dilemma. In fact it resembles knowledge only in being an attitude and a feeling very similar to some attitudes and feelings which may and often do accompany knowledge. But "knowledge" is an immensely potent emotive word engendering reverence towards any state of mind to which it is applied. And these "feelings of significance" are those among our states of mind which most deserve to be revered. That they should be so obstinately described as knowledge even by those who most carefully remove from them all the characteristics of knowledge is not surprising.

Traditionally what is said to be known thus mystically through the arts is Beauty, a remote and divine entity not otherwise to be apprehended, one of the Eternal Absolute Values. And this is doubtless emotively a way of talking which is effective for a while, when its power abates, as the power of such utterances will, there are several developments which may easily be used to revive it. "Beauty is eternal, and we may say that it is already manifest as a heavenly thing — the beauty of Nature is indeed an earnest of us of the ultimate goodness which lies behind the present cruelty and moral confusion of organic life ... Yet we feel that these three are ultimately one, and human speech bears constant witness to the universal conviction that Goodness is beautiful, that Beauty is good, that Truth is Beauty. We can hardly avoid the use of the word 'trinity," and if we are Scotch at all we cannot but say that they are one, because they are the manifestation of one God. If we are not theists there is no explanation."

Human speech is indeed the witness, and to what else does it not witness? It would be strange if in a medium of such moment, as this the greatest of all emotive words did not come into play. "In religion we believe that God is Beauty and Life, that God is Truth and Light, that God is Goodness and Love, and that because he is all these, they are all one, and the Trinity in Unity and Unity in Trinity is to be worshipped."

"No one who can interpret emotive language, who can avoid the temptation to illicit belief so constantly presented by it need find such utterances meaningless." But the wrong approach is easy and far too often pressingly invited by the speakers, labouring themselves under misconceptions. To excite a serious and reverent attitude is one thing, to set forth an explanation is another. To confuse the two and mistake the incitement of an attitude for a statement of fact is a practice which should be discouraged. For intellectual dishonesty is an evil which is more dangerous the more it is hedged about with emotional sanctities. And after all there is another explanation, which would long ago have been quietly established to the world's great good had men been less ready to sacrifice the integrity of their thought and feeling for the sake of a local and limited advantage.

Art as Technique

"Art is thinking in images." This maxim, which even high school students parrot, is nevertheless the starting point for the erudite philologist who is beginning to put together some kind of systematic literary theory. The idea, originated in part by Potebnya, has spread. "Without imagery there is no art, and in particular no poetry," Potebnya writes. And elsewhere, "Poetry, as well as prose, is first and foremost a special way of thinking and knowing." Poetic is a special way of thinking; it is, precisely, a way of thinking in images, a way which permits what is generally called "economy of means," a way which makes for "a simplification of the relative ease of the process." Aesthetic feeling is the reaction to this economy. This is how the academician Ovsyanniko-Kulikov, who undoubtedly read the works of Potebnya attentively, almost certainly understood and faithfully summarized the ideas of his teacher. Potebnya and his numerous disciples consider poetry a special kind of thinking — thinking by means of images; they feel that the purpose of imagery is to help channel various objects and activities into groups and to clarify the unknown by means of the known. Or, as Potebnya wrote:

The relationship of the image to what is being clarified is that (a) the image is the fixed predicate of that which undergoes change — the unchanging

Translated by Lee T. Lawrence and Marcia Rola.

Victor Shklovsky
1893-1984

The versatile Russian man of letters Victor Shklovsky was born the son of a teacher in Petersburg and studied at the university there. An outspoken founding member of the Russian literary society OPOYAZ, Shklovsky wrote one of the central theoretical statements of the formalist school ("Art as Technique," 1917) and his ideas were singled out for special denunciation by Leon Trotsky. Problems with the Bolsheviks prompted his emigration in 1921, but he returned two years later. Within a few years, after the publication of The Theory of Prose (1925), he backed away from the politically risky business of theorizing and took up other pursuits, particularly film criticism, screenwriting, and historical fiction. He wrote books on Tolstoy (1928), Mayakovskiy (1940), and Dostoevsky (1957), and it is also remembered for his autobiographical account of the revolutionary years. A Sentimental Journal: Memoirs 1917-1922 (1923). Ultimately, Shklovsky came to be considered an honored member of the Soviet literary establishment.
Nevertheless, the definition "Art is thinking in images," which means (it omit the usual middle terms of the argument) that art is the making of symbols, has survived the downfall of the theory which supported it. It survived chiefly in the wake of Symbolism, especially among the theorists of the Symbolic movement.

