How to (and not to) Defend the Manifest Image

Giuseppina D’Oro

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There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,   
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.   
 ***Hamlet* (1.5.167-8), Hamlet to Horatio**

Claims such as ‘there are no tables and chairs’ have become increasingly common in the philosophical context, and eliminativism is now a fairly well-established position in contemporary debates in analytic metaphysics.[[1]](#footnote-1) This outbreak of eliminativism has prompted a number of responses aimed at saving the manifest image of reality. Prominent amongst the attempts to save the manifest image is a view, powerfully articulated by Frank Jackson in *From Metaphysics to Ethics*[[2]](#footnote-2),according to which the manifest properties of objects, properties such as solidity or fragility, can be spared from the eliminativist’s guillotine if it can be shown that they are entailed (through the relation of supervenience) by scientific properties. Jackson’s strategy for saving the manifest image rests on a modest conception of the role of conceptual analysis in metaphysics. On this view, the role of conceptual analysis is modest because it is not the task of philosophy to establish a priori what there is, but rather to determine *which features of the manifest image can be located within the scientific image*: the manifest properties which cannot be so located are shown to be rogue concepts that have no place in serious metaphysics.

This chapter argues against the attempt to save the manifest image by invoking the relation of entailment (whether that implied by the notion of supervenience or by the more traditional notion of analytic entailment) on the grounds that the manifest image is sui generis. The defence of the manifest image that I propose as an alternative here rests on the idealist assumption that knowledge makes a difference to what is known,[[3]](#footnote-3) and that since the manifest and the scientific image are the correlative of two different ways of knowing they do not compete with one another. I call the idealist view that knowledge makes a difference to what is known the Reciprocity Thesis. Rather than seeking to determine what kind of manifest image one is entitled to have in order to comply with the scientific image, the Reciprocity Thesis limits the claims of science to its own *explanandum* and therefore sees no need to legitimise the manifest image by invoking the relation of entailment. The need to legitimise the manifest image in the light of the scientific image arises because the relation between the scientific and the manifest image has not been properly conceptualised. Once the scientific and the manifest image are understood as the correlative of different ways of knowing, the problem which the location strategy seeks to solve is shown to rest on a misconception of the relationship holding between different kinds of knowledge.

Section 2 outlines Jackson’s strategy for saving the manifest image from elimination. Jackson’s strategy relies on a modest conception of the role of conceptual analysis in metaphysics which presupposes a hierarchical view of the relation between the sciences, with physics as the most basic science. I contrast the strategy for saving the manifest image which relies on a modest conception of the role of philosophical analysis with a strategy that relies on a metaphilosophical commitment to the Reciprocity Thesis. According to the Reciprocity Thesis, the role of conceptual analysis in metaphysics is not modest: conceptual analysis establishes what the subject matter of different kinds of knowledge is by making explicit the inferences or judgments which they deploy to generate their own distinctive kinds of knowledge claims. I argue that although the Reciprocity Thesis rests on a more robust conception of the role of conceptual analysis in metaphysics, it does not pit philosophy against science. There is therefore no need to espouse the location strategy advocated by the modest conception in order to save the manifest image from the eliminativist’s guillotine *and* avoid conflict between philosophy and science. Sections 3 and 4 show how the Reciprocity Thesis is at work in Heidegger’s argument for the irreducibility of the ready-to-hand to the present-at-hand and in Collingwood’s claim for the irreducibility of actions to events. I conclude by clarifying the specific target of the claims of this paper. The claims of this paper are not directed against science or scientists themselves, but against certain philosophers or certain philosophical claims. For the key assumption which is responsible for problematising the manifest image (the layered/hierarchical view of the sciences with physics at the base) is not essentially a *scientific* one; it is a *philosophical* assumption concerning *how to conceptualise the relation between different forms of knowledge*.

I

*The Reciprocity Thesis and the Metaphilosophical Constraint that Philosophy should not Undermine Science*

In his influential *From Metaphysics to Ethics*, Frank Jackson outlines an account of what he takes the role of conceptual analysis in “serious” metaphysics to be.[[4]](#footnote-4) Serious metaphysics is not concerned with very long shopping lists, baked beans, cat food, mustard, rock salt etc., or with what goes under the name of dry middle-sized goods.[[5]](#footnote-5) Serious metaphysicians seek to comprehend what there is in terms of a limited number of more basic notions. For this very reason, Jackson says, serious metaphysics inevitably faces the “location” problem.[[6]](#footnote-6) Since the ingredients on the ontological list of the serious metaphysician are very limited, “some features of the world are not going to appear explicitly in the more basic account”.[[7]](#footnote-7) The task of conceptual analysis is to establish “when and whether a story told in one vocabulary is made true by one told in some allegedly more fundamental vocabulary”[[8]](#footnote-8) thus showing which ingredients on the long list are implicitly contained in the short list. The role of conceptual analysis in metaphysics, so envisaged, is a modest one because philosophers do not, for example, uncover any (deep) ontological truths while simply sitting in the proverbial armchair. Rather, the role of conceptual analysis is to establish *which* putative features of the manifest image have a place in the serious metaphysician’s account of what the world is like and to establish which do not: those features of the manifest image which cannot be located on the serious metaphysician’s list then face the ontological guillotine.

