Pasternak's *Iskazhenie* and the Practice of Creative Evolution

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The Soviet 1920s, as a period of linguistic liberalization, instability and change, were characterized retrospectively by Roman Jakobson as a "landslide of the norm." Another metaphor which in a similar way highlights the unpredictability of the situation was used in 1924 by Iurii Tynianov as the title of an essay that monitors the state of contemporary poetry: "Promezhutok" ("The Interval"). The word in Tynianov's usage designates a period in which inertia stops working, allowing for new phenomena to appear and grow: Новый стих—это новое зрение. И рост этих новых явлений происходит только в те промежутки, когда перестает действовать инерция […],[1] that is, *promezhutok* is one of the nodes of evolution, a window of possibilities that equates to some degree with Jakobson's more dramatic phrase.[2]

The concept of norm, central to any discussion of literary dynamics and the literary process, is evoked by Tynianov in the essay only once, in the section devoted to Boris Pasternak. After discussing the artistic experience of Khlebnikov and Maiakovskii, the outcome of which is described as an excessive detachment of the "rebellious word" from the "thing" (слово стало свободно, но оно стало слишком свободно,

1 Iurii Tynianov, 1977, "Promezhutok," *Poetika. Istoriia literatury. Kino*, eds. E.A. Toddes, A.P. Chudakov & M.O. Chudakova, Moscow, pp. 168–95; p. 169. "A new verse is a new vision. And the growth of these new phenomena may take place only in the intervals when inertia stops working […]." Unless otherwise noted, translations are my own.

2 For a discussion of the metaphor *opolzen'* ("landslide," first used by Tynianov himself) and its evolution in the formalist context, see Heinrich Kirschbaum's article in the present volume.

оно перестало задевать), Tynianov defines the "mission of Pasternak" (миссия Пастернака) as:

> взять прицел слова на вещь, как-то так повернуть и слова, и вещи, чтобы слово не висело в воздухе, а вещь не была голой, примирить их, перепутать братски. Вместе с тем это естественная тяга от гиперболы, жажда, стоя уже на новом пласте стиховой культуры, использовать как материал XIX век, не отправляясь от него как от нормы, но и не стыдясь родства с отцами.[3]

In what ways might norms be understood in this context? And how does Pasternak's practice relate to the mission defined by Tynianov? These are among the questions to be examined in the present article, which also aims to demonstrate how *performance* can be a statement in its own right.

Indeed, within the Russian avant-garde, and particularly in the context of Futurism, the artistic position of Boris Pasternak stands out as non-iconoclastic, evolutionary rather than revolutionary in character. Though for a period he himself was clearly a part of the Moscow Futurist milieu, in a letter he wrote to Meierkhol'd in 1928, Pasternak declares that the only brand of Futurism he could accept is a "Futurism with a genealogy" (футуризм с родословной).[4] A similar standpoint finds graphic expression some decades later in Pasternak's novel. The statement ascribed to Iurii Zhivago that in art, as distinct from science, "forward steps are made by attraction" actually has a distinct bearing not only on the novel itself but on Pasternak's own creative experience from its very beginnings. Zhivago writes in his diary:

> Каждый родится Фаустом, чтобы все обнять, все испытать, все выразить. О том, чтобы Фаусту быть ученым, позаботились ошиб-

3 Tynianov 1977, p. 182. "to aim the word straight at the thing and somehow to turn both words and things in such a way that the word is not left hanging in mid-air nor the thing left naked, but instead they are reconciled, fraternally entangled. At the same time this is a normal pull away from hyperbole, the thirst of one already standing on a new stratum of poetic culture to use the nineteenth century as material without pushing off from it as from a norm, but also without being ashamed of kindred with one's fathers." (Iurii Tynianov, 1969, "Pasternak's 'Mission'," (trans. A. Livingstone) *Pasternak: Modern Judgments*, eds. D. Davie & A. Livingstone, London, p. 126.)

4 Boris Pasternak, 1992, *Sobranie sochinenii v piati tomakh*, vol. 5, Moscow, p. 243.

> ки предшественников и современников. Шаг вперед в науке делается по закону отталкивания, с опровержения царящих заблуждений и ложных теорий.
>
> О том, чтобы Фаусту быть художником, позаботились заразительные примеры учителей. Шаг вперед в искусстве делается по закону притяжения, с подражания, следования и поклонения любимым предтечам.[5] (DZH 282)