Many still believe, then, that thinking in images — thinking, in specific scenes of "roads and landscape" and "flowers and boundaries" — is the chief characteristic of poetry. Consequently, they should have expected the history of "imagistic art," as they call it, to consist of a history of changes in imagery. But we find that images change little; from century to century, from nation to nation, from poet to poet, they flow on without changing. Images belong to no one; they are "the Lord's." The more you understand an age, the more convinced you become that the images a given poet used and which you thought his own were taken almost unchanged from another poet.

The works of poets are classified or grouped according to the new techniques, that poets discover and share, and according to their prior, the new technique of language; poets are more concerned with images than with creating them. Images are given to poets; the ability to remember them is far more important than the ability to create them.

Imagistic thought does not, in any case, include all the aspects of art nor even all the aspects of verbal art. A change in imagery is not essential to the development of poetry. We know that frequently an expression is thought to be poetic, to be created for aesthetic pleasure, although actually it was created without such intent — e.g., Amensky's opinion that the Slavic languages are especially poetic and Andrei Bely's ecstasy over the technique of placing adjectives after nouns, a technique used by eighteenth-century Russian poets. Bely joyfully accepts the technique as something artistic, or more exactly, as intended, if we consider intention as art. Actually, this reversal of the usual adjective-noun order is a peculiarity of the language (which had been influenced by Charles Slavonic). Thus a work may be (1) intended as prosaic and accepted as poetic, or (2) intended as poetic and accepted as prosaic. This suggests that the art of poetry is in the way we perceive it. By "works of art," in a narrow sense, we mean works created by specific techniques designed to make the works as obviously artistic as possible.

Potemkin's conclusion, which can be formulated "poetry equals imagery," gives rise to the whole theory that "imagery equals symbolization" that the image may serve as the invariable predicate of various subjects. (This conclusion, because it expressed ideas similar to the theories of the Symbolists, intrigued some of their leading representatives — Andrei Bely, Morozhkin, and his "external confidant" example. In fact, formed the basis of the theory of Symbolism.) The conclusion stems partly from the fact that Potemkin did not distinguish between the language of poetry and the language of prose. Consequently, he ignored the fact that there are two aspects of imagery: imagery as a practical means of expression and imagery as a means of reinforcing an impression. I shall clarify with an example. I want to attract the attention of a young child who is eating bread and butter and getting the butter on her fingers. I call, "Hey, butterfingers!" This is a figure of speech, a clearly prosaic trope. Now consider a different example. The child is playing with my glasses and drops them. I call, "Hey, butterfingers!" This figure of speech is poetic trope. (In the first example, "butterfingers" is metonymic; in the second, metaphorical — but this is not what I want to stress.)

Poetic imagery is a means of creating the strongest possible impression. As a method it is depending upon its color, more not less effective than other poetic techniques; it is neither more nor less effective than ordinary or negative parallelism, comparison, repetition, balanced structure, hyperbole, the commonly accepted rhetorical figures, and all those methods which emphasize the emotional effect of an expression (including words or even articulated sounds). But poetic imagery only externally resembles either the stock imagery of fables and ballads or thinking in images — e.g., the example in Ovsianko's Language and Art in which a little girl calls a ball a little watermelon. Poetic imagery is but one of the devices of poetic language. Poetic imagery is a means of abstraction; a little watermelon instead of a watermelon, or a little watermelon instead of a ball, is only the abstraction of one of the object's characteristics, that of roundness. It is no different from saying that the pig and the melon are both round. This is what is meant, but it has nothing to do with poetry.

The law of the economy of creative effort is also generally accepted, [Herbert] Spencer wrote:

On seeking for some clue to the law underlying these current maxims, we may see shadowed forth in many of them, the importance of economizing the reader's or the hearer's attention. To so present ideas that they may be apprehended with the least possible mental effort, is the desideratum towards which most of the rules above quoted point.

Hence, carrying over the metaphor that languages as the vehicle of thought, there seems reason to think that in all cases the fiction and inertia of the vehicle deflect from its efficiency; and that in composition, the chief, if not the sole, thing to be done, is to reduce this fiction and inertia to the smallest possible amount.

