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# Nonlinearism: The Paradigm That Replaced Postmodernism. On the Materials of Song Poetry and Cyberliterature

Vitaliy A. GAVRIKOV
Bryansk branch of The Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration under the President of the Russian Federation
(Bryansk, Russian Federation)
yarosvettt@mail.ru

**Abstract.** This article is an attempt to delineate a new paradigm in the literary arts (including print literature and song poetry). According to the author's hypothesis, this paradigm cannot be attributed simply to the onset of "digital culture." The primary reason for the emergence of the new paradigm is the transition from the modernist-postmodernist text to the non-linear text. The transition began in print literature, continued in song poetry, and found its ultimate expression in cyberliterature. The second reason was a change in the artistic paradigm. According to Roland Barthes, in literature, the era of authorial intent (with the author's mind as the focus) had given way to the period of textuality before reception (which focused on consciousness) became dominant. In this article, the author hypothesizes that at the end of the twentieth century the active postmodernist reception of literary texts was replaced by interactive nonlinear reception.

**Keywords:** nonlinearism, postmodernism, creative paradigms, song poetry, cyberliterature

## Bob Dylan and the Revolution of Academic Consciousness

Literature is defined as a form of artistic activity connected with writing. However, creative literary production is not limited to print literature but also includes song poetry, which until recently was considered marginal; not quite literature. Thus, in English and German studies, rock-and-roll and other types of songs are often approached from cultural, sociological, historical, and other perspectives. However, purely literary scholars have been wary of this object of study. Perhaps

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only the works of The Beatles and Bob Dylan have an established tradition as the object of literary study (Khumichev 2014, 7).[1]

In modern Russian academia, the situation is different. Song poetry is studied primarily from the position of literary scholarship. In the USSR, it was uncommon to write about rock-and-roll (rock poetry), and what was written about the genre was consistently negative. The situation changed after 1991. Some 150 theses, dealing with various aspects of rock-n-roll, have been defended in Russia in the 25 years since the fall of the Soviet system.[2] Most of them are philological. Although I have not counted the theses devoted to guitar poetry (bard songs), the number should be comparable due to its lesser marginality. As of 2018, about 40 theses (predominately philological) deal with the works of Vladimir Vysotsky alone.

Nevertheless, the debate continues as to whether it is appropriate to define songs as poetry. There are many examples of instances when the written text of a song is considerably worse than its performed equivalent. In other words, not every hit song can be considered poetry. Indeed, every intermedial text of a song consists of at least three aesthetic components: poetry, vocals, and music. The latter can be divided into melody and rhythm. It goes without saying that rhythm alone is capable of creating powerful emotional energy, and so even a song with poorly written lyrics can provide a significant amount of aesthetic pleasure if the music or vocals are powerful enough. How can then one distinguish between "good song poetry" and "bad song poetry" in that case?

A large number of rock songs are not poetry simply because the authors do not aspire to create works of literature. Quite often they are musical compositions without lyrics or with a minimal amount of words. For example, the tracks "Larks' Tongues in Aspic: Part One" and "Larks' Tongues in Aspic: Part Two" on the album "Larks' Tongues in Aspic" by the band King Crimson do not contain verbal texts. There is no doubt that these compositions should be considered rock-art, and they are often included in the collections of legendary rock songs, yet they are not poetic texts.

Sceptics who insist that songs cannot be studied with the use of literary theory frequently argue that what is considered song poetry does not resemble poetry when it is transferred to the written page; it is a collection of phrases without the traditional poetic artistry, structure, or coherence, and sometimes, as it was noted, there is no verbal text. They also contend that a song is inseparable from music and voice, so it cannot be analysed using the tools of literary theory. Indeed, literary theory was created in order to analyse written texts. A scholar may study a song's words on paper, but it is not the same as analysing the recorded version of song poetry.

1 Translations of quotes from Russian specialist literature are my own throughout the article.
2 See my study presenting the list of these works (Gavrikov 2013).

