

İstanbul Bilgi University
Institute of Social Sciences

“YOU” IN CYBERTEXTS: EXPANDING NARRATOLOGY

DİDEM ERMİŞ

In Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in
Comparative Literature

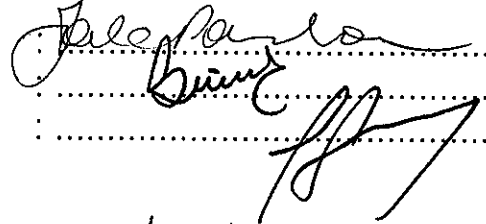
DEPARTMENT OF COMPARATIVE LITERATURE
Bilgi University, İstanbul

August 2009

“YOU” IN CYBERTEXTS: EXPANDING NARRATOLOGY
SİBERMETİNLERDE “SEN”: ANLATIBİLİMİN SINIRLARINI
GENİŞLETMEK

DİDEM ERMİŞ
107667006

Tez Danışmanı Prof. Dr. Jale Parla
Jüri Üyesi Prof. Dr. Sibel Irzık
Jüri Üyesi Bülent Somay



Tezin Onaylandığı Tarih

: 27/08/2009

Toplam Sayfa Sayısı:

110

Anahtar Kelimeler (Türkçe)

- 1) sibermetin
- 2) elektronik edebiyat
- 3) anlatıbilim
- 4) ikinci kişi
- 5) perspektif

Anahtar Kelimeler (İngilizce)

- 1) cybertext
- 2) electronic literature
- 3) narratology
- 4) second person
- 5) perspective

Bütün hakları saklıdır.
Kaynak göstermek koşuluyla alıntı ve gönderme yapılabilir.
© Didem Ermiş, 2009

ABSTRACT

This study analyses the different uses of second person narration in print literature and in cybertexts. Providing an alternative to narrative, cybertexts will create changes in the way literature is experienced and analysed. This study investigates this change in the realm of point-of-view. Following an exploration of the theoretical background of cybertext and second-person narrative, the study argues that while the use of second person narrative in print literature does not allow a second person point of view, it does so in cybertexts, where the reader is actively participating in the configuration of the text, instead of merely interpreting it. Examples from Turkish literature employing second person narration and from hypertext novels and interactive fictions are used for a comparative study of how second person narration does and does not constitute a second person point of view.

keywords: cybertext, electronic literature, narratology, second person, point of view

ÖZET

Bu çalışma, sibermetinler ve geleneksel edebiyat ürünlerinde ikinci kişi anlatılarının farklı uygulamalarını inceler. Anlatıya bir alternatif oluşturmasıyla sibermetinler edebiyatın deneyimlenme ve incelenme süreçlerinde değişiklikler yaratıyor. Bu çalışma da bu değişimin izlerini perspektif alanında sürer. Sibermetin ve ikinci kişi anlatıları üzerine bir kuramsal arka plan çalışmasının ardından bu çalışma, geleneksel edebiyat ürünlerinde kullanılan sen anlatıları bir ikinci kişi bakış açısı sunamazken, sibermetinlerde kullanıldığında bu anlatıların birinci ve üçüncü kişi bakış açılarından farklı bir kategori sunduğunu savunur. Buradaki fark, sibermetinlerde bir ikinci kişi olarak okurun metni yorumlayan bir konumdan çıkarak aktif bir şekilde metni oluşturan bir aktör haline gelmesinden kaynaklanır. Bu çalışmada, Türk edebiyatından ikinci kişi anlatısını kullanan metinler, hipermetin romanları ve etkileşimli kurgular karşılaştırmalı olarak incelenmiş, ikinci kişi anlatısının bu durumlarda bir bakış açısı sunup sunmadığı tartışılmıştır.

anahtar kelimeler: sibermetin, elektronik edebiyat, anlatıbilim, ikinci kişi, perspektif

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study would not be possible without the support of many friends. I would like to begin by thanking my fellow "macomplit" veterans, without whom the past two years would be nothing like the one I experienced. Among many other things, comparative oranges and papers that wrote themselves were only to be discovered with them.

I would like to extend sincere thanks to my advisor, Jale Parla; I am very grateful for her encouragement, support and strong confidence in me.

For their invaluable support, I would like to thank my friends studying abroad, who helped me during my efforts of reaching the articles and publications that I desperately needed to continue this study: Gülru Göker (who also provided great support not only by her heart-warming friendship but also by her invaluable comments), Gökçe Günel, Selim Güleşci, Sinem Gürbey, and Yunus Doğan Telli worked as an international friendship/intelligence agency to reach even the least available publications and delivered them to me from around the world.

Special thanks to Harun Küçük, who read and commented on the study in detail, providing a supporting hand and motivation just when I needed it the most, and to Irmak Ertuna, for our beautiful friendship of twenty years (and counting) and her generous help of proofreading.

I am thankful for the support of my family, and would like to express my gratitude for their never-ending trust in me. After all, I would like to thank Can Sezer, without whom, nothing would be.

Introduction	1
i. Defining termin(e)ologies.....	1
ii. “You” as an exemplary case	4
iii. Expanding narratology	7
Chapter 1. Cybertext: Definitions and discussions	11
i. Hypertext and electronic literature	12
ii. What cybertext theory has to offer	19
iii. After Aarseth: Current discussions on cybertext and digital media	28
iv. Conclusion	38
Chapter 2. Second Person in Print Literature	41
i. Definitions.....	47
ii. Modes	49
iii. Functions	58
iv. Second person: a faux point-of-view.....	64
Chapter 3: Second person point of view in cybertexts: performing the narrative	71
i. Changing position of the reader in cybertexts.....	71
ii. Second person in hypertext fiction.....	77
iii. Second person in interactive fiction	87
iv. Conclusion	95
Conclusion	98
Works Cited	106

Introduction

My title draws on three concepts to be explored within the framework of this study: “you,” “cybertext,” and “narratology.” In this context, I argue that cybertexts –expected to trigger a revolution in the very understanding of what constitutes the “literary” and a long-term evolution of literary aesthetics– create a shift in the understanding of narrative and analysis of literature. Accordingly, in this study, I use second person narrative to investigate an exemplary case of how cybertexts change the function and interpretation of narrative elements such as point of view.

i. Defining termin(e)ologies

In the study of cybertexts, there are a significant number of new terminologies and neologisms to be differentiated, defined, absorbed, and rejected. As far as newborn concepts and words are concerned, the critic is free to constitute her own terminology because of the nascency of this theoretical field. While sketching the framework of this thesis, I have consciously avoided the term “electronic literature,” since it is clear that almost all literature produced today is already electronic by default—except for a minority among writers, who still prefer the tactility of the pen or of the typewriter. Since electronic/digital tools are so ubiquitous, today’s (electronic) literature is as far from classical print literature as it is from cybertext. Digitally written texts are products of a different mindset than that of hand-written texts, shaped by the flexibilities such as easy cutting, copying and pasting options of the digital medium. By referring to these new texts as works of electronic literature, I would not only be overlooking the

transformation in the very process of production of contemporary literature, but I would also underestimate the shift that cybertexts create in the realm of literature. The neology of “cybertext,” a term originally proposed by Espen Aarseth in his book with the same title, laden with its theoretical background and connotations, appropriately and precisely conveys the greater object of this thesis’ attention. The electronic medium is the customary facilitator behind the production of cybertexts, nevertheless there’s more to cybertexts than making use of the possibilities the electronic medium provides. Cybertexts, above all, are works of *ergodic literature*.

Ergodic is a term coined—from the Greek words of *ergon* (work) and *hodos* (path)—by Espen Aarseth in his book on cybertext theory, *Cybertext: Perspectives on Ergodic Literature*. According to Aarseth, a work of ergodic literature is a text in which the reader has to work through the text’s path, which means that the reader is obligated to exert non-trivial effort (more than the eye movement and occasional turn of the page) to traverse the text. The traversal of the text is the journey of the reader from what is written in the text to what is interpreted by the reader; in Aarseth’s words, the reader starts with textons (signs as they appear in the text) and ends with scriptons (signs as they appear to the reader). And when the traversal of the text involves a calculation, then the text we have at hand is defined as “cybertext” (Aarseth 75). Non-trivial effort here means that the reader should do more than merely interpreting the text: filling the gaps with interpretation is not enough to reach scriptons in ergodic literature. Interpretative function is a necessary, though not a distinguishing feature of cybertexts.

Aarseth identifies seven variables for the possible functions that the reader can use for producing scriptons out of textons: “dynamics, determinability, transiency, perspective, access, linking, and user functions” (Aarseth 62-4). From within these seven variables, the user function (and its four variables) is definitive for ergodic texts: an ergodic text is “one in which at least one of the four user functions, in addition to the obligatory interpretative function, is present” (Aarseth 65). The other three user functions, which may be operative in ergodic texts in addition to the interpretative function are: the explorative function, which means the reader would choose from among multiple paths within a text; the configurative function, which means the user could choose how to configure the way textons turn into scriptons by rearranging or changing variables in the text; and finally the textonic function, in which the reader can also add textons which would be permanent in the text (such as the case in most of the collaborative texts).

Cybertexts constitute a very exciting and enormously wide universe of wordy-beings with very complex, diverse and tricky nature(s). These texts “share a principle of calculated production, but beyond that there is no obvious unity of aesthetics, thematics, literary history, or even material technology” (Aarseth 5). Aarseth defines cybertext as “a perspective [he] use[s] to describe and explore the communicational strategies of dynamic texts” (Aarseth 5). Therefore, the genre of cybertexts includes a wide array of texts, varying from computer games and “multi-user dungeons” to works of

interactive fiction and different versions of collaborative writing.¹ My conception of cybertext throughout this study will consist of texts that provide an alternative way of producing literature. Taking cybertext as a medium, in McLuhan's terms, I will treat the content of cybertext as the written word, and I will search for the message it conveys in the transformation of the position of figures in and around the textual world. In order to explore how cybertexts challenge narratology, this study focuses specifically on fictive "literary" cybertexts, i.e., texts making use of the new possibilities digital media offers for their production and consumption. Consequently, while specifying cybertexts that are produced and consumed through computers, Internet and computer programmes, I will be looking at texts that are more stories than games, and my focus will be on textuality rather than cybernetics, and on poesy rather than experimentalism. I will question Aarseth's own classifications of cybertexts and different variables including user functions by discussing these terms and providing close readings throughout this study.

ii. "You" as an exemplary case

The very beginning of the title iterates the well-known but less regarded pronoun, "you." Throughout this study, the pronoun "you," or "second person narrative" as it has been referred to in theoretical studies is

¹ Here, it would be necessary to note that originally, Aarseth does not consider hypertext fiction among cybertexts, as he argues that cybertexts should make use of either textonic or configurative functions. Hypertexts, according to Aarseth, are works of ergodic literature with their explorative user function. In this sense, I am actually adopting a loose understanding of what Aarseth makes of the term cybertext, and make it a category of digital ergodic literature, i.e. ergodic literature made in the digital medium, for the digital medium.

analysed in order to explicate how literary cybertexts can change and challenge the narratological assumptions. Second person narrative is not the favourite subject in academic works on narratology; still there exist a small number of scholars working specifically on the second person narrative, who try to position this mode of narration within literary theory.

Second person narrative is usually considered the naughty, whimsical youngster of the narrative family, and often deemed little more than an experimental case, it is usually analysed without allocating much space in most general surveys of narrative points of view. In his seminal work *Narrative Discourse Revisited*, Gerard Genette briefly mentions second person narrative as a “rare but very simple case” (133). As Mieke Bal notes in *Narratology*, second person is usually regarded as “an exceptional [...] experiment” (21), “which cannot be sustained; since the reader ‘translates’ it into first-person format” (29) in order to be able to transform the text at hand into an interpreted story. “The ‘you’ is [therefore] simply an ‘I’ in disguise” (30).

Most of the theorists who do analyse second person narrative situate themselves in a tradition that maintains that the second person narrative is an alternative “point of view.” Second person narratives, I will later argue, do not actually provide us with an alternative point of view to first or third person points of view. This does not, however, mean that they are mere examples from among different usages of first or third person narratives. Fludernik underlines the unique characteristic of second person fiction, distinguishing it from a mere play in the postmodernist manner; according to her, second

person technique “is usually chosen with great care and employed with great finesse and sophistication” (Fludernik "Introduction" 305). And as Brian Richardson states,

[W]hile standard second person fiction can be narrated in either the first or third person, the choice of the ‘you’ form radically changes the tone of the work and provides a unique speaking situation for the narrator, one that does not occur in natural narratives and consequently one that continuously defamiliarizes the narrative act. (Richardson 319)

Matt DelConte argues that second person narration in conventional print literature should indeed be defined not by who is speaking but by who is listening (the narratee) and thus it is not really a point of viewing or speaking, but a “point of reception” (DelConte “Why You Can’t Speak: Second person Narration, Voice, and a New Model for Understanding Narrative” 208). As the examples studied below in the first chapter show, in conventional print literature, second person narratives are “received” by the reader as either first-, or third-person point of view, or their variations. Since the reader, who identifies with the narratee of the narrative through the usage of second person pronoun, cannot include her own point of view in the narrative, there is no way of finding a distinct second person point of view in print literature. The narrator either presents the story of the narratee/protagonist (and sometimes reader) through the variations of first-person, or of the variations of third-person point of view. This way, by arguing that second person narrative does not constitute a distinct point of view, the study also

challenges the theoretical tradition of taking second person into account as a category of perspective.

As Monika Fludernik, who has produced extensive research on you-narratives, states in her introduction to *Style* journal's special issue on the second person, there is no "unequivocal definition of what exactly is a second person text" ("Introduction" 287), let alone a widely accepted theoretical argument about it. Notwithstanding the weakness in the number and volume of studies on (as well as narratives in) the second person, there are many different interpretations and arguments about how the second person form could be read, interpreted, analysed and categorised. Similar to cybertexts, the second person narratives also constitute an under-explored field in literary theory and criticism. Since this study's aim is to show how cybertexts challenge narratology, a question emerges from the review of theories on second person narrative: Considering arguments on what second person narrative is (and is not) in print literature, would the same theories apply to cybertexts that use second person narration? The following chapters present an effort to explore the ways in which the theories on second person narrative in print literature will fail to apply to cybertexts.

iii. Expanding narratology

This study will explore a set of questions: What happens when the second person appears in the realm of cybertext? Does it change the way cybertexts operate? Or do cybertexts modify the existence of "you" in fiction? What does this relationship between the second person narrative and cybertextuality tell us? And finally, (how) can narratology expand its borders

to be able to analyse the ambivalent “you” as an agent in cybertexts? How will it deal with this borderline situation, how will it prescribe this patient, which is neither narrative, nor something else?

My argument in this study is that since the reader’s position changes dramatically (with the inclusion of three major user functions in addition to the interpretative function) in cybertexts, the second person indeed provides an alternative point of view, a narratological circumstance which we do not experience in conventional print literature. Cybertexts change and modify the existence of the second person in narrative, and shift its position from a point of reception to that of a view with the inclusion of the user’s perspective. The changing user-status not only affects the way this new literature is experienced, but also the way it is analysed. As seen in this exemplary case, the narratological categories will shift, bend, and expand when cybertexts are the object of analysis. The critics will need to invent new strategies of reaching these dynamic texts.

Hybrid close readings will be borne from the interaction of second person narrative and cybertextuality, as both of these “genres,” or modes of “narrative” challenge the very definition of “narrative” as well as the study of it, namely “narratology.” As much as cybertext theory seems too calculated at times, my initial drive in naming this text after Aarseth’s *Cybertext* stems also from my belief that these theories indeed call for a re-visit, in a more embracing manner, with the backing-up of close readings of literary works, a component that *Cybertext* was clearly missing. Without imposing a “universal” set of principles on narrative that is supposed to function in cybertexts, my efforts will run parallel to Markku Eskelinen’s address of

“problems of expanding literary narratology beyond its print heritage without falling into the trap of pan-narrativism” (Eskelinen, “Six Problems” 179). The questions that motivate this study build on the argument that cybertexts (will) change the way we acquire knowledge, understand the world, and interpret literature. The function of second person narrative differs in the printed medium and in cybertexts. The readings of these texts will open up a yet unexplored path. While theoretical approaches such as narratology, semiology, and semantics will give us hints about how to approach these new kinds of literary narratives, we will need to invent and re-invent new methodologies of understanding our ways of interpreting cybertexts. In order to read cybertexts, we will need to challenge narratology as we know it.

In order to explain the nature of the main object of the argument, the first chapter of this study presents theoretical approaches to cybertext and how it is differentiated from both print and hypertext literature. The second chapter presents a brief review of second person analysis in print literature, providing a discussion of the different definitions, modes and functions of second person narration in traditional literature, and how it has been analysed by theorists as a point of view. Here, I present my argument that the second person does not supply us with an alternative point of view in print literature. The third chapter is an exploration of the functions of “you” in cybertexts, and includes readings of cybertexts making use of the second person. Clarifying the distinctions between different functions of “you” in cybertexts in comparison with those in print literature, this third chapter shows how second person becomes a distinct point of view with the

changing function of the implied/real reader, in texts that use the cybertext medium.

Chapter 1. Cybertext: Definitions and discussions

The term cybertext is actually my substitution for the term “electronic literature,” the customary designation of my field of inquiry. While “electronic literature” currently seems to be the common term, I believe this usage reflects the equally common underestimation of the transformation caused by the introduction of digital technology in traditional literature. “Electronic literature” does not refer to traditional literature that is only re/produced electronically; the effect of the introduction and massive use of digital technologies on the production of traditional literature should be a separate research field. Above all, cybertext does not define itself with being inherently electronic or digital. It is an alternative to traditional narrative methods. I believe that the works that I employ in this study provide an alternative to traditional print literature and hence mark the emergence of new literary categories, such as the second person narrative. That is why the objects of this study, whether they are hypertext fictions, Internet fictions, or interactive fictions are considered to be cybertexts.

