salthe's hierarchical structuralism is then discussed.

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