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In response to these general challenges, one can argue that literary study has considerable experience in working with oral sources such as folklore. This experience can be used to analyse songs. Furthermore, literary scholars can carry out interdisciplinary research together with musical experts, art historians, and researchers from other fields. Finally, it is possible to develop a research apparatus for the analysis of song texts on the basis of literary study, and such methods are being actively developed in this field.

As for the quality of the poems sung, the impact on the recipient (first and foremost, on the professional, educated one) appears to be virtually the only criterion for artistic value today as all other criteria have been discredited by Antoine Compagnon (1998). On the whole, despite some resistance from traditional literary scholars, academic scepticism towards song poetry as an important branch of contemporary literature is gradually weakening.

Bob Dylan's 2016 Nobel Prize was a landmark event for scholars of song poetry. Finally, the Nobel Committee was ready to confer official recognition upon singing poets. This event will surely shake the scepticism of the academic literary establishment in regard to song poetry. Moreover, it could be the beginning of a long journey towards the equality of the two lyrical branches.

## Manifestation Paradigms in Poetry

Manifestation (or explication) is the material means of expression (generation) of the verbal text. This term is not associated with literature, genres, artistic eras... Manifestation is a technical aspect of verbal art determined by its material medium. Below we shall attempt to summarize the various manifestation paradigms that have existed throughout history.

An ancient literary text consisted of oral, mimetic, kinetic, and other elements that were recorded only in the mind of the singer/narrator. The medium of the literary text was the body of its performer. A discrete literary work in all its uniqueness did not leave behind any material traces: "This syncretic complex does not exist in between performances; each time it is reconstructed anew according to certain rules in accordance with specific conceptions and norms" (Chistov 1986, 129). Thus, even though such singers/narrators attempted to perform texts they had learned, they inevitably created new versions of the texts. "This 'verbal variability' is one of the key characteristics of oral tradition and although it is not a definitive criterion capable of distinguishing oral from written tradition, it can be helpful in shifting the probability of a tradition's origins in one direction or another" (Mournet 2003, 180).

Subsequently, with the development of writing and due to the transition to a consciousness of a new type (reflective), the original synthesis of the arts is

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dissolved. The expressive arrays, once inseparable from one another, become autonomous. The arts that are familiar to us today, such as painting, literature, music, and dance, appear. In short, a literary text noticeably changes its status as a signifier. However, "the oral culture does not immediately disappear by the mere fact of its being in contact with writing, nor does the literature of the oral society disappear because of the introduction of written literature. Rather, a synthesis takes place in which characteristics of the oral culture survive and are absorbed, assimilated, extended, and even reorganized within a new cultural experience" (Obiechina 1992, 197).

There was a particularly important change in the field of literature: with the appearance of the written language, the recipient acquired the unprecedented ability to return repeatedly to the source text in its unchanged original form. As Boris V. Tomashevsky states: "A literary work has two properties: 1) independence from the accidental everyday conditions of utterance and 2) the fixed immutability of the text. Literature is self-contained fixed speech" (1996, 23). It should be emphasized that Tomashevsky does not raise the question of readers' interpretations but rather that of the stability and invariability of the written text although it is clear that for every reader a literary work has a separate individual meaning. Each era and culture will discover new meaning in a literary work. Stanley Fish notes: "meanings are the property neither of fixed and stable texts nor of free and independent readers but of interpretive communities that are responsible both for the shape of a reader's activities and for the texts those activities produce" (1980, 322). The primary focus here is the fixation of literary art in a tangible medium, rather than reception or intention. The second stage in the development of literary art gave it permanence, but only printed texts became fixed. Intermedial semiotic complexes containing elements of motion and sound (singing, music, dance, etc.) remained unfixed as audio and video recording had yet to come into existence.

Roughly a century ago, owing to technical progress, it became possible to record audiovisual texts. The widespread distribution of sound-recording equipment in the 1950s and 1960s led to a tectonic shift in literary oral expression. The dawn of this "new era" in oral artistic expression did not stem from the mass audience for records but rather from the wide accessibility of audio-recording. Thus, a "new literature" appeared; a new kind of artistic intermedial text that combines folkloric orality with the permanence of printed (written) literature. Moreover, this development was integrated into the history of traditional literature "on paper." As a rule, there is no third type of explication in the scholarship. Researchers treat either literature in the oral (folkloric) or preliterate stage or in the "print" stage or the cybernetic stage.

