

## IMITATION STRATEGIES OF A. TURGENEV'S NOVEL "SO THAT GOD WILL TEAR YOU TO PIECES FROM THE INSIDE!"

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The study was supported by a grant from the Russian Science Foundation № 23-18-01007, <https://rscf.ru/en/project/23-18-01007/>; F. M. Dostoevsky Russian Christian Humanitarian Academy

**Abstract:** The article is devoted to the analysis of Andrey Turgenev's novel "So that God will tear you to pieces from the inside!". The aim is to show the imitation practices of the critic Vyacheslav Kuritsyn, in this case acting as a writer under the pseudonym Andrey Turgenev. The author's "precedent" pseudonym, allusively associated with the name of the Russian classic Ivan Turgenev, gives rise to the idea of a literary game that the critic-writer started to create an imitation text, a "secondary" text. However, the classical Turgenev traditions were ignored by the modern writer, he tried, on the one hand, to combine the techniques of Fellini cinema in the novel text, on the other hand, to reproduce the strategies of the Moscow conceptualists D. Prigov, L. Rubinstein, V. Sorokin, etc. It is shown that along with stylistic mistakes, the merit of the Kuritsyn-Turgenev genre experiment is an appeal to fundamental issues of creativity, a wealth of intertextual references to modern Russian and world literature.

**Keywords:** Kuritsyn; Turgenev; "So that God will tear you to pieces from the inside!"; genre experiment; Moscow conceptualism.

### 1 Introduction

Andrey Turgenev is a pseudonym that was chosen for himself by the infamous Yekaterinburg, then Moscow, and later St. Petersburg literary critic, an authoritative expert on Russian postmodernism Vyacheslav Kuritsyn. Probably, in order to distance the credo of the critic and the writer, in order to appear before the reader in a different (mysterious) image, Kuritsyn found a sonorous pseudonym, which, on the one hand, distanced him from the critical pathos of the previous Kuritsyn articles, on the other hand, absorbed obvious connotations to the name and work of the famous Russian writer of the nineteenth century Ivan Turgenev.

As you might guess, for a postmodernist philologist, this technique is a literary game, it is no coincidence that a few years later Kuritsyn will perform under a new pseudonym — Sirin, in order to try on the mask of a novelist of a different style, the early V. Nabokov (see more about this: Bogdanova 2008).

Guessing about the author's pseudonym, the reader initially sets himself up for a postmodern game, which Kuritsyn-Turgenev undertakes. The recipient's task is to discover the tactics of literary game mimicry offered by the novelist and to explicate them in the "secondary" (as one might assume) text.

The rapidity of the birth of Vyacheslav Kuritsyn's novels in the first decade of the XXI century makes us take a closer look at his art-texts. And although Kuritsyn strives to separate himself as a writer from himself as a critic (see more about it: Kuritsyn 2001), the recipient-reader retains an allusive connection with the critical-postmodern strategies of the "venerable" critic and the "novice" prose writer.

How does the "new" Turgenev manifest himself in modern Russian prose? What is the artistic originality of a previously unknown author? Is it possible to talk about the continuation of a truly Turgenev tradition, or is the game in the text-experiment dominant?

### 2 Literature Review

Few researchers have written about V. Kuritsyn's critical articles and literary texts. Among them are M. Berg (Berg 2000), N. Leiderman (Leiderman 2003), M. Lipovetsky (Lipovetsky 1997), E. Bibergan (Bibergan 2011), O. Bogdanova (Bogdanova 2008, 2019, 2023). These and other studies (Groys 1979, Epstein 2000, Bobrinskaya 1994, 2006, Albert 2014) formed the basis of our study and were involved in the analysis.

### 3 The practical significance

The practical significance of the study is that its intermediate and final conclusions, individual observations and judgments can be used in further study of the work of Vyacheslav Kuritsyn and modern Russian literature in general.