The claim also has a certain polemical thrust. It is aimed at formalist theories of literary evolution as outlined in the 1920s, notably by Iurii Tynianov himself. In an essay published in 1921, Tynianov describes literary tradition precisely in the terms Zhivago applies to *science*: Нет продолжения прямой линии, есть скорее отправление, отталкивание от известной точки—борьба.[6] Pasternak's oblique reference to Tynianov in a discussion on artistic evolution may in fact be regarded as a continuation of a "dialogue" begun by Tynianov's discussion of him in "Promezhutok," which actually carries a dedication to Pasternak.[7] I will

5 Boris Pasternak, 1990, *Sobranie sochinenii v piati tomakh*, vol. 3, Moscow. Quotations from *Doktor Zhivago,* abbreviated DZH, refer to this edition. "Every man is born a Faust with a longing to embrace and experience and express everything in the world. Faust became a scientist thanks to the mistakes of his predecessors and contemporaries. Progress in science follows the laws of repulsion—every step forward is made by reaction against the delusions and false theories prevailing at the time.//That Faust was an artist he owed to the example of his masters. Forward steps in art are made by attraction, through the artist's admiration and desire to follow the example of the predecessors he admires most." (258). English translations are taken from Boris Pasternak, 1958, *Doctor Zhivago*, trans. M. Hayward & M. Harari, London.

6 Iurii Tynianov, 1977, "Dostoevskii i Gogol' (k teorii parodii)," *Poetika. Istoriia literatury. Kino*, eds. E.A. Toddes, A.P. Chudakov & M.O. Chudakova, Moscow, pp. 198–226; p. 198. "There is no continuation of a straight line, there is rather a departure, a repulsion from a certain point—a struggle."

7 The essay was published (in part) in the fourth issue of the journal *Russkii sovremennik* 1924 and was subsequently included in Tynianov's *Arkhaisty i novatory* (1929), where the dedication to Pasternak appeared. As is evident from a letter of 7 March 1929, Tynianov sent the book to Pasternak together with his novel *Smert' Vazir-Mukhtara* (Tynianov, 1977, p. 472). In the second issue of *Russkii sovremennik* 1924 Pasternak had published his story "Vozdushnye puti," together with four of his recent lyrics. (Christopher Barnes, 1989, *Boris Pasternak: A Literary Biography*, vol. 1: *1890–1928*, Cambridge, p. 326). Barnes (1989, p. 327) characterizes the journal as "a forum for outstanding unorthodox talent. On its pages Pasternak figured alongside formalist critics Eikhenbaum, Grossman, Shklovsky, Tynyanov and Vinokur, prosaists Babel, Pilnyak, and the Serapions, and poets such as Akhmatova, Esenin, Khodasevich, Mandelstam and Tsvetaeva."

return to the question of how Pasternak realizes Tynianov's "mission" in his novel, but first I will dwell on the concept of "norm," in relation to Pasternak's aesthetics and literary practice.

The evolutionary position notwithstanding, in Pasternak's œuvre one can identify a paradigm of words/concepts pertaining to creativity in general and/or creative processes in particular, which implies a departure/deviation from perceived norms, such as displacement (*smeshchenie*), distortion (*iskazhenie*), intended liberty (*namerennaia svoboda*).[8] The first of these concepts, *smeshchenie*, which figures most notably in a well-known passage of *Okhrannaia gramota* (*A Safe Conduct*, 1929–1931), is actually also a word in Tynianov's vocabulary. *Smeshchenie* and *sdvig*, that is a displacement of automatized literary forms, play a central role in Tynianov's conception as the driving force of evolution, leading to the renewal of literature; figuring under different names (Eikhenbaum's "sharpening" and "intensification" (*obostreniia* and *intentsifikatsii*), Shklovskii's "defamiliarization" and "making difficult" (*ostraneniia* and *zatrudneniia*)), these concepts lie at the core of formalist theory.[9] But whereas for Tynianov and the formalists *smeshchenie* is a phenomenon largely associated with literature and language (*smeshchenie zhanra*, *smeshchenie stilia*),[10] for Pasternak it seems to designate an experience of "reality":

> Наставленное на действительность, смещаемую чувством, искусство есть запись этого смещенья. Оно его списывает с натуры. Как же смещается натура? Подробности выигрывают в яркости, проигрывая в самостоятельности значенья. Каждую можно заменить другою. Любая драгоценна. Любая на выбор годится в свидетельства состоянья, которым охвачена вся переместившаяся действительность.[11]

8 The last expression refers to Pasternak's translation practice and will not be considered in this article; for aspects of this practice, see Susanna Witt, 2003, "Perevod kak mimikriia: *Gamlet* Pasternaka," *Swedish Contributions to the Thirteenth International Congress of Slavists, Ljubljana, 15–21 August 2003* (Slavica Lundensia Supplementa 2), eds. B. Englund Dimitrova & A. Pereswetoff-Morath, Lund, pp. 145–56.