The third paradigm of interpretation of the literary text appeared with the transition to a digital culture: "Somewhere in the late 1990s or early 2000s,

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the emergence of new technologies re-structured, violently and forever, the nature of the author, the reader and the text, and the relationships between them" (Kirby 2006, 35). This new era has not received a conventional name yet. "Digimodernism" is one of the most successful terms (Kirby 2009). But its originator Alan Kirby views this paradigm from a different point of view than the author of the current article. First, digimodernism applies to far more than literature, and this study deals only with the literary process. Second, in the current study, my focus is on the technological aspect of the question and not its other characteristics such as creative thought or the semantic particularities of individual utterances. There are some other terms denoting the end of postmodernism: altermodern, hypermodernism, performatism, automodernism, and others (Osipova and Yungblud 1992). Thus, today there are many concepts dedicated to understanding the latest cybertextual discourse. Such pluralism of opinions is clear: the new paradigm has generated an unprecedented shift in the field of the language arts and media.

There is one more productive term, "digitalism." For example, Laurențiu Malomfălean says, "cybertext is a transition between hypertext and digitext or, in more words, a paper text translated into digital form, but without any digital qualification." The author further says, "if hypertext remains on paper and cybertext remains the virtual form of a paper-written text (or the virtual reality put on paper), we now can define digitext as a writable, operable and performable text only in a digital medium, inconvertible to a paper support" (Malomfălean 2019). However, in our view, it would be better to use the term "cybertext" as it absorbs two concepts (a computer text and a digitext) in the above mentioned meanings.

Thus, literature has moved to a new format technically, too, and changing technologies for the creation and transmission of a literary text modify the "generation of meanings," as well, and literary "digitalism" should be integrated into a series of creative paradigms.

## Creative Paradigms as the Interrelation of Intentions, Textuality, and Referentiality

There are several views on the development of literature. In this context, it is interesting to view them as the interplay of intentions, textuality, and referentiality. Roland Barthes considers several successive strategies used by authors in his article "Death of the Author." He associates archaic literature with the lack of authorship as the works are created by anonymous narrators. The author appears in the modern period and assumes a central role under positivism. Then the language itself becomes the central category, acting, "performing," getting aware

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of the subject, but not the person. This change in the point of view (research focus) occurs in the period of the formation of modernism (Barthes 1967).

A more detailed concept is offered by Valery I. Tyupa (1997), who begins his research of "paradigms of artistry" not with the ancient syncretism but with "reflective traditionalism." At this stage of development, genre is the central idea of art: a work is considered good if it fits into the generic canon. The second stage is "post-classicism." At this stage, the "text is only an imprint of the author's inspiration", with the author's consciousness at the centre. Nevertheless, the role of the reader as a subject capable of empathy with the author is also important. The third paradigm is "romanticism." The author's position is strengthened; he is viewed as a genius, able to create something that others cannot. The author's style becomes the central focus. The reader is thought of as the author's partner in the artistic game. The fourth paradigm is "post-romanticism," which makes verisimilitude the central criterion of artistry. The author is seen as a "historian of the present" (Balzac), who understands the underlying nature of things. The fifth paradigm is "post-symbolism," in which the perceiving consciousness assumes the central role, and artistry, first and foremost, is connected with the recipient's response. The key phrase here is "the creative object is relocated into the consciousness of the addressee" (Tyupa 1997). Therefore, it becomes apparent that both scholars are generally talking about the same thing, about the changing relationship in the triumvirate "author – text – reader," with the lone exception that Tyupa operates with one more element – the relationship to reality, i.e. referentiality.

