



*issues involved*, including relations between the arguments of Duhem and Quine. Trenchant conclusions or theorems should not be looked for; my purpose is exploration not proof.

I begin (§2) with a scheme for overcoming holism by disentangling essences from accidents, which leads (§3) to a new characterisation of the meaning and reference of sentences, involving ‘abstract tests.’ After noting (§4) that Duhem and Quine themselves already adumbrated such tests I show how they can be formalised in the language of model theory, in fact of set-theoretical axiomatisation. A quantum-mechanical example is looked at in §5. In §6 I consider how Quine relates meaning, essence and analyticity, in §7 how Duhem relates the cleavage between physics and mathematics to the impossibility of crucial experiments, and whether holism really does have conflicting implications for Duhem and for Quine.