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Paradoxism as a Trans-Historical Meta-System

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Abstract

Paradoxism is an avant-garde literary/artistic movement centered on contradictions, absurdities, antinomies, deviations of sense, upside-down interpretations etc. as creative principles. The movement spans literature, art, philosophy, even science, and it aims to challenge conventional thinking and express the complexity and contradictions of reality. Paradoxism is examined here not merely as an avant-garde literary movement, but as a trans-historical literary meta-system grounded in contradiction as a productive aesthetic principle, initiated by Smarandache in 1980. Drawing upon paraconsistent and neutrosophic logic, this paper argues that Paradoxism operates beyond Modernism and Postmodernism by formalizing paradox as both method and meaning. Through comparative analysis with major literary movements, logical axiomatization, and conceptual diagrammatic models, Paradoxism is shown to function as a universal operator acting upon literature itself. Rather than resolving inconsistency, Paradoxism preserves and intensifies it, allowing meaning and non-meaning to coexist. The paper concludes by extending Paradoxism into contemporary theory and artificial intelligence, positioning it as a generative framework for future literary and computational creativity. Below is a concise comparison with other movements, highlighting key contrasts.

Core Tenets of Paradoxism

- Celebrates logical contradictions, nonsense, and impossible scenarios;
- Uses paradoxes as structural foundation (e.g., "The silence is louder than thunder");
- Rejects traditional coherence; embraces chaos as philosophy;
- Emerged in response to Communist Romania's oppressive absurdities.

Keywords: Paradoxism; Logical Contradictions; Traditional Coherence.

1 | Introduction: The Problem of Single Meaning

Much of Western literary history has been governed by the assumption that contradiction is a flaw to be eliminated. From classical poetics to realist narrative, coherence and unity have been treated as aesthetic virtues, while inconsistency has been viewed as error, failure, or immaturity. Even when contradiction appears, it is typically subordinated to a higher synthesis or resolved through interpretation.

Paradoxism challenges this foundational assumption. It does not regard contradiction as a temporary disruption to be repaired, but as a permanent and productive condition of literature. Instead of asking how meaning may be stabilized, Paradoxism asks how literature operates when meaning contradicts itself.



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2 | Historical Overview of Literary Logics

Classical and Renaissance literature prioritize harmony, balance, proportion, and unity. Romanticism disrupts rational order through emotion and subjectivity, yet still seeks expressive coherence. Realism and Naturalism reinforce causal logic and empirical representation, presenting the world as knowable and narratively consistent.

Modernism fractures form, time, and subjectivity, but often retains an implicit search for meaning beneath fragmentation. Postmodernism deepens skepticism through irony, play, and meta-narrative disruption, yet typically suspends meaning rather than affirming contradiction itself.

Despite their differences, these movements share a structural constraint: contradiction is either resolved, sublimated, or relativized. Paradoxism breaks with this lineage by refusing resolution altogether. It neither heals contradiction nor ironizes it. Instead, contradiction becomes the generative core of literary production.

3 | Meaning, Definition, and Origins of Paradoxism

Paradoxism is defined by the systematic use of contradiction, antinomy, and anti-sense as constructive literary devices. A paradoxical text may assert and deny the same proposition without aesthetic collapse. Meaning and non-meaning are not mutually exclusive but mutually reinforcing [1-4].

Historically, Paradoxism emerges from avant-garde experimentation, yet it is not confined to any single period or cultural context. Its logic may be applied retroactively to earlier texts and prospectively to future forms of writing, including computational literature.

Paradoxism is therefore not primarily historical, but trans-historical: it operates across literary epochs by exposing and activating contradictions already present within them.

4 | Comparative Position Among Literary Movements

When placed alongside other literary movements, Paradoxism occupies a structurally distinct position.

Classicism seeks harmony; Paradoxism dismantles it. Realism represents reality; Paradoxism questions the possibility of representation itself. Surrealism draws from the unconscious; Paradoxism employs conscious contradiction. Absurdism declares meaninglessness; Paradoxism allows meaning and non-meaning to coexist.

Paradoxism does not negate these movements externally. Instead, it internalizes, mirrors, and inverts their core assumptions. In this sense, Paradoxism functions as a reflective operator rather than a rival doctrine.

5 | Logical Formalization

Paradoxism aligns naturally with non-classical logic, particularly paraconsistent and neutrosophic systems. In such frameworks, a proposition may be both true and false without rendering the system invalid.