With all their differences, modernism and postmodernism are united in the most essential thing, in the ratio of the key categories. The main thing here is that both modernism and postmodernism focus on the perceptive consciousness of the reader. However, the position of the recipient is active rather than interactive. The reader "recreates" another's text but only in the sense that he generates it as an interpretation. Modernist and postmodernist texts develop in a linear projection, though they have a plurality of individual interpretations or a different focalization (several points of view on a single event).

Thus, it is reasonable to talk about the transition to a new creative paradigm. Now it is not only a new way of structuring a literary work but a new kind of interrelations among the representatives of the triad: "author – text – reader." For the first time in history, the author does not supply the reader with a finished text: he provides only the "details," and the reader's function is to assemble the device. Only then can this "device" be put into use, i.e. the work can be interpreted. Under this new paradigm, the question is raised: what is primary – the new text or its new reception? At present, it is difficult to answer this question. Perhaps it is precisely the increased focus on reception that has led to experimentation in textuality. On the other hand, however, even the Bible can

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be seen as a nonlinear text both due to such factors as the use of footnotes or concordances and the variability of the four Gospels. Perhaps, this new paradigm could be called interreceptivism (from "interactive reception") rather than nonlinearism. However, if song poetry is to be included in the paradigm, the term "nonlinearism" would seem to be preferable.

As we have seen, the new paradigm did not arise overnight. Nonlinearist (nonlinear) works began to appear during the postmodern period. The development of intermedial literature allowed nonlinearism to flourish. Then, with the transition to the "digital age," a new paradigm came into being. Thus, cyberliterature (or "digiliterature") is only one manifestation of this new mechanism for the generation of texts.

## Forms of Nonlinearity in Verbal Art: Variability

In 2011, the author's theoretical monograph *Русская песенная поэзия XX века как текст* [Russian Song Poetry of the Twentieth Century as a Text] explored the difference between song poetry and print literature (Gavrikov 2011). One of the primary differences between these two types of verbal art is variability. I draw a distinction between the concepts of the song (hereafter referred to as "the work") and the text (a specific audio- or video-recording). The work is a supertext, the sum of all its specific manifestations (explications). Each of the texts are, at the same time, included in one or another cyclic context: an album, concert, etc. Thus, while on the one hand, each subsequent performance of the same song seems to supersede the previous ones (classical textual studies), on the other hand, a specific audio-recording is inextricably bound to the structure of its cycle. It turns out that even an early version of a song cannot be nullified by a later one, much as the early albums of a music group are not rendered obsolete by their later albums. But this is simply one aspect of the variable nonlinearity of song poetry. In Russian-language philology, this phenomenon is referred to as "вариантообразование" ("generation of variants").

Another aspect of variability can be seen in the Russian song poetry of the past quarter century, in which we find variations of the same song that have radically different meanings. Thus, we are faced with two text-homonyms: they sound identical but carry different meanings. This is not a frequent occurrence, but it significantly changes our understanding of verbal art. A supertext usually has one conceptual meaning – a single invariant. But sometimes we find two "general lines," two "meanings" within a single work. This process can be called "инвариантообразование" ("the generation of invariants"). However, the term "reinterpretation" may be more familiar to an English-speaking reader. This is not simply the reworking of the original conception, but the creation of

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a new meaning based on the previous one. Let us turn to some examples of "the generation of invariants."

The rock-poet Egor Letov almost never included his early songs in his later albums. The lone exception is the song "Снаружи всех измерений" [Outside of All Dimensions], which first appeared on the album "Поганая молодежь" [Rotten Youth] (1985). Letov sang it again in the cycle "Зачем снятся сны" [Why Do We Dream Dreams] (2007). The early version is primarily different from the later one in the status of the lyric hero. In the first version, he is a dead man, whereas in the second he is a "psychonaut," a man traveling through multiple realities by means of shamanistic, narcotic experiences.