9 V.V. Eidinova, 1995–1996, "Tynianovskie poniatiia 'smeshcheniia' i 'smeny' i nekotorye iavleniia russkoi prozy 1920-kh godov," *Sed'mye tynianovskie chteniia: Material dlia obsuzhdeniia* (Tynianovskie sborniki 9), Riga & Moscow, pp. 236–38.

10 "Displacement of genre," "displacement of style," Tynianov 1977, p. 258.

11 Boris Pasternak, 1991, *Sobranie sochinenii v piati tomakh*, vol. 4, Moscow, pp. 187–88 (*Okhrannaia gramota*, 11:7). "Focussed upon a reality that is being displaced by feel-

Smeshchenie refers to reality when it emerges in its aesthetic category.[12] In the next paragraph a formalist key concept is explicitly evoked, somewhat ironically, and here the reference is to literature:

> Когда признаки этого состоянья перенесены на бумагу, особенности жизни становятся особенностями творчества. Вторые бросаются в глаза резче первых. Они лучше изучены. Для них имеются термины. Их называют приемами.[13]

One of the textual realities corresponding to *smeshchenie* in Pasternak's own work is *iskazhenie*, "distortion." It is connected to the experience and reworking of other works of art. *Doktor Zhivago* presents a picture

ing, art is a record of this displacement. It copies it from nature. In what way is nature displaced? Details gain in sharpness, while losing independence of meaning. Each one could be replaced by another. Any one of them is precious. Any one, chosen at random, can bear witness to the state that envelops the whole of transposed reality." Boris Pasternak, 2008, *The Marsh of Gold: Pasternak's Writings on Inspiration and Creation*, ed. & trans. A. Livingstone, Boston, p. 111.

12 See Peter Alberg Jensen's article in this volume for a discussion of Pasternak's thematization of this state in his early prose fragments.

13 "When the signs of this condition are transferred onto paper, the characteristics of life become the characteristics of creation. The latter leap to the eye more sharply than the former. They have been better studied. There is a terminology for them. They are called devices." (Pasternak, 2008, p. 111). Pasternak's attitude to Formalism emerges from a letter to Pavel Medvedev (20 August 1929) in which he comments on the latter's book *The Formal Method in Literary Scholarship*. Pasternak fully agrees with Medvedev's critique of Marxist literary scholarship and "on the whole" shares his position vis-à-vis Formalism, but reproaches Medvedev for being "unfair" towards the formalists "in certain details"; these "details," however, which Medvedev "insufficiently explicate," turn out to be such fundamental concepts as *ostranenie* (defamiliarization), the relationship between *fabula* and *siuzhet* and others: Мне всегда казалось, что это, теоретически, очень *счастливые* идеи, и меня всегда поражало, как позволяют эти понятья, эвристически столь дальнобойные, быть их авторам тем, что они есть. ("It always seemed to me that, from a theoretical perspective, these ideas are very *felicitous* ones, and it always struck me how these concepts, heuristically so long-ranging, can be allowed to mean to their authors what they presently do." Pasternak, 1992, p. 280). For a discussion of the letter with particular reference to Pasternak's own literary practice of the time, see Lazar' Fleishman, 1981, *Boris Pasternak v dvadtsatye gody*, Munich, pp. 134–36. Among the formalists, Fleishman singles out "the Leningraders" Tynianov and Eikhenbaum as being closest to Pasternak's reflections on art in the 1920s (Fleishman, 1981, p. 136). For a survey of formalist attitudes to Pasternak, see Catherine Depretto, 2006, "Pasternak i russkie formalisty," *Eternity's Hostage: Selected Papers from the Stanford International Conference on Boris Pasternak, May 2004*, Stanford, pp. 210–26.

of creation as imitation, in accordance with Zhivago's own statement cited above (*s podrazhaniia i sledovaniia liubimym predtecham*), but the creative element in the process is linked precisely to *iskazheniia*, as distinct from the fatal "gift" of exact copying with which Zhivago's antipode Antipov is endowed. These *iskazheniia* are distortions or deviations from canonical texts which arise organically and spontaneously *in the process of imitation*. A central image pertaining to creation in the novel is mimicry, implying an organism that perceives the light, colour and form of its surroundings, creatively reworks them and expresses them through its own body. Mimicry is closely related to the essence and existential mode of art as presented in the novel, a life principle turned into an artistic principle, thus making "art" an organic part of "life." Mimicking other texts is part of the novel's poetics (mimicry itself being intimately linked to "evolution," almost an emblem of it).[14]