[Richard] Avenarius:

If a soul possess inexpressible strength, then, of course, it would be indifferent to how much might be required of the person, only the necessarily expended time would be important. But since the forces are limited, one is led to expect that the soul has to carry out the apperceptive process in as expeditiously as possible — that is, with artistic language.

Shklovsky is here giving two things of major theoretical importance: (1) he argues that different techniques serve a single function, and that (2) no single technique is all-important. The second permits the formalism to be concerned with any and all literary devices; the first permits it to discuss the devices from a single consistent theoretical position. [Tr.]

[Herbert Spencer, The Philosophy of Style (Hamburg Library, vol. 34, New York, 1882), pp. 3-4. [Shklovsky]]

Shklovsky's quoted reference, in Russian, preserves the idea of the original but abridges it. [Tr.]

Comparatively the least expenditure of energy, and, hence, with comparatively the best result.

Petrarchistically, with only one reference to the general law of mental effort, rejects [William] James's theory of the physical basis of emotion, a theory which contradicts his own. Even Alexander Vasilevsky acknowledged the principle of the economy of creative effort, a theory especially appealing in the study of rhythm, and agreed with Spencer: "A satisfactory style is precisely that style which delivers the greatest amount of thought in the fewest words." And Andrei Bely, despite the fact that in his better pages he gave numerous examples of "roughness of the economy of creative effort" and (as examples from Baratynsky) showed the difficulties inherent in poetic epistles, also thought it necessary to speak of the law of the economy of creative effort in his book — a heroic effort to create a theory of art based on unverified facts from antiquated sources, on his vast knowledge of the techniques of poetic creativity, and on Krylovich's high school physics text.

These ideas about the economy of energy, as well as about the law and aim of creativity, are perhaps true in their application to "practical" language; they were, however, extended to poetic language. Hence they do not distinguish properly between the laws of practical language and the laws of poetic language. The fact that Japanese poetry has sounds not found in conversational Japanese was hardly the first factional indication of the differences between poetic and everyday language. Leo Jakubinsky has observed that the law of the dissimilation of liquid sounds does not apply to poetic language. This sugestive to him that poetic language tolerated the admission of hard-to-pronounce conglomeration of similar sounds. In his article, one of the first examples of scientific criticism, he indicates indirectly, the

The Russian version involves a play on the word for "bad," colloquial for "cliff," "cliff," etc. [Tr.]

**6**The Russian version is "made difficult." The suggestion is that posse is "easy" or smooth rhythms slip by unnoticed; poems that are difficult or "groggish" force the reader to attend to them. [Tr.]

**7**Sharovjuk, probably. [Tr.]

**8**Ozo Jakubinsky, "O vozvrazhchennuyu yazyko" ([On the Sounds of Poetic Language], Shosnay (1910): 38. [Shklovsky]
Leo Jakobinsky's article 14 and, hence, why (along with other slips of the tongue) we fail to pronounce it. The process of "algebraization" is the over-automatization of an object, permits the greatest economy of perceptive effort. Either objects are assigned only one proper feature and number, for example — or else they function as though by formula and do not even appear in connection:

I was cleaning a room and, marveling about the divan and couldn't remember whether or not I had dusted it. Since these movements are habitual and unconscious, I could not remember and felt that it was impossible to remember—so that if I had dusted it and forgot that I had acted consciously, then it was the same as if I had not. If some conscious person had been watching, then the fact could be established. If, however, no one was looking, or looking on unconsciously, if the whole complex lives of many people go on unconsciously, then such lives are as if they had never been.15

And so life is reckoned as nothing. Habitualization devours works, clothes, furniture, one's wife, and the fear of war. If the whole complex lives of many people go on unconsciously, then such lives are as if they had never been. And art exists that one may recover the sensation of life; it exists to make one feel things, to make the stone story. The purpose of art is to impart the sensations of things as they are perceived and not as they are known. The technique of art is to make objects "unfamiliar," to make forms difficult, to increase the difficulty and length of perception because the process of perception is an accessible end in itself and must be prolonged. Art is a way of experiencing the artificialness of an object; the object is not important.

