

Contents

1	Physicists in Wonderland	1
1.1	What This Book Is About	1
1.2	Back to Copenhagen	4
1.3	What Do Physicists Say Now?	8
1.4	But There has Never Been a Consensus	11
1.5	Why Bother?.	14
1.6	Outline of the Book	17
2	The First Mystery: Interference and Superpositions	21
2.1	The Spin.	21
2.2	The Mach–Zehnder Interferometer	24
2.3	The Quantum Formalism	28
2.4	How Does It Work?.	32
2.5	What Is the Meaning of the Quantum State?.	33
2.5.1	The Measurement Process Within the Quantum Formalism.	36
2.5.2	The “Naive” Statistical Interpretation	41
2.6	Conclusions	44
	Appendices.	45
3	“Philosophical” Intermezzo	73
3.1	Realism and Idealism	73
3.2	Scientific Realism	80
3.2.1	Underdetermination	81
3.2.2	Incommensurability of “Paradigms”	83
3.2.3	The Status of “Unobservable Entities”	86
3.3	Realism and Quantum Mechanics	91
3.4	Determinism	94
3.4.1	Definitions	94
3.4.2	Determinism and “Chaos Theory”	98
3.4.3	Probabilities in Classical Physics	101

3.4.4	The Law of Large Numbers and Scientific Explanations	104
3.4.5	“Randomness” and Deterministic Dynamical Systems	105
3.4.6	Quantum Mechanics and Determinism	106
	Appendix	107
4	The Second Mystery: Nonlocality	111
4.1	Introduction.	111
4.2	Einstein’s Boxes	113
4.3	What Is Nonlocality?	115
4.4	A Simple Proof of Nonlocality	118
4.4.1	An Anthropomorphic Thought Experiment	118
4.4.2	A Real Quantum Situation	121
4.4.3	Conclusions.	123
	Appendix	127
5	The de Broglie–Bohm Theory.	129
5.1	The Theory	130
5.1.1	The Equations of the Theory	130
5.1.2	How Does the de Broglie–Bohm Dynamic Work?	134
5.1.3	What About the Statistical Predictions of Quantum Mechanics?	137
5.1.4	Measurements of “Observables” in the de Broglie–Bohm Theory	140
5.1.5	“Contextuality” and Naïve Realism About Operators	151
5.1.6	What About the Collapse of the Quantum State?	152
5.1.7	What Are the Meaning and the Origin of the Statistical Assumptions on the Initial Conditions in the de Broglie–Bohm Theory?	155
5.1.8	Heisenberg’s Relations and Absolute Uncertainty	159
5.1.9	What Is the Relationship Between the de Broglie–Bohm Theory and Ordinary Quantum Mechanics?	161
5.2	Some Natural Questions About the de Broglie–Bohm Theory	162
5.2.1	How Does the de Broglie–Bohm Theory Account for Nonlocality?	162
5.2.2	What About Relativity?	169
5.2.3	What About the Classical Limit?	173
5.3	Other Objections	174
5.3.1	Isn’t This a Return to Classical Mechanics?	175
5.3.2	Isn’t the Theory Too Complicated?	176

5.3.3	What About the Symmetry Between Position and Momentum?	177
5.3.4	What About the No Hidden Variables Theorems?	178
5.3.5	If the Predictions of the de Broglie–Bohm Theory Are the Same as Those of Quantum Mechanics, What Is the Point of the de Broglie–Bohm Theory? . . .	179
5.3.6	Why Isn’t there an Action–Reaction Principle in the de Broglie–Bohm Theory?	179
5.4	Conclusions	180
5.4.1	Trouble in Paradise?	180
5.4.2	The Merits of the de Broglie–Bohm Theory	183
	Appendices.	185
6	Are There Any Alternative Theories?	199
6.1	The Many-Worlds Interpretation	200
6.1.1	The Naive Many-Worlds Interpretation	200
6.1.2	A Precise Many-Worlds Interpretation	207
6.1.3	The Pure Wave Function Ontology	209
6.2	The Spontaneous Collapse Theories	213
6.3	The Decoherent Histories Approach	216
6.4	QBism	222
6.5	Conclusions	227
	Appendices.	228
7	Revisiting the History of Quantum Mechanics.	233
7.1	The Bohr–Einstein Debate.	234
7.1.1	What Was the Debate Really About?	234
7.1.2	The 1927 Solvay Conference.	236
7.1.3	The Photon and the Box Experiment	238
7.1.4	The Einstein–Podolsky–Rosen Argument	241
7.1.5	Who Won the Bohr–Einstein Debate?	244
7.2	Born and Einstein	247
7.3	What Did Schrödinger Really Worry About?	249
7.4	The von Neumann No Hidden Variables Theorem	253
7.5	Misunderstandings of Bell.	258
7.6	The Non-reception of de Broglie’s and Bohm’s Ideas.	264
7.6.1	Reactions to de Broglie.	264
7.6.2	Reactions to Bohm.	269
7.7	Quantum Mechanics, “Philosophy”, and Politics	275
7.8	Conclusions	283
8	Quantum Mechanics and Our “Culture”.	285
8.1	The Trouble with Quantum Mechanics	286
8.2	A Plea for “Copenhagen”	288

8.3	But What About Now?	289
8.4	Understanding Quantum Mechanics: An Unfinished Story	292
Glossary		295
References		303
Author Index		323
Subject Index		327

<http://www.springer.com/978-3-319-25887-4>

Making Sense of Quantum Mechanics

Bricmont, J.

2016, X, 331 p. 26 illus., 25 illus. in color., Hardcover

ISBN: 978-3-319-25887-4