

limitations (with a few exceptions, for example, *The Seagull* is evaluated rather negatively on page 315).

Another serious objection is the author's inadequate knowledge of Russian, despite statements such as, "the endorsing syntax works against our being able to feel the . . . sympathy . . ." (p. 259). How can one judge a writer's syntax and draw conclusions from it on the basis of a translation? Hahn is completely unaware of all the literature on Chekhov written in Russian or in any language other than English, and even the English titles in her biography are incomplete. When Bitsilli, Derman, Roskin, Chukovskii, Chudakov, as well as Thomas Winner, Nils Å. Nilsson, and Karl Kramer (to mention just a few) are unknown to the author, numerous reiterations and rediscoveries (in the chapter on *Three Sisters*, for example) are unavoidable. Had she been familiar with some of these studies, she would not have stated that Chekhov's stories "have received scant formal attention outside Russia and the Russian departments of universities" (p. 10). Chekhov's letters are quoted not from any of the large English editions (let alone from the original) but from S. Friedland's very limited selection.

The above criticism notwithstanding, the book has many positive features. Beverly Hahn certainly has a strong empathy for Chekhov and his work. Her general thesis is that he was a true humanist, but she never defines this term, which is too broad, too vague, and too hackneyed to be used without qualification. Apparently, she means that he was a compassionate man, a writer "for whom the most immediate personal value in life will probably be love and fulfilled relationships generally" (p. 68). She emphasizes that Chekhov is an author full of warm feelings for (or abhorrence of, as the case may be) his characters, who have "nothing to do with Chekhov the 'dispassionate observer' referred to so frequently by critics" (p. 88). Her observations, such as on Chekhov's irony (p. 59), are sometimes striking. The subtitle is misleading: What are his major stories, and why are only a few of the best known stories discussed or even mentioned? Ms. Hahn has made an interesting choice, however. She discusses at length several stories which have not been analyzed too often: "Easter Eve" is included, as is "Lights," a story Chekhov did not even include in his collected works, but to which Hahn devotes an entire chapter. It is not surprising that there are chapters on Chekhov's women in which Ms. Hahn expresses a difference of opinion with Virginia Llewelyn Smith, the author of a recent book on this aspect of Chekhov—and chapters on "The [Name Day] Party," "The Lady with the Dog," "A Woman's Kingdom," and *Three Sisters*, in which female characters are central. The way Ms. Hahn draws Tolstoy into the discussion of "The Name Day Party" and "The Lady with the Dog" is illuminating. There are numerous, occasionally valuable comparisons and juxtapositions with English writers, for example, with D. H. Lawrence in the chapter "A Woman's Kingdom." The only non-English author discussed more extensively (in the last chapter) is Henrik Ibsen.

Hahn's Chekhov has its shortcomings, and it rehashes previous work, but it contains lucid insights and analytic comments that secure it a specific place in the extensive and expanding library of Chekhov criticism.

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DEFAMILIARIZATION IN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE. By *R. H. Stacy*.
Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1977. xii, 193 pp. \$14.00.

This is a deft, erudite, and well-written gloss on Viktor Shklovskii's dictum that "estrangement is almost always present wherever there is an image." Noting with approval Shklovskii's "almost," Professor Stacy mentions several areas where estrangement is usually not encountered—in "the preparation of a corpse for ritual display in a funeral parlor, the introduction to books, 'how-to-do-it' books, and bird, flower, plant,

and rock identification guides, the directions accompanying various contraptions which must be assembled, dictionaries, etc."

As one can guess from this limitation, what we have here is an account of the phenomenon that can only be described as far-ranging. Chapter 1 provides a general introduction to the concept of estrangement, which Professor Stacy illustrates with examples from a wide variety of sources. Chapter 2, entitled "Victor Shklovsky and *Ostranenie*," describes the critic's use of the concept and the reactions of other scholars and critics. Both of these chapters are lively and interesting. The following two chapters—called "Forms and Varieties of Verbal and Phrasal Defamiliarization" and "Prose and Poetry"—become engulfed in a welter of names and titles that occasionally threaten to transform themselves into pure lists. About the only masterpiece of world literature not mentioned is *Bambi*, where His rifle is rendered as a third hand. The last chapter, "Literary History," shows, too briefly, that "types of defamiliarization are especially prominent in certain post-classical, Alexandrian, baroque, decadent or silver ages of literature, i.e., during periods when writers rely chiefly upon a *réchauffage* and foregrounding of those devices formerly used by greater artists, but used by them as secondary elements, as means to an end and not as ends in themselves."

Apart from the assumption underlying the word "greater" in the preceding paragraph, I have two quibbles with this book: one concerns the word "defamiliarization"; the other concerns the discussion of Brecht.

The word "crime" cannot capture the higher register of Dostoevsky's *prestuplenie*. The word "evil" captures only the higher register of Solzhenitsyn's *zloi chelovek* in the rhesus monkey scene from *Cancer Ward* (in the Burg and Bethell translation), whereas the word "mean" captures only the lower register (in the Rebecca Frank translation). The word "estrangement," however, besides containing the significant root, neatly incorporates a more abstract meaning than that which it conveys in everyday usage. Why, then, do we resort to "making strange," "bestrangement," and "defamiliarization" when we have a perfectly good English word that works? The word "defamiliarization," besides being offensive English, is not even a translation of *ostranenie* but a definition of it.

The second quibble concerns the discussion of Berthold Brecht's *Verfremdungseffekt*. No mention is made of the probability that Brecht developed his theory out of what he heard about *ostranenie* when he visited Moscow in 1935. Although Brecht seems not to have met Shklovskii at that time, he undoubtedly heard about the theory from Sergei Tretiakov and Sergei Eisenstein.

A more profound and succinct exploration of Shklovskii's concept can be found in Daniel Laferrière's article, "Potebnya, Šklovskij and the Familiarity: Strangeness Paradox" (*Russian Literature*, April 1976). Nevertheless, everyone will find in Professor Stacy's book things that are new and interesting.

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DAS PROBLEM DER VERSSPRACHE: ZUR SEMANTIK DES POETISCHEN TEXTES. By Jurij N. Tynjanov. Edited and translated by Inge Paulmann. *Theorie und Geschichte der Literatur und der schönen Künste, Texte und Abhandlungen*, vol. 25. Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1977. 168 pp. DM 28, paper.

In this day and age when values are seen to be relative or when—as in the case of "Marxist" criticism in the Soviet Union—they are seen to be inadequate and obsolescent, the literary critic or scientist can take refuge in the study of literary technique and form. Here, at least, one can make meaningful and even scientifically demonstrable statements without the necessity of defending an entire value system. (Indeed, by