The range of poetic (artistic) work extends from the sensory to the cognitive, from poetry to prose, from the concrete to the abstract. From Cervantes' Don Quixote — scholastic and poor nobleman, half consciously bearing his humiliation in the court of the duke— to the broad but empty Doll of Turgenev: from Charlemagne to the same "idol" in Russian "Charles" and "king," obviously derived from the same root, korol'. The meaning of a work broadens to the extent that artfulness and artistry diminish; thus a sable symbolizes more than a poem, and a proverb more than a joke. Consequently, the least self-contradictory part of Potemkin's theory is his treatment of the joke, which, from his point of view, he investigated thoroughly. But since his theory did not provide for "expressive" works of art, he could not finish his book. As we know, Notes on the Theory of Literature was published in 1805, thirteen years after Potemkin's death. Potemkin himself completed only the section on the joke.16

After we see an object several times, we begin to recognize it. The object is in front of us and we know about it, but we do not see it17 — hence we cannot say anything about it. Art removes objects from the automatism of perception in several ways. Here I want to illustrate a way used repeatedly by Leo Tolstoy, that writer who, for Merezhkovsky, at least, seems pretty much as if he himself saw them, saw them in their entirety, and did not alter them. Tolstoy's art is strong by not naming the familiar object. He describes an object as if he were seeing it for the first time, an event as if it were happening for the first time. In describing something he avoids the accepted names of its parts and instead names corresponding parts of other objects. For example, in "Shame," Tolstoy "defamiliarizes" the idea of juggling: "to stripe people who have broken the law, to hurl them to the floor, and to rip on their bottoms with switches," and, after few lines, "to flail about on the naked buttocks." Then he remarks:

Just why precisely this stupid, savage means of causing pain and not others — why not prick someone or any part of the body with needles, squeeze the thumb on the face or with anything like that?

15Alexandr Pogodin, Young, yak tsverchev (Language as Art) (Khabarov, 1953), p. 2. [Slavokov]
16Slavokov, Don Quixote (1953), frontispiece. [Slavokov]
17Slavokov, "Leo Tolstoy's Diary," entry dated February 27, 1957. [Slavokov]

I apologize for this harsh example, but it is typical of Tolstoy's way of pricking the conscience. The familiar act of juggling is made unfamiliar both by the description and by the proposal to change its form without changing its nature. Tolstoy uses this technique of "defamiliarizing" to illustrate our notions. The narrator of "Kupol'nychno," for example, is a horse, and it is the horse's point of view (rather than a person's) that makes the content of the story seem unfamiliar. Here he says, "...the horse regards the limitation of private property..."

I understood well what they said about whipping and Christianity. But then I was absolutely in the dark. What's the meaning of "his own", his cat?" From these phrases I saw that people thought there was some sort of connection between me and the stable. At the time I simply could not understand the connection. Only much later, when they separated me from the other horses, did I begin to understand. But even then I simply could not see what it meant when they called me "man's property." The words "my horse" referred to me, a living being, and seemed strange to me as the words "my head," "my arm," "my nose.

But the words made a strong impression on me. I thought about them constantly, and only after the most diverse experiences with people did I understand, finally, what they meant. They meant this: in life people are guided by words, not by deeds. It's not so much that they love the possibility of doing or not doing something as it is the possibility of speaking with words, agreed upon among ourselves, about various topics. Such are the words "my," and "mine," which they apply to different things, creatures, objects, and even to land, people, and horses. They agree that only one may say "mine" about this, that, or the other thing. And the one who says "mine" about the greatest number of things is, according to the game which they've agreed upon amongst themselves, the one who can boast the most. I don't know the point of all this, but it's true. For a long time I tried to explain it to myself in terms of some kind of real gain, but I had to reject that explanation because it was wrong.

Many of these, for instance, who called me their own, were made on me—although others did. And so with those who fed me. Then again, the coachman, the veterinarians, and the outsiders in general treated me kindly, yet those who called me their own did not. In one case, having widened the scope of my knowledge, I can say, with some certainty, that the notion "my," not only in relation to us horses, but..."
no other basis than a human instinct which is called a sense of or right to private property. A man says "this house is mine" and never lives in it; he only worries about its construction and upkeep. A merchant says my shop, my dry goods shop, for instance, and does not even wear clothes made from the better cloth he keeps in his own shop.

There are people who have a claim of title of their own, but they never see them. And the whole relationship between them is that the so-called "owners" treat the others unjustly.

There are people who call women their own, or their "wives," but their women live with other men. And people strive not for the good of life, but for goods they can call their own.