There is already a body of involved theoretical discussion of what hypertexts and cybertexts are; and this chapter provides a summary of these discussions. The chapter thus begins with the presentation of hypertext, and then goes on to what cybertext theory has to offer to literary theory. Continuing with a brief analysis of current discussions around the topic, the chapter ends with the presentation of my own understanding of the term cybertext as a medium for producing alternative literature, which I use in this study for a comparison with works of traditional literature.

i. Hypertext and electronic literature

In order to understand what cybertext is, we need to understand the theory that was its antecedent and—as regarded by some cybertext theorists—its rival: hypertext. For before Espen Aarseth stormed the theoretical field of electronic literature with his highly controversial book *Cybertext: Perspectives on Ergodic Literature* in 1997, hypertext was hyped as the embodiment of poststructuralist ideals and was believed to be the “next big thing” after the movable type allowed mass distribution of literature. Illana Snyder in *Hypertext: The Electronic Labyrinth* argues that: “writing with a computer not only blurs the line between thinking and writing but also shapes to some extent the ways in which we think” (Snyder 5). The power of an *alternative* way of producing literature comes from the transformation of the way the world is, as well as the way the individuals are, both ontologically and epistemologically, in the rapidly changing digital era. Back when hypertext was promoted as the ultimate means of expression, it was true that hypertext allowed us a new tool for rearranging the space of our writing. Regardless of the fact that hypertext held great potential in its day, much of that potential never materialised and eventually “cybertext fiction replaced it” (Eskelinen, “Cybertext Narratology” 66). The history of hypertext theory is, however, still key to any attempted definition of the cybertext.

Hypertext theorists have found the initial ideas of the term in Samuel Taylor Coleridge’s *Treatise on Method* (1849), where he proposed a set of principles for the preservation of human knowledge, and in Vannevar Bush’s

article "As We May Think" (1945). Vannevar Bush proposed a microfilm tool called *memex*, "in which an individual stores all his books, records, and communications, and which is mechanised so that it may be consulted with exceeding speed and flexibility" (Bush 155). The term "hypertext," despite its strong resemblance to these earlier ideas, was coined much later by Ted Nelson in 1965, who defined it as "nonsequential writing" (Nelson 0/2). Following Nelson's presentation of the term hypertext and the Xanadu² system that he believed would be developed instead of today's world wide web; theorists such as Jay David Bolter and George P. Landow have associated the term with the evolution of literature, building a hypertext theory in close relation with literary and critical theory, specifically in the 1990s when the use of the Internet was rapidly expanding. J. David Bolter, in *Writing Space: Computers, Hypertext, and the Remediation of Print*, approaches hypertext through electronic writing, trying to demonstrate how the computer environment and digital writing affects literature and critical theories. George P. Landow in the third edition of *Hypertext 3.0: Critical Theory and New Media in an Era of Globalization*, approaches hypertext as "multilinear, multisequential" writing instead of "nonsequential" and follows the critical uses and redefinitions of the hypertext in contemporary critical works. Landow begins with stating that it is necessary to relate Ted Nelson and computer technologies with Jacques Derrida and post-structuralist thought, and continues with re-evaluating terms such as text, critical theory,

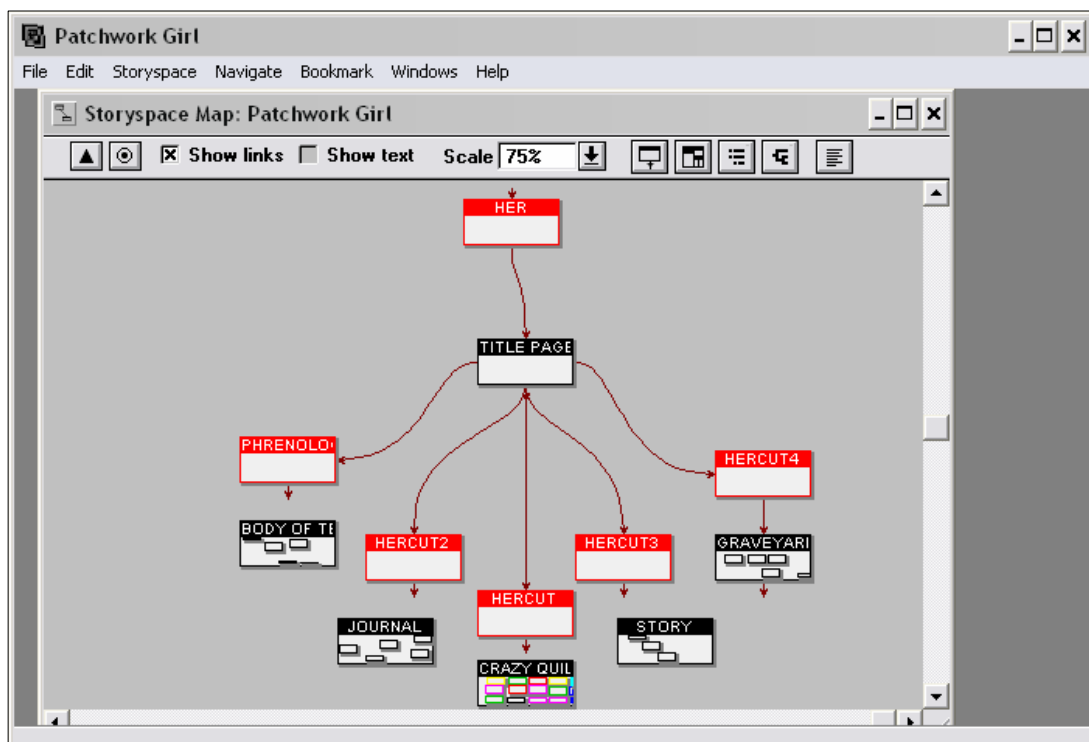
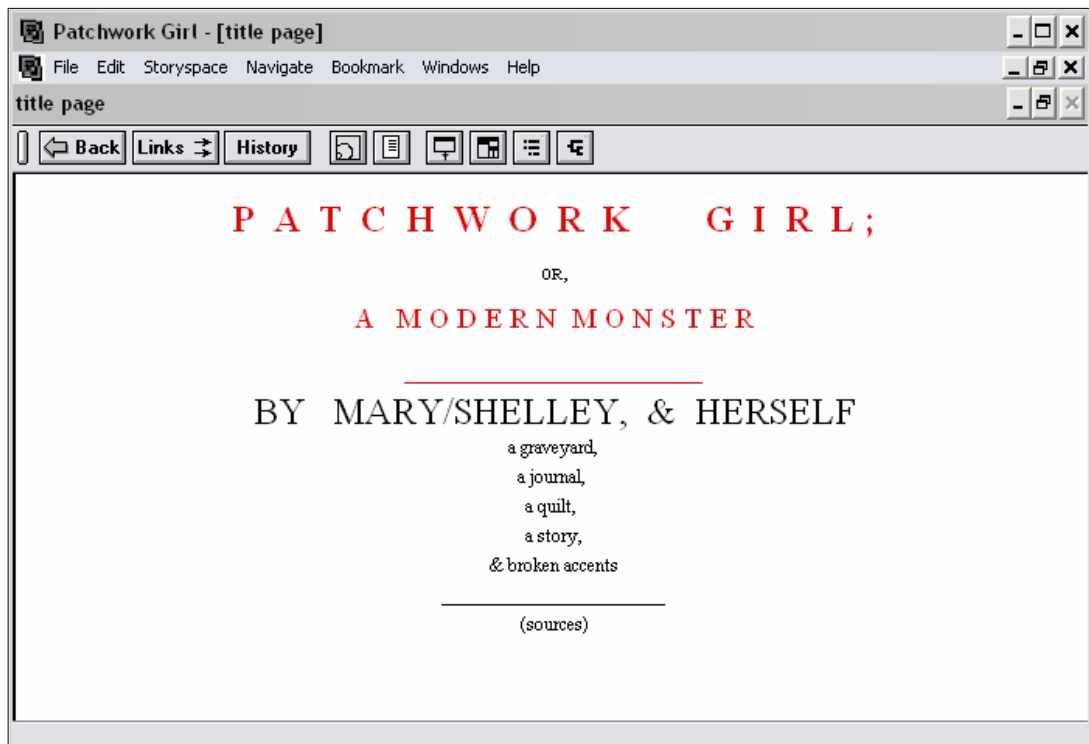
² <http://xanadu.com/>

author, writing, narrative, and literary education in relation to hypertext; trying to re-define these terms in light of each other.

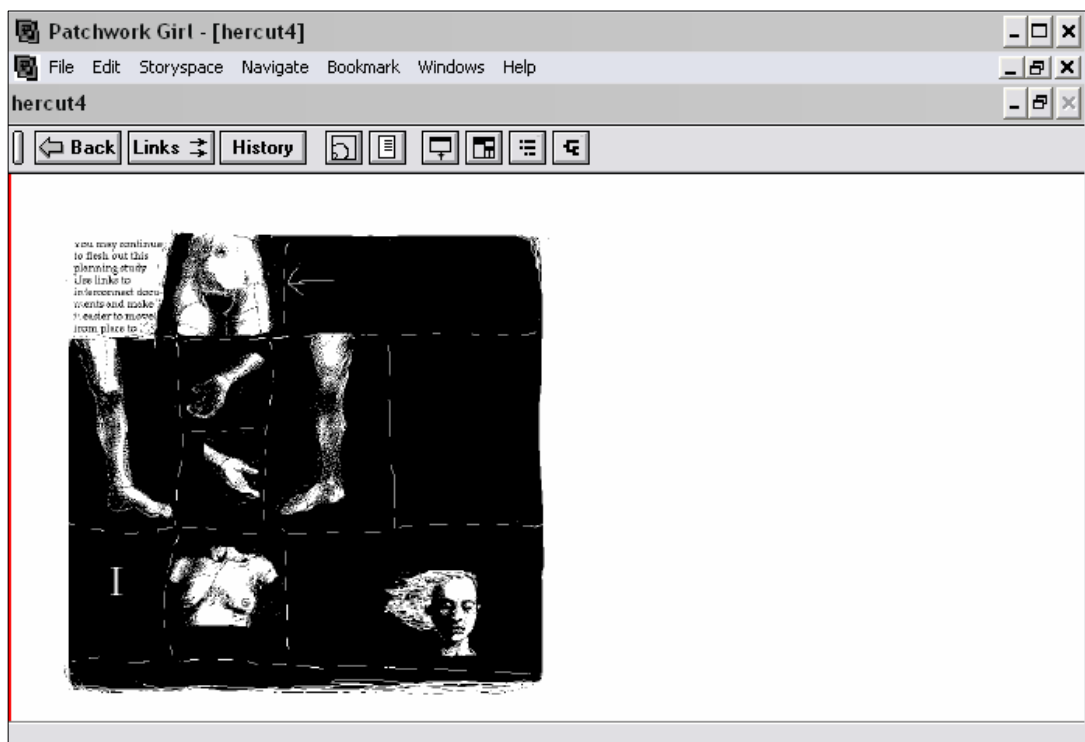
The term hypertext encompasses both theory and practice. While there is extensive theoretical work on hypertexts, there are also literary works produced within the hypertextual environment: hyperfictions. Michael Joyce's *afternoon, a story*, written in 1987 and published by the Eastgate Systems in 1990, is considered to be the first work of hyperfiction. *afternoon* is also the first hypertext that is configured with the Storyspace software produced by Eastgate Systems. Produced with the same software, another groundbreaking hypertext was Shelley Jackson's *Patchwork Girl*, published in 1995. Often cited in studies of feminist theory, literary criticism and hypertext theory, *Patchwork Girl's* content indeed is a gallery of the questions raised by the hypertextual medium. Shelley Jackson re-visits Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, and produces a fiction dealing with the issues about the body, bodily and mental disintegration, authorship, writing, creating and subjectivity. In *Patchwork Girl*, Shelley Jackson presents a brilliant example of the early hyperfictions by dealing with the problematic in the disintegration of body, thought, and expression with the embodiment of hypertext, and her creative writing skills.

So, hyperfictions were different from printed books, but how so? Since visuality in hyperfictions and all kinds of digital literature is extremely significant for grasping an understanding of the text, I will hereby use *Patchwork Girl* to present a visual example, in order to show how these early hyperfictions operated. In the title page of *Patchwork Girl*, the reader is

invited to a reading experience through different parts of the story: “a graveyard,” “a journal,” “a quilt,” “a story,” “& broken accents.” The reader can thus choose where to begin on the title page, or she can access the map of the story throughout her reading by clicking on the map, and leave her current position to travel through the different paths of the story.



The reader thus can jump from one title to the other through this map, travel around the texts that lie under the titles, and therefore can stitch her own patchwork from the bits of the story that is presented to her. Another example may be the opening page of the chapter “a graveyard” which provides us with the parts of the body of a woman, presented in a puzzle-like visual representation, inviting us to click on different body parts to learn the stories hidden beneath these arms, these hands, and these breasts.



This way, the Storyspace software provides an important technology for hypertext fiction, both for the writer (as a mode of production) and the reader (as an interface of consumption). While offering a system (developed by prominent theorists of hypertext such as Michael Joyce, Jay David Bolter, and John B. Smith) to the writer for arranging her hypertextual thoughts in a manner alternative to usual word processors, Storyspace also presents a new environment to the reader, for experiencing this alternative literature in

an alternative computer program. If we look at the Eastgate Systems' web page, we see that hyperfictions continue to be produced and distributed. There are many hypertext writers who use Storyspace, or another program by Eastgate Systems, Tinderbox, which allows the writer to arrange the stories in a hypertextual manner. Nevertheless, with its high prices (both of these softwares are tagged with a \$295 tag, and the average price of a single Eastgate hyperfiction is \$25) and its shortcomings in mass-distribution, the significance of Eastgate publications has indeed been decreased, especially with today's Internet-fictions, which provide all-access, free fictions to every computer user with an Internet access, all around the world. When we are talking about electronic literature, we are dealing with a new and ever-growing field. Especially through the development of easily approachable technologies such as the Web 2.0 or user-friendly on-line applications, there are also fictions produced and published on the internet, usually referred to as "internet fiction." Working on electronic writing in Australia, the Electronic Writing Ensemble presents Internet fictions making use of hypertextual links, on the web site at <http://ensemble.va.com.au>. The most recent examples of electronic fiction may be found on the web page of Electronic Literature Organisation, which is "founded in 1999 to foster and promote the reading, writing, teaching, and understanding of literature as it develops and persists in a changing digital environment" (<http://eliterature.org/about/>). The Electronic Literature Organisation distributes news about recent discussions, symposia, workshops, panels and other gatherings on theoretical work on the field, and keeps an archive of digitally produced literature in its databases. While there are current efforts for publishing a second database

and collection of electronic literature, there are already 2353 works of 1196 authors published by 193 publishers available at the electronic literature directory (<http://directory.eliterature.org/>). Most of the works presented in this directory benefit from the hypertextual links as well as the opportunities of the Internet medium. The directory presents works in four genres: poetry, fiction, drama, and non-fiction; making use of eight different techniques: hypertext, reader collaboration, other interaction, recorded reading/performance, animated text, other audio/video animation, prominent graphics, and generated text.

Theory and practice have nourished each other in the world of electronic literature: while the theories have led to the expansion of hypertextual imagination, the hypertextual (and other) electronic literature gave rise to more theoretical expansion. With the introduction of other technologies, hypertext ceased to be the only and most prominent technique of producing literature, and as Eskelinen and Koskimaa point out in “There is no easy way to repeat this,” hyperfictions “suffered from the theory built around them” (9) and to some extent stayed within the limits of what has been explored by the hypertext theory. Arguably offering much more than what practice can achieve, cybertext theory has in a way tried to avoid this limitation. This is how we arrive at the concept of a lively, ever-expanding, acting and reacting text, which goes by the name cybertext: “from the cybertextual point of view, texts not simply are but they *do* things” (Eskelinen and Koskimaa 7). The works we see at the Electronic Literature

Organization's database also show us that the works themselves indeed pass way beyond the limited offerings of the hypertext.

ii. What cybertext theory has to offer

Ted Nelson, while defining hypertext as nonsequential writing, adds that hypertext is the "text that branches and allows choices to the reader, best read at an interactive screen" (0/2). While it is true that hypertext provides a text that branches, Nelson has been criticised for the second part of the definition, which implies that hypertexts allow choices to the reader.

Aarseth states in *Cybertext* that

When Ted Nelson first coined the word *hypertext* in 1965, he was thinking of a new way of organizing text so that it could be read in a sequence chosen by the reader, rather than followed only in the sequence laid down by the writer. However, since codex texts can also be read in sequences determined by the reader, what he in fact suggested was a system in which the writer could specify which sequences of reading would be available to the reader. (77)

Although hypertexts can empower the reader and put her in a new position allowing her to share the authority of the author, this same relation between the author and the reader can indeed be regarded as the weakest point of hypertext theory. Aarseth argues that "the activity of hypertext reading is often portrayed, in contrast to codex reading, as a kind of co-authorship, with the reader creating her own text as she goes along. [...] But hypertext, especially when compared to other new digital media, is not all

that different from the old world of print, pen, and paper” (77-8). I believe the frustration that lies beneath this argument has basic roots, as hypertext could not achieve to present what has been promised by the theory. Yet, it would be unfair to place hypertexts among the realm of print, pen and paper. For hypertext actually presents a break from the traditional print literature, it would be better to look at Aarseth’s relatively positive questions and ask, “Hypertext is certainly a new way of writing (with active links), but is it truly a new way of reading? And is all that jumping around the same as creating a new text?” (Aarseth 78). This is also visible in the case of Storyspace software briefly presented above: Storyspace is truly a new tool for the writers to arrange their thoughts, but as a reading environment, it is not much different from a printed book, in which the reader has the freedom to skip pages, or take notes beside the printed text. Thus making a distinction between “texts that can be explored versus texts that can be changed, added to, and reorganized by the user” (60) we can begin to distinguish hypertext and cybertext.

The distinction above defines hypertexts as texts that can be explored, and cybertexts as texts that can be manipulated by additions and rearrangements. So, where does this distinction and definition put the reader in hypertexts and cybertexts? It is not just the basic definition of a branching text that allows the reader choices but almost all theories of hypertext suggest the same thing: that the reader takes control of the text independently from the writer, as if at the cost of the “death of the author,” the reader is finally born in hypertexts. While thinking on the new position of

the writer in hypertexts George P. Landow states, “hypertext reduces the autonomy of the author” (Landow 126). According to Landow, hypertext, just like the contemporary critical theories, allows the reader to be considered in a different way, and it “embodies many of the ideas and attitudes proposed by Barthes, Derrida, Foucault and others” (Landow 127). We shall remember here our previous question: does hypertext and its explorative nature really provide the readers with such philosophical expansions? If we want to search for the practical effects electronic literature has on our practice of literature as readers, it is necessary to avoid over-enthusiastic approaches.

