



DOI: 10.2478/rjes-2024-0016

BOOK REVIEW

Felix Nicolau. *Istoria nucleară a culturii. Cuante hermeneutice. București: Tritonic, 2021. 336 pp. ISBN 978-606-749-547-8*

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Istoria Nucleară a Culturii. Cuante hermeneutice/The Nuclear History of Culture. Hermeneutic Quanta is a book by Felix Nicolau published in 2022 at Tritonic Publishing House. This book brings together multi-disciplinary subjects condensed in a text that encompasses the author's multiple areas of interest. Felix Nicolau, the author of poetry books, novels, and texts of literary criticism, offers this time a great insight into how widely discussed subjects can be approached in a more "playful" style. As the author builds a system of historical but also current data, he merges the "serious" analysis of various subjects with a humoristic discourse. Nicolau structured the book into thirty chapters, each of them concerning a different area of interest. For example, in the first chapter, Literature and the Functions, we have commentaries on subjects such as "The Dangers of Greek Literature", followed by "The Decency of Latin Literature" or "Scandinavian Literature: Flowers and Socialism". As the book advances, he gradually imports an array of subjects, such as "Christianity and The Elites", "Historical Telenovelas", "The Edification of Femininity" or "Action Movies". This being said, the reader should be prepared to encounter an extended commentary that is not limited to one field but unfolds itself as connecting, among others, literature, history, religion, medicine, music, film, fashion, and politics.

Beginning with the title, the author already announces to the reader about his plan of bringing together a multitude of subjects. He indeed, creates a quantum out of each of the disciplines, as the considerable number of subjects he discusses, brought together, gets converted into nuclear power for the mind. Also, the titles of the subchapters are extremely suggestive. They highlight both the array of subjects and the humorous voice of the author. Still, the author begins his book in a more serious manner, by bringing into discussion a more general approach concerning Hermeneutics, Stylistics, Psychology, and Culture. In this way, he is preparing the reader for the following set of information. The text provokes the reader into questioning the main concern of this book, as it combines a considerable set of topics. He almost creates a stream of consciousness, or better said a stream of "disciplinary ideas" that he later categorizes in different sections. Even if the discourse is diversified, some points are also restated depending on the subject, highlighting the versatility of his ideas and how those can be applied in different fields. As an example we have Chapter III, Subchapter 10, *Sclavie pentru toată lumea, democratic. Escravidão/ Slavery for Everybody, Democratic. Escravidão*, in which we are presented with a commentary on slavery, starting from the historical point in which, as the author states, the methods of the slave trade became more "refined", as several tribes got paid to catch other tribes (108). The same commentary is also included in both chapter XV, *Multilateral dezvoltata corupție și orbiri de bon ton/ The Multilaterally Developed Corruption and the Blindness of the Bon Ton* (239), and chapter XIX, *Justiție, stat drept/*

Justice, Lawful State (259). His ideas become intertwined as he repeats the commentaries, highlighting the link that already exists between various subjects.

A noticeable phenomenon that can be observed concerning the writing style of this text is that Nicolau doesn't try to over-explain his ideas; he keeps them short, bold, and convincing. Probably this is exactly the reason that stands behind the author's choice to concentrate on such style, and not pursue a more traditional commentary on these topics. This choice gave him the chance to explore other possibilities to transfer his ideas into a text complex enough to be at the same time appreciated by scholars and enjoyed by the common readers. Nevertheless, even if each point is discussed in a short paragraph, the information is daringly delivered to initiate a dialogue between the text and the reader, without emphasizing or exaggerating a form of in-depth explanation coming from the author. As throughout the text he is commenting on or criticizing several ideas, actions, or behaviors, Nicolau is focusing especially on a more "scandalous" set of information. He is playing with the words, alternating between a more serious approach and a humoristic take. Even if the rich set of information is transmitting that the reader should already be accustomed to the directions the book takes, it is also providing the reader with "research" ideas on unfamiliar topics or alternative perspectives.

Since the 2021 publication of his book, *Istoria nucleară a Culturii. Cuante hermeneutice/The Nuclear History of Culture. Hermeneutic Quanta*, Felix Nicolau has become so persistent with bringing forward "scandalous" information, so much so that he provided the public interested in his approach with the publication of *Știința minciunii responsabile. Tratat de embolii culturale/ The Science of Responsible Lying. A Treaty of Cultural Embolisms* in 2024. To this extent, Felix Nicolau is inviting the reader to satisfy a specific thirst for cultural debate by creating, once more, a literary immersive space of controversies. After all, by taking into consideration both the practical intentions of the books and the charm of the writing style, one may ask in these cases: is it, or is it not "art for art's sake" (253)? And as the author states: "Done. It's almost past 12" (326).

Notes on the author

Maria-Simona Bica is currently a PhD student at West University of Timișoara, Romania. She graduated with an M.A. in American Studies and a B.A. in English and Romanian Languages and Literatures from the same university. Her current research interest is focused on trauma studies in American literature, as she is currently developing a new method of analysis in the field called the Pattern Theory.