I am convinced that this is the essential difference between people and ourselves. And therefore, not even considering the other ways in which we are superior, but considering just this one virtue, we can bravely claim to stand higher than men on the ladder of living creatures. The actions of men, at least those with whom I have had dealings, are guided by words — ours, by deeds.

The horse is killed before the end of the story, but the manner of the narrative, its technique, does not change:

Much later they put Serpushkov's body, which had experienced the world, which had eaten and drunk, into the ground. They could probably send a seal to hide, or his flesh, or his bones anywhere.

But since his dead body, which had gone about in the world for twenty years, was a great burden to everyone of the four-volume books, which immediately began to rot, in a good uniform and good boots; to lay it in a new coffin with new nails at the four corners, then to place this new coffin in another chest and ship it to Moscow; then there are people who put this body and at just that spot, to hide this putrefying body, swarming with maggots, in its new uniform and clean boots, and to cover it over completely with dirt.

Thus we see that at the end of the story Tolstoy continues to use the technique, even though the motivation for it [the reason for its use] is gone.

In War and Peace Tolstoy uses the same technique in describing whole battles as if battle were something new. These descriptions are too long to quote; it would be necessary to extract a considerable part of the text. But Tolstoy uses the same method in describing the drawing room and the theater.

The middle of the stage consisted of the brush by the sides stood painted pictures representing trees, and at the back a linen cloth was strung down to the floorboards. Maidens in red dresses and white skirts sat on the middle of the stage. One very fat, in a white silk dress, sat apart on a narrow bench to which a great postcard box was glued from behind. They were all singing somewhere. When they had finished, the maiden in white approached the prompter's box. A man in silk with tight-fitting pants on his fat legs approached her with a plume and began to sing and spread her arms in dismay. The man in the tight pants finished his song alone, then the girl sang. After that both he raised silence at the music resounded; and the fat man, obviously wishing to begin singing his part with her again, began to run his fingers over the hand of the girl in the white dress. They finished their song together, and everyone in the theater began to laugh and shout. But the maid and women on stage, who represented lovers, start to bow, smiling and raising their hands.

In the second act there were pictures representing moments of life and scenes in the linen dress, resembling the moonlight, and they raised their hands on a frame. As the musicians started to play the bass horn and counter-bass, it large number of people in black masques poured onto the stage from right and left. The people, with something like dog's ears on their heads, started to wave their arms. Then still more people came running out and began to drag away the masks that had been wearing white dresses and who now wore one of sky blue. They did not drag her off immediately, but sat with her for a long time before dragging her away. Three times they struck something metallic behind the side scenes, and everyone got down from his knees and began to chant a prayer. Several times all of this activity was interrupted by enthusiastic shouts from the spectators.

The third act is described:

... But suddenly a storm blew up. Chromatic scales and chords of diminished sevenths were heard in the orchestra. Everyone ran about and

again they dragged one of the bystanders behind the scenes as the curtain fell.

In the fourth act, "There was some sort of devil wind, waving his hands, until the boards were moved and they disappeared." And Tolstoy describes the method in which he describes marriage — "Why, if people have an affinity of souls, must they sleep together?" But he did not disfigure simply those things he considered:

Pierre stood up from his new comrades and made his way between the carpenters on the other side of the road where, indeed, the servant of soldiers bore. He wanted to talk to them. The Frenchometry stopped him on the road and ordered him to return. Pierre did so, but not to the carpentry, not to his comrades, but to an abandoned, unlocked carriage. On the ground, near the wheel of the carriage, he sat cross-legged in the Turkish fashion, and lowered his head. He sat motionless for a long time, thinking. More than an hour passed. No one disturbed him. Suddenly he burst out laughing with his usual, good natured laugh — so loudly that the men near him looked around, surprised at his conspicuous strange laughter.

"Ha, ha, ha," laughed Pierre. And he began to talk to himself. "The soldier didn't allow me to pass. They caught me, berated me. Me — me — immortal soul. Ha, ha, ha," he laughed with tears starting in his eyes.

Pierre glanced at the sky, into the depths of the departing, playing stars. "And all this is mine, all this is mine, and all this is 1," thought Pierre. "And all the rest they caught and put in a planked enclosure. He smiled and went off to his comrades to lie down to sleep."