While the reader does not take over the dominance of the author, indeed, in contrast to print literature and static hypertexts, the reader encounters in cybertexts (including some rather dynamic hypertext examples) a wider space to fill in. Whether we call this new reader an *interactor* or an *operator*, “manipulation of the cybertext is done by this individual, not just reading” (Monfort “The Hypertext Murder Case”). This way, the text becomes wider than the definition of narrative, welcoming the real reader into the textual universe. Aarseth regards hypertext as an alternative to narrative, and places it among ergodic literature in which the reader has to expend “non-trivial effort” to read the text, to make and act upon choices while reading.

Perhaps for a better way of understanding cybertext, we shall begin with understanding how “text” is defined by cybertext theorists. In Aarseth’s words, a text is “any object with the primary function to relay verbal information. Two observations follow from this definition: (1) a text cannot

operate independently of some material medium, and this influences its behavior, and (2) a text is not equal to the information it transmits” (Aarseth 62). While the first observation actually links to the beginning of this chapter where it was stated that our ways of thinking and writing change with the changing ways of technology, the second observation leads us to one of the basic points that Aarseth makes in *Cybertext*: the text is not equal to the information it transmits, therefore the reader pays an effort to travel through what is presented by the text, to arrive at the information it conveys.

The reader’s journey through the text involves one departure point that is provided by the text and one arrival, which is subjective and interpretative. In cybertext theory, “strings as they appear to readers” are differentiated from “strings as they exist in the text” (62) the first being *textons*, and the latter *scriptons*. In addition to these two strings, a text also includes “a traversal function” which is “the mechanism by which scriptons are revealed or generated from textons and presented to the user of the text” (62). There are seven variables for the possible traversal functions that the reader can use for producing scriptons out of textons: “dynamics, determinability, transiency, perspective, access, linking, and user functions” (Aarseth 62-4). *Dynamics* demonstrate the difference between the static existences of scriptons of a text. In cases where the number of textons remains fixed the number of scriptons may change, the text is dynamic. *Determinability* means “the stability of the traversal function” (63) and the text is determinate if the same scriptons are achieved in multiple times by the same response to a given situation. Aarseth gives the example of dice to explain the indeterminate

texts; every time the dices are cast in the same manner, the results vary.

The third function is *transiency*, defining how the time of the text is configured: “some texts scroll by their users at their own pace, while others do nothing unless activated by the user” (63). It thus makes a difference if the passing of time (without any additional action) produces different scriptons or not. For example if in a text-based game, you do nothing for a period of time, and you die as a result, this means that the text is transient. The fourth function is *perspective*; which can be either personal or impersonal. As though it appears to be open to the reader’s personage, the perspective in *If on a winter’s night a traveller* is impersonal, as “there is nothing for the real reader to do but read” (Aarseth 63). Fifth variable is *access*, and it specifies if “all scriptons of the text are readily available” allowing random access such as the case in traditional print literature, or if you need to take several steps in order to reach certain scriptons in the text, such as the case in hyperfictions with conditional links. The sixth variable is *linking*, which can operate in explicit links, conditional links or not at all. Even though this function appears to belong to the digital medium, there is indeed print literature providing explicit links between different parts of the texts, such as the choose-your-own-adventure books, or, a more “literary” example, *Hopscotch* by Julio Cortazar. The user functions constitute the seventh and final variable, the defining function of how the readers reach from textons to scriptons. There are four different user-functions that the readers can employ while reading ergodic literature: interpretative, explorative, configurative, and textonic. When we calculate a permutation of these, all of these variables and functions provide us with numerous (576 to be precise) possibilities for

an ergodic work of literature and Aarseth uses these variables to analyse several cybertexts. Once again suggesting that “there is no evidence that the electronic and printed texts have clearly divergent attributes,” (Aarseth 70) Aarseth provides a table of 23 texts positioned in accordance with their typology variables.

Talking about ergodic literature, Aarseth puts more importance to the user function than the others, stating that this is the defining function for ergodic texts: an ergodic text is “one in which at least one of the four user functions, in addition to the obligatory interpretative function, is present” (Aarseth 65). Briefly mentioned above, the three additional user functions in addition to the obligatory interpretative function are: explorative, configurative, and textonic. If the text requires from its reader to explore the different possible paths for traversing the text, then it is making use of the explorative function; if the text needs to be configured by the reader, to be rearranged, cut, copied, pasted, etc. then it is configurative; and if it is allowing and encouraging the reader to add in to the text by producing textons, then it is making use of the textonic function.

Cybertext “is a machine for the production of variety of expression” (Aarseth 3) that “reads its readers and reacts back by changing itself far more profoundly than by simply playing around with conditional links” (Eskelinen “Cybertext Narratology” 52). In a reductionist approach, as a constantly changing text that reacts to the real reader who traverses it, “cybertext fiction is essentially more unpredictable than hypertext fiction [...] the relationship of parts to the supposed or at least titled textual whole gets

looser as parts gain more or total independence” (Eskelinen “Cybertext Narratology” 53). This way, in a quite contradicting manner, cybertext theory defines itself in contrast to hypertext, its main objective being expanding the barriers and boundaries of hypertext. Similar to the question raised by Aarseth on the true nature of hypertexts as a new way of reading, Eskelinen, draws attention to the reader position in hypertext reading stating, “in their processes of navigation readers don’t become writers but a species of co-narrator at best in their capacity to choose (prefabricated) paths. Still, one should not mistake one’s changing interpretations for changing texts” (Eskelinen “Cybertext Narratology” 54). In contrast to hypertext in which through whatever path the reader may take, the resulting “scripton” is seen more or less the same; cybertext fiction, with its transient time, dynamic scriptons and fluid plots that may be altered by the readers, offers innumerable challenges to the analysis and understanding of narrative.

Cybertext theorists also argue that there are certain traversal modes in cybertexts that may not be found in print or hypertext fiction: “textonic and intratextonic dynamics, indeterminate determinability, personal perspective, transient time, as well as configurative and textonic user functions” (Eskelinen “Cybertext Narratology” 61). To some extent, cybertext theorists are right in their criticism: there are many hypertexts that are not as open to reader manipulation as the theoretical examples of Aarseth and Eskelinen. Nevertheless, it is also true that hypertext fiction, with the possible creative implications, may also include several, if not all of the functions stated above. In fact, Aarseth has himself given several hypertext fictions that go beyond

the mentioned barriers of hypertextual environment. It is true that several examples of hypertexts cannot go beyond what has previously been offered by multilinear narratives such as the choose-your-own-adventure series, but there are (and may be) also hypertext examples that do not stay equally static. Above all, do we really need a super-text that can go where no text has gone before? If we want to observe the changing attitudes and narrative modes, does it make a difference if one type of text is superior to the other in empowering the reader?

In their contribution to the *Cybertext Yearbook 2000*, Eskelinen and Koskimaa explicitly state that they see cybertext theory “superior to the hype ridden hypertext theory and its amusing, undeniably influential and theoretically untenable notions of convergence, interactivity and wreaders”(Eskelinen and Koskimaa 8). Nevertheless, to exclude hypertext from the realm of cybertext is not only underestimating the possibilities within the hypertextual environment, but also ignoring the possible expansions of the explorative and interpretative user functions. For many theorists hypertext is indeed a subset of cybertext. Interestingly, Eskelinen himself declares, “hypertexts should be seen as a subset of cybertexts” (Eskelinen “Cybertext Theory: What an English Professor Should Know before Trying). Nick Monfort, a theorist mainly working on the field of interactive fiction, in his review of *Cybertext* also states, “the cybertext category therefore contains hypertext, which is operated by means of clicking and traversing links, but it is much broader” (Monfort “The Hypertext Murder Case”). What we see here is the emergence of a new theory, which is all-inclusive, more embracing,

expanding but not excluding what has been offered by hypertexts. When theorists turn against hypertexts, there emerges a confusing contradiction: if hypertext is a subset of cybertext, how could they have a significant opposition; why would it matter that cybertexts are superior to hypertexts? If what cybertext theory achieved was “to erase the stifling hypertext boundary, and to redraw that boundary so that it demarcates a more interesting territory of reader-influenced texts” (Monfort “The Hypertext Murder Case”), then cybertext theory is not meant to be exclusive, but inclusive. As any form of digitally produced and consumed text is incredibly new for both the critics and the readers, the all-embracing promise of cybertext theory is in fact its positive side. The traditional print literature as well as static and dynamic hypertexts can find their space within the cybertext theory and its more than five hundred media positions offered by the permutations of the possible traversal functions. As Monfort points out, “Thanks to Aarseth’s book, a larger literary category has been declared worthy of critical attention – a category which includes Eliza, MUDs, poetry that involves text morphing and motion in response to input, interactive fiction, and other sorts of non-hypertextual works” (Monfort “The Hypertext Murder Case”); this inclusiveness should not completely abandon hypertext examples.

While hypertexts do not obviously allow the reader to take full control of the text, it would also be unfair to place them among the league of print, pen, and paper, for the explorative function in hyperfictions in fact present the reader with a new experience hardly found in traditional literary environments. The user function that the reader is equipped with in

hyperfictions also affects the position of the writer, as it becomes more a “suggestor” rather than an occupant of the author position. For hypertextual environment also allows and calls for collaborative writing, the reader may also be equipped with textonic function. This way or that way, the reader’s position changes when she enters the realm of the hyper or cyber texts:

“Readers of a printed book can write over or revise the text, but they cannot write in it [...] In the electronic medium, however, readers cannot avoid writing the text itself, because every choice they make is an act of writing” (Bolter 152). While there are many hyperfictions allowing the reader to choose among different paths presented only in order to arrive at a final point designated by the writer, there are also hyperfictions allowing the reader to configure, modify, and add to the given text. Hypertext presents itself as more than simply pressing the enter key because the reader has an active role in building the new way of thinking which is shaped by new possibilities of interaction introduced by computers and the digital experience.

Hypertexts, then, if they are to constitute a change from conventional print literature, should take us beyond the idea that a text is only sequential when it is written by an author as sequential and multisequential only when it is written by the author as multisequential.

iii. After Aarseth: Current discussions on cybertext and digital media

Current debates on cybertexts take place largely around three issues: the fact that cybertext theory focuses only on theory without putting much emphasis on practice and close reading analysis, the debate around the

importance of media-specific analysis, and the question of the literary value and its significance in digitally produced and consumed literature.

The main argument of cybertext theory centres on the richness of possibilities that the different variables of the traversal of the text propose. “Cybertext fiction has created or will create its own set of both ontological and epistemological problems not reducible to the already automated acts of modernism and postmodernism” (Eskelinen “Cybertext Narratology” 61); and it will do so through the “576 non-hypothetical possibilities Aarseth’s theory is able to foreground (Eskelinen “Cybertext Theory: What an English Professor Should Know before Trying). In *Cybertext*, Aarseth arrives at these 576 possibilities by taking a permutation of the seven variables, and their respective possibilities within. Nevertheless, as we cannot see clear examples for these 576 possibilities when talking about cybertext, we are indeed talking about a highly theoretical mode of writing, as most of the theoretical implications do not demonstrate themselves in the practical works that are available. Eskelinen also accepts that cybertext fiction is “not much in existence yet” (Eskelinen “Cybertext Narratology” 52). He does not regard this as a downside though:

As cybertext theory itself is still in an initial phase, and inevitably developing and changing its face continuously, the application field is expanding even more rapidly [...] So, even though cybertext theory is highly useful in the way it helps us to better understand previous and contemporary digital and non-digital texts, its real potential will only be called upon by the further

development of new media communication. (Eskelinen and Koskimaa 11)

Regarding the text as a machine “consisting of the medium, the operator and the strings of signs” (Eskelinen and Koskimaa 8), the cybertext theory proposes theoretical implications that might be expected to expand how texts are produced and consumed in the digital world. Nevertheless, this emphasis on theory puts the reader as well as the critic in the awkward position of searching for concrete analysis of what has been realised in cybertexts instead of limitless possibilities, or those of expanded limits. Is cybertext a medium valuable only insofar as it provides a progressive way of writing? Hayles also points out this downside of cybertext theory: “with its emphasis on a theoretical space of semiotic possibilities, cybertext theory is strongest on generating a theoretical heuristic grid with which to understand a wide variety of textual practices [...] A third limitation of cybertext theory, especially as interpreted by Eskelinen, is mistaking numerosity for analytical power” (Hayles “What cybertext theory can’t do”).

In the analysis of literature, be it born-digital, manual or digitised, the theory is expected to both nurture and be nurtured by practice. While the cybertext theory opens up an expanded understanding of positioning literature, the reader fails to meet the implications of the theoretical combinations, causing an inevitable frustration. This frustration of failing to meet in practice what theory offers, which is also supported by other frustrations such as the reader’s ignorance of (at least not being accustomed to) the tools of this alternative literature is especially important in a nascent

field such as the cybertext. While we decide whether or not cybertexts are literary enough to be the object of literary studies, the fact that “just because cybertext theory predicts 576 different combinations, using Aarseth’s scheme for parsing the semiotic components of cybertexts, does not mean that all 576 combinations will be equally interesting or worthwhile” (Hayles “What cybertext theory can’t do”) gains even more importance. The core of literary theory and analysis, the importance of literariness (albeit the vague definition of it) never loses its significance, be it in the realm of manual, digitised, or cybertext literature.

This brings us to a second group of discussions about cybertexts: how could and should they be defined as literature? The importance of the transformation of the writing and thinking space of the contemporary world becomes highly significant in this discussion. As the modes and ways of our thinking change, so do our ways of expression and literary or artistic production. The digitalisation of the word has not only affected the world of literature, but also any other artistic form. What changes in this alternative way of expression can indeed be regarded as yet another evolution of aesthetic values. To quote Eskelinen and Koskimaa,

Questioning, testing, and developing the medium has always been an aspect of all art. The need for this kind of reflection and self-reflection is even more crucial with our multi-conditioned digital media, which rely not only on certain technical platforms, but also on several layers of software; and not only rely but make active use of these layers –one should never forget that

for cybertext theory writing and programming are just two faces of the same coin. (Eskelinen and Koskimaa 10)

It is very important in this aspect to not avoid the effects of the changing medium if we are to regard these new texts as literature. For indeed, especially through the remediation aspect that they borrow (or inherit) from games, they do change the way literature operates: “in literature we may have to configure in order to be able to interpret, but in games we have to interpret in order to be able to configure” (Eskelinen “Six Problems” 179). This relation that is found between cybertexts and games also helps us avoid the enthusiasm that is borne out of thinking cybertext literature as a genuinely novel development. For this very excitement may be an unnecessary burden at times, preventing us from looking beyond the newness of the field to search for deeper implications on narrative and literature: “ludology gives us a perspective and a paradigm from which to approach the interactivity or ergodicity of literary works without any hype of the new versus the old, as interactivity has always been dominant in games” (Eskelinen “Six Problems” 179). Therefore, it is important to see cybertext as an alternative way of producing literature, instead of a “new” one, borne from the rearrangement of resources for literature production.

We should not underestimate the impact of the game-like qualities of cybertext, nevertheless if we are to look for the implications of cybertext in literary theory, we should also not look beyond its literary qualities, which indeed allow us to see how this new literature expands and offers alterations to narrative and literary theory and criticism. Hayles explains the cybertext

theoreticians' tendency to overlook the literary value of the mentioned 576 possible cybertextual positions with a comparison of hybrid genres:

Whenever interspecies mating occurs, the offspring are likely to spark controversy if not fear and loathing – think of the Minotaur, Leda's two eggs, and in our posthuman age, the androids of *Bladerunner*. So it is not really surprising that electronic literature, the hybrid progeny of an interspecies mating between computer games and literary traditions, arouses strong feelings from the descendants of both lineages. (Hayles "Cyber|literature")

It is true that hybrid genres usually are received by suspicion, but their strength also comes from this interspecies nature, this in-betweenness that may be expected to achieve fruitful dimensions never imagined before. This is also true for the cybertextual literature that is the object of this study, as it gains its power from the digital and computational offerings as well as from literary devices. Drawing attention to the importance of literary elements such as "originality of expression, construction of plot, use of metaphor and tropes, and characterization through action and narrative voice," Hayles rightfully proposes that "just as literary analysis of electronic literature that does not consider the reader's choice of pathways or the materiality of the medium would be seriously incomplete, so would an analysis that looks only at programming structure without regard for these tools of a writer's trade" (Hayles "Cyber|literature"). As cybertexts may be regarded from the point of view of different academic, theoretical or critical approaches such as the

study of games (ludology) or programming, the impacts that they create in the literary traditions, theories and criticisms should also be surveyed, for “if these works are interactive, they are also fictions, and they cannot be understood as meaningful cultural practices without this literary component” (Hayles “Cyber|literature”). This would of course be viewing these texts through the perspective of literary criticism, but if we are to regard these texts seriously, then we have to treat them seriously, as works of a developing literary tradition, just like we would treat any other text that provide new horizons in the aesthetics of literature. For the reader and the critic who reads for the pleasure of the text, Hayles’ question is relevant: “is not content, however postmodern, fragmented, contradictory, deconstructive, or elusive it might be, intimately involved in why most users read texts and especially why they return to them time after time?” (Hayles “What cybertext theory can’t do”).

Placing cybertexts within her studies is also tough for the literary critic, as she needs not only to search for the literary value and the impact of this new literature on the theories and understanding of literature, but she also needs to relate these with the emerging technologies and the medium in which these alternative literature works are produced and consumed. How does this new medium affect the literary value of these texts? This question leads us to the third main discussion stream, that of the significance of the medium in cybertexts.

Cybertext theory, though subtly, does not specify the digital medium as a basic necessity. Aarseth provides ancient examples such as the *I Ching*

for cybertexts. Eskelinen and Koskimaa, trying to point out the disadvantages of creating hype over the “new,” declare that “cybertext theory does not draw sharp distinctions between different media, an advantageous position when almost everything has already turned digital leaving that word devoid of and descriptive or distinctive power” (Eskelinen and Koskimaa 8). This argument, as long as it does not lead to overlooking the functions utilised by this medium, is acceptable to some extent since in the contemporary world, everything is already digital and electronic, and mostly computerised, whether or not it truly offers new aesthetic, epistemological or ontological expansions. For Aarseth, the new textual technology is “potentially more flexible and powerful than any preceding medium” (10) but he also gives examples of ergodic literature from experimental printed books. His examples include Marc Saporta’s *Composition No. 1, Roman*, which was a novel printed unbound, and the readers could shuffle the pages and read in any sequence. Similar to this are B. S. Johnson’s *The Unfortunates*, a book that was released as a bunch of papers inside a box, or Milorad Pavic’s *Last Love in Constantinople*, which is released with a deck of tarot cards that would potentially alter the reading experience of the book. Monfort also underlines this side of Aarseth’s argument, stating that Aarseth has been avoiding unnecessary and distracting discussions by “simply making his definition independent of the medium in which the work is presented” (Monfort “The Hypertext Murder Case”).