### 4 Mixing of Novel strategies in Kuritsyn-Turgenev's text

In the novel "So that God will tear you to pieces from the inside!" first of all, even before getting acquainted with the text itself, its name attracts attention — it is excessively long and intricate. Inevitably, a new question becomes relevant: what does the name imply — an order, instruction, statement, judgment or something else? There seems to be no doubt that this kind of "mysterious" title was chosen by the writer in order to intrigue, interest, and captivate the reader who at least once looked at the cover of the book.

The abstract prefixed to the text strengthens and supports the original intrigue, since it characterizes the novel a priori as "sensational, shocking", as a "bizarre literary installation", besides explicates the main problem of the novel text — "Where does ... art come from?" (Turgenev 2008, 4). As you know, the problem is not new not only for Russian, but also for world literature, and the problem is undoubtedly deep, philosophical, it seems inexhaustible, since time dictates new ways and new forms of creative research, and therefore offers new answers to eternal questions.

It is also curious that already in the annotation Kuritsyn-Turgenev names Fellini, who (as indicated) inspired the author of the novel "to such an experiment with genre" (Turgenev 2008, 4). From everything presented in the annotation, it becomes clear that the novel should be a kind of genre experiment, a kind of a postmodern conceptual construction based on a mixture of literary and cinematographic trends, a kind of text-film that incorporates the intentions of not only different genres, but also different types of arts.

The mixing of strategies of different forms of art, in this case verbal and visual, the designation of genre originality as an "installation" easily leads to the attribution of the novel of Kuritsyn-Turgenev to the practices of conceptual writers. It becomes obvious that Kuritsyn is trying himself in what V. Sorokin and other artists and writers of the so-called "Moscow conceptualism" have already tried themselves in much earlier (Groys 1979, Bibergan 2011, Albert 2014). It becomes clear that Kuritsyn chooses as the rules of the literary game the techniques and strategies of "collective action" by A. Monastyrsky and others (see about this: Bobrinskaya 1994, 2006, Lipovetsky 1997, Epstein 2000, Bogdanova 2023). The only important difference, it seems, is that the combination takes place in a different fantasy series: not painting plus literature, but cinema plus literature. And, as the novel text shows, Kuritsyn offers a much wider range of combinations-comparisons, which will have to be dealt with.

#### 4.1 Structural and compositional features of the novel

The novel "So that God will tear you to pieces from the inside!" consists of six chapters and an epilogue. Each of the chapters is called primitively — by the day of the week and the designation

of the ordinal number of the day. For example, “1st day, Tuesday”, “2nd day, Wednesday” and so on, up to Sunday. As it becomes clear from the narrative, this kind of title is mediated by the “business trip” nature of the main character’s stay in the Such City, counting down the days he spent here. The beginning of the countdown is not from Monday, but from Tuesday, most likely, is explained by the simple fact that the flight of the plane that brought the hero to the Such City took place on Tuesday, and not on Monday. But the laws of the artwork force us to find other explanations. The naming of chapters as “1st day”, “2nd day” and so on involuntarily suggests the days of creation, especially since biblical allusions have already sounded in the title of the novel and, as it becomes clear from the narrative, are provoked by the task of finding the roots of art by the main character. Thus, from the point of view of compositional construction, the whole novel appears as a kind of closed system — the very six divine days of creation that the director needed (such is the professional affiliation of the central character), that is, the creator, to comprehend and feel his own new cinematic idea. “Dropped out” from the calendar list “Monday” in this system is the off-screen (off-story) life of the hero-director. And, probably, the arrival day that happened by chance on Tuesday leads to the fact that the entire former and ordinary (daily and habitual) life of the character is figuratively represented by one big Monday — a “difficult day”, the big and long life that the director lived outside the festive and carnival business trip time allotted to him in the Such City.