In early Letov, the lyric hero is generally characterized in terms of death: "Blood is gushing from his throat/His whole body has turned into rain" ("Не смешно" [Not funny]); "The snow will close our eyes," "We will leave this house/ We will freeze and fall asleep" ("Мама, мама…" [Mum, mum…]); "We are under a layer of frozen earth" ("На наших глазах" [Before our eyes]); "I got up and found that I was dead" ("Кто ищет смысл" [Who is seeking the meaning]), etc. The lyric hero in Letov's later works, in contrast, is in a state not of death but of "the ebullient motion of the sparkling mind" ("Калейдоскоп" [Kaleidoscope]). While still alive, he has achieved insight into certain mysteries through an altered state of consciousness. The song "Слава психонавтам" [Glory to Psychonauts] is a hymn to the "new alchemy": "This is our chemical home/For the sad inhabitants of the Earth." The album contains slang terms used by drug users. Moreover, Letov mentions his drug experiences in interviews from this period.

The truncation of one of the means of expression (the words, the music) can significantly change the meaning of a musical composition. For example, Pyotr Mamonov's "Спиритизм" [Spiritism] (a track from the album "Транснадежность" [Transreliability] 1991) loses its verbal subtext in the album "I collected some good songs on one CD" (2000).

Sometimes authors combine two songs into one. Clearly, such a "hybrid" is not the equivalent of either of its prototexts. The bard Vladimir Vysotsky went even further, often combining several songs into a single unit sung without pauses. Such potpourris were composed of thematically similar songs. These medleys could consist of full-length versions of shorter works and of fragments of longer works. For example, when Vysotsky sang six war-themed songs without pause at a concert on 27 March 1980 (Moscow, Cultural Centre "Commune"), he performed two of them in full, two verses each of three other songs, and one verse of one song. Such a megatext is not a chaotic heap of fragments. A potpourri has its own logic in semantic dynamics. It is a piece with a complex plot composed of episodes from different songs.

There are occasions when it is enough to change one keyword to substantially transform the meaning of a song, resulting in a chain reaction across the whole

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piece. For example, the first line of Bashlachev's song "There is no one to break the birch" reads as follows: "Take away the copper pipes." This is a well-known image, referring to the triad: "water, fire and copper pipes," the passing through of which signifies overcoming great difficulties. When performed at the Fifth Annual Festival of the Leningrad Rock Club in June 1987, Bashlachev sang "Take away the copper corpses." In the Russian language, the words "pipes" and "corpses" sound almost identical, and only attentive listeners will notice the difference. Yet the difference is significant!

Originally, the song was called "Windows to Europe", and it was built upon the opposition of the West and Russia. However, by the late 80s in Soviet rock circles, it was seen as bad taste to criticize Western civilization because communist ideology had proven untenable. At precisely that time, rock in the Soviet Union underwent its counter-cultural phase, characterized by the rock poets' open struggle with the Soviet political system. This struggle is reflected in this altered line of Bashlachev's song. The copper corpses are monuments to Soviet leaders. Thus, this image in the first line alters the entire meaning of the song. If originally it was concerned with the deep contradictions between the West and Russia, now the song focuses on the divisions within Soviet society into "them" (the Soviet élite) and "us." Thus, by changing one letter ('b' to 'p'), Bashlachev achieves a radical change in the meaning of the song. Meaning can also be transformed through intonation. Sometimes the manner of performance (e.g. mocking, substandard) turns the song from serious to humorous. There are several examples of Vysotsky's performance of initially serious songs in a travesterial (clownish) manner. The verbal text is not changed, but the song's sense is inverted by the distortion in the vocals (antics).

There are other ways of reinterpreting songs. Artists covering other artists' songs frequently rework the pieces they perform. Moreover, there are many cases where musicians insert someone else's song into their own albums. Thus, someone else's material is adapted not only to the voice and music of another artist, but it is also used in the context of another's album. It is as if the song becomes part of the conceptual artistic framework of the borrowing author. Of course, the borrowing of complete works is a broad topic and requires a more detailed analysis, which lies outside the scope of the current study.

Thus, many authors are employing a new creative strategy when at the level of the author's consciousness the song does not have a stable text, and, sometimes, a stable semantic invariant. As in folklore, the text is adapted to the situation, in particular, to the performer's mood, to context among other songs, to the audience's reactions, etc.