If being digital is not a primary quality of cybertexts and ergodic literature, and if these texts should not be treated with the “imperialistic

drives” of narrative theory, as they provide an alternative to narrative with their roots stemming from games, then in which discipline should we analyse them?³ This becomes even more contradictory when we encounter sentences in *Cybertext* implying that cybertexts are primarily computational. Indeed, what Aarseth does in *Cybertext* is to propose new categories which would help us in our analytical approach to any textual product, be it ergodic, static, print narrative, hypertext, or cybertext. Within this broader theoretical realm which does not distinguish one medium or another, he focuses on cybertext as a genre that puts several functions in effect that are not encountered in traditional print or hypertext literature. This broad theoretical background in fact creates a more or less complex theory presented in an opaque theoretical language ridden with neologisms. As the cybertext theory is still very much a work in progress, these theoretical contradictions and ever growing list of neologisms alienate the newcomers to the field.

Following a heated discussion with Eskelinen, which took place on the Internet, Hayles proposes another term for the same concept. In order to overcome the theoretical burden of cybertext, and to achieve a terminology without underestimating neither the literary, nor the game-like or computational qualities of the texts that are at stake, she makes up the word cyber|literature:

I propose the term “cyber|literature” the two halves of the word allude to the two parents, connected by a vertical line that in

³ There is actually another discipline called “ludology” that studies games, in all different formats such as plays, toys, or video games. The importance of ludology is that it regards games as objects of study in themselves, instead of regarding them as narratives.

programming is called a “pipe”. In case of cyber|literature, the set of statements are 1) the literary tradition is its parent, 2) the computer game is its parent, 3) the link is the essential feature, and 4) computation is the essential feature. (Hayles “Cyber|literature”)

Hayles proposes cyber|literature hoping it “will be inclusive and synergistic rather than exclusive and confrontational,” explaining how she coined the term by alluding the two halves of the word to the parents of cyber and literature; and connecting these two by a vertical line “that in programming is called a ‘pipe’.” The aspects of cyber|literature are “1) the literary tradition is its parent, 2) the computer game is its parent, 3) the link is the essential feature, and 4) computation is the essential feature,” and the pipe for Hayles implies “that foregrounding any one of these aspects necessarily opens the door to the others as well.” I do not believe that proposing new and even more complicated terms in order to overcome the definition problems would make for a more comprehensible theory. It is true that cybertexts, at least those that are produced with a literary drive, should be analysed from a literary point of view, and it is true that both the game-like qualities and the employment of the digital should be investigated in the ways of producing this alternative literature. But we do not need to reinvent our terminology from the ground up every time; the term cybertext is not that much different from the term cyber|literature. Whether the word literature is present in the term or not, cybertexts can be analysed with literary agendas, and they may rightfully be expected to affect literature and narrative as we

know it. Arguing that the alternative production and consumption mode presented by the cybertexts have an effect on literature, we need to treat “cybertext” as a new medium, and to search its implications in literature, which is indeed the main task that is undertaken in this study.

iv. Conclusion

One of the downsides of cybertext theory is the fact that its most distinguished theoreticians rely almost solely on suppositions, possibilities, and mathematical calculations on different permutations of these supposed possibilities. Aarseth makes a permutation of the seven variables he defines for the texts and achieves 576 unique media positions. Without providing close readings, he positions different texts in graphics, appointing different variables to each. We see that he regards some texts differently from the others, but we do not witness the act of analysing these texts to arrive at these conclusions. Cybertext theory presents important theoretical expansions but fails to demonstrate what implications those expansions might have in the texts that we have at hand. That is why, instead of establishing a dichotomy between hypertext and cybertext, I include the hypertextual literary works in the realm of cybertext. My conception of cybertext therefore is literary works making use of the digital media in both the production and the consumption processes, which require from their readers more than interpretation: let it be explorative, configurative, textonic, or different permutations whose calculation I find unnecessary. More specifically, as what is significant in this alternative literature demonstrates itself, and the new literary categories such as the second person point of

view emerges in the works themselves, this definition will provide a framework for the works that I will analyse in this study.

Interestingly, there have not been many references to Marshall McLuhan's groundbreaking article "The Medium Is the Message" in the theoretical works on cybertexts – or any other electronic literature. In *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*, which introduced the world the term "media," McLuhan begins with the argument that in order to study media properly, we need to understand that "the content of every medium is always another medium" (8), and "the message of any medium or technology is the change of scale or pace or pattern that it introduces into human affairs" (8). McLuhan, giving an example from the emergence of movies states, "The movie, by sheer speeding up the mechanical, carried us from the world of sequence and connections into the world of creative configuration and structure. The message of the movie medium is that of transition from lineal connections to configurations" (12). If we are to study cybertexts from a literary point of view, we need to search for the message it provides for the transition within practice and consumption of literature. Taking cybertext as a medium, in McLuhan's terms makes the content of cybertext the written word, but the message it provides will demonstrate itself in the transformation it provides in the changing positions of the figures in and around the textual world.

I have hereby provided an overall presentation of the theoretical world that I have chosen to dive in for this study. But what this new literature has to offer to the theories of narrative and literature will only be revealed through

research and close readings that are focused on its different impacts. What follows in the next chapters are an effort in this manner, focusing on the existence of a second person point of narrative, in order to show how with these functions, positions, media and content, cybertexts, cyber|literature, or whatever we may call it, create shifts and ruptures in our understanding, perception, production and interpretation of literary works.

Chapter 2. Second Person in Print Literature

The ward was filled with ‘Nuri’s. You set on a bench, apparently just wiped out, with stains that are just about to dry out.⁴ (Erdal Öz *Yaralısın* [You are Injured] 15)

You’ve just gone to bed. You’re in familiar surroundings, nestling inside sheets and blankets that are steeped in your own smells and memories; your head has found that pocket of softness in the middle of your pillow [...] (Orhan Pamuk “Can’t You Sleep?” *The Black Book* 246)

Within an overwhelming peace you lean your ear towards the thin belly of the hourglass and listen to the passing time. This is a rustling, regular flow. The birds’ twitter and the sound of the warm breeze feel like tiny diamonds, rubies, and agates shining within silence. Are you happy? (Murat Gülsoy “Ütopya: 337 Milisaniye” *Belki de Gerçekten İstiyorsun* [Maybe You Really Want It] 14)

“You,” or—as they have typically been referred to—second person narratives, above all the different definitions that will be explored further below, are narratives addressing a certain “you,” who is the “other” of the text, even though it may refer to a “you” that listens (narratee) or acts (protagonist) in the textual world, instead of a “you” in the actual world as implied or real reader. The reader is still an outsider in a second person

⁴ All translations except from Orhan Pamuk’s *The Black Book* are mine.

narrative she cannot interpret through her own perspective. As Hopkins and Perkins state in their entry on second person in the *Critical Survey of Short Fiction*, “the reader always has some sense of being the narratee” (121). When we open the book in our hands to read you-narratives like the ones quoted above, the “you” we see in the text overwhelms us. Whether we understand clearly that the “you” of the text has nothing to do with “us,” or we identify ourselves with that “you” through what Samuel Taylor Coleridge calls a “willing suspension of disbelief,” the “you” is there, staring us right in the middle of the face, hungry for attention. Does it call us specifically, or reach out to a generic you that anyone (or no one) can fit in? We want to get to know this “you;” it seems so close to us, yet so distant. We want to embrace it; we have to understand what’s going on with it, to differentiate it from ourselves or internalise it even further than our “real” selves. We have to accept, reject, antagonise, and fantasise it. We have to understand the reason behind its presence there, with that prepossessing glimpse, clinging on to the text.

Who is the you in the text is the main question that every critic who dips her nose into second person narration asks first when she lays her hands and eyes on the text: is it me, the flesh-and-blood reader, is it any flesh-and-blood reader, is it a character in the novel, is it the author’s or narrator’s self, is it anyone, or is it everyone? In order to answer these questions and understand the manifold definitions, modes, and functions of you-narratives, we shall begin by inquiring about various categories in which these narratives are positioned in literary theory. A good first step would be

thinking about the very idea of identifying you-narratives as “the second person,” which in effect positions this narrative mode between the two conventional points of view, first-person and third person. Is second person a narrative point of view? Does the you-narrative offer a new mode of discourse, an alternative voice, or a tool of rhetoric? The answers to these questions and the category that we choose to place you-narratives within provide clues about how we define it.

The second person cannot provide a textual perspective and hence you-narratives in print literature cannot be considered as a second-point of view that provides an alternative to the first- and third-person viewpoints. Nevertheless, looking at the very brief history of second person analysis, we find that neither many critics nor narratologists have paid attention to the use of you-narratives, and most of those who did treated it as an unexplored point of view. The articles that will be used throughout the survey of the history of second person theory will include the earliest example of Bruce Morrissette, “Narrative You in Contemporary Literature,” Mary Frances Hopkins and Leon Perkins’ “Second Person Point of View in Narrative” entry in *Critical Survey of Short Fiction*, Brian Richardson’s “The Poetics and Politics of Second Person Narrative,” Uri Margolin’s “Narrative ‘You’ Revisited,” Matt DelConte’s “Why *You* Can’t Speak: Second person narration, voice, and a new model for understanding narrative,” as well as Monika Fludernik’s “Second person fiction: narrative *you* as addressee and/or protagonist” and “Second person Narrative and Related Issues.”

Before arriving at the definitions of second person narrative, we shall identify the proposed basic principles for classifying a text under the category of second person narrative by the above-mentioned theorists. From the second person rank, Morrissette eliminates the uses of “you” when it is functioning as a tool to address an audience. Supporting this distinction, Hopkins and Perkins also point that “the ‘you’ addressed [in the narrative] must be an *actant*; otherwise, we are dealing only with the you-narratee present at least implicitly in every narrative even if it is the narrator herself or himself” (Hopkins and Perkins 122).⁵ Fludernik herself also agrees that second person texts should be differentiated from fictions that merely use second person pronoun. I believe this attitude stems from the categorisation of second person under point-of-view. Since I do not place second person under the category of point of view, I also do not distinguish address function from proper second person narrative.

Richardson adds to this by stating “it is necessary to distinguish second person narrative from other types of fiction that frequently employ the second person pronoun at the level of narration” (Richardson 310-1). The examples of the uses of “you” at the level of narration, according to Richardson may be “authorial colloquy,” “monologue addressed to a real or imaginary listener,” “novels written as if they were being spoken to a proximate auditor,” “internalized debates or subvocal dialogues.” Richardson argues that in these cases, we face a “voice of an unequal dialogue, mimesis thinly disguised as diegesis” (Richardson 310-1).

⁵ Emphasis added.

Fludernik proposes several principles for a text to be considered as a proper second person narrative: For a text to be considered as a second person narrative there has to exist a (usually fictional) protagonist who is referred to by an address pronoun, an extended apostrophe [...]; the projection of the current addressee as the actant in a projected story [...]; or the modulation of generalized you and the function of address to the "real" reader who thus participates within the fictional action. [...] (Fludernik Introduction 302).

Uri Margolin also sets a series of features for identifying second person narratives, and proposes that for a text to be regarded as second person narrative, the text should at least include the following in its discourse:

The presence of a singular global narrator on the highest level of textual embedding [...]; the majority of these 'you' instances refer to *a narrated rather than communicative 'you'*; the speech acts of the narrator concerning the 'you' thus go beyond apostrophes, questions, orders, etc. [...] and tend toward the constative or representative, that is, reporting [...]; *the narrated you is a central agent in the sequence of events being recounted*; the events/actions/states involving this 'you' are specific and individual as regards their time and space, as

opposed to the purely typical or recurrent (generic you, 'you' as equivalent to 'one' or 'everyone').⁶ (Margolin 430)

By setting the above criteria, Margolin points out that the essential feature of any narrative is “the reporting of a series of interconnected actions or events.” For Margolin,

[i]n all [second person narratives] the topic entity of the discourse is also its recipient. The narrated events are hence of immediate significance to the recipient, since he or she is not just an observer, but the main agent of these events as well. Second, as all [second person narratives] are of the *discours* variety, narrator and narratee are in contact, an immediacy that enables the addressee to enter into dialogue with the narrator, commenting on the manner and matter of the story as it is being presented by the narrator. The first feature applies to first-person narratives as well, if we replace 'recipient' with 'speaker'. The second applies to all *discours* type communicative situations. But their joint occurrence is unique to [second person narrative]. (Margolin 443)

As I will argue, the second person does not provide a distinct point-of-view in print literature, and I do not distinguish one use of second person pronoun in narrative from the other. The “you” can exist in different modes in the narrative, and can perform various functions. Since it does not constitute

⁶ Emphasis added.

a category of perspective itself, there is no need to distinguish criteria of what shall be considered as “proper second person fiction.” Continuing with the challenges to the ongoing comprehension and categorisation of second person narratives in print literature, this chapter begins with a review of how you-narratives have been defined, and why and how they have been regarded as second person point of view. Following this review, the chapter continues by explaining modes and functions of second person narrative explored by literary critics. This chapter will then focus on the second person as a faux point-of-view through an examination of literary texts.

i. Definitions

To put it simply, second person narrative in print literature, as the examples in the beginning of this chapter show, is a narrative mode in which the narrator refers to either the protagonist or the implied/real reader of the narrated story as “you.” This protagonist may be an “I,” a specific he or she, or a generic individual who may or may not refer to the specific reader of the text. In some examples of “you” occurrences in narrative, this “you” may be a reference to the reader, constructing a framework for the narrative in which the narrator communicates with the reader through the address function of the pronoun.

One of the most informative publications about second person narratives is *Style* magazine’s special issue, providing invaluable insights into the understanding of you-narratives. In the introduction chapter of the magazine, editor and contributor Monika Fludernik states that “one of the major handicaps to an adequate treatment of second person narrative” is

because the concept lacks an “unequivocal definition” (Fludernik "Introduction" 284). For Fludernik, “the phenomenon of second person fiction proves fairly resistant to unequivocal definition particularly if one pays attention to the historical sources of the genre and considers its anticipations and incipient manifestations” (Fludernik "Introduction" 283). Considering the variety in the modes and the ambiguity in the functions of you-narratives, the reasons of this equivocality in the definition of second person narratives become understandable. Nevertheless, theorists have proposed corresponding definitions to several principles of considering a narrative “second person.” In light of the above-mentioned criteria, we shall now review the definitions of second person narrative, suggested by the same theorists.

Fludernik, in her own definition suggests that second person narratives are “narrative[s] whose (main) protagonist is referred to by means of an address pronoun (usually you)” and adds that “second person texts frequently also have an explicit communicative level on which a narrator (speaker) tells the story of the “you” to (sometimes) the “you” protagonist's present-day absent or dead, wiser, self” (Fludernik "Introduction" 288). For Richardson, “second person narrative may be defined as any narration that designates its protagonist by a second person pronoun. This protagonist will usually be the sole focalizer, and is generally the work’s narratee as well” (Richardson 311). Hopkins and Perkins, focusing on the reportive character of second person narration, states that “the you-utterance is neither

command, nor accusation, nor yet generalization, but report” (Hopkins and Perkins 122).

These definitions themselves do not tell us exactly how the “you” narrative presents a new point of view. My contention is that the lack of clarity in the existing approaches belies the actual role of the you-narrative of being a thematic/rhetoric tool. Matt DelConte, who argues against second person being a point of view, defines second person narration as “a narrative mode in which a narrator tells a story to a (sometimes undefined, shifting, and/or hypothetical) narratee- delineated by *you*- who is also the (sometimes undefined, shifting, and/or hypothetical) principal actant in that story” (DelConte 207-8). In order to reveal how the second person is a faux point of view, I will be both depending on, and moving apart from this definition of second person by DelConte in the final part of this chapter. Before that, we should identify the modes and functions of second person narration in print literature.

ii. Modes

Theorists that study second person as a point of view propose different modes of “you.” Hopkins and Perkins propose four distinct modes of second person narrative, regarding this narrative technique as a point-of-view: second person limited omniscience, where “the protagonist is the narratee [and the] narrator seems superior to the protagonist, wiser, even more articulate” (Hopkins and Perkins 125), the second person personal, in which “the narrator is entirely within the protagonist” (Hopkins and Perkins 127), the second person impersonal centre of consciousness, “a superior

voice, invisible but powerfully present, who serves at the center of consciousness in the novel” (Hopkins and Perkins 128), and second person other self, “exterior voice blends into the interior expression the narrator never seems more knowledgeable, more sophisticated, or more articulate than the protagonist” (Hopkins and Perkins 128).

Fludernik defines different functions of address in the text as such: “the addressee can be a generalized you, or a specific individual (an extra-diegetic narratee), [...] the enunciational instance can be envisioned as, basically, a ‘voice’ without existential attributes” (Fludernik SPF 221). Sometimes, Fludernik says, “the function of address combines with an ‘existential’ situatedness on the *histoire* level: the addressee is *also* an actant” (Fludernik SPF 221). When this is the case, “the addressee—like the narrating and experiencing selves in homodiegetic narrative—instantiates an existential bond with his or her former (discourse) self, positing a subjective verisimilar identity between the address-*you* and the protagonist-*you*” (Fludernik SPF 222).

According to Fludernik, another mode of second person narrative is “where the second person shows up in reference to a fictional protagonist only- there is no observable addressee function, although there may be an omniscient authorial narrator function in the text, a narrator divorced from the world of the fictional *you*” (Fludernik SPF 222). This is what Fludernik calls the “reflector mode” narrative, where the protagonist’s experiences are reflected to us from the protagonist’s perspective, and this is done in the

second person: “the *you* covers up for an *I* of the protagonist in the grip of narrative experience” (Fludernik SPF 222).