The very word *iskazhenie* is used in the novel by Zhivago himself to characterize the speech of the cattle healer Kubarikha, who emerges as a kind of folkloric embodiment of his own literary persona. It is significant that *iskazhenie* appears here in the context of tradition or evolution:

> Юрий Андреевич был достаточно образован, чтобы в последних словах ворожеи заподозрить начальные места какой-то летописи, Новгородской или Ипатьевской, наслаивающимися искажениями превращенные в апокриф.[15] (DZH 362)

Kubarikha's long incantation displays a series of approximations to the novel itself, including one of its most prominent features—the metapoetic stance (the incantation touches, among other things, upon soothsaying and its uses). The concept of *iskazhenie* is furthermore applicable

14 On these aspects, see Susanna Witt, 2000, *Creating Creation: Readings of Pasternak's* Doktor Zhivago (Stockholm Studies in Russian Literature 33), Stockholm.

15 "Yury was sufficiently well read to realise that Kubarikha's last words had been the opening phrase of an ancient chronicle, either of Novgorod or Ipatyevo, but so distorted from the errors of copyists and the repetitions of sorcerers and bards that its original meaning had been lost." (331). *Iskazhenie* is a word with negative connotations in common usage; for a discussion of its positive meaning in the novel see Boris Gasparov, 1989, "Vremennoi kontrapunkt kak formoobrazuiushchii printsip romana Pasternaka Doktor Zhivago," *Boris Pasternak and His Times: Selected Papers from the Second International Symposium on Pasternak*, ed. L. Fleishman, Berkeley, pp. 315–58, p. 351.

to the novel's own relationship to tradition, its mimicking the *liubimye predtechi*.

I will now discuss how the novel, in Tynianov's words, "uses the nineteenth century as material," and, moreover, how it does so in the handling of the very theme of historical continuity. My specific example is a poem from 1836 by Fedor Tiutchev, "Ne to, chto mnite vy, priroda…" ("Nature is not what you think…"), to which Pasternak had turned dialogically already in his first collection of verse, *A Twin in Clouds* (1913).[16] An apotheosis of animate nature, in which there are "freedom," "love," and "language," Tiutchev's poem juxtaposes an implicit "I" (*ia*), or maybe "we" (*my*), who possesses true knowledge, to the "you" (*vy*) of its opening line: those who are not open to Nature and therefore do not understand the essence of things:

Не то, что мните вы, природа:
Не слепок, не бездушный лик –
В ней есть душа, в ней есть свобода,
В ней есть любовь, в ней есть язык…
[…]
Вы зрите лист и цвет на древе:
Иль их садовник приклеил?
Иль зреет плод в родимом чреве
Игрою внешних, чуждых сил?..
[…]
Они не видят и не слышат,
Живут в сем мире, как впотьмах,
Для них и солнцы, знать, не дышат
И жизни нет в морских волнах.

Лучи к ним в душу не сходили,
Весна в груди их не цвела,
При них леса не говорили
И ночь в звездах нема была!

16 See Susanna Witt, 2008, "O prostranstve lesa v poetike Pasternaka," *Liubov' prostranstva… Poetika mesta v tvorchestve Borisa Pasternaka*, ed. V. Abashev, Moscow, pp. 175–87. On Pasternak and Tiutchev, see also Konstantin Polivanov, 2008, "O tiutchevskikh istochnikakh Pasternaka: Zametki k kommentariiam", *Vremia i mesto: Istoriko-filologicheskii sbornik k 60-letiiu A.A. Ospovata*, Moscow, pp. 560–67.

И языками неземными,
Волнуя реки и леса,
В ночи не совещалась с ними
В беседе дружеской гроза!

Не их вина: пойми, коль может,
Органа жизнь глухонемой!
Увы, души в нем не встревожит
И голос матери самой![17]

The last three stanzas of Tiutchev's poem concretize these *vy* in a series of images, first in a "negative" mode, displaying their failing faculties, then in a striking metaphor which effectively sums up their character.