Literary meaning may be modeled as a triplet consisting of affirmation, negation, and indeterminacy. A paradoxist text is defined not by the absence of meaning, but by the simultaneous presence of incompatible meanings.

This formalization distinguishes Paradoxism from rhetorical or ornamental uses of paradox. Contradiction is not stylistic excess; it is structural necessity.

6 | Conceptual Models

Several conceptual models clarify Paradoxism's operation:

- 1) The historical inversion spiral, in which Paradoxism intersects all literary periods, inverting their dominant principles.

- 2) The paradox cube, where form and anti-form, meaning and anti-meaning coexist within a single topological structure.
- 3) The movement interaction graph, in which Paradoxism maintains bidirectional relations with all movements rather than linear descent.

These models emphasize that Paradoxism does not replace literary history but punctures it.

7 | Case Studies

In poetry, paradoxical texts affirm emotion by negating it.

In prose, narrators establish credibility by exposing unreliability.

In drama, characters exist and do not exist within the same ontological frame.

In each case, contradiction functions not as error, but as a generator of interpretive richness.

8 | Implications for Literary Theory

Paradoxism challenges foundational assumptions about coherence, interpretation, and closure. It suggests that literature does not require consistency to function meaningfully. On the contrary, contradiction itself may serve as a primary aesthetic value.

This reframes interpretation not as problem-solving, but as navigation within irreducible inconsistency.

To compare Paradoxism, the movement founded by Florentin Smarandache in the 1980s—with the vast history of literature, we must first define its core "Paradoxist Manifesto." It is an avant-garde movement based on the excessive use of contradictions, antinomies, and paradoxes in creation. It seeks a "non-literary" or "anti-literary" essence by embracing the impossible and the illogical.

Below is a breakdown of how Paradoxism connects to or differs from the movements listed, grouped by their historical and philosophical proximity as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Comparison of Paradoxism with Other Movements.

Movement	Key Features	Paradoxism Comparison
Classicism	Emphasis on order, harmony, reason, and adherence to tradition.	Paradoxism rejects tradition and harmony, instead embracing contradiction and disorder.
Naturalism	Depicts reality with scientific objectivity, focusing on harsh aspects of life.	Paradoxism uses paradox to challenge reality, not to document it objectively.
Renaissance	Revival of classical ideals, humanism, and artistic achievement.	Paradoxism breaks from classical traditions by emphasizing contradiction and innovation.
Marinism	Baroque style with elaborate metaphors and wit.	Paradoxism shares complexity but uses paradox as a central device, not just ornamentation.
Stridentism	Mexican avant-garde combining futurism and social critique.	Paradoxism shares an avant-garde spirit but focuses on paradox rather than technology or social themes.
Surrealism	Explores the unconscious, dreams, and irrational juxtapositions.	Both use unexpected combinations, but surrealism is dream-focused while paradoxism is logical and philosophical.
Objectivism	Clear, concrete imagery; rejects abstraction.	Paradoxism embraces abstract contradictions.
Oulipo	Constrained writing and mathematical structures.	Paradoxism uses thematic constraints (paradoxes) rather than formal ones.
Absurdism	Highlights life's meaninglessness and the search for meaning.	Paradoxism uses contradiction without necessarily asserting meaninglessness.