Fludernik separates two implications of second person narrative: those that emphasise the addressee function of the pronoun, and those that emphasise the protagonist function. Those that emphasise addressee function constitute the most basic prototype for second person fiction, “conversational storytelling.” Fludernik argues that the use of this conversational storytelling technique in postmodernist fiction induce “the actual reader to, at least initially, feel addressed by the textual *you*” (Fludernik SPF 231).

While the *you* in narrative is usually distinguished as the narratee-protagonist, in some examples being the protagonist is the more important characteristic of the two. Margolin says, “in addition to being the one spoken to, the second person can also be the one spoken of, thereby turning him or her into a participant in the narrated event as well” (Margolin 427). This is where the “*you*” loses its address function, and it symbolises the protagonist in either first- or third-person point of view. In such prototypes that emphasise protagonist function of the pronoun, Fludernik counts instructive/guide book *you* where “the actual addressee is described as *doing* things in a possible application of the instructions” (Fludernik SPF 235), “the ‘courthouse *you*’ [where] the rendering of the defendant’s (or witness’s) actions and thoughts in the reconstructive narration addressed to the defendant/witness” (Fludernik, SPF 236), and the “generalizing *you*” that is “crucially homocommunicative, associating an addressee with actions performed by

that addressee, although those actions are not situated in a fictional past but in a potential future or a conjectural alternative world of atemporal fictionality” (Fludernik, SPF 236). Finally, Fludernik adds to these, “self-address *you*” (Fludernik, SPF 238) where the protagonist *you* is actually the narrator herself.

Richardson, considering the address function as a mere example of using “*you*” pronoun in the text, proposes three types of what seems to him as “proper” second person narrative: “standard,” “subjunctive,” and “autotelic”. In light of what has been presented by Fludernik, and Hopkins and Perkins, and with references to Brian Richardson’s relatively simplistic categorisations, let us begin searching for the modes of *you*-narrative in several examples with the simplest use of the *you*-pronoun: address.

You as an address pronoun can appear in many different faces in narratives. In Laurence Sterne’s *Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman*, the narrator frequently addresses the narratee, calling it “Sir” or “Madam” from time to time, most of the time providing guidance about the story that he is narrating: “This turn of thinking in my father, is what I had to remind you of: - The point you are to be informed of, and which I have reserved for this place, is as follows” (Sterne 101). “*You*” can thus contact us directly, in a communication between the narrator and the reader, through a narrative ruptured with apostrophic uses of *you*.

In Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar’s *Mahur Beste*, the “*you* address” comes in a post-modernist/experimental manner, this time of the author addressing not the narratee, but the protagonist itself, through a letter presented as part of a

framework (or rather end-note) narrative, supposedly written in reply of a previous letter written by the protagonist to the author (not quoted in the text itself): “Of course, if I had not written your story, through which occasion would you draw the attention upon yourself. You had a life that was like a sealed box. I opened that box for you” (Tanpınar, 141-2). The modes of you-usage in narratives can present several address functions, none of which present a distinct point-of view. When the address function is employed, the only perspective present in the narrative is the narrator’s, which cannot be regarded as a second person.

The “you” we encounter in literature, other than the address function, also conveys more than one meaning. Since the diegetic nature of the word opens more opportunities than the first or third person pronouns, the way it is processed in the reader’s mind can vary drastically. Nevertheless, as we will see below, none of these functions present a new perspective, a second person point of view, which we can distinguish from the first- or third-person points of view.

At times, the “you” would refer to “us” specifically, as the reader of the text at that moment, at least for a while, just as the way the first few sentences of Italo Calvino’s *If on a winter’s night a traveller* does. Richardson refers to this as the autotelic mode, in which “the direct address to a ‘you’ that is at times the actual reader of the text and whose story is juxtaposed to, and can merge with, the characters of the fiction” (Richardson 320). This is specifically what we witness in *If on a winter’s night a traveller*, since the first few lines tell a story that the actual reader shares with the protagonist-you:

“You are about to begin reading Italo Calvino’s new novel, *If on a winter’s night a traveller*” (3). The reader, in this first line, is just one moment ahead of the protagonist. Similar to what Richardson identifies, “throughout the text the ‘you’ continues to move, shift, double back, and change again, addressing alternately the real reader, the implied reader, and the narratee” (Richardson 321). The you of the narratee, the protagonist and the reader merge, only to be distinguished in the coming pages, when the characteristics of the protagonist-you are given in more detail, and the story begins to unfold in front of the reader’s eyes as a story that she does not live, but follows through the pages. Thus, the second person cannot incorporate its perspective in the novel. The point of view is in third-person.

Sometimes, the “you” is a generic one, referring to anyone, as in the first sentences of “Can’t You Sleep?” which is the only chapter putting you-narrative in function, in Orhan Pamuk’s *The Black Book*. Margolin defines the generic or impersonal “you,” as where “no actual addressee could be literally included in the reference class of a particular token of a ‘you’” (Margolin 428). As seen in the first few pages of “Can’t You Sleep?”, the you-narratee of the narrative, notwithstanding a touch of hidden self-reflection of the narrator, does not reflect any specific personal characteristics: it is no one in particular, and hence could be anyone: “You are ready: it feels as if you’re wafting away from your own body, wafting away from your beloved legs, your hands, your arms. You are ready, and this so pleases you that you no longer feel the need for these limbs you’re leaving behind; you know you’ll be forgetting them soon too, as you close your eyes” (Pamuk 247). As we see

later on in this chapter, the narrator at one point introduces himself into the narrative: “But no, you still can’t sleep. So do as I do [...]” (Pamuk 248).

While at this point the narrative shifts from the function of “generic you” to the function of “instructive you” (explained below), this shift also blinks an eye to yet another function, the “subtle” first-person narrative in which the narrator tells the story of herself to herself in the you pronoun.

In these examples of self-narration, the “you” rather refers to an “I,” a case that Morrissette explains as the following: “the thinly concealed autobiographical first person implied beneath the ‘you’ [...] betrays itself and breaks forth inconsistently but revealingly as ‘I’” (Morrissette 3). This is similar to what Margolin calls a version of internal dialogue, which include “cases involving a displaced or transferred second person usage” where “a speaker could thus speak to and of him or herself in the second person, thereby creating a situation of internal dialogue or self-communication” (Margolin 428). Erdal Öz’ novel *Yaralısın* (You are Injured), a novel of continuous you-narrative depicting the torture-full prison life of a (semi-) political prisoner could be an example of self-narration. In this type of second person narratives, we witness how the “you” pronoun is employed in a narrative with first-person point of view: the narrator’s knowledge of events narrated remain within the limits of the protagonist’s: “You observe how the ward’s senior behave towards the others, you feel a chill whenever he passes near you. He is someone who tries to look ruthless. As far as you can see, he is not hand in glove with anyone” (Öz 17). This is first-person narrative, but the “you” pronoun has thematic/rhetorical effects that will be

explored further below. One cannot always tell her own story by referring to herself as I, there may be narrative situations in which she would prefer distancing her self from herself, as is the issue in *Yaralısin*: “You forced yourself. You saw that you could not even move yourself. From where you laid, you hardly moved the zipper of your pants, opened it, turned slightly sideways, and with the help of your fingers, to the floor, on the concrete you peed. Once you saw that the spreading wetness was red red blood, you quivered” (Öz 241).

The second mode Richardson presents is the subjunctive, where the narrator makes use of the imperative. In these narratives, there is “the consistent use of the imperative, the frequent employment of the future tense, and the strong distinction between the narrator and the narratee” (Richardson 319). As stated above the second part of “Can’t You Sleep?”, the part that follows the brief introduction of the narrator’s I to the readers of the text, is written in this mode: “So do as I do: turn gently to one side, but without moving your arms or legs; let your head sink into the other end of the pillow, and let your cheek feel the cool. Then think of Princess Maria Paleologina [...]” (Pamuk 248). As we see in this example, in you-narratives, the different modes of the second person continuously merge with each other. The you in these lines, is the narrative of a subtly hidden autobiographical I narrated to a group of unidentified readers, among which one can easily place herself in as no other specification than the narratee-you’s narrative situation (a person in bed who is unable to sleep) is presented in the text.

A final mode of second person narrative may be identified as referring to a “he/she,” existing in the textual world of protagonists. This, according to Richardson, is the standard form, which is similar to traditional narration forms that tell the story of a single protagonist in usually the present tense: “This ‘you’ is inherently unstable, constantly threatening to merge with another character, with the reader, or even with another grammatical person” (Richardson 312). Richardson says this is the mode in which the protagonist/narratee is easily distinguished from the actual/IMPLIED reader, “nevertheless,” to quote Richardson, “one of the more unsettling features of this mode of narration is that this distinction can be collapsed whenever the ‘you’ could refer to the reader as well” (Richardson 312). Such a narrative in which the narrator tells a protagonist’s story by using the third-person point of view and you pronoun is found in the short story by contemporary writer Murat Gülsoy, “Ütopya: 337 Milisaniye” (Utopia: 337 Miliseconds), which uses continuous you-narrative while narrating the dystopian story of “you” in a distant future:

You are now in a different time. You are both inside the era in which you live, and slightly beyond it. You still cannot figure out how things turned out to be this way. You are one of the old ones. You’re of the outworn, of the aged. Just like everyone else, you worked endlessly with the dream of running away and getting rid of the city that has long ago transformed into a city-state. Like everyone else. While your birds that you fed inside

the cage grew old and died one after another, you did not give up. [...] (Gülsoy 14)

We see in the above example that, even though the you pronoun is employed, the narrator tells the story of a consciousness other than himself, and he is only referring to this character as you for narrative effects of identification. The use of you address in a dystopia, after all, is not a surprising combination: this dystopia is yours.

iii. Functions

As there are many different modes of the narrative you, there are also various functions. Why is this decision made to present the narrative in the second person pronoun instead of first- or third-person pronouns, which would more clearly reflect the perspective and point of view of the protagonist? What are the reasons behind this narrative play?

Margolin, while distinguishing the types of “you” in narrative counts: “actual individual reader, generalized actual-reader role, an inscribed communicative ‘you’ (narratee), and an inscribed narrated ‘you’ (narrative agent)” (Margolin 441). These basic types actually offer much for inspecting the functions of second person in narrative.

When the you pronoun is used in the narrative employed in an address-mode, the function is obvious: as seen in the examples given from *Tristram Shandy* or *Mahur Beste*, the you is used to communicate with the reader, the narratee, or the protagonist. While the example in *Tristram Shandy* shows the communication between the narrator and the narratee, in

Mahur Beste it shows the communication between the narrator and the protagonist, and in “Can’t You Sleep?”, the short chapter of Pamuk that employs versatile functions of the you-narrative, the you pronoun shows the communication between the writer/narrator and reader: “If I’m not asleep by now, dear readers, I’ll become an unhappy lover searching for an exact copy of a lost sweetheart but losing all trace of her in my memories; I shall roam about the city, searching for my beloved [...]” (Pamuk 249).

In narratives that use the non-address modes of the you-narrative, as the first thing that comes eventually to mind, reading in second person creates a specific kind of empathy, which is interestingly absent in either first- or third-person pronouns. “You” is a deictic dress we can wear anywhere, whenever we hear or read the pronoun, for the “you” in the text secretly whispers in our ears that we could exist personally in the textual world. Just like when we hear someone calling “you” we almost automatically turn around to see if they are calling us, if possible, any reader would replace himself with the “you” referred by the narrator, and this textual experience is quite different from that of standard immersion a reader experiences in the uses of “I” or “he/she.” “You” has an obscure intimacy that surpasses immersion and draws on the opaque ambiguity of its very existence. Similarly, Richardson states that second person texts “simultaneously invite and preclude identification with the other pronominal voices” (Richardson 313). Similarly, DelConte argues that “the *you* of second person narration (unlike the presence or absence of a narrational *I*) carries extradiegetic effects for the reader” (DelConte 208).

“Second person allows irony, indirect discourse, interior monologues, bouncing, various kinds of distance, and fluctuations of distance between narrator and protagonist” (Hopkins and Perkins 131). Margolin finds three kinds of motivation or justification for the usage of the “you” narrative: “the aesthetic, the cognitive-ethical, and the psychological, associated, respectively, with the positions of the actual reader, narratee, and narrative agent” (Margolin 444).

As the inspection of the different modes of you narratives show, most of the time, the mode in which the “you” pronoun is used in narrative is quite hard to distinguish. Richardson says “some of its characteristic features include ambiguity over the identity and status of the ‘you’: it is, at the outset, epistemologically a more dubious pronoun than the traditional ‘I’ or ‘she’ which we ordinarily have no trouble processing as we encounter a fictional text for the first time” (Richardson 312). The dubiousness of the “you” comes from this indistinguishable character of its modes. Sometimes the mode is clearer than others, but sometimes, it is truly hard to make a clear distinction, and depending on interpretation, one reader can process the “you” differently from another. This obviously brings instability to the “you” used in narration, and obscures the clarity of the text.

Fludernik on the other hand, underlines the specific function of second person narrative as undermining the separation of the narrational level and the story level: "This, happens through second person narrative as homodiegesis consists in the narrator sharing a function both on the narrational and the story planes [...] in heterodiegesis, on the other hand, the

narrator tells the story of *another* person and is not an actant on the story level. [...] Second person fiction is being used increasingly to undermine the separation of these two levels” (Fludernik SPF 220).

Considering above-mentioned theories, let us now examine how the use of second person narrative affects experience of the narrative. We have seen several examples of the employment of second person pronoun. While address-modes such as *Tristram Shandy* and *Mahur Beste* provide a sense of metafictional play in the narrative, the non-address modes encourages the reader towards performing different readings and interpretations.

In “Can’t You Sleep?” we witness a rapidly shifting function of second person. It is at the same time the narratee, the protagonist, the narrator, and the reader, depending on the way she chooses to interpret the text.

Murat Belge, in *Edebiyat Üstüne Yazılar* (Texts on Literature), states that the “you” functions as a tool of empathy in *Yaralısın*, implying anyone and everyone can be in the protagonist’s position:

The reason for the usage of ‘you’, apparently, is because of the need to tell that all of us can be in this position: ‘You could be the man here.’ But since the details increase, instead of keeping up with such identification the word ‘you’ causes the opposite. As we see the ‘you’ we get used to reading it as ‘him’, because we know that what is told here did not happen to us. If ‘him’ was used as the pronoun, in an accustomed way, sooner

or later we would identify with this, and it might have been more effective. (Belge 130-1)

What we see here is once again an expectation from “you” the tasks that need to be fulfilled by the owner of the point-of-view. However, instead of presenting a mere identification, you-narratives provide the text with rich interpretative dimensions. I interpret the employment of you in *Yaralısin*, as a tool to serve the overall thematic objective of the novel, which is to demonstrate how torture alienates one from her own body and mind. Belge identifies “existentialist problematic” (Belge 130) as one of the major characteristic of this novel. The use of the second person pronoun is clearly functioning as a tool of dealing with this existentialist problematic. The novel, which begins with the statement “The ward was filled with ‘Nuri’s” actually ends with a character at the novel asking the protagonist about his name. The protagonist, which has been referred to as “you” throughout the novel, is surprised at the question that was not asked before in the period that the novel covers, and the novel ends with this sentence: “Nuri” you utter softly. ‘My name is Nuri” (Öz 271). Here, being identified by himself with the name Nuri, symbolises how the protagonist has lost his identity completely. All throughout the novel there are clues to a loss of an existentialist basis, and the clues become obvious towards the end: “You are now almost one of them. There is no smile left within you. A vague nausea” (Öz 265). Thus, the protagonist, which cannot refer to himself as “I” anymore, loses himself completely with the tortures that degrades his honour as an individual, and refers to himself as Nuri, which is the way of referring to himself as the third-

person. The story, told in the first-person, thus, ends with a tragic shift to the third person at the very end of the novel.

In another example, Murat Gülsoy's "Ütopya: 337 Milisaniye," the narrative presents a third-person point of view, and employs the you pronoun as a way of naturalising the fantastic, the "science-fiction"esque aura of the story. Using the power of empathy that the you-narrative possesses, the narrator tells the story of an individual, a third person, just before he commits suicide upon the meaninglessness of his life, which he achieved through a life-time effort. In this narrative, just like the Pamuk example, the narrator reveals himself as an "I" in the final paragraph. This "I" distinguishes the narrator from the protagonist clearly, and distances the narrator as he confesses that he has a limited knowledge to the protagonist's inner world:

You open the door of the microwave oven. You flip the hourglass once again. You sit on the chair and put your head inside it. The oven, in which nothing has been cooked before, smells of metal. You slowly touch the buttons of the oven. You think you are making a rehearsal. Maybe for a future crisis of hopelessness. Maybe you really want it. That, I do not know either. All I know is the touch of your finger, clumsily, on the button. (Gülsoy 22)

For Richardson, "the second person is a playful form, original, transgressive, and illuminating, that is always conscious of its own status and often disguises itself, playing on the boundaries of other narrative voices" (Richardson 314). As the differing functions of second person narrative in

fiction shows, this narrative technique has distinct specifications that provide a multi-layered and instable meaning to the text. Being a point-of-view, nevertheless, is not a particular specialty of second person narration. Looking at Gerald Prince's *Dictionary of Narratology*, we see that he defines point of view as: "The perceptual or conceptual position in terms of which the narrated situations and events are presented" (Prince 75). Since the narrated situations in the events in the above-mentioned texts are not presented through the perceptual position of second person, second person narratives cannot be defined to be a version of point-of-view. Second person narrative, as a type of narrative employing the "you" pronoun in order to produce thematic or rhetoric implications, thus, is actually a *faux* point-of-view.

iv. Second person: a faux point-of-view

While most theorists take it for granted that second person is not a point of view, Fludernik places second person parallel to first and third. Talking about a passage from Nuruddin Farah, she comments: "[this example] is a true and proper instance of second person narrative from a novel in which first-, second- and third-person narrative alternate chapter by chapter" (Fludernik "Introduction" 283). According to Fludernik, "the fictional *you* cannot be read as identical to oneself, the actual, empirical reader, nor can the text be interpreted consistently as one of continual address" (Fludernik SPF 227). Once fictional you is not considered as the reader, there remain two perspectives for the owner of the you pronoun: the you that is present in print literature is either the narrator's self, (which, through self-narration, presents us first-person perspective) or the narrator's "other,"

which would be a character in the textual world of the narrative (which presents us third-person perspective). And in the address situations, since the reader or narratee's position is already outside of the text, these implementations have no chance of providing us with a distinct point of view. When the address function is at stake, there is only the point of view of the addressor present in the text, which is the first-person, perspective of the "I" of the narrator.

