

Book Review

Quantum Closures and Disclosures: Thinking-Together Postphenomenology and Quantum Brain Dynamics.

Author: Globus, G., John Benjamins Publishing Company
Amsterdam/Philadelphia, 2003, 198 pp.

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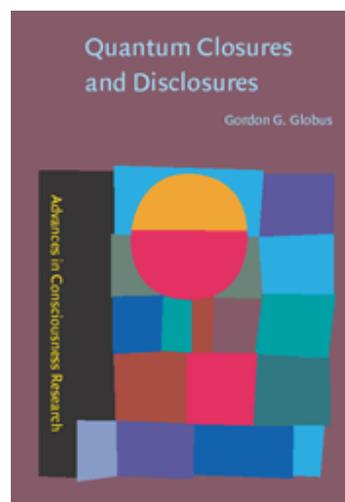
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Most quantum-oriented approaches to cognitive neuroscience aim at understanding the physical processes subserving consciousness. This line of inquiry has been followed by investigators like Umezawa, Yasue, and recently Vitiello. Vitiello's book, *My Double Unveiled: The Dissipative Quantum Model of Brain*, published by John Benjamins in 2001, opened up a hidden physical correlate of conscious experience by deducing the reduplicative features of a quantum-field-theoretical brain from non-linear aspects of Umezawa's thermofield theory.

Now Gordon Globus, in his new volume entitled "Quantum Closures and Disclosures: Thinking-Together. Postphenomenology and Quantum Brain Dynamics" (John Benjamins, Amsterdam/Philadelphia, 2003, 198 pp.), has taken neurophysics one decisive step further. He has broken the monopolistic grip of consciousness itself on quantum theories of mind.

At first glance, some merely technical differences between the physical constructs offered by Vitiello and those advanced by Globus appear to frame the contrast between their two works. For example, the relative roles of "tilde" and "non-tilde" universes as mediators of Vitiello's conscious self and its "double" are forcefully reversed in Globus's treatment. Such differences are important in formalistic terms, but the uniquely revolutionary meaning of Globus's ideas lies elsewhere.

While Vitiello's predecessors tried to link quantum physics to the neurobiology of a rigidly centered consciousness, and while Vitiello himself has only felt his way tentatively toward the adjunctively hidden physical domain of a conscious self which remains transcendental, Globus leaps



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ahead of the pack by showing that the subject of quantum neurophysics is necessarily decentered at its ontically embedded core. His demonstration moves quantum neurodynamics from the restricted Husserlian project of consciousness studies to an extended Heideggerian exploration of the existential subject. Given the generally problematic nature of defining boundaries between conscious subject and intended object in quantum measurement, and given isomorphisms between existential praxis and quantum observables as active operators, Globus's massive shift toward authentic self-eccentricity should resonate widely among post-classical neurophysicists as a welcome Copernican breakthrough.

Nevertheless, a danger presents itself here. One can travel too far along the road of decentered neurophysical subjectivity and end up falling down the black hole of Derrida's totally deconstructed self. Globus himself makes some moves in this direction but admirably stops short of the cliff. For those who might intemperately push his clear-sighted work too far, the following cautionary advice may apply: seek your neurophysical reframing of presence in the existential convergence of significations, rather than in their divergence toward an infinity of empty universals. Perhaps Globus's heirs will be able to use some future inclusion of quantum gravity within an updated version of thermofield theory as a guide toward semiotic convergence of this sort.

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