I would suggest that Tiutchev's poem provides a genealogy for two concrete images in *Doktor Zhivago* related to the central thematic complex of "evolution versus revolution," and, in particular, to the ambivalent character of the second. The Russian revolution as depicted in the novel has two faces: one represented by the liberating, all-encompassing inspiration brought about by the first, February revolution, an emotional state best captured by the expression "Leto 1917 goda";[18] the other represented by the destructive forces of violent reshaping and "improve-

17 Fedor Tiutchev, 1984, *Sochineniia v dvukh tomakh*, Moscow, vol. 1, pp. 101–102. "Nature is not what you think:/Not a cast, not a soulless face—/It has a soul, it has freedom,/It has love, it has language… […] You behold the leaf and blossom on the tree:/Did a gardener paste them to it?/Does the fruit ripen in the kindred womb/Through the play of external, alien forces? […] They do not see or hear,/They live in this world as if in darkness,/For them, it seems, the suns do not breathe/And there is no life in the ocean's waves.//The beams did not find their way into their souls,/Spring did not blossom in their breasts,/In their presence the woods did not talk/And the night in stars remained silent!//And in unearthly languages, upsetting rivers and woods,/The thunderstorm did not confer with them by night/In a friendly conversation!//They are not to blame: how can a deaf-mute/Understand the life of an organ!/Alas, his soul will not be moved/Even by his own mother's voice!" When the poem was published in the journal *Sovremennik* in 1836 stanzas 2 and 4 had been excluded by the censorship; on Pushkin's insistence these stanzas (which were not preserved) were represented by dotted lines (Tiutchev, 1984, p. 440). They are given here as […].

18 "The Summer of 1917." "Leto 1917 goda" was the subtitle to the collection *Sestra moia—zhizn'*; on correspondences between this work, its biographical context and the novel, see Elena Pasternak, 1998, "Leto 1917 goda (O *Sestre moei—zhizni* i *Doktore Zhivago*)," *Pasternakovskie chteniia*, vol. 2, eds. M.L. Gasparov, I.Iu. Podgaetskaia & K.M. Polivanov, Moscow, pp. 100–15.

ment" of life which finally hijacked it, embodied in the bizarre figure of the *glukhonemoi*, the "deaf-mute," the "extremist-maximalist" Maksim Aristarkhovich Klintsov-Pogorevshikh.

Tiutchev's line В ночи не *совещалась* с ними/В *беседе* дружеской гроза! echoes in the image Zhivago himself uses to convey the atmosphere of "the summer of 1917" to Lara, having witnessed a nocturnal meeting in the square of the small town of Meliuzeevo: Не то, чтобы говорили одни только люди. *Сошлись и собеседуют* звезды и деревья, философствуют ночные цветы и митингуют каменные здания. (DZH 145).[19] Tiutchev's negated characteristics of *vy* are used in an affirmative way to designate an inspired state of proximity to nature and communion with all creation. The *glukhonemoi* in the last stanza of Tiutchev's poem is deaf precisely to the voice of life in the same sense as his namesake in the novel, whom the doctor meets on the train back to Moscow that same summer. Zhivago is startled by the attitude represented by this puppet-like figure who urges that "[s]ociety has not yet disintegrated sufficiently. It must fall to pieces completely, then a genuinely revolutionary government will put the pieces together on a completely new basis." At this point, however, Zhivago is unable to articulate any counterarguments: "Yury felt sick. He went out into the corridor." (151).

Not only the deaf-mute, but also the life-affirming image of revolution originating in Tiutchev's poem accompanies the train ride—in the form of the omnipresent lime trees, *lipy*, whose scent is "like a message delivered on the way or like greetings from Melyuzeyevo, as though ad-

19 "And it isn't as if only people were talking. Stars and trees meet and converse, flowers talk philosophy at night, stone houses hold meetings." (136) Cf. a passage from the chapter "Sestra moia—zhizn'" which was excluded from Pasternak's *Autobiographical Sketch*: […] казалось, вместе с людьми митинговали и ораторствовали дороги, деревья и звезды. ("it seemed like the roads, the trees and the stars were holding meetings and delivering speeches together with the people." Pasternak, 1989, p. 651). In the novel, "leto 1917 goda" is summarized retrospectively by the doctor after Lara's departure from Varykino: За своим плачем по Ларе он оплакивал также то далекое лето в Мелюзееве, когда революция была тогдашним с неба на землю сошедшим богом, богом того лета, и каждый сумасшествовал по-своему, и жизнь каждого существовала сама по себе, а не пояснительно-иллюстративно, в подтверждение правоты высшей политики. (DZH 448). "Mourning for Lara, he also mourned that distant summer in Melyuzeyevo when the revolution had been a god come down to earth from heaven, the god of that summer when everyone had gone mad in his own way, and when everyone's life existed in its own right and not as an illustration to a thesis in support of higher policy." (406).

dressed personally to Yury." (146). Once again the image appears in the novel as a "positive" to Tiutchev's "negative" (in a photographic sense).[20] If Tiutchev's poem states При них леса не говорили/И ночь в звездах нема была,[21] the lime trees—with "leaves as thick as *night* and sprinkled with *small stars* of wax flowers" (146)[22]—are communicating and Zhivago is able to discern their message:

> В эти минуты казалось понятным, что заставляло шелестеть и клониться друг к другу *эти ночные тени и что они шепчут друг другу*, еле ворочая сонными отяжелевшими листьями, *как заплетающимися шепелявыми языками*. Это было то же самое, о чем думал, ворочаясь у себя на верхней полке, Юрий Андреевич, весть об охваченной все ширящимися волнениями России, *весть о революции*, весть о ее роковом и трудном часе, о ее вероятном конечном величии. (DZH 160–61)[23]

In the following, however, the Janus face of revolution will turn only one side to Zhivago: the brutal and destructive. A prime example is the partisan leader Liverii Mikulitsyn—a kind of narrative substitution or transformation of the deaf-mute, who himself completely disappears from the novel as soon as he gets off the train. In his confrontation with Liverii the captive doctor at last articulates his counter-argument in an elaborate

20 Thus the novel repeats an earlier practice in Pasternak's handling of a Tiutchevan subtext; cf. Tomas Venclova's analysis of "Iiul'skaia groza" as a "negative" (Venclova's term) to Tiutchev's "Vesenniaia groza" (Tomas Venclova, 1999, "Iz nabliudenii nad stichami Borisa Pasternaka," *Essays in Poetics*, *Literary History and Linguistics*, *Presented to Viacheslav Vsevolodvich Ivanov on the Occasion of His Seventieth Birthday*, eds. L. Fleishman, et al., Moscow, pp. 284–86).

21 "In their presence the woods did not talk/And the night in stars remained silent!"

22 Hayward & Harari's translation slightly changed for greater accuracy.

23 "At such moments Yury felt he understood what it was that made these night shadows rustle and put their heads together, and what it was that they whispered to each other, hardly turning their leaves, heavy with sleep, like faltering, lisping tongues. It was also what Yury was thinking of, turning and twisting in his bunk—news of the ever widening circles of unrest and excitement in Russia, news of the revolution, of its difficult and fateful hour and of the likelihood of its ultimate greatness." (149). Cf. the poem "Iiul'skaia groza" (1915): Не отсыхает ли язык/У лип, не липнут листья к нёбу ль (Pasternak 1989, p. 90; Does not the tongue dry up?/For the linden trees, do not the leaves stick to the palate?"), where Venclova, in addition to the biblical allusion, catches a "phonosemantic subtext" from "Ne to, chto mnite vy, priroda…" (Venclova, 1999, p. 286).

answer to them both. Here, again, Tiutchev's poem proves to be relevant. Its juxtaposition of the (implicit) *ia* and *vy* is transposed to the novel and now projected on the discourse of "evolution versus revolution." Zhivago's argument in favour of life and its own capacity for eternal renewal is structured according to the rhetorical model set by the very title "Ne to, chto mnite vy, priroda…":

> Переделка жизни! Так могут рассуждать люди, хотя, может быть, и видавшие виды, но ни разу не узнававшие жизни, не почувствовавшие ее духа, души ее. Для них существование—это комок грубого, не облагороженного их прикосновением материала, нуждающегося в их обработке. А материалом, веществом, жизнь никогда не бывает. Она сама, если хотите знать, непрерывно себя обновляющее, вечно себя перерабатывающее начало, она сама вечно себя переделывает и претворяет, она сама куда выше наших с вами тупоумных теорий. (DZH 334)[24]

The doctor's reaction to Liverii's tirades—Какое самоослепление! (DZH 334)[25]—is in complete agreement with Tiutchev's description of the *vy* position in stanza three: Они не видят и не слышат,/Живут в сем мире, как впотьмах,/Для них и солнцы, знать, не дышат/и жизни нет в морских волнах.[26]

The different attitudes towards nature/life under discussion are also *demonstrated* on the narrative level early in the novel. In two short parallel scenes (1:6 and 1:8) featuring Iura Zhivago and Nika Dudorov in

24 "'Reshaping life! People who can say that have never understood a thing about life—they have never felt its breath, its heart—however much they have seen or done. They look on it as a lump of raw material which needs to be processed by them, to be ennobled by their touch. But life is never a material, a substance to be moulded. If you want to know, life is the principle of self-renewal, it is constantly renewing and remaking and changing and transfiguring itself, it is infinitely beyond your or my theories about it.'" (305–306). It is not important that "nature" is not explicitly mentioned here; in Pasternak nature is "the closest and fullest synonym of life" (Vladimir Al'fonsov, 1990, *Poeziia Borisa Pasternaka*, Moscow, p. 93).

25 "'How can anyone be as blind as this?'" (306).