Let us consider an excerpt from the example passage from Farah's novel, quoted in Fludernik:

You wondered if the man had made sense to the others since you didn't understand him. You were looking at the other faces for clues when Misra's image came right before you, placing itself between you and the men you were staring at. You would remember the same image when, years later, at school and in Mogadiscio, you were shown the pictures of Egyptian mummies by one of Salaado's relations, namely Cusmaan. The image which insisted on imposing itself on your brain was that of a Misra, already dead, but preserved; a Misra whose body, when you touched it, was cold as ice, as though it had spent a night or two in the mortuary. [...] Then you told the image to vanish—and it did. And you were staring at the men's faces, in silence, in the kind of thank-you-God hush which comes after a Muslim has sneezed. (Farah, *Maps* 123 qtd. in Fludernik, 281-2)

Fludernik says that, “the you is here no longer anchored to a virtual narratee, to a generalized “you” that might appeal to the reader as an identificationary option: it exclusively refers to the protagonist” (Fludernik 283). But how would this protagonist’s point of view differ from a protagonist who is referred to as I or he/she? Fludernik says that at the same time, “the protagonist remains the internal focalizer throughout the novel” (Fludernik 283). Since the internal focalizer remains the same, the perspective may change from first to third. But what happens when it is referred to as you? This does not provide a new point of view, as no specific implication is present. This usage, at most, functions as a tool of ambiguity, which makes it a tool of rhetoric rather than a specific point of view.

Richardson also positions the second person between the first and third person points of view: “I will try to clarify the shifting relationships that the second person has with its more established and conventional neighbors, the first and third persons” (Richardson 310). Nevertheless, in his article, he also presents the you-narrative as a narrative technique rather than a point-of-view:

[i]t is an original mode of narration, one that allows innovative authors a fresh way to treat traditional fictional situations, and one that permits authors to explore the boundaries of and invent variations on a new fictional voice, as many of the authors discussed above amply demonstrate. It is arguably the most important technical advance in fictional narration since

the introduction of the stream of consciousness. (Richardson 327).

Bruce Morrissette also refers to the usage of second person as a literary technique, a basis for a unique narrative mode, rather explicitly, when he states that it is a point-of-view: “various modes of ‘you’ which modern novelists have developed have been employed with a certain amount of conscious technical intent” (Morrissette 11).

Matt DelConte, on the other hand, is among those who study second person in detail, notwithstanding his arguments against it being a type of point of view: “we encounter an inevitable overlap of second person with either first- or third-person because second person is always also either first- or third-person” (DelConte 204). As DelConte argues, while the first and third person points of view are “defined along the axis of narrator, second person narration is defined along the axis of narratee—more precisely, by the coincidence of narratee and protagonist” (DelConte 204). The “you” refers to a perspective that is absent in the text: the “you,” in a tradition of narratology, which centres on voice and narrator, is a faux-perspective, and cannot be regarded as a point of “view.” “Second person narrative by definition is a point of reception, not a point of seeing or speaking” (DelConte 210).

The fact that the second person is regarded as a point-of-view underestimates its thematic and rhetorical effects on the reader. When the focus of the studies on second person belies in the argument that it is indeed a type of point-of-view, “the attempts to account for these thematic and rhetorical effects have been inadequate” (DelConte 206). What DelConte

does, consequently, is to propose “a model based on the triad of narrator, protagonist, and narratee” (DelConte 210) which respectively refers to speaker, text, and audience. DelConte, in his model, differentiates Genette’s influential taxonomy of homo- and heterodiegesis “because it foregrounds narrative functions and diegetic planes rather than ontological worlds” (DelConte 212).

Second person narratives present us an unfamiliar narrative, challenging the understanding of what narrative should be. Most of the theorists studying second person narratives underline the incomprehensible, ambiguous, and obscure nature of this narrative technique. Margolin says that some features of second person narrative “[go] against the grain of our intuitive understanding of what story telling is all about: namely, reporting about an event structure that does not interact with the reporting act itself, even though it may be contemporaneous with it” (Margolin 432). Richardson also points to the ambiguity of second person narration, stating it is “an extremely protean form, and its very essence is to eschew a fixed essence” (Richardson 311). Fludernik says second person narratives address the category of person and the “dichotomy between *discours* and *histoire*, relation between the narratee (and “you” protagonist) and the implied or real reader” (Fludernik "Introduction" 292) while regarding it as one of the most “nonnatural” narrative modes (Fludernik "Introduction" 290).

As I have tried to show above, I argue against the presence of a distinct second person point of view in literature, and suggest that you-narratives provide us with a rather sophisticated narrative technique that has

ambiguous effects on the reader. “You” is thus basically the name of the focal character in the narrated story. Due to its deictic existence, the use of you as a narrative agent has distinct implications. It is not a point of view, although this does not lessen its value or significance in literature. “You” does not have a voice in the narrative, but the narrating consciousness does. The fact is, “you” does not exist in the textual world of print literature. Thus, while the focal character is “you,” the story is narrated by a narrator’s voice. Since there can never be an “actual” you of a narrator in the textual world of print literature, the you, which is the focal character, is either first-person (which is the case in examples in which there is self-narration in the second person) or third-person (all the other times, except for self-narration). “You” is only there to be talked about (becoming narrative itself—as a protagonist of first- or third-person point of view), or talked to (becoming the narratee/reader), and does not have a function of providing a new perspective.

If the point of view can be regarded as a symbol of the relationship of the focal character to the narrator, we can argue that when the narrator and the focal character are identical, the perspective is first-person, and when they are not, the perspective can be considered third-person. As we see, there is no space for “you” here. You, as a deictic word, can never fully exist and have a different relationship to the narrator than being her or being her other. At least, that is the case in traditional print literature. What happens in the realm of cybertexts, where the reader/user has the possibility of handling the reins of this “you,” and actually becomes the narrator’s “you” by

performing what “you” in the narrative should do, is the subject of the following chapter.

Chapter 3: Second person point of view in cybertexts: performing the narrative

As presented in the previous chapter, second person is a rather unexplored narrative mode in traditional print literature. While the second person is a familiar mode of narration in the realm of cybertexts, the subject is rather neglected in literary analyses and its implications have not yet been explored in depth.⁷

This chapter analyses the differing functions of second person pronoun in cybertexts from those in print literature, and demonstrates how the use of the “you” pronoun provides an alternative point of view. Through a review of perspective in cybertext theory, the narrative scheme of Seymour Chatman, the literary performative, and several cybertexts of different genres (hypertexts, interactive fictions, choose your own adventures) the chapter explores second person point of view in cybertexts.

i. Changing position of the reader in cybertexts

As we see in traditional print literature the second person narratives are essentially either the first or third person in disguise, notwithstanding the different modes and functions of the employment of the “you” pronoun. With the inclusion of the personal perspective and three additional user functions to that of interpretative, in other words through the inclusion of the real reader

⁷ There are two short papers dealing with the functions of second person in electronic literature: “The Use of the Second Person in Electronic Fiction” by Ruth Nesvold, given at the IALS conference in Freiburg in September 1997, and Jill Walker’s “Do You Think You’re Part of This? – Digital texts and the Second Person Address,” published in *Cybertext Yearbook 2000* edited by Eskelinen and Koskimaa.

within the textual universe, the cybertexts provide us with possibilities of works in second person point of view.

The distinguishing feature of cybertexts that creates the space for the second person point of view is the new categorisation of perspective:

If the text requires the user to play a strategic role as a character in the world described by the text, then the text's perspective is personal; if not, then it is impersonal. A text such as Italo Calvino's *If on a Winter's Night a Traveler...* (Calvino 1993) pretends to involve the reader as a participant, but there is nothing for the real reader to do but read. In a MUD,⁸ on the other hand, the reader is (in part) personally responsible for what happens to his or her character. (Aarseth 63)

On the other hand, what we see in conventional literature in general can be regarded as impersonal perspective since the reader is outside the textual world and plays no role in the textual existence of the characters or the plot. Remembering the three types of focalization proposed by Genette (non-focalized narrative, internal focalization, and external focalization), "personal perspective forms an obvious addition to Genette's three categories of focalization" (Eskelinen "Cybertext Narratology" 62). Since the

⁸ Multi-User Dungeons (MUDs) are earlier examples of multi-user virtual worlds of online gaming. These are text-based virtual worlds providing their users with brief explanations of the environment and races that live in that fantasy world. To create a character accordingly, and act in that fantasy world is up to the user, who types in commands to the computer to create her story.

impersonal perspective is also present in several hypertext examples, I do not wish to extend my claims to all cybertexts.

In *Cybertext*, Aarseth presents a scheme in which he positions different texts into different typology variables (explained briefly in the first chapter of this study). In this scheme of 23 different texts, only 10 are identified to hold a personal perspective. These ten texts include text adventures, text generating programs, and MUD environments as well as two print books, one being *I Ching*, an ancient Chinese text providing a set of oracular statements that is rather used as a fortune-telling book today, and the other *Money Spider*, a gamebook in the choose-your-own-adventure fashion, that is acclaimed for the minimalism of its rules and the wideness of the options it offers to the reader. This inclusion of the print literature once again demonstrates the inclusiveness of cybertext theory: being digital is not regarded as an essential aspect, but digital cybertexts provide better opportunities for the personal perspective: “the added level of interactivity in electronic text, however, the element of choice which goes beyond closing the book or skipping a chapter, tends to draw the reader even further into the text” (Nestvold). The reading experience in digital cybertexts, then, becomes a virtual and literary performance of the real reader. She does not only read what happens to her when she chooses between this page and that page, but she also participates by following rather complicated links and occasionally adding to the text in order to see what happens next in the story depending on the choices she makes.

In works with the personal perspective, the reader is expected to do more than merely follow the story; she is expected to take over the focalization provided in the text, or else either the story does not go further or “the story may continue but its reading may not if [she] manage[s] to get [her] character killed or hurt” (Eskelinen “Cybertext Narratology” 62). Burdening the reader with textual responsibilities that affect both the characters and the plot, cybertexts that provide a personal perspective to the reader include the “real reader” within the textual universe side by side with the narrator, the narratee, the protagonist, and the implied author and reader.

Saymour Chatman presents us with a diagram of “whole narrative-communication situation” (Chatman *Story and discourse: narrative structure in fiction and film* 151) in which different actors active in the narrative situation are identified. In this diagram, while the implied author, the narrator, the narratee, and the implied reader are positioned within the narrative text, the real author and the real reader are positioned outside the box representing this textual/narrative universe. Within the narrative text, he finds the implied reader and author to be immanent in a narrative, while the narrator and the narratee are optional (151). When we turn to Gerald Prince’s *Dictionary of Narratology*, however, we see that Prince argues that the narrator and the narratee are also immanent in the narrative. While in his view there is always a narrator and a narratee as long as there is a narrative, he differentiates them from the real and implied authors and the real and implied readers, respectively.

As what truly affects the narrative situation in cybertexts is the changing position of the real reader, we shall examine more closely how this narrative figure is defined. Prince defines the implied reader as “audience presupposed by a text; a real READER’S second self (shaped in accordance with the IMPLIED AUTHOR’s values and cultural norms)” (43) while he defines the (real) reader as the decoder or interpreter, which “is not to be confused with the IMPLIED READER of a narrative or with its NARRATEE and, unlike them is not immanent to or deducible from the narrative” (81). Chatman positions the real reader outside the narrative transaction and identifies it as “extrinsic and accidental to the narrative” (150) but says that it is “of course, indispensable to [the narrative] in an ultimate practical sense” (151). As we see in these accounts, the real reader, practically and essentially necessary for the narrative, is in fact outside of the textual space. She is an interpreter that is extrinsic to the narrative situation: an outsider of the narrative. Cybertexts with personal perspective, however, present us with a totally different narrative situation, since in order for the narrative to exist, there needs to be an operating real reader, who manipulates the narrative, leads the protagonist through the story, and decides upon taking textual action in order for the plot to evolve: she needs to manipulate the story in order for the story to exist.

So what happens when the reader enters the textual universe? Taking part in the communication offered by the text, the reader travels between different positions; at times becoming the narratee, at times the narrator, at times the protagonist. Her extradiegetic role is thus transformed into a liquid

format; she travels between different narrative levels, she interacts with diverse aspects of the story, within the rules and boundaries determined by the cybertext. The limits and rules may range from the story line drawn by the author, the different paths offered by the links, and the capacity of the program to understand what has been written by her to “the length of each day, the kinds of magic and technology that exist, the game mechanics of fighting and casting spells, social structures, physical characteristics of the species you belong to and so on” (Walker 40). While a similar effect is seen in choose-your-own-adventure books, the interaction level is much higher in electronic cybertexts. When you read print literature “there’s no space within the text for you to respond” (Walker 35). However, the electronic cybertexts present us a “you” that “is expected to answer, unlike its non-electronic counterparts,” and therefore “the identification is external and physical, and not just emotional” (Walker 38). By becoming “answerable,” the “you” of cybertexts indeed become a real form of address, and the reader, by answering that address, beyond reading, practices a virtual literary performative.

Mentioning the performative aspect here is not coincidental, as “the literary performative has a lot in common with the function of you in electronic texts” (Walker 43). As proposed by J. L. Austin, there is a “distinction between constative utterances, which make a statement, describe a state of affairs, and are true or false, and another class of utterances that are not true or false and that actually perform the action to which they refer: performatives” (Culler 504). When performatives are used in literature, “to

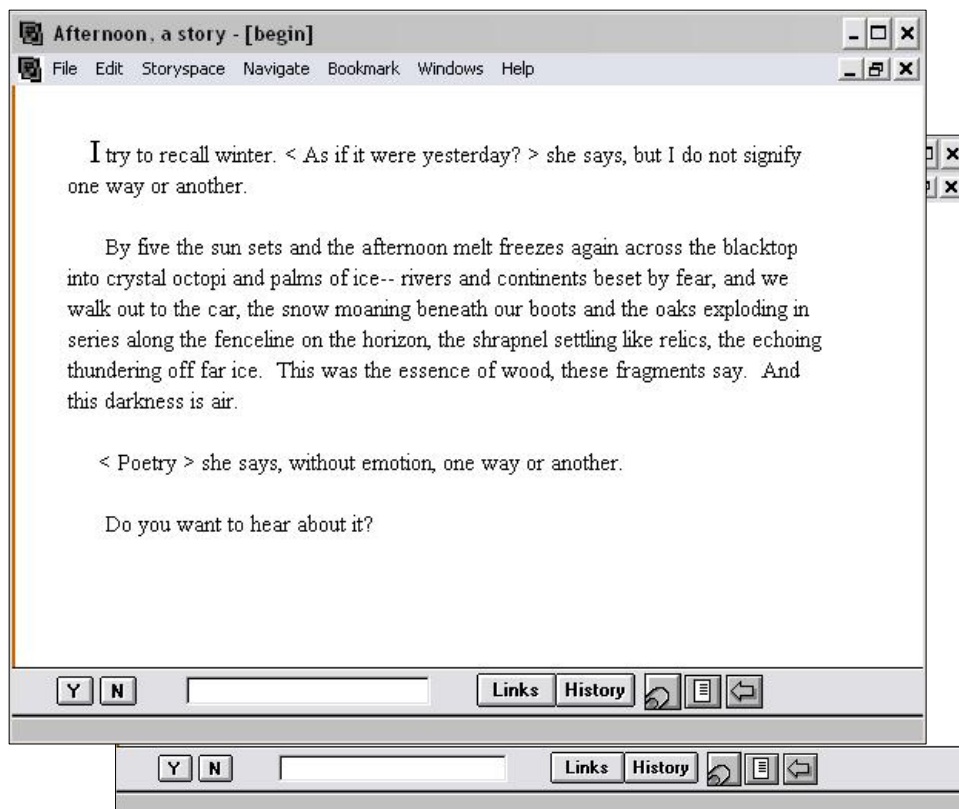
read the address is to perform what one reads” (Kacandes 141). What happens in cybertexts with second person narrations is also a variant of the literary performative. When you click on the mouse to follow the link to a path, or when you enter into the program the words “go north,” you actually (or rather virtually) go north, and find whatever it is in the north of your location; a spring, a forest, a cabin, whatever there is to find. The main difference is the aspect of virtuality, since when you utter words like “I do” or “I promise” in real life, this means you really do perform these actions; in cybertexts, you do this as part of the textual universe that you have recently been invited to, and thus you perform the literary performative virtually. In order to be a part of the textual world, “you’re supposed to forget all about Chatman’s careful separation of real reader, implied reader and narratee. [...] you have to enact the text’s performative in order to play” (Walker 45). The situation is not only like this in interactive fictions but also Internet fictions or hyperfictions. Since the narrative urges the reader to become the “you” in the sentences, through her participatory actions such as clicking the mouse or replying the questions posed by the text, “you accept your role; you become “you”. You perform an involuntary performative” (Walker 46-7).

ii. Second person in hypertext fiction

In hyperfictions, second person narrative may be functioning in both the way it functions in print literature (i.e. referring to a character other than the reader), and in a unique way of constituting an alternative perspective. The “you” we encounter in hypertexts may be referring to a character in the story (such as the case in *afternoon*), or to the reader as protagonist,

narratee, or narrator. Most of the times the referral to the real reader as the protagonist, narratee and narrator happens simultaneously, or the reader constantly changes positions between these three positions, never losing her essential position as a flesh and blood reader.

