

## Introduction

Levente T. SZABÓ – István BERSZÁN

Babeş-Bolyai University, Department of Hungarian Literary Studies,  
Cluj-Napoca; e-mail: [tszabo.levente@ubbcluj.ro](mailto:tszabo.levente@ubbcluj.ro),

Babeş-Bolyai University, Department of Hungarian Literary Studies,  
Cluj-Napoca; e-mail: [berszan.istvan@ubbcluj.ro](mailto:berszan.istvan@ubbcluj.ro)

### ABSTRACT:

In the first part of the Introduction Levente T. Szabó introduces Hungarian Studies Yearbook revealing its purpose to serve as a new scholarly hub and focal point for Hungarian studies oriented both towards methodologically challenging experiences and an evidence-based, resource-oriented Hungarian studies. In the second part of the introduction István Berszán presents the thematic issue “Kinetic Spaces – the Challenge of Complexity by Practical Rhythms”, which initiates interdisciplinary research into the rhythm of practices and occurrences in order to open fields of orientation that are larger than recent paradigmatic spaces.

**Keywords:** Hungarian Studies Yearbook, glocal, transnational, space and time, complexity, kinetic spaces, practical rhythms.

### Introducing *Hungarian Studies Yearbook*

*Hungarian Studies Yearbook* is the latest intellectual venture of the Hungarian community from the Faculty of Letters at the Babeş-Bolyai University. The launch of this new platform comes after a long preparation, and seems to be a natural and logical outcome both of the rich glocal scholarly traditions and the substantial impact this local community has had in Hungarian studies in the last decades.

The Faculty of Letters from Kolozsvár/ Cluj/ Klausenburg has a long tradition of outstanding and innovative publications related partially or completely to Hungarian studies. To name just a few, from the first international journal of comparative literary studies, established by Sámuel Brassai and Hugo von Meltzl in 1877, or the pioneering scholarly journals and publications of Antal/ Anton Herrmann in compara-

tive folklore and ethnology at the end of the nineteenth century, to the enthrallingly large historical lexicographic series of Attila Szabó T., are all long-lasting and globally relevant performances.

*Hungarian Studies Yearbook* aims to be a continuation of these innovative and rich scholarly traditions that offered both a glocal sense and a transnational framework for Hungarian studies. Its purpose is to serve as a new scholarly hub and focal point for Hungarian studies oriented both towards methodologically challenging experiences and an evidence-based, resource-oriented Hungarian studies that are able to excavate and foreground new sources and novel interpretations. The publication will seek to bring new voices from or upon Transylvanian Hungarian studies, even though its focus is not primarily Transylvania or Hungarian literature, language or ethnology of Romania. And even though it opens with a thematic interdisciplinary issue experimenting with a border phenomenon, *Hungarian Studies Yearbook* will seek and accept proposals that fall entirely within the conventionally defined borders of Hungarian studies with a special focus on Hungarian literary history, comparative literature, literary theory, theoretical and functional linguistics, ethnography, ethnology and anthropology.

The *Hungarian Studies Yearbook* is a scholarly publication of the Hungarian line of study at the Faculty of Letters, the line of study being an official administrative representation of the Department of Hungarian Literary Studies, the Department of Hungarian and General Linguistics, the Department of Hungarian Ethnography and Anthropology, and the Doctoral School of Hungarian Studies. Its language is English and it is published once each year with a call for papers in January. The yearbook is published in association with the Sciendo platform from de Gruyter and indexed in all the relevant international scholarly databases. (*Levente T. Szabó*)

### *Introducing the thematic issue: Kinetic Spaces – the Challenge of Complexity by Practical Rhythms*

The concepts of space and time are designed in physics to conceive of the objective extension of the universe. From the homogenous Newtonian infinity to the space-time curvature of the theory of relativity, from the complementary curled-up space dimensions of string theory to the branes of the multiverse, they are meant to offer a description of the structure (or texture) of space and, inseparably, the temporal component of motion. On the other hand, aporias concerning our orientation in occurrences (as the conundrums of the human space and time experiences, often incompatible with geometrical or mathematical patterns) emerged beginning with Zeno of Elea or Saint Augustine. The later development of physics has still not yielded any satisfactory answer, on the contrary, unpredictable turns in the 20<sup>th</sup> century – the theory of

relativity, quantum mechanics or string theory – definitely increased their number. This gave rise to numerous alternative research attempts leading to the Bergsonian concept of 'duration' triggering repeated revivals of phenomenology (from Edmund Husserl to Merleau-Ponty, Emmanuel Lévinas and Francisco Varela) or introducing concepts like 'kairos' (Michel de Certeau) and 'timespace' (Theodor Schatzki) in the theory of practice.

