
Mateusz Borowski (Faculty of Performance Studies, Jagiellonian University, Cracow) / After the megabyte bomb II. New times

In his *Megabyte Bomb* Stanislaw Lem attempted to measure the impact of the new media of technology on contemporary social life, by placing those technological innovations at the heart of the epistemologic orders dominating by the turn of the 20th century. On the margins of his essays he mentions the mutual relations between the hard sciences, particularly nuclear physics and the concepts of time that emerged in the 20th century. It is not by accident that those meditations appear in the context of the book devoted to modern information technologies which also contributed to the contemporary understanding of time.

In my paper I concentrate on the relationship between the exploration of digital worlds and the hard sciences, both of which are assumed to undermine the universality of time, since a number of the phenomena created by the internet culture are premised on various concepts of time and temporality (suffice it to mention the timeline from Facebook or the alternative time's flow in *Second Life*). Those new temporal orders have become particularly significant when not only social, but also cultural and economic relations to a large extent migrated into cyberspace. I investigate those changes in the understanding of time that have been registered by science fiction culture in recent years. My basic point of reference is Greg Egan's *Orthogonal* trilogy (2011–2013), especially its third volume, *The Arrows of Time* (2013). As I try to demonstrate, this is an instance of a critical continuation of Lem's thinking that from the very beginning in the 1950s was concerned with the question of time in sciences. I posit, however, that in many ways the contemporary experimentation in science fiction, by taking into account those recent technological and social phenomena, goes beyond the perspective adopted by Lem.