Locating manifest properties requires us to demonstrate that they are entailed (in an unorthodox sense of “entail” that needs to be carefully unpacked) by the items on the shortlist of the serious metaphysician. Consider, for example, the macroscopic property of ‘solidity’: one need not deny that objects such as tables and chairs are solid if it is possible to account for their solidity in terms of the lattice-like arrays of molecules. Thus, whether or not we are justified in employing ordinary notions such as ‘solidity’ depends on whether such notions are entailed, in a very specific sense of ‘entailed’, by the ingredients on the more basic list. The notion of entailment that Jackson invokes is *not* the traditional notion of entailment according to which *a* entails *b* if *b* can be deduced *a priori* from *a*.[[9]](#footnote-9) It is rather the notion of ‘necessary determination’ or “fixing”[[10]](#footnote-10) that is captured by the relation of supervenience according which the features of the manifest image are fixed or determined by those of the scientific image. The avowed advantage of this account is that it retains philosophy’s traditional role as an *a priori* activity whilst crucially also avoiding conflict with the claims of science. Since philosophical reflection, so understood, does not lead to conclusions that clash with those of science, philosophical analysis respects the desideratum that philosophical views should *not* be at odds with science.[[11]](#footnote-11) On the modest conception, the desideratum that philosophical views should not contradict those of science is taken to imply that the direction of metaphilosophical travel should be from metaphysics to the philosophy of mind, or from metaphysics to the philosophy of perception or from metaphysics to ethics etc. On this approach, therefore, the question one should ask is ‘What kind of philosophy of x can one have, given the ontological starting point inherited from science’?

But there is no need to accept the modest conception of the role of conceptual analysis in metaphysics which is presupposed by the asking of the Location Question in order to meet this metaphilosophical constraint. If what motivates the modest conception is the assumption that in order not to breach the constraint that philosophical views should not be at odds with science one should seek to locate the manifest in the context of the scientific image, then one is operating under *false* assumptions. For in fact there are metaphilosophical alternatives which are not in breach of that constraint. The alternative metaphilosophical starting point that I will outline in this chapter is committed to the idealist view that there is a reciprocal relation between *how* we know and *what* we know. On this view, the reality that is disclosed by the method of a science is the correlative of a certain kind of explanation. This means that what is explained by different sciences[[12]](#footnote-12) is brought under a particular categorial description that is linked to the method through which that particular category of thing is known (the Reciprocity Thesis). The Reciprocity Thesis embraces the virtuous circularity holding between knowledge and what is known in the idealist tradition and shows that the attempt to deny the view that knowledge makes a difference to what is known rests on a failure to acknowledge the range of presuppositions that science brings to the investigation of reality. From this metaphilosophical perspective, the view that physics replaces metaphysics as the science of pure being merely replaces one dogmatism (metaphysical dogmatism) with another (scientific dogmatism).[[13]](#footnote-13) According to the Reciprocity Thesis, therefore, philosophy does not begin ‘modestly’ with ontological truths which are handed over to the philosopher from the physicist, and subsequently try to establish what other truths are ‘entailed’ (through the relation of supervenience) by these more fundamental truths. Rather, philosophy seeks to uncover the *forms of inference or judgment which are implicit in the categorial descriptions of reality*. The kind of entailments philosophical analysis is concerned with are those holding between method and subject matter, the form of an explanation (with its characteristic *explanans*) and its corresponding *explanandum*.

The Reciprocity Thesis goes back to Kant, who understood ontological categories to be embedded in forms of judgment. The category of causality, for example, does not denote an extensional relation, but an inference of the kind ‘if x, then y’. Just as the categories of Kantian metaphysics are embedded in forms of judgment, so the metaphilosophical position defended here takes the category of the sort of thing one describes to be the correlative of a specific form of inference. Philosophical analysis exposes this correlation by showing *which category of thing is entailed by which form of inference*. But while the ancestry of the view defended here is Kantian, the Reciprocity Thesis also goes beyond Kant in some important respects. Kant left the door open for the possibility that being might be known *qua* being (at least to the extent that he did not deny that things could be knowable as they are in themselves if only by God); the Reciprocity Thesis closes off that option: it denies both that pure being as such is accessible to physics, as the modest conception allows, *and* that it is accessible to an intuitive intellect, as it is allowed by transcendental idealism. The reciprocity thesis, therefore, closes off the epistemic gap that Kant left open and which led to the charge of subjective idealism that was levelled against him by much post-Kantian idealism.[[14]](#footnote-14)

A selective application of the Reciprocity Thesis may be deemed to be reasonably unproblematic, since many would concede that the special sciences bring reality under a description that is characteristic of their own way of knowing and tailored to their own investigative interests. What is more problematic, or at least *perceived* to be problematic, on the other hand, is the view that the Reciprocity Thesis applies across the board. As an across-the-board claim, the Reciprocity Thesis is controversial because endorsing it entails forsaking the hierarchical model of the sciences that is presupposed by the modest conception. Since, on the modest conception physics displaces metaphysics as the first science, the modest conception goes hand-in-hand with a particular view of the relation between the sciences according to which

a) the sciences are hierarchically arranged

b) the explanations of physics are complete and ontologically basic

c) the claims of the special sciences supervene upon those of physics

The Reciprocity Thesis abandons this layered/hierarchical model of the sciences. Thus the question it addresses is not (like the modest conception) ‘how can we locate the manifest within the scientific image?’ but rather ‘what is the distinctive *explanandum* of the natural sciences and how does it differ from that of other forms of knowing’? The direction of metaphilosophical travel is not from the scientific to the manifest image or, as in the title of Jackson’s book, *from metaphysics to ethics*, but the other way around. Rather than altering the manifest image so as to make it compliant with the scientific image, the Reciprocity Thesis limits the claims of science to its own domain of inquiry.