The combination of cinema and literature techniques in the novel dominates the text and concerns things not only general, but also private, for example, the location of the hero(s) within the literary text. This spatial territory of the novel is chosen by the Such City, which, as is clear from the narrative, turns out to be Venice — the very name of the city only sounds twice in the text. The substitution in the name of the city, then by the Such City, then by Venice, turns out to be important for the writer. On the one hand, he paints the real Venice, with its canals and squares, reproducing the features of its topography with almost cartographic accuracy, on the other hand, the author creates the image of some mysterious of the City in which extraordinary mystical events take place. The combination of “reality and dreams”, which is mentioned in the annotation, turns out to be one of the end-to-end techniques of Kuritsyn-Turgenev and mediates all layers of his novel narrative.

As for the time depicted in the novel, it also turns out to be concrete and abstract at the same time, accurate and amorphous: Turgenev’s heroes are either in modern Venice, or in a remote time (forward or backward, into the future or into the past) the Such City. That is why the phrase “... well, where am I ... on the Moon” (Turgenev 2008, 7), casually thrown by one of the heroines, does not look unloaded with meaning, but generates either a real or virtual expansion of space, leads to a novel intrigue related to the allegedly planned flight to the Moon. This gossip-rumor also becomes one of the direct engines of the plot, involves novel characters in its orbit (for example, heroes named Borya, Slava, Sasha and even a representative of the Chinese Province of the Blue Goat are going to fly to the Moon).

#### 4.2 The system of the novel’s heroes

The main characters of Kuritsyn-Turgenev’s novel in the annotation are called “bohemians”, more specifically — publishers, magazine editors, artists, graphic artists, installers, almost illusionists. But the main one among them is the “Russian VIP”, a well-known titled director who came to Venice (Such City) to complete his film, which is supposed to be shot here. The hero’s name is Konstantin Nikolaevich. The surname is never pronounced “out loud”, although it sounds “off-screen” in the text when one or another heroine either addresses the hero, or simply calls him by his last name. Moreover, the name of the hero is written out in the text in a peculiar way: only the second half of it, the patronymic, is subjected to a case change. Together they are an indivisible unity. That is, in this case, Kuritsyn is on the verge of combining right and wrong, accurate and erroneous, familiar and peculiar.

Konstantin Nikolaevich is a native of the Urals, who many years ago (forty years ago) created his first and only film (called “The River”), which received the prize of the Venice Film Festival — the Winged Lion. Since then, the director has not created anything else, but now — at the end of his years — he is going to make a film about a vision girl who was once his love or about events that could be connected with her. Even more precisely, many years ago, the director began shooting the second film after “The River” called “The Lake”, but during the filming, the performer of the main role and the beloved of the main character Sonya tragically died. It is to her that the new film by Konstantin Nikolaevich — “The Lagoon” — should be dedicated.

The named series of films of the main character: “The River” — “The Lake” — “The Lagoon” — on the one hand, testifies to a certain mutual dependence of these “water” films, about a certain conditionality of the interests of the main character, about a certain abstraction that the author chooses as one of the narrative principles. But, on the other hand, each of these films is reproduced in detail in the text of the novel, is presented through the consciousness of the filmmaker and is almost stage-reproduced in his memory. Episodes of the future film are reproduced in the mind of the hero-director even in several “working” versions, in different storylines. The principle of combining, originally set, also works here, through the use of a cinematic change of general and close-ups, through a change of general and private, generating the desired volume, a kind of cinematic video sequence.

It is this storyline — the director’s search for the plot of the future film — that most of all provides the overlay of “reality and dreams”, it is on this line that the highest degree of intersection is achieved: until a certain time, the heroine named Sonya forms a kind of stereoscopy of vision, she is equally perceived as a real character, then as a dream-dream of the protagonist. The events taking place in the mind of the hero-director are deliberately recreated by the author with the same degree of accuracy as reality, with an equal measure of verisimilitude and authenticity. Cinema becomes essentially the life of Konstantin Nikolaevich, his life is an important and essential part of cinema. His beloved appears either as the heroine of his story, or as a performer of fictional or real cinematic roles. The bizarre interweaving of cinematic angles of Fellini’s films really find their echoes in the literary text of Kuritsyn-Turgenev.