Anyone who knows Tolstoy can find several hundred such passages in his work. His method of seeing things out of their normal context is also apparent in his last works. Tolstoy described the dogmas and rituals he attacked as if they were unfamiliar, substituting everyday meanings for the customarily religious meanings of the words common in church ritual. Many persons were painfully wounded; they considered it blasphemy to present as strange and monstrous what they accepted as sacred. Their reaction was due chiefly to the technique through which Tolstoy presented and reported his environment. And after turning to what he had long avoided, Tolstoy found that his perceptions had unsettled his faith.

The technique of defamiliarization: it is not Tolstoy's stroke. I claim Tolstoy because his work is generally known.

Now, having explained the nature of this technique, let us try to determine the approximate limits of its application. Personally feel that defamiliarization is found almost everywhere form is found. In other words, the difference between Poteba's point of view and ours is this: An image is not a permanent referent for those mutable complexities of life which are revealed through it; its purpose is not to make us perceive meaning, but to create a special perception of the object — it creates a special, the "insider," way of looking at it.

The purpose of imagery in erotic art can be studied more accurately, an erotic object is usually present as if it were seen for the first time. Gogol, in "Christmas Eve," provides the following example:

Here he approached her more closely, touched, smiled at her, touched her plump body with his fingers, and expressed himself in a story that showed both his cunning and his conceit.

"And what is it you have, magnificent Sokolka?" he said with a smile, satisfied with his beginning. He wandered about the room.

"And what is this you have, dainty Sokolka?" he said in the same way, having approached her again and grasped her lightly by the neck, and in the very same way he jumped back.

"As if you don't see, Osip Nikiforovich," answered Sokolka, "a neck, and on my neck a necklace."

"What's that? On the neck? It's not okay! Ha, ha, ha!" and the secretary again wandered about the room, rubbing his hands.
"And what is this you have, incomparable Solokha? ... It is not known to what the secretary would stretch his longer fingers now.

And knit Hansum has the following in Hunger: "Two white prodigies appeared from beneath her blouse."

Erotic subjects may also be presented figuratively with the obvious purpose of leading away from their "recognition." Hence sexual organs are referred to in terms of lock and key, 22 or plumbing tools, 23 or bow and arrow, or rings and martinspike, as in the legend of Stavroyr, in which a maned man does not recognize his wife, who is disguised as a warrior. She proposes a riddle:

"Remember, Stavroyr, do you recall
How we little ones walked to and fro in the street?
You and I together sometimes played with our martinspikes—
You had a silver martinspike,
But I had a gold ring?
I found myself at it just now and then,
But you fell in with it ever and always."

Says Stavroyr, son of Godinovich.
"What I didn't play with you at martinspikes!"
Then Vasilius Mokhumb: "So he says. Do you remember, Stavroyr, do you recall,
Now must you know, you and I together learned to read and write;
Mine was an ink-well of silver,
And yours a pen of gold?
But I just mastered it a little now and then,
And I just mastered it ever and always."

In a different version of the legend we find a key to the riddle:

Here the formidable envoy Vasilisya
Repaid her skirts to the very nod.
And then the young Stavroyr, son of Godinovich,
Recognized her gilded ring. ... 25

But defamiliarization is not only a technique of the erotic riddle—a technique of euphemism— it is also the basis and point of all riddles. Every riddle pretends to show its subject either by words which specify or describe it but which, during the telling, do not seem applicable to the type: "black and white and red—reid!—all (I'll tell you)" or by means of cold but imaginative sentences: "(Twas bright, and the alibeytoyes / Did glide and gimble in the wade)." 26

Even erotic images not intended as riddles are defamiliarized ("boobies," "tarts," "pieces," etc.); in popular imagery there is generally something equivalent to "trampling the grass" and "breaking the gardener's heart." The technique of defamiliarization is absolutely clear in the widespread image—a motif of erotic affectionation—in which a bear and other wild beasts (or a devil, with a different reason for nonrecognition) do not recognize a man. 27

The lack of recognition in the following tale is quite typical:

A peasant was ploughing a field with a plough horse. A bear approached him and asked, "What's made this mare piebald for you?"

"I did the piebalding myself."

"But how?"

"Let me, and I'll do the same for you."

The peasant agreed. The peasant tied his feet together with a rope, took the ploughshare from the two-wheeled plough, hoisted it on his head, and applied it to his flanks. He made the bear piebald by scratching his fur down to the hide with the hot ploughshare. The man untied the bear, which went off and lay down under a tree.