The Reciprocity Thesis rejects the hierarchical view of the sciences with physics as its basis that is presupposed by the modest conception. Yet its defence of the autonomy of the manifest image does not breach the desideratum that philosophical claims should not contradict those of science. For to claim that nature is the correlative of scientific method, or is the distinctive *explanandum* of natural science rather than the *Ding-an-sich*, is not tantamount to denying science authority over its own domain of inquiry. The view that the manifest image cannot be located within the scientific image because it is the correlative of a distinctive way of knowing does not therefore breach the constraint under which the modest conception of the role of conceptual analysis in metaphysics operates, i.e., that philosophical claims should not contradict those of science and thereby undermine its emancipatory potential. Defending the autonomy of the manifest image by denying that it can be derived by entailment from the scientific image does not, therefore, require one to advocate a return to the conception of reality that was decisively disenchanted through the success of a mechanistic conception of causality.

The strategy for saving the manifest image from the jaws of physics, to borrow an expression from Raymond Tallis (2017), is neither one that tries to establish what features of the manifest image are compatible with those of the scientific image (as in the modest conception), nor one that harks back nostalgically to a re-enchanted conception of nature of the kind one finds in Greek mythology, but rather to *limit the claims of physics to its own explanandum*. Nature, as the scientist conceives it, remains exactly the same. It is made up of molecules (or whatever other ontology turns out to be the correlative of scientific explanation), not of ordinary macroscopic goods such as baked beans, and it is explained mechanistically. The Reciprocity Thesis does not change anything within or about the scientific image.[[15]](#footnote-15) The flip side of the claim that commitment to the reciprocity thesis does not change anything about the scientific conception of nature is that, conversely, the scientific image changes nothing about the manifest image because the criteria by which the objects of the manifest image are identified, and the kind of explanations which are at work in the manifest image, do not respond to the norms and expectations of scientific enquiry, but to different ones.[[16]](#footnote-16)

In sum: although the role of conceptual analysis in metaphysics that emerges from a commitment to the Reciprocity Thesis differs from the modest conception advocated by Jackson, it does not violate the metaphilosophical constraint under which the modest conception operates, namely that philosophy should not contradict the claims of science and undermine its emancipatory potential. If it is indeed the case, as it is argued here, that commitment to the reciprocity thesis does not breach that constraint, then there is a metaphilosophical alternative that cannot be ruled out on that account. If the modest conception of the role of conceptual analysis is recommended on the grounds of its ability to abide by the constraint that philosophy should not undermine science, the same recommendation also holds for the metaphilosophical view that the role of conceptual analysis in metaphysics is to uncover the explanatory norms that govern different forms of knowing. For one is not entitled to invoke an argument simply when it suits one’s own philosophical agenda.

The next two sections show how the idealist insight that knowledge makes a difference to what is known is at work in two philosophers who have denied that the manifest image can be legitimised by entailment from the scientific image.

II

*Actions are Not Events: Collingwood*

The modest conception of the role of conceptual analysis in metaphysics that is offered by Jackson as a solution to the problem of elimination has been hugely influential in shaping the kind of questions that have been occupying 20th century philosophers of mind who have tended almost unanimously to assume that the problem which the philosophy of mind should address is that of the place of mind in nature, or the so-called Placement Problem. The Placement problem is another manifestation of the Location Problem: it arises within a metaphilosophical framework that operates with a modest conception of the role of conceptual analysis in metaphysics and assumes a layered/hierarchical view of the sciences.

The question of the place of mind in nature has been formulated in different ways. For some, the placement problem is *ontological*: can mental states be accommodated within the material universe? For some, it is *epistemological*: can the distinctive first-person perspective of the mental find a place in the third person perspective of science?[[17]](#footnote-17) And for others, the location question is *causal*: can explanations in the special sciences be reconciled with the causal explanations of physics or is there a problem of causal overdermination?[[18]](#footnote-18) However, whether the placement question raises its head in an ontological, epistemological or causal context, it is generated by the *same* set of metaphilosophical assumptions, namely the hierarchical relations between forms of knowledge with physics at the base, the metaphysical priority of the explanations of physics, and a metaphilosophical commitment to a modest conception of the role of conceptual analysis in metaphysics.[[19]](#footnote-19) In the philosophy of mind, this metaphilosophical consensus concerning the nature and purpose of philosophical analysis has been so pervasive as to enjoy cross-party consensus, uniting non-reductivists *and* reductivists alike. In fact, while it has been a matter of ongoing debate whether the supervenience relation (which Jackson invokes to legitimise the manifest image) can be mobilised in support of a reductivist or a non-reductivist agenda,[[20]](#footnote-20) both reductivists and non-reductivists agree at a metaphilosophical level that the question which the philosophy of mind should address is, in the title of one of Kim’s books, the question of *The Place of Mind in a Physical World*.[[21]](#footnote-21)

A powerful challenge to the modest conception of the role of conceptual analysis in metaphysics (and its concomitant view of the relation between the sciences) can be found in the work of the British idealist R. G. Collingwood. Collingwood was concerned not with vindicating our right to use concepts of ordinary objects such as table and chairs, but with vindicating our right to use the term ‘action’ in a way that fundamentally differs from the concept of ‘event’. As a *sui generis* concept ‘action’ does not denote a subset of events, events whose efficient causes are internal (e.g. brain processes) rather than external, but the correlative of a distinctive form of explanation which invokes a teleological notion of cause. Collingwood refers to this as the *causa ut* as opposed to the *causa quod*.[[22]](#footnote-22)