The postmodern metaphor “life is cinema” finds its realization in the Kuritsyn text. The metaphor comes to life and acquires its metonymic qualities in the novel: then life according to the laws of the part and the whole becomes an integral part of the film reality, then cinema imposes its artistic principles on human (or character) life.

#### 4.3 Main or secondary character

As already mentioned, Konstantin Nikolaevich is brought out in the novel as the main acting character around whom all events are concentrated, in connection with the image of which the time spiral is unwound. The reality of the character’s dominance is supported by the realism of recreating his appearance. Individual features of the main character’s habits and manner of his speech embodiment, some facts of his biography tie him so closely to the everyday life canvas that sometimes the name of a vip-director can be guessed by the name of a real vip-writer (for example, V. Makanin). It is the image of Konstantin Nikolaevich that “gathers” the entire character system around him, it is his event series that essentially exhausts the plot of the novel-cinema. The death of the hero sums up the novel (although in the text there are also “framed” images of old women, intentionally named by the author *parks*, which give the plot the final framing completeness).

Meanwhile, the main acting character Konstantin Nikolaevich cannot be unequivocally recognized as the main character. The fact is that in Kuritsyn’s novel, indeed, “all the Bohemians” are

busy solving “fatal questions” — first of all about the meaning of art, about its forms. For example, it seems that a hero named Borya, who is not very talented and not of the first rank, is always “at the mercy of images” (Turgenev 2008, 10), they “obscure” him the “true essence of phenomena” (Turgenev 2008, 41). Konstantin Nikolaevich is the only one of the heroes who has never asked this or similar questions. The hero-director is not a thinker, he is rather a dreamer. He doesn’t even live in a movie, but only in dreams and memories. The image of Konstantin Nikolaevich was created by Kuritsyn-Turgenev in such a way that the talent and creative giftedness of the hero can only be judged “from other people’s words”. Most often he speaks of himself — “insanely talented” (Turgenev 2008, 29), or: “I am a legendary old man ...” (Turgenev 2008, 171).

Not once does the hero utter a single smart talented idea worthy of his VIP, does not give a single meaningful observation, does not express a single interesting judgment. It seems to be said about the hero-director that “the creator in Konstantin Nikolaevich <woke up> at the crack of a teaspoon” (Turgenev 2008, 34). However, a hero who ascended the cinematic Olympus with a single film and for forty years not only did not create, but also did not try to create something that occupies him, can hardly seriously be called a talented or brilliant person, can hardly take on the role of a leading character (although, it seems, he is exactly that conceived by Kuritsyn). It is no coincidence that one of the people close to him called the hero “behind his back” a loser whom “no one remembers” (Turgenev 2008, 327), which largely follows from the course of events of the entire novel. Even the titular novel formula does not belong to Konstantin Nikolaevich, but is pronounced by another character — a Lord, as it seems, without finding a proper response and understanding in the soul and consciousness of Konstantin Nikolaevich. Ultimately, even the final death of the hero will befall him not in connection with creative pursuits, but in connection with his senile infirmity.

The weakness of the character of the main character is found “between the lines”, is not advertised by the author in any way. But, apparently, not being planned by the writer, the weakness of the conditionally main character is manifested in all his behavior: both in how passive he is in today’s reality, and in how pathetically cowardly he once in the distant past could not protect Sonya from Anna (the scene on the morning lake), how in the plan of the film, he variously sorts out the treacherous departures of the loving Sonya, as he petty rushes between her imaginary lovers. A film that was not created as a result by a “talented” director, as it turns out, could not have been created: it is insignificant and petty in its essence, in its design, it is banal and primitive. It’s not interesting. And the point is not that the plot moves of the planned film are excessively simple, but that a gifted creator-hero should have understood that ingenious simplicity does not consist in reproducing everyday life plausibility, but in comprehending the existential side of human life. Therefore, in the course of the narrative, the hero turns out to be just a “wedding general”, “a historical decoration of the local landscape” (Turgenev 2008, 59).