Hypertext fictions may function in different ways: They may require the reader's manipulation in order to draw a unique story line, such as the case in *Joe's heartbeat in Budapest*, or they may offer static beginning and ending points to the reader, and allow her to draw zigzags along the line in between these two points as she likes, such as the case in *24 Hours with someone you know*. No matter how effective in changing the plot or other aspects of the story, the utterance of "you" in hypertexts, an apostrophe to the reader, often requires a response. You are faced with forking paths, and it is up to you to choose which one you will take, most usually with a click of the mouse, or by typing in characters; "in electronic texts, your scripted response



Contrary to how it has been analysed by Walker and Nestvold, there is no genuine second person in *afternoon, a story*. The text actually begins with an excerpt from the narrative ending with the sentence: "Do you want to hear about it?" Walker interprets this as "When you are asked, "Do you want to hear about it?" in *afternoon*, it's almost impossible to keep your distance to that address" (Walker 46) and Nestvold, confusing this address with the second person point of view, states, "the reader has the option of literally answering, and the fiction will take a different turn whether the answer given is "yes" or "no": the answer to the direct address has consequences for the progress of the fiction, making the addressee a more specific being than merely an implied reader or ideal audience" (Nestvold). This actually is the hyperfiction functioning with the inputs of the reader. The reader is here once again in the textual universe, stirring the wheel of the narrative from one direction to the other, but since she is not referred to directly by the narrative, she is in fact manipulating the story of a protagonist who tells the story in first person perspective. Since the "you" in the question does not refer to the flesh and blood reader reading the text, there is no second person point of view functioning here. A click on the word "it" at the end of the question leads you to the fragment where the narrator states "I want to say I may have seen my son die this morning."

Since the reader needs to click her mouse or type in yes, no, or anything she wants when she's face to face with this question in order for the story to unfold, at the first reading, the fragment asking "you" if it wants to

“hear about it” may be regarded as an incident of second person point of view. Nevertheless, after reading *afternoon* more than once, this fragment reappears to gain its meaning within the context of a conversation between two characters in the text, and the reader realises that the “you” of the sentence is indeed not the reader, but a character in the story, specifically the psychiatrist that the protagonist visits in order to overcome his (either real or unreal) experience of seeing his wife and son dead in a car accident.

The two articles on the second person in electronic literature mistakenly judge this utterance as second person perspective, since *afternoon* is in fact a story that communicates with its reader in different ways. The story unfolds in a way that depends on the choices of the reader, and from time to time, the reader encounters parts referring to her own reading experience: the above quotation from the text is a perfect example. In this reflexive fiction that tells both a story and a story about itself in parallel fragments that interfere with the story, the closure that is uttered in the above quotation is both referring to the closure of text for the reader, and the closure of the event for the protagonist. The path chosen by the reader, the point of narrative that the reader sees this fragment defines how it is interpreted. Remembering that *afternoon* was categorised by Aarseth as a text with impersonal perspective which is static, determinable, intransient, with controlled access and making use of conditional linking and only the explorative function, we see that even though it has resemblances with print literature, indeed, with the task of arranging the fragments (if even partly) given to the reader, the fragmentary nature of *afternoon* changes from one

reading to the other, way beyond the changes caused by interpretation in conventional print literature.

Looking at other hypertextual fictions available on the internet, however, we see that the second person pronoun refers to the protagonist, the narratee and the narrator, thus offering a different perspective: both *Joe's heartbeat in Budapest*, *24 Hours with someone you know*, and *The Brain of Katherine Mansfield*, though in very different manners, present the reader stories with a second person point of view.

I cannot remember which page of *Joe's heartbeat* I've come across first, but I believe the title page should be <http://www.lit-arts.net/JHIB/you500.htm>,⁹ which identifies the text as “a hypertext conversation by Ruth Nestvold.” The link on the page sends you to a page identified at the address bar with the number 300 (you300.htm), and there you see the beginning of your conversation with the text: “Strange. It's been a while. I'm having trouble putting all your features back into one face. Does that sound stupid?” You have been given four options to answer, all of them leading to a different path through the story since the text reacts to the answers you choose to give to it. For example, if you choose to click on the word “bitch” insistently, the narrative terminates itself: “Okay, that does it, I'm outta here. Don't try calling me again. I won't call you.” Or if you press on the word “maybe” too often, the text says “Hey, is this a discussion or a monologue? If you want this to go anywhere, you have to do your part, you

⁹ The title page shows itself in other URLs as well throughout the story: <http://www.lit-arts.net/JHIB/you420.htm>. This link though forwards you to a different point of beginning than the title page at .../you500htm: <http://www.lit-arts.net/JHIB/you220.htm>

know. I'm slowly getting the feeling that I'm talking to myself. You have the same impression?" A couple of more "maybe"s bring you into a vicious cycle, from which if you want to exit, you have to choose either side: yes or no. By getting into a dialogue with the narrator of the text, exploring the story in many ways, we learn that the narrator and the "you" character that s/he is supposedly engaged in a conversation with, had had an affair years ago in Budapest, when the narrator was together with a different man, named Joe.

There is also a point where the author personally interferes with the narrative. At one point, if you are determinate enough to win the heart of the narrator with whom you have obviously shared a past secret love affair in Budapest, you reach a "happy beginning." At this point, the text asks you if you would like to "start over." The yes option brings you back to the beginning of the story, which you have the option to reconstruct in a different manner; the no option provides you no further links by stating that "Well then, there's no point in continuing this, is there?", the maybe option opens up new links and new possible extensions to the story; and the "bitch" option here provides an unexpected answer from the text: "That was completely inappropriate, you know. It's one thing if you speak to my narrator that way - s/he's only a persona, a fictional construct. It's another matter entirely if you speak to me, your fictionalized author, that way. Just to punish you, I'm not going to give you any more options." Not only the text surprises you, but there is also a teasing tongue below, sticking from the computer screen.¹⁰

¹⁰ <http://www.lit-arts.net/JHIB/you149.htm>

There are other times that the text refers directly to the real reader, from the mouth of the author:

That's good. I'm just an author, after all, creating these dialogue options for your entertainment or edification or torture, depending on your philosophy of aesthetics or reading or what moves you. This is just a fiction, and as an educated reader at the turn of the 21st century, you (the reader) do not want to be caught behaving in a naive fashion, taking on the role of the "you" (the character) I (the author) have created (with your help). Or do you? Could it be you want to get back to the fiction?" (You the reader, <http://www.lit-arts.net/JHIB/you100.htm>)

"Not surprising when there are so few options to start with; a "yes," a "no," a "maybe," an occasional "bitch" when you're fed up. As an alternative, would you like to return to where we were before we started this discussion?" (No, <http://www.lit-arts.net/JHIB/you462.htm>). In *Joe's heartbeat in Budapest*, depending on your reading experience, you have different story lines, you learn either more or less about your past with the narrator that you are sharing the dialogue, and you either fight with or reunite as consequence of your choice of answer. Here, the narrative addresses "you" directly, and you change positions from being a flesh and blood reader, to the narratee, the protagonist, and even to the narrator, at points that you click on your chosen answer from among the four options presented to you.

Quite differently from what happens in *Joe's heartbeat*, in *24 Hours with someone you know*, a short story by Philippa J Burne, you read a story, and throughout the story, you are faced with situations which you must choose one option or the other. When the text tells you that "She looks you up and down. 'I suppose you'd better *come in*.'" it also provides you another option: "You look up and down the street and wonder whether you should just *leave*." (<http://www.glasswings.com.au/modern/24hours/entry.htm>, italics mark the links) Here you have the choice of either choosing the "come in" or the "leave" link, leading the story in one direction or the other. While this fiction is designed in the "choose-your-own-adventure" fashion, there is a basic difference: Whichever links you choose, you arrive at the end, at a picture of a man filling up the baggage of a car (<http://www.glasswings.com.au/modern/24hours/dawn.htm>). This way, the text does not really offer choices to you, choices that you must suffer or benefit from the consequences; but it gives you a puzzle, which you decide to finalise either this way or that way:

The reader takes on a mediating function, but her power over the text is quite limited: the imitation of the form of text adventures is only marginally successful in an interactive sense, since no matter which choices the reader makes, they ultimately bring her back to the same story line – whether or not the protagonist goes to the bar or the park has no consequences for the progression of events. (Nestvold)

Nevertheless, when the second person point of view is the issue, even though the choices of the reader may not be altering the end of the story, her choices are still crucial, as the story does not go further unless she makes these choices. So, once again the “you” functions in the text, referring to a second person, inviting the reader to take part in the narrative, and providing a second person point of view to the narrative.

*The Brain of Katherine Mansfield*¹¹ by Bill Manhire presents us a different and a more typical choose-your-own-adventure experience:

You are just an ordinary New Zealander. One day, with nothing better to do, you enter a bookshop; your eye is caught by a book in a large display case. Interesting title: *The Brain of Katherine Mansfield*. And it's attractively designed and illustrated, too.

You leaf casually through the pages. Well, this really does look interesting. Creatures from outer space . . . a mysterious tattoo . . . magnificent scenic locations . . . secret caverns deep below Lake Te Anau . . . South Island mushroom farming . . . A dozen different endings . . .

Well . . . maybe not. Yet why do you feel that your whole life has been leading you to this very moment? What strange

¹¹ <http://www.het.brown.edu/people/easther/brain/index.html>

power is this book exerting on you? You reach out. You hesitate.

This is the moment of choice. It is up to you. You can put the book down now, walk quickly from the shop. Yet you hover, you hesitate. And yes! you were born to turn the pages of adventure! Your grip tightens on *The Brain of Katherine Mansfield*. Your heart thunders with anticipation . . .

As this title page shows, what we encounter in *The Brain of Katherine Mansfield* is the transference of a printed choose-your-own-adventure book into a hypertextual web page available on the Internet. This fiction operates very similar to a printed choose-your-own-adventure; the act of turning the page is briefly exchanged with the act of clicking on a link on the text. Even the links are identified with words such as “go to 14.” As you read your own story here, you encounter different situations, are offered different choices of paths or inventories. In accordance with your decisions, the story either moves forward, or you die, just to begin again from the start, this time with the knowledge of what not to choose if you want to keep reading the story. The reader is included in the textual universe and the text unfolds in accordance with her actions and decisions. Notwithstanding the fact that the reader’s contribution here is in its minimum, we see here a second person point of view. This puts the choose-your-own-adventure books in a unique position. Since there are no other genres that provide these options in the conventional print literature, choose your own adventure series, though with limited access and limited opportunities, when they operate as a cybertext,

indeed provide a second person perspective to the reader. The reader once again becomes the narratee and the protagonist while she reads, and the narrator of the text while she turns the pages; just like in the instance of clicking on the mouse to follow the links. The focalizer “you” is not a third or first person presented in the narrative: it is the second person of the narrative, the other, the real reader, who becomes the protagonist, the narratee or the narrator from time to time.

iii. Second person in interactive fiction

I cannot, of course, place you bodily in this valley. Instead “YOU” are represented inside the computer. You are allocated, for instance, a certain strength which will go down if you’re stabbed, belted, etc. by unfriendly creatures, rather like in real life. Under normal circumstances you will gradually recover from any hurt, but like everything in this life, there are exceptions to the rule. Although the machine becomes your physical body, you are of course still left with your own mind! It will be your decisions which determine your fate. (*Twin Kingdom Valley*, “Instructions”)

Looking at the genre of interactive fiction,¹² we see a different function of the second person perspective in cybertexts. The above quotation from the instructions of *Twin Kingdom Valley*, a text-based adventure game, perfectly summarises the position of the real reader face to face with a work

¹² There are also discussions around and against the usage of this term (see Aarseth 48-51).

of interactive fiction. In interactive fictions, “conventional mode is for the text of the program to address the player, who is also a reader, as if she were the character. Reciprocally, the player types in commands in second person imperative form, e.g. 'examine door'" (Nestvold).

Looking at what happens in *Twin Kingdom Valley*, we see that at the beginning of the text, you see a house in north, and you enter. Here you see a stone jug, a key and a lamp. You are expected to command the computer in an imperative form, you type in “take x,” and the computer responds “I have it now.” In interactive fictions, the format of the responses of the computer varies. Different programs or emulators narrate responses to your actions in different ways such as “taken,” “you take x,” or as it is the case here, “I have it now.” Nevertheless, even though the computer interprets your command in first person when you command to take inventories in *Twin Kingdom Valley*, when you go out of the house, into the forest path, and see a spring where you type in “drink,” the computer responds: “the cool water refreshes you.” Here you are, the second person, virtually refreshing with the cool water that you have just ordered yourself to drink. You virtually perform what you narrated yourself: you drink the water, and it refreshes you. The role-playing aspect of interactive fictions caused by its connection to the genre of games pushes you into the textual world. You may have never drunk that water, but you drank it, because you chose it out of all possible actions within the world of this interactive fiction.

In interactive fictions, the computer program presents you with settings and situations, while by giving directions you pick inventories, use

them to advance in the plot and walk through the adventure. When the program is done explaining the environment, “you narrate your own actions” (Walker 40). Virtually performing what you order the protagonist to do, you try to make the right decisions, pick the right inventories, and use them at the right time in the right way, in order to accomplish whatever task you have undertaken within the textual agreement between you and the interactive fiction you decided to explore.

In the interactive fiction examples, the boundaries between narrator, narratee, protagonist, and the reader are blurred. Most of the time, the narrator is the program, the emulator that tells you the story. It tells you where you are, what your surroundings are, and once you type in commands for your character inside the program to perform, it narrates back to you what this character of yours has consequently experienced. Here, the employment of the second person pronoun is “to facilitate identification with the main character, but it is also a result of the interactive nature of the reading experience, the fact that the genre is as much game as fiction” (Nestvold). Throughout your experience with the interactive fiction, you are the narratee, the protagonist, and the narrator of the story. You learn your limitations, you build up your expectations and plans of reaching the goal, and then “you’re on the producing end of the communication model and not just a recipient” (Walker 40). The game-like nature of cybertext thus changes the way the story is told.

While most of the interactive fictions operate in a similar way of presenting surroundings and a task for the reader to fulfil, a unique example

of interactive fiction, *Photopia* by Adam Cadre, presents us a different employment of the genre's basic principles. *Photopia* also presents us a unique situation that the perspective of the narrative changes from one reading to the other. While employing the "you" pronoun in its narration, after the work is read once, the perspective of the narrative turns into third person point of view in the following readings. Hence, in fact, *Photopia* presents us a work that is both second person and third person perspective, depending on the reader's past experiences with the narrative.

In *Photopia*, we read a story that is chronologically mixed up. As you go along the way, things slowly begin to gain meaning as a whole, and once you reach the end of the story, everything is in its right place, and you can never go back and read from the beginning, imagining things happening any other way. *Photopia* has a plot that keeps the reader's attention alive and its literary value contributes greatly to the game quality. *Photopia* is one of those rare works that show a wonderful experience of how games interact with stories in order to enrich each other: *Photopia* would not be possible to reach its current effect on the reader if it was not published in its current format as an interactive fiction. The identification it presents in the first reading has a very unique effect on the reader.

At the beginning of *Photopia*, you are presented with an option of experiencing the narrative with color. If you want color at this point, you read different sections of the plot in different colors, and the colors themselves become clues for you to attach the fragments of the story to each other. Then you enter the story: there is a screen with the following sentences, in

quotations: “Will you read me a story?” - “Read you a story? What fun would that be? I’ve got a better idea: let’s tell a story together.” That is what you will be doing during your reading experience. You will tell a story together with this program. Then you click on the screen again, and there you are, drunk, in a car that your other drunken friend drives, you go along, talk to him, he speeds up, he does not see the red light, you crash.

Beginning with this car crash, the plot of *Photopia* continues to unfold in two different segments. One segment narrates real life events that appear on the screen in black and white, and the other narrates fantasy worlds, appearing on the screen in color. Sequentially, there is one real life segment then one fantasy segment, and while chronologically mixed up, these sequential segments are linked to each other with the wordings in the beginnings and at the ends: You see a red light in real life, you enter the red planet in the sequential fantasy world, you crash on water in fantasy world, you hear a splash in the sequential real life segment, you press on the chest of your daughter whom you take out from the pool and she spits out the water that nearly killed her in real life, you find yourself under the sea in the sequential segment from the fantasy world, and so on... The real life and fantasy world are thus constructed in a chain, in a dialogue that keeps the plot interesting and integral.

The puzzles of *Photopia* are very simple, and you can type in help anywhere if you cannot find out what to do next. The game does not offer you alterations in the plot, you may skip some parts in the dialogues between

characters or not, but in order to finish the story; you have only one path to follow.

The fantasy world segments resemble a typical work of interactive fiction where you have a task to fulfil in a designated area, but the real life segments keeps you attached to the story: your real task, as the reader, actually consists of stitching the fragments together. At first segments, you do not understand what is going on in the story: whom the “you” of the text refers to, who the “you” is supposed to “be” remains obscure until the end of the work. And once you reach the end of the work and understand what has been going on, you realise that you have been performing a faux second person all throughout the story.

To summarise *Photopia*'s story, once you're done reading the fragments presented with a mixed chronological order, the story that is revealed to you (and you here refers to every reader of the story since there are no different paths provided) in a very sentimental way is this: Alley is a young girl, who was nearly dying when she was only four when she decided to dive into their pool on the backyard, and was saved by her mother. Alley has a nice relationship with her father, and she frequently talks with him about astronomy, the stars, etc. Alley has a date with Joe, a boy from high school who has a crush on her, on Saturday night. On Friday night, Alley goes to the house of the Mackeye family, to babysit their little kid Wendy. Wendy adores Alley, as does everyone else in the story. She makes up stories for Wendy, allowing her to contribute (these stories make up our fantasy world segments). After the Mackeyes come back home, Alley gets

into the car with Mr. Mackeye, and while driving back home, a car (the car that was driven by a drunken young man at the very beginning of the story) crashes into them, Alley dies. This simple story, within the interactive medium, is presented in such a way that you experience all of this story through the eyes of those around Alley: you begin as the boy in the car that crashes into hers, you become her mom when she was trying to save her from drowning, you become her dad and talk to her about the skies and the stars, you become Joe and ask her out, you become Mr. and Mrs. Mackeye, you become Wendy... All throughout the story, and most of the times without realising what role you perform, you perform these figures that are attached to Alley closely. The protagonist of the story is Alley, but you as the reader experience it from the second person point of view, adopting the second person referring to those around Alley without realising it, at least during the first reading of the work.

What *Photopia* actually has is a third person point of view, each segment telling the story of a character, from his or her point of view. The reader, identifying with a different character in every fragment, indeed is in the textual work as an operator, just as in the case of *afternoon*. Her role-playing capabilities are indeed trimmed, there is no way for her to exist in the textual world as herself, as she is always performing the actions of the others, quite similarly to the effect of the usage of second person pronoun in print literature. The only significant difference is that the reader can herself understand this only after once she has finished the story, and until she finishes the story, she actually performs the second person, making this story

experienced in second person perspective in the first reading, and third person perspective in the following readings. Your memory of the events changes your reading experience. When asked why he chose to write the story in interactive fiction form, drawing attention to the importance of perspective in his work, Cadre explains:

True, the player has little power to affect the events of the story. But it was crucial to me, was in a sense the whole point of the piece, that the player *inhabit* the places of the game. In the "real life" sections, I wanted to provide the experience of hanging out with this kid, to the extent I could; in the bedtime-story sections, it was absolutely vital that the player be the one wandering around in the various strange locales of the tale.