He invokes the Reciprocity Thesis to deny that humanistic and scientific explanations have the same explanandum and thus that explanations which invoke an efficient concept of cause compete with explanations which invoke a teleological notion of cause. They do not compete because scientific explanations explain events, whereas humanistic explanations explain actions. Actions and events, however, are not ontological categories of traditional metaphysics; they are the correlative of humanistic and scientific explanations respectively. They belong to what Collingwood calls a metaphysics of *absolute presuppositions*, a metaphysics aimed at uncovering the fundamental assumptions that govern the methods at work in different contexts of inquiry. Actions, therefore, are not transcendent metaphysical entities; nor are events what ‘really’ exists independently of certain methodological assumptions concerning how they can be explained. Actions cannot be distinguished from events by invoking any visible empirical differences between the two. Rather, actions are identified by invoking a purpose. The action of opening a garage door, for example, is not individuated through a description of the bodily movements performed (since these might range from the manual lifting of the doors to the pressing of a button on a remote control without leaving the driving seat) but by bringing it under a teleological description. Since actions are the correlative of a distinct form of explanation (one which invokes a notion of teleological rather than efficient causality), they are not a subset of events (in the way in which the extension of the concept ‘goat’ is a subset of the extension of the more general concept ‘mammal’) but their own genus. The category ‘action’ is *sui generis* and conceptually independent of the category ‘event’ because actions and events are the correlatives of different types of causal judgments.

Collingwood mobilises the Reciprocity Thesis to argue that the privileged place that scientific knowledge occupies in the layered/hierarchical arrangement of the sciences rests on a form of dogmatism, i.e. on the failure to acknowledge that the objects of scientific investigation are the correlative of scientific method and thus that what (natural) science seeks to know, nature, does not replace the object of traditional metaphysical inquiry: the thing-in-itself. He denies that there is any such thing as a science of pure being, whether this be metaphysics or physics. His challenge to the layered view of the sciences presupposed by the modest conception is therefore not motivated by a desire to reinstate metaphysics as the science of pure being. For, so he argued, there is no such science. Being can only be known under certain categorial descriptions that are in turn determined by the relevant methodological assumptions which are made. Conceptual analysis uncovers the presuppositions through which Being is known qua event (the correlative of scientific explanation) or qua action (the correlative of humanistic explanation). Given the reciprocal relation between method and subject matter it is not possible to individuate and explain an action through the methods of science; this is not because actions are transcendent metaphysical entities, but because they have to be explained in a different way in order to be understood as actions.[[23]](#footnote-23) The concept of action eludes the scientific image because it is the correlative of a different kind of judgment, one which invokes a teleological notion of causation; its sui generis nature means that it cannot be accommodated and would have to be eliminated.

The privileged status accorded to scientific knowledge in the layered/hierarchical conception of the sciences, Collingwood argues, is sedimented in language where the term ‘science’ has come to mean ‘natural science’ (just as the term ‘drink’ has become slang for ‘alcoholic drink’).[[24]](#footnote-24) Similarly, the term ‘cause’ has become synonymous with ‘efficient cause’. His rejection of the layered view of knowledge with its privileging of the inferential patterns established in natural science gives rise to a distinctive defence of the autonomy of the mental. There is, for Collingwood, no problem of causal overdetermination because causation is an intensional/explanatory relation which holds between the explanans and explananda of a particular type of inquiry, and the choice between one sense of causation and another is dictated by the explanatory needs served by a particular form of knowing. Rather than claiming that there is no problem of causal overdetermination because mental states are token identical with physical states and thus causally efficacious only qua physical states (as non-reductive physicalists argue), Collingwood denies that the concept of efficient causation has any application in the context of action explanation. Nor does Collingwood seek to save the mental from the threat of epiphenomenalism by arguing, in the manner of functionalists such as Ned Block,[[25]](#footnote-25) that mental states are causally efficacious *qua* mental.

Instead, his solution to the problem of causal overdetermination is to reject the metaphilosophical picture that privileges the sense of (efficient) causation that responds to the explanatory goals of natural science; he argues that the sense of causation one invokes when providing an explanation must be sensitive to nature of the questions one is answering. The role of conceptual analysis in metaphysics is to disambiguate the different senses of the term ‘cause’ to avoid any illegitimate trespass beyond the proper domain of application of each sense of causation. Thus, rather than seeking to answer the question of the place of mind in nature Collingwood rejects the metaphilosophical picture which gives rise to the problem in the first place. Humanistic explanations are not causal explanations (in the sense of efficient causes) which invoke macroscopic objects (such as, for example, baseballs) as their explanans rather than microscopic ones (such as molecules). They are explanations of a different kind which invoke an altogether different sense of causation and which serve different explanatory needs.

Collingwood mobilises the Reciprocity Thesis in the service of an argument for the disunity of science in the Latin sense of the word *scientia* (meaning a body of knowledge with a distinctive method and subject matter) rather than (as he puts it) in the ‘slang’ sense in which the term science is used in the context of the layered/hierarchical model, where the term is assumed to be synonymous with natural science. He became posthumously famous when his claim for the disunity of *scientia* was revitalised by W. H. Dray[[26]](#footnote-26) in his response to Hempel’s claim for methodological unity.[[27]](#footnote-27) The methodological disagreement between Hempel and Dray over the logical structure of explanation never made explicit that the metaphilosophical platform from which Collingwood articulated his argument for the disunity of knowledge stemmed from a commitment to the idealist claim that knowledge makes a difference to what is known. It is a commitment to the Reciprocity Thesis that lies behind the claim that actions have to be understood in a different way, if they are to be understood at all. The modest conception is in danger of fostering the illusion that one can have one’s cake and eat it, i.e., accept a metaphilosophical commitment to the priority of the scientific image *and* save the manifest image. Collingwood dispels that myth, for a robust conception of action has no place within the inferential framework of science.