26 "They do not see or hear,/They live in this world as if in darkness,/For them, it seems, the suns do not breathe/And there is no life in the ocean's waves." Cf. Zhivago's analogous reaction to the government decrees and newspapers that cover the facade of the house with the sculptures opposite Lara's home in Iuriatin: Какое завидное ослепление! (DZH 376). "'How lucky to be so blind!' thought Yury." (343).

childhood, the novel gives a contrastive view of their relationship to surrounding nature, which in this case is Duplianka, the estate of the silk manufacturer and "great patron of the arts" Kologrivov. Iura is taken to the estate by his uncle Vedeniapin and left to spend his time with Nika, some years his elder, who is also staying there.

First, the novel focuses on Iura, who wanders round the house alone, unable to find his friend. The beauty of the place, it is said, "reminded him of his mother, who had been fond of nature (любила природу) and had often taken him for country walks." (17). Nature for Iura is a place of communion and communication:

> Над лужайками слуховой галлюцинацией висел призрак маминого голоса, он звучал Юре в мелодических оборотах птиц и жужжании пчел. Юра вздрагивал, ему то и дело мерещилось, будто мать аукается с ним и куда-то его подзывает. (DZH 15).[27]

Like in Tiutchev's poem, there are "love" and "language." Moreover, the whole scene clearly relates to its last line: Увы, души в нем не тревожит/И голос матери самой! Iura *is* moved by his deceased mother's voice. Once again the novel makes use of a negated characteristic of *vy* in the poem, allowing it to apply in an affirmative way to the opposite category—Iura is implicitly identified with the *ia* of the poem, as one initiated into the secrets of nature.[28]

In connection with Nika, who deliberately hides from Iura and goes off into the park, there is an analogous description of the fragrance and

27 "Like an aural hallucination his mother's voice haunted the lawns, it was in the buzzing of the bees and the musical phrases of the birds. It made him quiver with the illusion that she was expecting him to answer, that she was calling him to her, now here, now there." (20).

28 The episode is highlighted once again—this time as vehicle in a simile describing Zhivago's sensations after Lara's departure from Varykino: Как когда-то в детстве среди великолепия летней природы в пересвисте птиц мерещился ему голос умершей матери, так привыкший к Ларе, сжившийся с ее голосом слух теперь иногда обманывал его. «Юрочка»,—в слуховой галлюцинации иногда слышались ему из соседней комнаты. (DZH 449). "As in his childhood, when after his mother's death he thought he heard her voice among the bird calls in the summer magnificence of Kologrivov's garden, so now his hearing, accustomed to Lara's voice and expecting it as a part of his life, played tricks on him and he heard her calling, 'Yura!' from the next room." (407). The repetition (almost verbatim) lends retrospective weight to the episode."

delight of nature. But it has a different influence on the older boy and leads to other reactions:

> «Как хорошо на свете!—подумал он.—Но почему от этого всегда так больно? Бог, конечно, есть. Но если он есть, то он—это я. Вот я велю ей,—подумал он, взглянув на осину, всю снизу доверху охваченную трепетом (ее мокрые переливчатые листья казались нарезанными из жести),—вот я прикажу ей»,—и в безумном превышении своих сил он не шепнул, но всем существом своим, всей своей плотью и кровью пожелал и задумал: «Замри!»—и дерево тотчас же послушно застыло в неподвижности. Ника засмеялся от радости и со всех ног бросился купаться на реку. (DZH 21)[29]

Nika's behaviour is the revolutionary stance *performed*: man is god and his relationship with nature is one of violence and command.[30] It is not by chance that the next paragraph tells us about his father, the terrorist Dementii Dudorov, "condemned to death by hanging, but reprieved by the Tsar and now doing forced labor," and his mother with her enthusiasm for "rebels and rebellions, extremist theories, famous actors or unhappy failures." Nika himself, we are told, contemplates "running away to his father in Siberia and starting a rebellion." (26).

My final example relating to Tiutchev's poem "Ne to, chto mnite vy, priroda…" is from one of the novel's central scenes, set in the forest. It depicts a moment of creative epiphany which occurs when Zhivago finds himself standing in the play of light from the setting sun. Here, Tiutchev's line Лучи к ним в душу не сходили,[31] is "distorted" in the same way as before and brought to bear in an affirmative form on the novel's hero:

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29 "'How wonderful to be alive,' he thought. 'But why does it always have to be so painful? God exists, of course. But if He exists, then I am He.' He looked up at an aspen shaking from top to bottom, its wet leaves like bits of tinfoil. 'I'll order it to stop.' With an insane intensity of effort, he willed silently with his whole being, with every ounce of his flesh and blood: 'Be still,' and the tree at once obediently froze into immobility. Nicky laughed with joy and ran off happily to the river to bathe." (25–26).