A magpie flew at the peasant to pick at the ears that were there. He caught it and broke one of its legs. The magpie flew off to perch in the same tree. 28

23a We have supplied familiar English examples in place of Shklovsky's word-play. Shklovsky is saying that we create words with no reference to or with ambiguous referents in order to force attention to the objects represented by the single-sounding words. By making the reader go through the exact step of interpreting the nonsense word, the writer prevents automatic responses. A food in a box, but "boxed" forces one to pause and think about the bear: D.D. 24


25We have supplied familiar English examples in place of Shklovsky's word-play. Shklovsky is saying that we create words with no reference to or with ambiguous referents in order to force attention to the objects represented by the single-sounding words. By making the reader go through the exact step of interpreting the nonsense word, the writer prevents automatic responses. A food in a box, but "boxed" forces one to pause and think about the bear: D.D. 24


28In studying poetic speech in its phonic and lexical structure as well as in its characteristic distribution of words and in the characteristic thought structures compounded from the words, we find everywhere the artistic technique—a technique, if we find material objectively created to remove the automatism of perception: the author's purpose is to create the vision which results from that deautomatized perception. A work is created "artificially" so that its reception is impeded and the greatest possible effect is produced through the slowness of the reception. As a result of this lingering, the object is perceived not in its extension in space, but so to speak, in its continuity. Thus "poetic language" gives satisfaction. According to Aristotle, poetic language must appear strange and wonderful; and, in fact, it is often actually foreign: the Sumerian used by the Assyrians, the Latin of Europe during the Middle Ages, the Ambassadors of the Persians, the Old Bulgarian of Russian literature, or the elevated, almost literary language of folk songs. The common archaisms of poetic language, the intricacy of the sweet new style [dolce stil nuovo], the obscure style of the language of Arnaud Daniel with the "roughening" [barte] forms which make a "troubadour" style—these are used in much the same way. Leo Jakubinsky has demonstrated the principle of phonetic "roughening" of poetic language in the particular case of the repetition of identical sounds. The language of poetry is, then, a difficult, "roughened, "imposed language. In a few special instances the language of poetry approximates the language of prose, but this does not violate the principle of "roughened" form.

Her sister was called Tatyana.
For the first time we shall
Wiffully brightens the delicate
Pages of a novel with such a name. 30

wrote Pushkin. The usual poetic language of Pushkin's contemporaries was the elegant style of Dorzhavin; but Pushkin's style, because it seemed trivial then, was unexpectedly difficult for them. We should remember the constellation of

29Kotzebue, Pugatin, 24-56. Daniel refers to the new lyric style of his contemporaries. [7]

30Alexander Pushkin, Eugenie Onegin. I.144.
Vladimir Propp
1895-1970

Vladimir Yakovlevich Propp is the originator of folklore studies in the mode of historical and structural typology. Initially a philologist of Russian and German, Propp in 1918 took his degree at Petersberg, where he taught from the 1920s (when the institution had become known as Leningrad University) until his death. Propp's work, such as the groundbreaking Morphology of the Folk Tale (1928), was suppressed because of official suspicion of formalist influence, but Western intellectuals, notably Claude Levi-Strauss (see Ch. 2) rescued him from obscurity in the 1950s. Among Propp's other studies are those on the origins of the tale of enchantment (1947), the Russian heroic saga (1958), and the poetics of peasant folk songs (1963). The translation of "Fairy Tale Transformations" is from Readings in Russian Poetics (1971).

[Fairy Tale Transformations]

The study of the fairy tale may be compared in many respects to that of organic formation in nature. Both the naturalist and the folklorist deal with species and varieties which are essentially the same. The Darwinian problem of the origin of species arises in folklore as well. The similarity of phenomena both in nature and in our field is a direct explanation which would be both objective and convincing. It is a problem in its own right. Both fields allow two possible points of view: either the internal similarity of phenomena or the external dissimilarity producing phenomena. The theory of transformation or self-consistent metamorphoses, or transformations of various cause and occurrence. In order to resolve this problem, we need a clear understanding of what is meant by similarity. Propp has so far been invariably defined in terms of a plot and its variants. We find such an approach acceptable only if based upon the idea of the spontaneous generation of species.
THE CRITICAL TRADITION

Classic Texts and Contemporary Trends

Third Edition

Edited by
David H. Richter

Queens College
of the City University of New York

BEDFORD/ST. MARTIN'S
BOSTON • NEW YORK