Minimalism	Simplicity and economy of expression.	Paradoxism often uses complexity to express contradictions.
Metarealism	Seeks to transcend reality through metaphor.	Paradoxism remains within reality's contradictions.
New Formalism	Revival of traditional poetic forms.	Paradoxism is experimental and anti-traditional.
Mannerism	Artificiality, exaggeration, and complexity.	Paradoxism shares complexity but in a conceptual way.
Petrarchism	Idealized love and strict poetic forms.	Paradoxism breaks from idealism and formality.
Baroque	Ornamentation, emotional intensity, and dynamism.	Paradoxism shares complexity but is more conceptual.
Cubo-Futurism	Fusion of cubism and futurism; dynamism and fragmentation.	Paradoxism shares fragmentation but through paradoxes.
Ego-Futurism	Russian futurism emphasizes the self and innovation.	Paradoxism is less self-focused and more universal.
Acmeism	Clarity and tangible imagery; opposes symbolism.	Paradoxism opposes clarity in favor of contradiction.
Expressionism	Distorts reality to express subjective emotions.	Paradoxism distorts reality through logical contradictions.
Impressionism	Captures fleeting sensory impressions.	Paradoxism is more conceptual than sensory.
Aestheticism	"Art for art's sake"; values beauty.	Paradoxism values intellectual challenge over beauty.
Symbolism	Uses symbols to represent ideas.	Paradoxism uses paradox as a symbol of life's contradictions.
Parnassianism	Precision, detachment, and formal perfection.	Paradoxism is engaged and often intentionally imprecise.
Social Realism	Focuses on social issues and the working class.	Paradoxism can address social issues, but through paradox.
Socialist Realism	Promotes socialist ideals in a positive light.	Paradoxism is critical and not tied to any political ideology.
Transcendentalism	Intuition, spirituality, and connection with nature.	Paradoxism is more intellectual and less spiritual.
Verismo	Italian realism focuses on everyday life.	Paradoxism is not confined to everyday life.
Dirty Realism	Depicts seamy side of life in plain language.	Paradoxism uses contradiction and may not focus on the seamy.
Mahjar	Arab emigrant writers expressing nostalgia.	Paradoxism is not tied to diaspora experiences.
Futurism	Celebrates technology, speed, and the future.	Paradoxism does not focus on technology.
Enlightenment	Reason, science, and progress.	Paradoxism uses reason to expose its limits via paradox.
Romanticism	Emotion, nature, individualism, and the sublime.	Paradoxism is more intellectual and less emotional.
Revolutionary	Art as a tool for political revolution.	Paradoxism can be revolutionary in thought but not necessarily political.
Victorian	Moral earnestness, propriety, and social conservatism.	Paradoxism challenges moral certainties.
Edwardian	Similar to Victorian but more relaxed.	Paradoxism is more radical and avant-garde.
The Lost Generation	Disillusionment after WWI.	Paradoxism shares disillusionment but expresses it through paradox.
Beat	Rejects convention, emphasizes spontaneity and personal expression.	Paradoxism rejects convention but is more structured in its use of paradox.

Realism	Represents reality accurately.	Paradoxism distorts reality to reveal deeper truths.
Stream of Consciousness	Focuses on the flow of thoughts in the mind.	Paradoxism may use this technique, but is defined by paradox.
Traditionalism	Adherence to traditional values and forms.	Paradoxism is anti-traditional.
Modernism	Breaks with tradition, experiments with form.	Paradoxism is modernist in spirit.
Postmodernism	Questions grand narratives, embraces fragmentation and irony.	Paradoxism shares these traits but is defined by paradox.

8.1 | Movement Period Key Characteristics Comparison with Paradoxism

Grouping:

1. Classical and Renaissance Movements:

Classicism, Renaissance, Petrarchism, Mannerism, Baroque

2. 19th Century Movements:

Romanticism, Realism, Naturalism, Symbolism, Aestheticism, Parnassianism, Impressionism (in art/literature), Verismo, Transcendentalism

3. Early 20th Century Movements:

Futurism (and its variants: Cubo-Futurism, Ego-Futurism), Acmeism, Expressionism, Surrealism, Dada (though not listed, related), Stridentism, Social Realism, Socialist Realism, The Lost Generation

4. Mid to Late 20th Century Movements:

Existentialism (not listed), Absurdism, Beat, Minimalism, Dirty Realism, Oulipo, Objectivism, New Formalism

5. Contemporary and Other:

Postmodernism, Modernism, Metarealism, Mahjar, Marinism, Revolutionary, Victorian, Edwardian, Consciousness (might refer to Stream of Consciousness?), Traditionalism, Enlightenment.

8.2 | Comparative Analysis

Table 2 presents the comparative analysis.

Table 2. Comparative analysis.

Movement	Period	Key Focus	Contrast with Paradoxism
Classicism	17 th -18 th c.	Harmony, reason, order	Rejects Paradoxism's chaos; seeks universal truths vs. Paradoxism's deliberate incoherence
Naturalism	19 th c.	Scientific objectivity, determinism	Documents reality; Paradoxism <i>subverts</i> reality through impossible contradictions
Surrealism	1920s	Unconscious, dream logic	Shares absurdity but seeks hidden truths; Paradoxism <i>embraces</i> illogic as an endpoint
Absurdism	1950s	Meaninglessness of existence	Focuses on human despair; Paradoxism treats absurdity playfully/experimentally.
Minimalism	1960s	Simplicity, reduction	Opposes Paradoxism's dense, complex contradictions
Oulipo	1960s	Constrained writing, mathematical rules	Values precision; Paradoxism thrives in rule-breaking

Social Realism	20 th c.	Idealized proletariat struggle	Politically prescriptive; Paradoxism is anarchic and anti-dogmatic
Baroque	17 th c.	Ornamentation, drama	Shares complexity but seeks divine harmony; Paradoxism denies resolution
Romanticism	19 th c.	Emotion, individualism, nature	Prioritizes sincerity; Paradoxism weaponizes irony and artificial constructs.
Postmodernism	Late 20 th c.	Deconstruction, relativism	Overlaps in rejecting grand narratives but lacks Paradoxism's <i>systematic</i> contradictions.