Collingwood denies that actions can be located, but he does not infer from this that, since they cannot be located, they should be eliminated. His view is rather that the choice between location and elimination is one that must be made by those who operate with a conception of the role of conceptual analysis (the modest conception) which gives rise to the location/placement problem in the first place. Whether one accepts or rejects the Reciprocity Thesis, it is at the very least important to be metaphilosophically aware of the stranglehold that the modest conception has exercised over the kind of questions that are deemed to be important within the philosophy of mind, and of the kind of moves that philosophers of mind are allowed to make.

III

*A Table is Not a Table-wise Arrangement of Molecules: Heidegger*

Another philosopher who rejected the metaphilosophical commitment to the hierarchical view of the sciences that informs the location strategy is Heidegger. This section presents Heidegger’s claim that the ready-to-hand is not a category derivative from the present-at-hand, but its own genus, as based on an underlying commitment to the Reciprocity Thesis, according to which manifest and scientific judgments have their own distinctive and *sui generis* explananda.

The association of Heidegger with the idealist tradition is not unproblematic, for while in *Being and Time* he flirted with idealism, and held it in greater esteem than realism, he stopped short of giving it full-hearted endorsement.[[28]](#footnote-28) My argument here is not that Heidegger is a card-carrying idealist, but that his defence of the autonomy of the manifest image in *Being and Time* can be presented as arising from a commitment to the idealist insight contained in the Reciprocity Thesis. When his defence of the autonomy of the manifest image is presented in this way, it is shown to be much more radical than contemporary attempts to rescue the manifest image by showing that it is entailed (either by the relation or supervenience or the more traditional notion of analytic entailment) by the scientific image.

In *Being and Time*, Heidegger distinguished the category of the ready-to-hand from the category of the present-at-hand. The former comprises objects viewed from the perspective of the specific function they fulfil within a practice (the needle is for sowing; the desk for writing on, etc.). The latter, on the other hand, capture their purely scientific properties. For Heidegger, the ready-to-hand is *sui generis* because it is not accessible from the purely scientific perspective of the present-at-hand. Understanding an object as ready-to-hand requires understanding it in a completely different way, namely by grasping its function or purpose, or what Heidegger calls its “in-order-to”.[[29]](#footnote-29) This function or purpose cannot be gleaned from the object’s present-at-hand properties: for example, knowing the molecular structure of an object will tell us nothing about its purpose. The *purpose* of the desk, the *function* of the needle, is understood in the context of the *practices of writing and sowing*, and this functionality is not covertly entailed by the molecular constitution of the table top or the needle’s head, any more than it is possible to glean from the chemical composition of a piece of clay that it was the fragment of a pot once used as vessel for transporting oil. To understand the needle *qua* needle, the desk *qua* desk, the piece of clay *qua* fragment of a pot, is to understand them as ready-to-hand from the inception because there is no covert relation of entailment that leads from the molecular structure of the wooden top, the needle’s head and the pot’s fragment to their function as tools or use objects. This is why, Heidegger argues, it is not possible to understand an object as ready-to-hand through an *operation of addition*, by starting from present-at-hand properties and then adding something on to them (the value of the object to *Dasein*). To understand the object as ready-to-hand, one must shift to a different way of knowing, one which brings the purpose of the object into view by subsuming it under a *teleological judgment*. It is because the object can be understood as ready-to-hand only when it is understood teleologically (in terms of its role or purpose) that the category of the ready-to-hand is conceptually independent of the category of the present-at-hand, and inaccessible from the perspective of science.

The picture of the manifest image that is presented in *Being and Time* is considerably richer than the one allowed by the modest conception of the role of conceptual analysis in metaphysics. For Heidegger, the nature of the table as a ready-to-hand object found in kitchens and restaurants is not exhausted by the solidity of the table-top against which we rest our elbows and crockery at meal times: solidity may be inferred from the lattice-like arrangement of molecules, but ‘table-ness’ cannot. The modest conception of the role of conceptual analysis in metaphysics presents ordinary objects as a conglomerate of the kind of secondary qualities that would be allowed by Locke and then legitimises them by locating them on the serious metaphysician’s list of primary properties by invoking the relation of supervenience. But if Heidegger is right, the manifest image is much richer than the Lockean conception of an object’s nominal essence. This richer conception of ordinary objects, unlike the impoverished version that is captured by Locke’s list of secondary qualities, is not amenable to being located on the serious metaphysician’s short list. For in describing an object as ready-to-hand, one necessarily invokes a teleological judgment that presents the object not merely as having a colour, a smell and as emitting a noise when tapped, but as having a role or function. If one presents a candle as a piece of wax, as Descartes did in the *Second Meditation*,[[30]](#footnote-30) one will also find it easier to think that the essence of the candle can be described through the vocabulary and explanations of mathematical physics.