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## Types of Nonlinearity in Verbal Art: Verbal Paradigmatics

The second type of nonlinearity in song poetry is "verbal paradigmatics" (a term coined by the author of this article). The concept of "paradigmatics" has been borrowed from linguistics, bearing in mind that whereas syntagmatics implies horizontal movement, paradigmatics implies vertical movement. "Verbal paradigmatics" is a property of an audio text to form two or more print versions. The simplest example of "verbal paradigmatics" is homophonia. Singing poets have learned to use this duality as a "literary device," and sometimes this duality arises spontaneously. For example, in the song "Purple Haze" by Jimi Hendrix, we find the phrase: "Excuse me while I kiss the sky"/ "Excuse me while I kiss this guy." The group "Nirvana" performed a song "Smells Like Teen Spirit" with the variability: "Here we are now, entertainers"/"Here we are now, entertain us." Moreover, interlingual homophones may arise. The song "What Can I Do" by the group "Smokie" is popular in Russia. Many Russians, however, hear the Russian phrase "водки найду" ("I'll find some vodka") in the phrase "What can I do."

The above are all simply singular examples of a "multilayered" audiotext. I am not familiar enough with English-language song poetry to speak of it as a systematic phenomenon. In Russian songs, however, verbal paradigmatics is a systemic device employed by some authors such as Aleksandr Bashlachev, Aleksandr Kholkin, Dmitry Ozerskiy, or Venya D'Rkin (Aleksandr Litvinov). Verbal paradigmatics is very similar to Japanese kakekotoba but in a different cultural background. It adds "volume," a "stereoscopic" nature to the text. Two homophones (A/B, C/D) in the song result in four equal variants of paper transcripts, according to the principle:

1. AC
2. AD
3. BC
4. BD

As the number of verbal paradigmatic homophones increases, the variants on paper grow exponentially. Moreover, elements of verbal paradigmatics are not limited to homophones but also include variability of punctuation (commas, quotation marks for titles, quotation marks for direct speech, etc.), syntactic variation (splitting/merging of words and morphemes), variability of register (at the junction of lowercase/uppercase letters), bilingual variability, etc.

It is essential that the authors elicit a dual semantic interpretation based on context. That is to say, this is not a random trick of articulation, it is a conscious aesthetic device. One example of this device can be found in Aleksandr Bashlachev's song "Name of the Names," which contains the phrase ("Красно солнышко врежет по почкам"). This line can be translated with at least two English

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equivalents: "The red sun will punch people in the kidneys," or "The red sun will burn the buds on the trees." Here we find two homonyms and one homophone of register. Let us start with the latter one. In Russia, Prince Vladimir is not referred to with the word "Солнце" but with the affectionate diminutive "Солнышко." This is difficult to translate into English, but the difference is the same as between "cat" and "kitty." This affectionate form appears to be the recognizable appellation of the Prince although in theory the same word could be used to denote the sun.

It should be noted that the common translation "Vladimir the Red Sun" is not quite true. Historically, it would be more correct as "Vladimir the Beautiful Sun" since "красный" can mean either "beautiful" or "red." The first meaning almost never occurs in modern speech. Bashlachev, however, employs the rare archaic form of the adjective ("красно" instead of "красное"), which makes the entire expression archaic. Accordingly, the old meaning "beautiful" is evoked in the listener's linguistic memory. Nevertheless, the current meaning does not disappear. Finally, in the Russian language, both the words "kidney" and "bud" are denoted as "почка." The most important thing is that the homophone reveals two homonyms. If not for the Prince in the context, there would be no reason to look for duality in other words.

In the above-mentioned monograph, the author describes one song by Venya D'Rkin that contains more such verbal paradigmatics than poetic lines (Gavrikov 2011, 495–506). Additionally, in my other book (Gavrikov 2015), there is the study of the rock album "Ballad of a Minstrel" by Aleksandr Kholkin, where all the songs are based on the principle of verbal paradigmatics.

