

**Basarab Nicolescu: From
Modernity to Cosmodernity.
Science, Culture, and Spirituality.
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If you want to understand the relations between the worlds of contemporary science and modern culture, you have to read the book of Basarab Nicolescu entitled “From Modernity to Cosmodernity: Science, Culture and Spirituality”. This book is full of disquieting questions: What is reality? This question was put forward in 1948 by Wolfgang Pauli, the Nobel laureate in physics, saying: “The formulation of a new idea of reality is the most important and most difficult task of our time.” More than sixty years later, this task still remains unfulfilled. This book has the aim to make a step forward toward the accomplishment of this task. A further question asks how is it that we know more about what we do and less about who we are? Why is our world running into a potential triple self-destruction: material, biological and spiritual? The author of this book claims that the major cause behind the trend is that our modern world becomes more and more the product of the blind but triumphant technoscience. It is manifested by the increasing gap between the meaning of science and in its interaction with spirituality, and by leading to the split of science and culture. Furthermore, it has a detrimental political consequence by originating totalitarianism in the abolition of sacred.

Nicolescu also raises the question of why the modern science was developed in Europe. Typically, the Christian dogmatism is considered as an obstacle of scientific progress by referring to the infamous process of Galileo Galilei. Nicolescu claims that just the opposite is true, according to him, modern science has essentially Christian origin, namely, it evolved from the dogmas of the Christian trinity and the incarnation.

The book discusses in detail the relation of two forms of our knowledge: the traditional and the scientific. The former assumes mental silence, direct perception and dissolution in the unique and complete reality; the latter needs activity of the mind, formulation of laws, existence of an objective, separate reality, independent on the observation.

In contemporary physics, the quantum mechanics requires introduction of new principles for determinism and causality distinct from the comprehensive causality of Aristotle. It places the whole reality between brackets, as an obscure, ontological and unnecessary concept, and even a new axiomatic logic should be developed. The new logic is illustrated by examples of modern art, which is called quantum aesthetics and quantum theater by Gregorio Morales. This concept is represented by the antitheater of Peter Brook and Ionesco. Its ideology is

developed by Jung and Lupasco assuming isomorphism between the world of quantum and psyche, where the observer is separated from the real by the wall of the unconscious.

Nicolescu describes in detail the major strive of modern physics for developing a theory of everything, in which all four forces – gravitation, electromagnetism, the weak and strong nuclear forces – could be united in a common field theory. This theory is not yet successful, but there are promising efforts, in particular, the superstring theory. Certain features of this theory however, look extremely absurd. Even our imagination encounters great difficulty for understanding the four-dimensional space-time of Minkowski, but how can we perceive a model where the theory assumes twenty-six dimensions for the interaction mediating bosonic strings, and ten dimensions for the fermion strings, respectively? And what we can do with the bootstrap theory suggesting the existence of 10^{11} pocket universes?

When we are searching for the secrets of the smallest object of our universe, we are coming closer in the understanding of the nature of the giants in the cosmos. When we look at what is happening in the shortest time interval of physical processes, we can understand what happened in the remote past when the big bang took place and the universe started to evolve. When you want to understand the nature of the simplest objects, you have to grasp what is the essence of the most complex things in the universe: human beings. This leads to the question of the relation between the Subjects and the Objects, which is the crucial problem of philosophy. This relation has varied in the different periods of human culture. The major steps can be described as premodernity, modernity, postmodernity and cosmodernity. In this long journey of human culture, Nicolescu can be our excellent guide.