Key Distinctions

- 1) Vs. Futurism (Marinetti): Futurism glorifies speed/technology; Paradoxism deconstructs progress itself.
- 2) Vs. Symbolism: Symbolism implies hidden meanings; Paradoxism makes meaning impossible.
- 3) Vs. Objectivism (Ayn Rand): Celebrates individualism/capitalism; Paradoxism mocks all ideologies.
- 4) Vs. Socialist Realism: Serves state propaganda; Paradoxism is inherently subversive.
- 5) Vs. Dada: Shares anti-art spirit, but Dada is nihilistic; Paradoxism is methodically contradictory.

Unique Paradoxist Traits

1. Mathematical Influence: Uses scientific paradoxes (e.g., Russell's Paradox) as poetic devices.
2. Anti-Resolution: Rejects catharsis or closure; contradictions remain unresolved.
3. Global Roots: Combines Eastern European existential angst with postmodern fragmentation.

Paradoxism remains niche but influential in experimental circles for its radical defiance of logical coherence. Unlike historical movements tied to eras (e.g., Victorian, Beat), it's a philosophical framework applicable across mediums. For deeper analysis, explore Smarandache's manifestos or works like *Le Sens du Non-Sens*: <https://fs.unm.edu/LeSensDuNonsens.pdf>

While Paradoxism began as a literary and artistic protest in the 1980s, Smarandache extended this concept in 1995 into Neutrosophy (<https://fs.unm.edu/Neutrosophy-A-New-Branch-of-Philosophy.pdf>), a new branch of philosophy that studies "neutralities".

1. Neutrosophy: The "Betweenness" of Reality

The core of Neutrosophy is the study of the triad: any idea or concept (T) is analyzed alongside its opposite (F) and the spectrum of neutralities (I) that exist between them.

- a) Fundamental Thesis: Every idea is defined by three components: a degree of truth (T), a degree of indeterminacy or neutrality (I), and a degree of falsehood (F).
- b) Expansion of Dialectics: Unlike Hegelian dialectics, which focuses only on the conflict between opposites (thesis and antithesis), Neutrosophy includes indeterminacy as a critical third element that balances the two.
- c) The Intersection: It posits that opposites can have "common parts" ($T \cap F \neq \emptyset$), a direct philosophical justification for the existence of paradoxes.

2. Connections of Neutrosophy to Literary Movements

Neutrosophy acts as a theoretical bridge between the “shock” of Paradoxism and the broader history of thought (see Table 3).

Table 3. Connections of Neutrosophy to Literary Movements.

Concept	Literary/Philosophical Connection	Neutrosophic Distinction
Paradoxism	Direct precursor; used antinomies as a protest against social "order".	Neutrosophy is the formalized science of these contradictions.
Postmodernism	Both embrace ambiguity, fragmented truths, and the rejection of absolute logic.	Neutrosophy offers a mathematical framework (T, I, F) to quantify that ambiguity.
Absurdism	Shared focus on the "nonsense" or "illogicality" of life.	Neutrosophy argues that "nonsense" has its own significance and structure.
Yin-Yang	Ancient roots of balancing opposites.	Neutrosophy adds the neutral third zone that ancient binary models often lack.

3. Applications beyond Literature

Neutrosophy has transitioned from a literary tool to a multidisciplinary science:

- Neutrosophic Logic: A generalization of fuzzy logic used in engineering, medicine, and military strategy.
- Geopolitics: Used to model conflicts by accounting for "neutral" parties (e.g., mediator nations) that influence the outcome between two opposing states.
- Psychology: Analyzing the "neutralities" in human decision-making and cultural disparities.

The Evolution: A Visual Summary

- Paradoxism (1980s): Artistic "anti-literature" using contradictions to break social chains.
- Neutrosophy (1995): Philosophical framework studying the interaction between opposites and neutrals.
- Plithogeny (2017): Further generalization considering multiple factors and their interactions in philosophy and sciences.