My own proposal<sup>1</sup> regarding kinetic spaces is an attempt to bridge these two separate orientations by a practice-oriented physics. The introduction of complementary rhythmic dimensions enlarges the only extended time dimension confirming that temporality is not only a measurable extension but also, unavoidably, the rhythm of a motion as well. I conceive of the rhythms of happenings as possible time directions. According to this approach, rhythms are not repeatable patterns of the observed motions, but multiple temporalities to be attended by gesture resonance: changing the direction in time practically means changing the rhythm of happening. All ideas of complexity presupposing concatenations between multifarious events are challenged by the spaciousness of parallel kinetic spaces, because no space, including the most complex one, is spacious enough to encompass the rhythms of all happenings. This is why practical orientation is unavoidable even in the research of the most exact sciences.

This first issue of the *Hungarian Studies Yearbook* on "Kinetic Spaces – The Challenge of Complexity by Practical Rhythms" initiates interdisciplinary research into the rhythm of practices and occurrences in order to open fields of orientation that are larger than paradigmatic spaces. The collected articles will also reveal the difficulties of such an attempt: disciplinary inclinations keeping us inside our paradigmatic spaces or the rhythmic inertia we have to fight against when turning our attention towards different kinetic spaces. I recommend these essays as more or less successful experiments in getting beyond the rhythmic border of largely extended (and accepted) research practices in order to enter the spaciousness of parallel kinetic spaces; and, at the same time, as more or less successful attempts at integrating or projecting the alternative temporalities into the authors' own disciplinary fields. Thus, the following physical, philosophical, poetic, artistic and biological reading experiments might be interesting not only as texts to be understood, but also as means of practical contact with the rhythm of different happenings.

*Kinetic Spaces – the Challenge of Complexity by Practical Rhythms* includes the following articles:

In "The Space-time of Physics: a Kinetic Space", theoretical physicist Zoltán Néda reveals how in the coordinate system of physics both geodesic orientation and the rhythm of causality-time have remained

1 Berszán, István. "Empirical Research and Practice-oriented Physics for the Humanities and Sciences, Arts and Humanities." *CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture* 18.2 (2016): <<https://doi.org/10.7771/1481-4374.2860>>

inside the kinetic space of light propagation. Realizing that the concept of space-time is considerably limited by this choice of research, we have to admit that, if we did not have a visual sense, our physics would be totally different.

In “Practical Rhythm and Time Projection”, István Berszán applies his practice-oriented physics to a Wordsworthian poetic experiment into the rhythmic dimension of a refined motion and describes how Alain Badiou provides a time projection of Saint Paul’s teaching and practice on the kinetic space of leftist struggle. By these examples the article examines the geometry of complementary rhythmic dimensions in literature and human sciences.

István Berszán’s interview with Philip Gross, “Hand-Written Road Maps to Multi-Dimensional Space”, opens up practice-oriented physics towards creative writing and *vice versa*. The concepts used by the interlocutors may be different, as well as their experiences regarding concrete places and rhythms, but the heightened alertness in a collaborative in-between space and orientation by gesture resonance seem to be their common guidelines

In “IF: Planning, Research and Co-Creation of an Existential Installation-Performance”, Rita Sebestyén presents an experimental, action-research based and interdisciplinary performance in which artists, audience, facilitators and researchers are working together in order to transform concrete given scenes into shared kinetic spaces of their interaction. Unlike physical experiments, the aim is not to repeat the same phenomenon in a controlled and observable setting but to provide new possibilities for practical interconnections.

In “Drums of Doubt: On the Rhythmical Origins of Poetic and Scientific Exploration”, Caius Dobrescu investigates the rhythmical ellipse or oscillatory rhythm of exploration as advancement into unknown territory. This model is connected to a large theoretical context including Berszán’s conception of practical orientation and it is tested on free verse as a “case study”.

In “Changing the Rhythm of Design Capitalism and the Total Aestheticization of the World”, Márton Szentpéteri presents a vast gallery of examples of the accelerating total aestheticization of the world from Romanticism to neoliberal globalization, highlighting the role of an expanding design culture. Investigations are made in order to displace this rhythmic direction by recent alternatives like design activism, the rebirth of art as emergency aesthetics and endeavors of liberal learning.

In “A Distant View of Close Reading: Irony and Terrorism around 1977”, György Fogarasi inspects the rivalry between “close” and “distant” readers underlying the coexistence of both scales as related kinetic spaces in literary orientation provided by the techniques and technologies of reading. The enduring value of de Man’s theory of irony is demonstrated with respect to the epistemology of ‘terrorism’ and the argumentation concludes that the question of approximation and distancing, of slow or

fast motion is a question of scale, frequency, or rhythm both in literary reading and examination of terrorism.

In “Genetics and Ethics: ‘Do Not Go Alone’”, András Falus focuses on ethical issues of genetic research underlying the mutual influence between scientific progress and ethical inquiry. From his point of view, “bilingual” experts with knowledge and experience in both practices are the best solution. But the double and/or mutual approach itself raises several questions of practical orientation, formulated and answered this time in a Q&A session between the editor and the author.

In “Embracing Noise and Error”, Bálint L. Bálint compares the “error space” of mathematical and statistical models with the stochastic features of single-cell regulation and the output error rates of biological complex systems. Revealing the limits of predictability and the uniqueness in time based on the irreversible flow of the real-life world, he argues for a kinetic space of human freedom. (*István Berszán*)