According to Heidegger the table, qua ready-to-hand, eludes the scientific perspective because its “in-order-to” does not supervene upon the arrangement of molecules accounting for the solidity of its surface. Molecules are not arranged table-wise, for they do not configure themselves with a view to making convivial dinners possible; to speak of them as being arranged table-wise is to import a way of grasping the relation between them which is completely alien to the scientific description of the object as present-at-hand. Strictly speaking, we cannot say that the table is an arrangement of molecules, for molecules do not arrange themselves in tables and chairs. From the scientific perspective, “everything must go” – to use the title of James Ladyman and Don Ross’s book.[[31]](#footnote-31) Talk of molecules arranged table-wise and chair-wise, illegitimately smuggles in features of the manifest image into the scientific one thereby creating the misleading impression that the ways in which we speak in non-scientific contexts can be accommodated by the scientific image. Once one accepts, as the modest conception does, the primacy of the scientific image, it may be harder than one might have originally envisioned to resist the eliminativist’s conclusions. This is a problem that Heidegger does not face because, unlike the modest conception, he denies the primacy of the scientific image. As a result, his suggestion for saving the manifest image is not to locate manifest properties in terms of the scientific properties by arguing that the former are entailed by the latter. Rather, Heidegger’s argument is that ‘tableness’ is *sui generis* because *purposiveness does not belong to the description of reality in terms of its molecular structure*. While molecules may be arranged in such a way as to account for the solidity of the materials out of which the table is made, they are not arranged in such a way as to account for the table’s use in the context of, say, the practices of writing and dining. The table’s “in-order-to” is grasped through a different kind of judgment, one that is teleological in nature. Heidegger’s defence of the distinction between the ready-to-hand and the present-at-hand, and his defence of the sui generis nature of the ready-to hand, therefore, rests on what we have called the Reciprocity Thesis. For, it is only through the application of a certain kind of purposive judgement that the object can be described as ready-to-hand.

Now one may try to undermine this strategy for defending the *sui generis* nature of the manifest image by arguing that we often infer manifest properties from scientific ones: an archaeologist, one might object, could infer that a piece of clay found on a site could not have been a fragment of a pot used for storing oil or water. This is because its chemical composition, as tested in the laboratory, indicates that the material out of which it is made is porous, thus making it unsuitable for the purpose of storing liquids. Clearly there are causal conditions which determine whether a certain material can be used to build, for example, a suitably impermeable vessel for the storage of liquids, or a suitably impenetrable surface on which to rest one’s crockery when eating. But this observation does not show that one can thereby derive the manifest image by entailment from the scientific image. For the unsuitability of a given material for a certain purpose (its unreadiness-to-hand, as Heidegger might put it) can only be grasped in relation to a goal, albeit one whose fulfilment it fails to promote. This would-be objection to the *sui generis* and irreducible nature of the manifest image actually reinforces rather than undermine the point that to understand an object as ready-to-hand is to grasp its role or function, *even in cases where it fails to fulfil it*. The table with a broken leg and the broken pot are not present-at-hand objects; they are ready-to-hand objects which have lost what Heidegger calls their “serviceability”,[[32]](#footnote-32) their ability to fulfil their “in-order-to” or serve a goal.

There are no such things as broken tables and uncomfortable chairs from the perspective of the scientific image, which at best can inform us about the molecular constitution of the wood but can say nothing about the function that the table fulfils in the practices of dining and writing. It is only from a perspective that allows for purposive judgment that an object can be described as either succeeding or failing by those teleological standards. A table is broken, or a chair is uncomfortable, *only* to the extent that it is brought under the category of the ready-to-hand. This richer conception of the manifest image will forever remain beyond the ken of science because molecules do not arrange themselves table-wise, needle-wise or pot-wise. To speak of them as arranged pot-wise, table-wise and needle-wise is to import the *very teleology which the scientific image seeks to excise*. While the scientific image can inform us about the *molecular structure* of wood, metal and clay, it cannot tell us about the *function* of the table, the needle and the pot. The scientific image, crucially, can describe them neither as ready-to-hand nor as unready-to hand, neither as fit nor as unfit for a given purpose.

This way of saving the manifest image from elimination also differs from another recent attempt to defend the manifest image, one which seeks to deflate the conflict by invoking the more traditional notion of analytic entailment.[[33]](#footnote-33) Amie Thomasson recently argues that just as anyone who knows that there is a left-hand glove and a right-hand glove also knows (by analytic entailment) that there is a pair of gloves, so anyone who knows ‘that there are molecules arranged baseball-wise’ knows (by analytic entailment) ‘that there is a baseball’. And just as anyone who grasps the analytic entailments between the claims ‘there is a left-hand glove and a right-hand glove’ and ‘there is a pair of gloves’ would not say ‘there is a right-hand glove, a left-hand glove *and* a pair of gloves’, anyone who grasps the analytic entailments between the claims ‘there are molecules arranged baseball-wise’ and ‘there is a baseball’ should not say ‘there are molecules arranged baseball-wise *and* there is a baseball’. These conversational prohibitions undermine the idea that it is necessary to eliminate ordinary macroscopic objects in order to avoid causal rivalry between scientific and ordinary/pre-scientific explanations. For if it is illegitimate to conjoin the claims ‘there is a baseball *and* there are atoms arranged baseball-wise’, it is also illegitimate to conjoin the claims ‘the shattering of the window was caused by the baseball *and* by the atoms arranged baseball-wise’. The moral of this story is that the view that scientific and common-sense explanations are mutually exclusive is the result of a failure to grasp the analytic entailments holding between scientific and manifest properties. Making such analytic entailments explicit defuses the problem of explanatory exclusion and eases the pressures that have driven contemporary metaphysicians to advocate eliminativism. Once we correctly grasp the grammar of certain expressions, the apparent conflict between scientific and manifest explanations simply evaporates and there is no longer any need to resort to the extreme measures proposed by some eliminativists in order to avoid the problem of explanatory exclusion. Thomasson’s strategy for saving the manifest image differs from Jackson’s because it deflates the tension between the manifest and the scientific image by appealing to a more traditional notion of analytic entailment. Jackson argues that the manifest image can be saved from elimination because properties such as solidity can be derived through the relation of supervenience from the scientific image. By appealing to a more traditional notion of entailment, on the other hand, Thomasson aims to show that the tension between the scientific and the manifest image rests on a failure to grasp that e.g. ‘baseball’ is (analytically) entailed by ‘molecules arranged baseball-wise’.