However, in the novel, which is all permeated with the techniques of substitutions and comparisons, the role of the main character, perhaps, could not be the role of Konstantin Nikolaevich. In the novel-mixing (in the novel-the movie “by Fellini”) it could move, according to the author’s idea, from one character to another. The image of an aging film director (“soon seventy”, Turgenev 2008, 59) connects all the events in the novel, his beloved Sonya allows Kuritsyn to “mix everything” in the Such City (and in such a novel). But the role of the creative leader of the Kuritsyn bohemia, oddly enough, is assumed by the Lord, a character not as handsome as Konstantin Nikolaevich, but clearly gifted and extraordinary. It is to him, ultimately, that the dominant role in the novel belongs. It is he who utters the ideologically sacred novel maxim about the meaning of art — “So that God will tear you to pieces from the inside!” (Turgenev 2008, 104). He also casts a lot of such maxims along the way: “The artist must suffer <...>” (Turgenev

2008, 73), “Art should torment <...>” (Turgenev 2008, 202), etc.

It is curious that in connection with the image of the Lord there is another novel shift. On the one hand, the concrete everyday realities and precise details, subtle and vivid judgments of the Lord give to his image life features, but on the other hand, his “technogenic” imagery clearly turns out to be beyond the realistic narrative, giving rise to another level of combining “reality and dreams”, authentic and fantastic.

The image of the Lord suggests the essence of the novel society. On the one hand, it is realistic, on the other — absolutely absurd and fantastic. The characters are introduced into the text without representation, without stories, without even marking the signs of their professions. Continuing this series, one may ask the question: who are the heroes of the novel by nationality, Russians or Italians, French or Chinese? What language do they speak among themselves?

It is quite obvious that Konstantin Nikolaevich is a Russian vip (as he is called in the novel), the heroes named Sasha and Slava are Ukrainians, the Siamese twins are Chinese. As for the other heroes, it is difficult to say with certainty about them. For example, the Lord, as if, should be Russian. Moreover, prototypical references point to the features of the Russian artist who owned the installation “Into the depths of Russia” (for example, the features of the artist Oleg Kulik) (Turgenev 2008, 167-168). However, nowhere in the novel is the hero’s past mentioned in a word. On the contrary, in conversation with the characters, his “foreignness” is often felt.

The same can be said about the heroine named Cipollino. Who is she? Italian? Chinese? Russian? And the character that the characters in the novel call Mom? It probably doesn’t matter in Kuritsyn’s text. The author does not write a realistic novel, but creates a cosmopolitan gaming reality in which a real human skull decorated with diamonds can be exhibited (or not exhibited) with equal success, corpses of deceased celebrities can be collected, a terracotta boy can be present, as a distant allusion to the terracotta army of the first emperor of China. The boundaries of reality and fiction are shifted and blurred.

That is why the language of the characters in the artificially created reality had to turn out to be a kind of Esperanto, a mixture of “French with Nizhny Novgorod”, reproduced either in the “Russian translation”, then in the original language, then using alliteration, then simply on sound-letter consonances. As indicated in the novel: then “in bad Italian”, then “in bad Russian” (Turgenev 2008, 10).

The names of the heroes are also in the same mixed series. Along with the usual Russian (Slavic) names — Borya, Slava, Sasha, Anna, Sonya, in the novel there are also unlikely names — Vergnitka, as well as nicknames — Salo, Bludo, Lord, Chippolina, Shrek, etc. This fundamentally mixed series of realities, details, images continue the un(in)differentiation of the living and the dead. So, for example, already on the first pages of the novel there is a conversation about a certain boy (Turgenev 2008, 8-9), about whom it becomes clear only later that he is not a living boy, but a terracotta figure at an exhibition of contemporary art. It should be added that in the dialogical speech of the characters, the author includes sounds “inanimate”, “inhuman”, as if recreating the whole cacophony of sounds that surround a person.