To illustrate how Neutrosophy functions as a philosophical expansion of Paradoxism, we can apply its core "triad" of Truth (T), Indeterminacy (I), and Falsehood (F) to a specific creative concept.

While Paradoxism thrives on the clash of opposites, Neutrosophy seeks the spectrum between them.

Neutrosophic Analysis of a Concept: "The Silent Voice"

In a standard literary movement, "Silence" and "Speech" are opposites. Neutrosophy breaks this down into three parts:

- (Truth/Speech): The act of vocalizing or expressing.
- (Falsehood/Silence): The absence of sound or expression.
- (Indeterminacy/Neutrality): A whisper that isn't quite speech, a silence that "speaks volumes," or a thought not yet spoken.

A Neutrosophic Distich

By incorporating the "Neutral" (I) element, the poem moves beyond a simple paradox into a neutrosophic observation:

The Third State My words are true only when they are lies, but the truth stays hidden in the breath I didn't take. (See Table 4).

Table 4. How this connects to the Movements.

Movement	Neutrosophic Interpretation
Paradoxism	Focuses on the "true/lies" conflict (T vs F).
Neutrosophy	Adds the "breath I didn't take" (I)—the indeterminate space where potential exists.
Objectivism	Focuses strictly on T (the objective reality/truth).
Absurdism	Argues that since T and F are both confusing, the world is pure I (meaningless).

Applying the core principles of Neutrosophy (the study of neutralities) to a specific example, we can see how it creates a "third state" between traditional literary opposites.

While Paradoxism focuses on the friction of T and F, Neutrosophy focuses on the I (Indeterminacy) that connects them.

Neutrosophic Triad Analysis: "The Window"

In traditional movements, a window is either open (T) or closed (F). In a Neutrosophic framework, we examine the degrees of T (Truth), I (Indeterminacy), and F (Falsehood):

- a) (Visible), The glass is transparent; the world is seen.
- b) (Reflective) The glass acts as a mirror; only the self is seen.
- c) (Translucent), The glass is frosted or dirty; the world is a blur, neither fully seen nor fully hidden.

A Neutrosophic Distich: Neutrosophy

By focusing on the "betweenness" of the state, we can write a distich that reflects this philosophy:

The Translucent Law I see the sun through a wall made of ice, finding the warmth in a light that is frozen.

Connection of Neutrosophy to the Movement List

Neutrosophy provides a scientific "code" to explain the feelings captured by these other movements:

- 1) Absurdism: While Absurdism views the lack of meaning as a dead end, Neutrosophy views it as an infinite degree of Indeterminacy (I) that can be studied and quantified.
- 2) Impressionism: Neutrosophy provides the logical basis for Impressionism; it is the art of the —where the "truth" of an object is blurred by light and perception.
- 3) Postmodernism: Neutrosophy is the ultimate Postmodern tool, as it mathematically proves that no single "Truth" (T) can exist without its "Falsehood" (F) and its "Neutrality" (I).

Take the Smarandache Paradox (<https://mathworld.wolfram.com/SmarandacheParadox.html>): If all is A, then the non-A must also be A. For example, "All is possible, the impossible too," and "Nothing is perfect, not even the perfect."

In Neutrosophy, the Smarandache Paradox acts as the logical bridge between the known and the unknown, mathematically proving that every system contains its own contradiction. When applied to the literary movements we provided, it reveals a pattern where the "Truth" (T) of a movement eventually merges with its "Opposite" (F) through the lens of "Indeterminacy" (I).

Neutrosophic Breakdown of the Paradox

The paradox—"If all is, then the non- must also be"—can be analyzed through the Neutrosophic Triad (T, I, F) = (Degree of truth, Degree of Indeterminacy, Degree of Falsehood):

- a) The Proposition (T): "All is possible." (Degree of Truth).
- b) The Anti-Proposition (F): "The impossible is possible." (The contradiction that must exist if the first statement is truly universal).
- c) The Neutral State (I): The "Indeterminacy" (I) where the boundary between possible and impossible dissolves.

9 | Conclusion

Paradoxism represents a shift from literature organized around meaning to literature organized around contradiction. As a trans-historical literary meta-system, it encompasses past movements and anticipates future forms, including generative artificial intelligence.

Literature, under Paradoxism, survives not by resolving paradox, but by inhabiting it.

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Data Availability

The datasets generated during and/or analyzed during the current study are not publicly available due to the privacy-preserving nature of the data, but are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest in the research.

Ethical Approval

This article does not contain any studies with human participants or animals performed by any of the authors.

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