Heidegger’s strategy for saving the manifest image is quite different from Thomasson’s. On the strategy pursued by Thomasson, one should always expect to find a table where there are molecules arranged in a certain way. As a result, she denies that it makes any sense to conjoin scientific and manifest judgements. Just as someone who thinks that there are washing machines and electrical appliances alongside one another as in ‘in my kitchen there are two things: a washing machine *and* an electrical appliance’ has failed to understand that the concept ‘washing machine’ is a species of the genus ‘electrical appliance’ so someone who says ‘there is a table *and* molecules arranged table-wise’ has failed to understand the analytic entailments holding between ‘molecules arranged table-wise’ and ‘table’. On Heidegger’s strategy by contrast, a present-at-hand arrangement does not entail a ready-to-hand one. Because the category of things which are captured by present-at-hand and ready-to-hand descriptions are conceptually distinct, it does not follow that where one finds one, one should expect to find the other too: there may be wood molecules arranged in a particular lattice-like way that account for the macroscopic secondary quality of solidity and yet no table-top. And there may be a table-top but no wood-like arrangement of molecules. In other words, for Heidegger the classification of items according to their manifest properties is tangential to the classification of objects according to their scientific properties.[[34]](#footnote-34)

In Heidegger’s account of the relation between the ready-to-hand and the present-at-hand the conflict between the scientific and the manifest image is eased in a very different way. For Thomasson there is no problem of causal overdetermination or explanatory exclusion because there is only one kind of causal judgment that is simply made twice: firstly, at the microscopic level of the molecular arrangement; and secondly, at the macroscopic level, captured by the secondary qualities that can be derived from entailment from the scientific image. It is the failure to discern that ‘there is a baseball’ is entailed by ‘there are molecules arranged baseball-wise’ which creates the *misleading* impression that there are two competing causal explanations: (1) that the window broke because it was hit by the baseball; and (2) that it broke because it was hit by the molecules arranged baseball-wise. For Heidegger, by contrast, the tension between the manifest and the scientific image is eased by denying that the distinction between manifest and scientific judgments is ontologically deep whilst at the same time acknowledging the sui generis nature of manifest judgments.

Rather than explain away[[35]](#footnote-35) the conflict between scientific and manifest descriptions by arguing that they denote the same thing at different levels of generality, Heidegger denies the existence of any relation of entailment between the present-at-hand and the ready-to-hand and defends the autonomy of the manifest from the scientific image. He does so by suggesting that manifest judgments are purposive/teleological judgments which conceptualise the relation between objects with reference to their in-order-to (the chair *is for* sitting at the table; the needle *is for* weaving with the thread; the pot *is for* storing oil; the hammer *is for* banging the nail in the wall). These judgements differ in kind from scientific judgments about the spatial arrangements of and causal relations between molecules. Since Heidegger denies that the ready-to-hand is analytically entailed by the present-at-hand, he would not deem someone who, in the presence of a building, asked ‘but where is the home?’ to be conceptually confused. For this question is unlike that of the person who, in the presence of a washing machine asks, ‘but where is the electrical appliance?’ The washing machine is a species of electrical appliance, but a building is not a species of a home. For one concept belongs to the category of the present-at-hand, and the other belongs to the *sui generis* category of the ready-to-hand. Contrary to what Ryle claimed,[[36]](#footnote-36) there is no category mistake in asking ‘but where is the university?’ while standing on its campus with its student accommodation, lecture theatres etc. intact: many academics under the pressures of the REF and TEF may ask themselves precisely *that* question when they start feeling they are no longer in the same job as the one they applied for. For Heidegger we may therefore continue to speak about tables and chairs, not because such manifest descriptions are entailed by more fundamental descriptions of properties that the objects ‘really’ have, but because since the scientific image is not about tables and chairs it does not affect, nor is it affected by, judgments about tables and chairs. There is no conflict between the scientific and the manifest image not because the manifest image is entailed by the scientific image but because manifest judgments bring objects under a categorial description that is sui generis.

A distinctive advantage of the modest conception of the role of conceptual analysis in metaphysics (so its supporters argue) is that since it privileges the inferential system of the scientific image it allows for no entities which are beyond the ken of scientific explanation. Its disadvantage is that it accommodates only a very anaemic version of the objects of the manifest image, namely those which are allowed entry by entailment (whether this be through supervenience or the more orthodox notion of analytic entailment). As we have seen, the modest conception can accommodate, for example, solidity and impenetrability but not tableness, for the latter requires employing purposive judgments that are extraneous to the scientific perspective; the modest conception can accommodate actions understood merely in terms of bodily movement and thus as species of events, but it cannot accommodate the concept of action as a sui generis category. The richer conception of the manifest image must be excised precisely because the functional objects that belong to the category of the ready-to-hand and the teleological descriptions of action cannot be accounted for within the inferential system of science since they can only be understood by switching to a different way of knowing. The Reciprocity Thesis, by contrast, acknowledges a conception of the manifest image that is much richer than the one allowed by recent attempts to legitimise the manifest properties of objects by invoking the relation of entailment, whether this be the relation of supervenience or the more traditional relation of analytic entailment. It does so by showing that manifest objects are the correlative of a different kind of inference and belong to a category of objects that is sui generis.