#### 4.4 Combining verbal and visual strategies

So, in Andrey Nurgenev’s (Kuritsyn’s) novel “So that God will tear you to pieces from the inside!”, the leading and end-to-end principle of the narrative turns out to be displacement, the principle of “non-differentiation” (according to Fellini), which manifests itself at all levels: place — time — hero. In continuation of the techniques of Fellini’s films, Kuritsyn vividly organizes the appearance of various characters in the artistic space of the novel. Thus, the camera of novel vision

moves from one character to another, while changing time and place, moving from subject to subject without stopping or interrupting the artist's gaze, like the movement of a movie camera. At the same time, the combination of verbal and visual art strategies simultaneously becomes a signal of "stylization" not only for films by Fellini, but also for the art-objects by Moscow conceptualists.

It is clear that Kuritsyn did not seek to consciously imitate the practices of conceptual art, but the very attempt to combine literature and cinematography, the imposition of the principles of various arts, in this case turns out to be conceptualistic in nature. Quite organically in this context, the heroes look like artists, not cinematographers, and as it is clear from the narrative — these are precisely conceptual artists, with their principles of new art. So, during a chess game in the literal sense of the word "eaten rook" (Turgenev 2008, 78) is perceived only as the realization of a metaphor, like, for example, in V. Sorokin's novel "Nastyia". In Sorokin's novel: birthday girl, "newly baked" (Russian phraseology) Nastyia was really baked in the oven (see more about this: Biberger 2011). The mention of Warhol's name only reinforces this association (Turgenev 2008, 201).

Combining the techniques of cinematic vision within a literary text suggests a comparison of Kuritsyn's prose with V. Pelevin's texts. In this case, we can recall Pelevin's novels, which are stylistically related to Kuritsyn and incorporate multiple film plans. Among the possible stylizations "under Pelevin" can be called the pretextual novel "The Prince of Gosplan", in which the novelist combines computer and everyday realities, virtual and usual (for more details, see: Leiderman 2003, Bogdanova 2019).

The principle of stylization can also include such passages of Kuritsyn, which can be qualified as "Tolstoy" — from Tatiana Tolstaya. The feminine beauty and metaphorical nature of Tolstaya's phrase finds its echo in Kuritsyn-Turgenev's prose — his tables with cups of vergnitka's coffee are generated by associations not only to Fellini, but also to Tatiana Tolstaya with her cubes, circles, triangles and trapezoids of saucers, cups, sliced sausage or pieces of cheese (for example, in her story "Honey Shura") (Leiderman 2003, Averyanova 2012, Bogdanova 2019).

A certain share of the originality of Kuritsyn-Turgenev's prose is the language, philological command of speech, the author's ability to use tones and semitones of individual phrases and words. The accuracy of observations, the beauty of comparative series, the abundance of comparisons and metaphors are perceived by the characterological dominant of the writer's artistic manner. Kuritsyn accurately and delicately knows how to use a word, skillfully betraying the common name of his own name, or vice versa, bringing identity in the naming of non-individualized and non-personalized object. So, the name Pablo sounds brilliantly and wittily in his novel, conveyed as if by personal writing, but addressed to faceless and monotonous characters, similar to the smallest detail in the form of clothing, behavior and facial expression. In whatever cafe, restaurant, bar the characters turn out to be, next to them are indistinguishable in appearance characters-waiters named Pablo.