## The Types of Nonlinearity in Verbal Art: Paper Hypertext and Computer Hypertext

This section will deal with the history of literary hypertext in brief. Perhaps the first written monument built on the principle of hyperlinks is the Bible. There are numerous footnotes that give the reader an opportunity to approach the text nonlinearly. Additionally, any dictionary with a system of internal hyperlinks is also a hypertext.

As for the literary hypertext, the works of James Joyce are often considered its starting point, although elements of nonlinearity can be detected earlier (for example, in the works of Sterne, Cervantes, etc.). Borges with his "The Garden of Forking Paths" (1941) is, of course, another pioneer of hypertexts. One of the first literary hypertexts by Vladimir Nabokov is his novel *Pale Fire* (1962). A year later, one of the most famous literary hypertexts appeared, namely Cortazar's *Hopscotch* (1963). The first Russian-language hypertext is Andrei Bitov's novel *Pushkin House* (1971). Although the book reads linearly, its second part is an

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alternative version of the first one, as indicated by its title "A Hero of Our Time. A Version and Variant of the Part One." In Milorad Pavić's 1984 *Dictionary of the Khazars*, nonlinearity is complicated by the triplicate structure of the work. The author gives three interrelated dictionaries, each of which describes the same event from the point of view of three different religious traditions.

A literary hypertext, wrapped in a computerized shell, first appeared in the United States as the experiment of a linguist. It is ironic, but the first "computer writer," the creator of the hypertext, has the last name Joyce, only his first name is not James but Michael. His novel *Afternoon, a Story* (1987) was the first computer literary hypertext. The novel unfolded according to the known principle of hyperspace, namely, the reader chose the course of events. The book did not have a paper version. It was produced on floppy disks. It was possible to read it only with the use of a computer. Some critics called Michael Joyce a "new Gutenberg," who had started a revolution in the history of literature. Today, there are many literary hypertexts, and one can say with certainty that this is only the beginning of a long journey. Possibly, hypertexts will take their worthy place in the history of literature in the future.

## Findings: A Nonlinearity Table

**Table 1.** *The characteristics of the four types of nonlinear texts*

| | A | B | C | D | E |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Literary hypertext (paper book) | Multiplicity of variants (song poetry) | Verbal paradigmatics (song poetry) | Cybernetic hypertext (computer literature) |
| 1 | Interactivity | + | +/- | + | + |
| 2 | Intermediality | - | + | + | +/- |
| 3 | Hypertextuality | + | - | - | + |
| 4 | Cybertextuality | - | -/+ | -/+ | + |

Cell 1C. Interactivity in song poetry is manifested at concert performances. The number of the albums recorded in the studio by singing poets is much smaller than the number of concerts they perform. The concert is an interactive act although the activity of the recipients is limited. Until recently, it was not customary for Russian "bards" to record albums.

Cells 1C, 2D. Song poetry is an intermedial text because it combines several expressive series: music, articulation (speech component), word (language component). Furthermore, some visual semiotic components: facial expressions, gestures, stage design, performance, etc. are also present in video recordings.

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Cell 1D. The interactivity here lies in the choice made by the listener: he can choose the first transcript of the homophone, the second one, or both as the correct variant.

Cell 2E. In modern cyberliterature, visual design elements are frequently used, and they are not just illustrations but visual ways to create intermediality (see Shelley Jackson's *Patchwork Girl* [1995])

Cells 4C, 4D. A recording can be digitized or left on magnetic tape, vinyl record, etc.

Finally, the author of the article does not insist on the terms "nonlinearism" or "interreceptivism." However, the main feature of future literary discourse will be the nonlinear way in which the text unfolds and the interactivity of its perception. The new paradigm will surely come into force when a consumer of a literary text perceives nonlinear literature organically, not in a rejecting way. It is the Internet that contributes to such a change in reader's/listener's consciousness. For the time being, there is no assurance that this process will be global, and nonlinearism will become a through line of the verbal art. Perhaps, these findings can be applied to other arts and, on the whole, to the modern digital era.

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