This chapter has sought to fend off the objection that the philosophical attempt to defend a richer conception of the manifest image informed by the Reciprocity Thesis is in breach of the desideratum that philosophy should not contradict the claims of science. The Reciprocity Thesis defends a notion of the manifest image that is sui generis and considerably more robust than the one allowed by the modest conception, one that *cannot* be accommodated, but, I have argued, it does not breach the constraint that philosophical claims should not contradict those of science. To say that there are such things as tables/chairs (or actions), and that such concepts belong to sui generis categories that are not reducible either to molecular arrangements (or to events), is not to contradict the claims of science, for tables and chairs (or actions) are not the explananda of scientific inquiry. It is, on the other hand, to contradict the claims of a philosophical standpoint (naturalism) which argues for the all-pervasiveness of the perspective of science. The Reciprocity Thesis is therefore in conflict not with science, but with scientism. There are indeed more things on heaven and earth than the naturalistic metaphilosophy which governs debates in contemporary analytic metaphysics and philosophy of mind allows one to say there are; but the reciprocity thesis allows one to say *this* without committing us to some form of supernaturalism precisely because it understands tables and chairs to be the correlative of manifest judgments, and molecules (or whatever ontological claims science commits us to) to be the correlative of scientific judgments. Rather than accepting the primacy of the scientific image, the Reciprocity Thesis confines the claims of science to its own explanandum by denying that there is a categorial description of reality that is ontologically basic.

Supernaturalism is the shadow cast by naturalism, a shadow which naturalism struggles to shrug off. The objects of manifest judgments are problematic from the naturalistic standpoint because if they cannot be explained scientifically then they must be not-natural in character. And if they are not-natural, then they must be supernatural, and they must therefore be excised. No such conclusion, however, needs to be drawn if one does not assume that physics has displaced metaphysics as the science of pure being and that nature has taken the place of the traditional object of metaphysical reflection: the thing-in-itself. So, to repeat, the argument of this paper is not directed against science but against the metaphilosophical view that physics has replaced metaphysics as the science of Being. The problem does not lie with our reluctance to part with a robust conception of the manifest image, nor does the problem lie with the scientific image; it lies rather with the ways in which the relation between the two has been conceptualised by philosophers. The conclusion that one should draw from this is not that we should stop philosophising, but rather that we should philosophise in a different way.

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1. Cf. Merricks (2000); Unger (1979a and b); Inwagen (1990). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Cf. Jackson (1998). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. For the claim that idealism is committed to the metaphilosophical view that knowledge makes a difference to what is known and that this is what is at stake between idealists and realists, see H. A. Prichard,1909:115-19. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. F. Jackson, 1998: 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. J. L. Austin, 1962: 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. In the philosophy of mind, where the question many philosophers address concerns the place of mind in nature, the location problem tends to be referred to as the “placement problem”. This is essentially the same problem that arises in two contexts: that of contemporary analytic metaphysics, where the major concern has been that of how to accommodate ordinary objects in the scientific world view, and in contemporary philosophy of mind, where the major concern has been that of how to accommodate the mind in the scientific world view. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Jackson, 1998: 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Ibid., p. 28. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Ibid., p. 25. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Ibid., p. 25. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. M. De Caro and A. Voltolini, 2010: 71. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. I am here using the term ‘science’ in the Latin sense (*Scientia*) to mean simply a form or way of knowing. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Cf. Tse (forthcoming 2019). [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. For further on this, see D’Oro (2018). [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. In this respect, the defence of the *sui generis* nature of the manifest image canvassed here is not the same as that advocated by liberal naturalists such as John McDowell (1996). The latter advocates a softening of the scientific image which is not required by the view I defend for which there is only one sort of naturalism, not two. Cf McDowell (1998). [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Cf. Smithson (forthcoming 2019). [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Cf. J. Levine (1983). [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Cf. Block (1997a and b). [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. For an account of how this conception of the role of conceptual analysis in metaphysics informs debates in the philosophy of mind, see D’Oro, Giladi, and Papazoglou (forthcoming 2019). [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. The relation of supervenience has been used in service of a non-reductivist agenda by Davidson (1980); while others, such as Kim (1995, 2000) have denied that the relation of supervenience can support non-reductivism. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. J. Kim (2000). [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. R.G. Collingwood [1940] 1998, chapter XXX. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. I discuss this further in D’Oro (2018a). [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Collingwood, R.G. [1940] 1998: 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Cf. 1997a and b. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. W. H. Dray (1957; 1958; 1963). [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. C. Hempel (1942). [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Cf. Heidegger [1927] 1962 § 43. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Ibid., §15 and 32. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Descartes [1641] 2008: 22. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Ladyman and Ross (2007). [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Heidegger [1927] 1962 § 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Cf. Thomasson (2007). [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. This is why, for example, a retailer’s marketing policy would not be improved by reclassifying its stock according to scientific rather than manifest properties of the objects (iron, wood, etc.) for such classifications would be of little use to the person searching for a table or for dining room storage. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. For a similar claim, see Smithson (forthcoming 2019). [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Viz., G. Ryle,1949: chapter 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)