(Adam Cadre on *Photopia*, available at

<http://adamcadre.ac/content/phaq.txt>)

As also seen in Cadre's own words about his work, he has been employing the interactive fiction method in order to increase the level of identification between the reader and the characters. The reader, not knowing that these are separate characters told in the third person point of view, takes over the consciousness of these characters as her own, and explores their world as them. But this narrative, once explored by the reader, is indeed told in the third person point of view, since after one reading, the reader only operates to see the character's actions, the identification level is that of a reader and a "s/he" in the story. The story is quite unlike the case in the first reading of the work, or as was the case in *Joe's heartbeat in Budapest*, where in every

reading the reader gets to perform her own perspective by responding differently to the narrator that opens up different dialogue opportunities, and thus altering the knowledge she receives from the narrative.

iv. Conclusion

Looking at above examples, we see that even though the use of the second person pronoun in conventional print literature¹³ does not accommodate a second person perspective, the cybertext medium has a potential to do so. When the cybertext allows the reader to enter the textual universe and reconstruct the story that was offered by the author throughout her own perspective, she may become the consciousness in the narrative that fulfils the actions of the second person point of view. In cybertexts, the “you” that is addressed in the narrative may be a distinctive actant,¹⁴ and this actant gains its voice in the narrative through the participation of the reader. When the reader takes over the focalization, the second person narrative in cybertext no longer provides only a point of reception, but this time also a point of seeing and acting. The “you” of the narrator finally finds a consciousness to attach to, and through the consciousness of the reader, unlike self-narration and third-person narratives told in the second person, the “you” turns into a reference to an active agency within the narrative dialogue, providing a new perspective.

¹³ I am excluding the rather experimental genre of choose-your-own adventure books.

¹⁴ See reference to Hopkins and Perkins in Chapter 2.

Coming back to the conception of point of view as a symbol of the relationship of the focal character to the narrator, we see that focal character and the narrator are differentiated in cybertexts by second person perspective. With the inclusion of the reader in the textual world, the real reader becomes present and able to claim the second person; and this constitutes a diverse reading experience from both first-person perspective and that of third-person. There is now someone in the textual universe to fill in the deictic existence of “you” that is referred to in the text and this alters the relation of the focal character and the narrator.

There is, of course, also cybertexts that make use of second person narration partially or fully, which do not provide a second person perspective, as the cases in *afternoon*, and *Photopia* show. While the reader experiences the second person address as second person perspective in these two works in the first reading, once she completes reading the book, it is clear to the reader that the “you” does not refer to her, but to a specific character in the story: as she is merely operating to see what happens to these characters, she is not in direct dialogue with the narrative, thus she cannot be the second person of the discourse. Contrary to cybertexts with second person perspective, cybertexts with first or third person perspective keep the reader’s consciousness outside the textual universe. She is only there to manipulate a story told in a third or first person point of view. Even when the second person pronoun is employed in the first or third person perspective cybertexts, the “you” is used to refer to a character that has his or her own consciousness within the textual world, instead of referring to the reader.

Hypertexts using the second person perspective however, provide the reader a unique identification with the protagonist/narratee, since they tell the reader her own story. Through her own perspective, she chooses the way or order in which her story unfolds. If there is, indeed such a thing as a second person point of view, it is only in cybertexts that may allow its existence, by making the reader their “second person,” referring to her as “you,” and throughout a dialogue with her, tell her own story to herself, through her own “second person’s” perspective.

Conclusion

In the preceding pages, I have tried to identify the implications of electronic literature in literary theory and specifically, in narratology. I began by exploring hypertext, and then moved on to electronic literature, to find myself in the realm of cybertext. Since the terminologies were new to me, and my grasp of the concepts was that of an outsider, my adventure in the field has led me into occasional confusion and frustration. One of the many challenges that I faced at the beginning was starting with the assumption that the change I was searching for belied in the electronic/digital nature of these literary works. In time, and with the support of cybertext theory, I grew to understand that the electronics and the digital medium was not the driving force behind the new narrative, it was rather the conception of an alternative storytelling technique that built on digital resources. The digital tools offered room for growth for this new technique, but the essential aspect was the independent presence of an alternative to conventional narrative methods. This very breakthrough in my own understanding of the field led me to regard this new technique as a medium for stories to be delivered in. The message that it delivered to literary theory was not in the content of the narrative, cybertext itself was the message.

Seeking to identify the changes in narratology that this new medium provided, I began to search for a good point of departure. It might have been the development of plot; it might have been any aspect of Genette's narratology: how did this new medium affect the frequency, the mood, and the perspective of the narrative? Of all the possibilities, I have chosen to dig

into second person narratives, both because this field was not yet explored in depth neither in conventional print literature nor in cybertexts, and because the issue presented just enough breadth for a study of this length.

So I started by asking the most fundamental of questions: What is cybertext? Is its most important aspect being digital, or is there something more that cybertext offers, something beyond a rather simple change of environment? How can I search for the implications of cybertext in literary theory? What are the new narrative modes that cybertext presents us? What is a second person perspective? Is second person perspective employed in conventional literature? Is the second person perspective possible to achieve in cybertexts? What are the current implications of second person narrative in cybertexts?

Thus I began my thesis by exploring the term cybertext as an alternative to conventional narrative. While composing cybertexts in the electronic environment was easier as the environment provided more functional tools for creating and consuming cybertexts, there were also cybertext examples that were distributed in print and bound book format, such as the ancient *I Ching*, or the more recent, experimental choose-your-own adventure series.

In order to understand what a cybertext was, I departed from the concept of hypertext and tried to demonstrate how the theories built around the two concepts differed from each other. Hypertext provided a new way of writing, but its effect on the reader was limited as an interface. Nevertheless, even though their impact on the reader was rather limited, it would be unfair

to place hypertext in the realm of pen and moveable type, especially regarding the explorative function and its potential employments. The hypertext presents the reader with a new reading experience hardly found in traditional literary environments.

Moving away from hypertext, I presented cybertext theory, which I treated as a medium where alternative narrative techniques could be employed. I also presented the current debates on cybertexts, and focused my efforts on showing the lack of empirical depth in the critical analyses of fictional (or non-fictional) works. I then treated the debates surrounding the importance of the digital medium, and the significance of literary value in this alternative to conventional narrative. Taking cybertext as a medium, in McLuhan's terms, the content of cybertext was the story, but cybertext itself was the message, and it was to demonstrate itself in the alternatives that it presented in literary theory and practice.

The alternative that I chose to explore was the second person perspective, consequently; I entered the realm of second person in conventional print literature. I defined second person narrative in print literature as a narrative mode that the narrator referred to the protagonist, the narratee or the implied reader of the story with the second person pronoun. The protagonist, who was identical to the narratee could be identical to the narrator or not, defining the perspective of the narrative. In the instances of "you" referring to the implied reader, the second person narrative was used for an address function, delivering a message through the narrative, from the author to her implied reader. Departing from this definition, I searched for the

definitions, modes, and functions of second person narrative in conventional print literature, making use of both the theorists that have worked on the issue, and works with second person narration from Turkish literature. I argued that in conventional print literature the second person narrative is either told in the first person point of view or in the third person point of view. When the narrative presented a self-narration in which the narrator was referring to herself with the second person pronoun, it was told in first-person point of view. And when the narrative was referring to a character with the second person pronoun to achieve an alternative identification, address or plot-related effects, it was told in the third-person point of view. Therefore, the second person point of view was impossible to achieve in conventional literature; its narrative effect belied its existence as a deictic word that had different implications on the reader from that of “I” or “he/she.” “You” was only there to be talked about or talked to. In conventional literature, the narrator and the focal character were either identical or not, and the cases that they were differentiated only allowed the consciousness of a fictional third person to exist in the textual universe: there was no space for a real consciousness of a real reader. In cybertexts, however, the situation was different: there was the real reader entering the textual universe, to fill the consciousness of the “you” that was referred by the narrator.

Thus I moved on to analyse the second person narrative in cybertexts, and I demonstrated how the second person usage allowed an alternative perspective to exist, with the inclusion of the real reader in the textual universe. The personal perspective of cybertexts requiring the reader to do

more than merely read the text presented to her, sucked in the reader's consciousness into the textual universe and attached it to the second person of the text. The reader thus was pushed into a virtual literary performative, as she clicked her mouse on the screen to traverse through the text in her own perspective: her click was not just a click, it was a walk towards north, it was a part she played in a dialogue, it was the act of stitching one fragment of the narrative to the other. These cases were neither non-focalized, nor was the focalization internal or external: the focalization belonged to the real reader, the text's outsider and its "second person." Expected to take part in the communication offered by the text, the reader was moving from the position of the narratee to that of narrator, protagonist, and reader from time to time.

Cybertexts also provided examples that employed the second person narrative in a manner similar to the instances in conventional literature. I have also showed that in some cybertext examples, as the text changes from one reading to the other, what has once been experienced in the second person point of view may be experienced in first or third person point of view in other readings of the text. I have also presented an exceptional case in print literature: the choose-your-own-adventure books, which allowed the participation of the perspective of the real reader, though with limited options.

This brief study of the second person perspective in cybertexts, without doubt, has a number of shortcomings: I did not have the liberty to reach every theoretical or primary resource that I needed to analyse, which limited my empirical scope. Some of the primary and secondary literature that I wanted to include in my study was simply inaccessible to me. My study

also could not benefit from parallel discussions around the topic, as cybertexts constitute at best a marginal field in literary studies in Turkey.

Notwithstanding my specific circumstances, exploring the field of cybertext presented me with tremendous challenges. When you analyse a print and bound book, among which there might naturally be exceptions, you have the concrete book in your hands as a whole. The story has one beginning, one end, and static words in between. Your reading and interpretation may vary from one reading to the other, but this provides richness to your interpretation, rather than frustration. You have proper and conventional ways of giving references to the text, the page numbers stay the same, and you have all the information you need for a proper citation at the first pages of the book. Your object of study is tangible. Remember my first words about *Joe's Heartbeat in Budapest*: I cannot even decide which URL refers to the title page of the narrative since I cannot clearly remember which page I was linked to in my first encounter with the text. The fact that you can be linked to any part of a narrative through the Internet aside, there are many more obstacles you have to deal with when working in the digital medium: what is once there does not stay there forever, at least not in the same way. The nightmare of the 404 error message alerting that the page does not exist anymore haunts you on the internet, you have to find the right emulators for your operating system to be able to read works prepared for other systems, a CD-ROM that you have purchased for your previous personal computer might not always work in the Macintosh you fancifully purchased for writing your study.

As if the technical difficulties are not enough, once you begin reading a work of cybertext, no matter the slightness of alterations, you configure a different story every time. You can usually not repeat the same footsteps you have followed during one reading in the next, which creates a sometimes-frustrating experience that complicates the process of close reading. And once you decide upon your interpretation, you can never be sure if you would interpret the same way if you just read the same narrative for three or five times more. Considering the fact that the story presents a second person point of view in cybertexts in the first reading and it does not do so in the following readings also show how complicated a textual material cybertexts provide to the critic. So how do we decide how to interpret? Shall we explore all possible readings, or shall we perform only one reading and report what we have interpreted for that very instance? In order to overcome this challenge, I found solace in a fragment from *afternoon* that was also quoted above: “closure is“, as in any fiction, a suspect quality [...] when the story no longer progresses, or when it cycles, or when you tire of the paths, the experience of reading it ends. [...] There is no simple way to say this” (Joyce “work in progress”).

If nothing else, because of the above mentioned challenges, cybertexts offer vast opportunities for the critic. Although initially created with the ascendancy of the author, depending mainly on the operative authority of the reader during the interpretation process, cybertexts end when the reader decides they have ended. One, five, or twenty readings of a cybertext may differ from one another. Getting lost within this interpretative jungle may both

frustrate and encourage you. You may lose your pre-set assumptions while floating in this fluid universe. It is only when you assure yourself that you have reached closure that you reach it, and it is only then that you can reach the closure of the message that you have longed to deliver to others.

Works Cited

Aarseth, Espen J. *Cybertext: Perspectives on Ergodic Literature*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1997.

Bal, Mieke. *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997.

Belge, Murat. *Edebiyat Üstüne Yazılar*. İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1998.

Bolter, Jay David. *Writing Space: Computers, Hypertext, and the Remediation of Print*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers, 2001.

Burne, Philippa J. *24 Hours With Someone You Know*. (1996) 10 August 2009 <<http://www.glasswings.com.au/modern/24hours/>>

Bush, Vannevar. "As We May Think". *MultiMedia: From Wagner to Virtual Reality*. Haz. Randall Packer ve Ken Jordan. New York: Norton & Company, 2001. 141-60.

Cadre, Adam. *Photopia*. 1998. 17 August 2009 <<http://www.adamcadre.ac/content/photo201.zip>>

———. "the Photopia Phaq, v2.0" 17 August 2009 <<http://www.adamcadre.ac/content/phaq.txt>>

Calvino, Italo. *If on a winter's night a traveler*. Trans. William Weaver. London: Vintage, 1998.

Chatman, Seymour. *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987.

Culler, Jonathan. "Philosophy and Literature: The Fortunes of the Performative" *Poetics Today* 21.3 (Fall 2000): 503-19.

DelConte, Matt. "Why You Can't Speak: Second Person Narration, Voice, and a New Model for Understanding Narrative." *Style* 37.2 (2003): 204-19.

Eskelinen, Markku. "Cybertext Theory: What An English Professor Should Know Before Trying" (01 February 2001) 17 August 2009
<<http://www.electronicbookreview.com/thread/electropoetics/notmetaphor>>

———. "Introduction to Cybertext Narratology" *Cybertext Yearbook 2000 JY* (2001): 52-68. 17 August 2009
<<http://cybertext.hum.jyu.fi/index.php?browsebook=4>>

———. "Six Problems in Search of a Solution: The Challenge of Cybertext Theory and Ludology to Literary Theory" *The Aesthetics of Net Literature: Writing, Reading and Playing in Programmable Media*. Eds. Peter Gendolla and Jürgen Schäfer. Beilefeld: transcript Verlag, 2007. 179-209.

Eskelinen, Markku and Raine Koskimaa. "Introduction: There is no easy way to repeat this". *Cybertext Yearbook 2000*. JY (2001): 7-12. 17 August 2009 <<http://cybertext.hum.jyu.fi/index.php?browsebook=4>>

- Fludernik, Monika. "Introduction: Second person narrative and related issues." *Style* 28.3 (1994): 281-311.
- . "Second person fiction: Narrative *You* as addressee and/or protagonist." *AAA--Arbeiten aus Anglistik und Amerikanistik* 18 (1993): 217-47.
- . "Second person narrative as a test case for narratology: The limits of realism." *Style* 28.3 (1994): 445-80.
- Genette, Gérard. *Narrative Discourse Revisited*. Trans. Jane E. Lewin. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990.
- Gülsoy, Murat. "Ütopya: 337 Milisaniye." *Belki de Gerçekten İstiyorsun*. İstanbul: altkitap, 2000.
- Hall, Trevor. *Twin Kingdom Valley*. Bugbyte, 1983.
- Hayles, N. Katherine. "Cyber|literature and Multicourses: Rescuing Electronic Literature from Infanticide". (10 January 2001) 17 August 2009
<<http://www.electronicbookreview.com/thread/electropoetics/interspecia>
>
- . "What Cybertext Theory Can't Do". (15 February 2001) 17 August 2009
<<http://www.electronicbookreview.com/thread/electropoetics/ecumenica>
>

Hopkins, Mary Francis, and Leon Perkins. "Second person Point of View in Narrative." *Critical Survey of Short Fiction*. Ed. Frank N. Magill. New Jersey: Salem, 1981. 119-32.

Jackson, Shelley. *Patchwork Girl by Mary/Shelley and Herself*. Watertown: Eastgate Systems, 1995.

Joyce, Michael. *afternoon: a story*. Cambridge, Mass: Eastgate Systems, 1990.

Kacandes, Irene. "Are You in the Text? The 'Literary Performative' in Postmodernist Fiction." *Text and Performance Quarterly* 13 (1993): 139-53.

Landow, George P. *Hypertext 3.0: Critical Theory and New Media in an Era of Globalization*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006.

Margolin, Uri. "Narrative 'You' Revisited." *Language and Style* 23 (1993): 1-21.

McLuhan, Marshall. *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*. Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1997.

Monfort, Nick. "Cybertext Killed the Hypertext Star" (30 December 2000) 17 August 2009
<<http://www.electronicbookreview.com/thread/electropoetics/cyberdebates>>

Morrisette, Bruce. "Narrative 'You' in Contemporary Literature." *Comparative Literature Studies* 2 (1965): 1-24.

- Nelson, Ted. *Literary Machines 90.1*. Sausalito: Mindful Press, 1990.
- Nestvold, Ruth. *Joe's Heartbeat in Budapest*. (20 November 2007) 17 August 2009 <<http://www.lit-arts.net/JHIB/begin.htm>>
- . "Do you want to hear about it: The use of the second person in electronic fiction" (1997) 17 August 2009 <<http://www.ruthnestvold.com/2ndper.htm>>
- Öz, Erdal. *Yaralısın*. İstanbul: Cem Yayınevi, 1974.
- Pamuk, Orhan. *The Black Book*. Trans. Maureen Freely. New York: Vintage, 2006.
- Prince, Gerald. *Dictionary of Narratology*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2003.
- Richardson, Brian. "The Politics and Poetics of Second person Narration." *Genre* 24 (1991): 309-30.
- Snyder, Illana. *Hypertext: The Electronic Labyrinth*. New York: New York University Press, 1997.
- Sterne, Laurence. *Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman*. Hertfordshire: Wordsworth, 1996.
- Tanpınar, Ahmet Hamdi. *Mahur Beste*. İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2004.
- Walker, Jill. "Do you think you're part of this? Digital texts and second person address" *Cybertext Yearbook* 2000: 34-51 17 August 2009 <<http://cybertext.hum.jyu.fi/index.php?browsebook=4>>