



Cortex and Mind: Unifying Cognition

By Joaquin M. Fuster

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This book presents a unique synthesis of the current neuroscience of cognition by one of the world's authorities in the field. The guiding principle to this synthesis is the tenet that the entirety of our knowledge is encoded by relations, and thus by connections, in neuronal networks of our cerebral cortex. Cognitive networks develop by experience on a base of widely dispersed modular cell assemblies representing elementary sensations and movements. As they develop cognitive networks organize themselves hierarchically by order of complexity or abstraction of their content. Because networks intersect profusely, sharing common nodes, a neuronal assembly anywhere in the cortex can be part of many networks, and therefore many items of knowledge. All cognitive functions consist of neural transactions within and between cognitive networks. After reviewing the neurobiology and architecture of cortical networks (also named *cognits*), the author undertakes a systematic study of cortical dynamics in each of the major cognitive functions--perception, memory, attention, language, and intelligence. In this study, he makes use of a large body of evidence from a variety of methodologies, in the brain of the human as well as the nonhuman primate. The outcome of his interdisciplinary endeavor is the emergence of a structural and dynamic order in the cerebral cortex that, though still sketchy and fragmentary, mirrors with remarkable fidelity the order in the human mind.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Cortex and Mind by Joaquin Fuster is the best book in the field I have read since Higher Cortical Functions by Alexander Luria. It is a book of similar scope and ambition, but reflecting the Zeitgeist of the beginning of the twenty-first century, rather than that of the middle of the twentieth century. I cannot think of anything of this importance and conceptual clarity written in between. With great clarity, Fuster defines a certain sophisticated understanding of the brain's function, and with great civility, gentility even, he debunks some of the most enduring misconceptions in the field." --JINS

". . . a remarkable and unique integration of cognitive neuroscience . . . Fuster's ability for compacting the vast domain of cognitive neuroscience into a brief and lucid book is admirable . . . beautifully written and a pleasure to read . . . a singular book." --Contemporary

Psychology

"Fuster's progress report dares us to believe that the patterns woven by Sherrington's 'enchanted loom,' the cerebral cortex, are now well on the way to being understood."--Nature

About the Author

Joaquin M. Fuster is at School of Medicine.

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