

Conclusions

Having arrived at the end of the book, it is hoped that readers have the impression that the aims presented at the beginning have at least partly been reached. From the methodological viewpoint, constructive naturalism comes out as a pretty definite (although of course open to criticism) position. The criteria for theory choice being set aside – as they do play an important role, but were not taken to be indicative of anything more than a general view on the interplay between ‘sophisticated’ and ‘common sense’ conceptions of the world – it is hoped that the more general approach will be regarded as plausible. As for the case studies, again independently of which positions have been positively argued for in this book, the expectation is that they served to illustrate how constructive naturalism works in practice, and how fruitful the mutual relation between metaphysics and science can be. The specific theses that have been proposed may or may not constitute a coherent whole (for instance, in terms of particulars of some sort, constituting the whole of reality via part–whole relations with various levels of emerging parts and properties, and possibly without a level of entities to be conceived of as fundamental). Be this as it may, further study on both the case studies examined here, as well as others which lend themselves to a treatment in terms of non-reductive metaphysics, cannot but prove philosophically relevant. And even if future results may diverge from those presented here, it is likely that the right approach to these issues goes along the lines identified in this book, with neither elimination nor reduction, but a wise development of metaphysics and science as complementary enterprises – at least as long an ambitious, non-purely-instrumentalist approach to science and our knowledge of reality in general is endorsed.