The multiplicity of literary references in Kuritsyn's text is attractive, their recognizability is smart and fun at the same time. In Kuritsyn's novel, allusions and receptions are subtracted from Kant, Collins, Aksenov, Bitov, Sorokin, Pelevin, Tolstaya, even Gorky or Astafyev. The reader meets with the writer's ability to hear sounds, to paint them: his hero can trust "dragonfly and arrow" (Turgenev 2008, 18), etc. However, more than in any of the previous novels, in this novel Kuritsyn-Turgenev often makes such polysyllabic comparisons ("untimely associations", Turgenev 2008, 19) that they do not always lend themselves to imaginative awareness. So, to determine the color of "burnt lentils" (Turgenev 2008, 43), it is unlikely that any of the readers will succeed today. In the expression that the jelly resembles "the skin of an aging fat woman" (Turgenev 2008, 138), there seems to be a lot of incorrect.

The lack of restraint of the speech tonality of individual characters of Kuritsyn again (as in previous novels) makes itself felt. So, a heroine named Anna in one scene is amazed by the speech of a certain beauty, who, in response to a phone call, suddenly begins to say "like a market girl, or something" (Turgenev 2008, 70). But already in the next paragraph, she herself uses the word "break off" (Russian vulgarism) or calls her aged ex-lover a "bald-headed bouncer" (Turgenev 2008, 71), although in the vocabulary of an Italian countess who has lived in her second homeland for almost 20 years and is divorced from street Russian speech, this is hardly possible and motivated.

A certain flair of provinciality is felt on the pages of Kuritsyn's novel. It would be one thing if a writer allowed his characters to use extra-literary forms of the Russian literary language, allowed errors in their individualized speech, but the fact is that incorrect pronouncing norms are often present both in the speech of his characters and in the neutral speech of the author. However, even a game novel (and maybe a game novel in the first place) should not have allowed this. All non-artistic trifles could be easily eliminated with the most superficial editorial editing. But Kuritsyn focused on playing with the word of the Moscow conceptualists D. Prigov, L. Rubinstein, V. Sorokin (see more about this: Bobrinskaya 2006, Biberger 2011, Bogdanova 2023), that is, he wanted to combine the "low" art of modern Russian postmodernism with the elite art of Fellini. But one can hardly imagine that Fellini could afford non-creative errors, which are alien to him, but for Moscow conceptualists they are principled and manifestational. Unfortunately, Kuritsyn-Turgenev did not take into account not only the difference in art, but also the difference in style.

## 5 Conclusion

Concluding the conversation about Kuritsyn-Turgenev's novel "So that God will tear you to pieces from the inside!", it is necessary, firstly, to return to the writer's pseudonym chosen by the critic and doubt its relevance. The precedent name of Ivan Turgenev, which is involuntarily actualized in a modern pseudonym, is used by the critic-writer, in our opinion, groundlessly and uncreatively. Secondly, given the mighty tradition of Russian literature, we would like to keep the faith that there will come a moment for modern Russian art when (as one of the heroes of Kuritsyn's novel promises) "low" will be returned "its revealing scale" (Turgenev 2008, 54), when the "empty sign" will not be issued "for a sign with a meaning" (Turgenev 2008, 294) and when "you figure out about everyone" — "does an aesthetic act exist or has he simply gone crazy" (Turgenev 2008, 230). It remains to be hoped that the literary experiments of Vyacheslav Kuritsyn (Turgenev? Sirin?) will not become literary "nonsense".

## 6 Prospects for further research

Concluding the analysis of Kuritsyn's mixed texts, we can say that (in the main) his practices contained the foundations of the theoretical base of the "Moscow conceptualism". The novelist made an attempt to imitate the techniques of conceptual writing, appealing not to painting and literature, like I. Kabakov, E. Bulatov, V. Pivovarov, D. Prigov, but to cinema (Fellini) and literature, mixing strategies of different arts. Further study of Vyacheslav Kuritsyn's texts will allow us to discover new components of his conceptually imitative creativity and better understand the principles that the followers of Moscow conceptualism are trying to reproduce.

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