30 The impact of this passage is also reinforced by repetition; a few pages later the episode is recalled by the boy: Ника вспомнил волшебную приподнятость ночи, рассвет и свое утреннее всемогущество, когда он по своему произволу повелевал природой. (DZH 23). "He remembered the excitement which had filled him in the night, and his omnipotence at dawn when he had commanded nature." (28).

31 "The beams did not find their way into their souls."

> Юрий Андреевич с детства любил сквозящий огнем зари вечерний лес. В такие минуты точно и он пропускал сквозь себя эти столбы света. Точно дар живого духа потоком входил в его грудь, пересекал все его существо и парой крыльев выходил из-под лопаток наружу. (DZH 339)[32]

The cases described so far are part of the novel's narration, its "telling." The same phenomenon of emulating the "forerunner" Tiutchev is to be found in the novel's "showing" too, with reference to Zhivago himself as well as to his folkloric double Kubarikha. The latter may be said to "perform" Tiutchev in her own way; in her discourse (which is explicitly commented upon as *iskazhenie*) we can discern the opening line of the poem discussed above, "Nature is not what you think…" in a somewhat "distorted" form: Ты вот смотришь и думаешь, лес. А это нечистая сила с ангельским воинством сошлась […] Ты думаешь, это что? Думаешь, это на березе ветер ветку с веткой скрутил-спутал? Думаешь, птица гнездо вить задумала? Как бы не так. Это самая настоящая затея бесовская. (DZH 361).[33] As for Zhivago, his diary (inserted in the novel as chapters 9:1–9:9) opens with the exclamation:

> Как часто летом хотелось сказать вместе с Тютчевым:
> Какое лето, что за лето!
> Ведь это, право, волшебство,
> И как, спрошу, далось нам это,
> Так, ни с того и ни с сего? (DZH 274)[34]

32 "Ever since his childhood Yury had been fond of woods seen at evening against the setting sun. At such moments he felt as if he too were being pierced by blades of light. As if the gift of the living spirit were streaming into his breast, piercing his being and coming out of his shoulders like a pair of wings." (310). Cf. the insistent exclamation in Pasternak's poem "Lesnoe" ("Forestrial," 1913): Ко мне, что к стертой анаграмме,/Подносит утро луч в упор. "To me, as to a wiped-out anagram, the morning brings its beam straight.") This passage in the novel is extremely rich and multifaceted, for other aspects see Witt, 2000, pp. 119–20; p. 139.

33 "Now you, for example, you look over there and you say to yourself: 'There's a forest.' But what there is over there is the forces of evil fighting the angelic hosts […]. Now, what do you think that is? You think it's two twigs that the wind has tangled together? Or a bird building its nest? Well, it isn't either. That there thing is a proper devil's toy […]" (330).

34 "How often in the summer I felt like saying together with Tyutchev://'What a summer, what a summer!/This is magic indeed./And how, I ask you, did it come to us/Unsought and undeserved?'." (252; first line modified).

The reference has an apparent metapoetic twist: the novel says a lot of things "together with Tiutchev," and particularly in relation to *the summer* of 1917. Moreover, this explicit citation also contains an *iskazhenie* as the reader is informed in the commentary to the novel: Неточная цитата; у Тютчева—"колдовство."[35]

Mostly, however, the type of *iskazhenie* observed in the novel and discussed above consists of an inversion of Tiutchevan subtexts. The significance of this practice for Pasternak's œuvre as a whole still remains to be examined in detail. One of its implications, for example, might be a reconsideration of the much discussed title of the collection *My Sister Life*. To the many proposed sources of this Pasternakian master trope—The Song of Songs, St Francis, Verlaine, Aleksandr Dobroliubov[36]— we could add Tiutchev's poem "Bliznetsy," which suggests the image of a "Sister Death": Есть близнецы—для земнородных/Два божества,—то Смерть и Сон,/Как брат с сестрою дивно сходных—/Она угрюмей, кротче он…[37]

We have seen how Pasternak in his novel "uses the nineteenth century as material," in his own idiosyncratic way realizing the formula set forth in Zhivago's diary about "imitating, following and adoring the beloved forerunners."[38] The polemic with formalist views on the literary proc-

35 Pasternak, 1990, p. 702. "Inexact citation—Tiutchev has 'koldovstvo'."

36 These are discussed in: Aleksandr Zholkovskii, 1999, "O zaglavnom trope knigi 'Sestra moja—zhizn'," *Poetry and Revolution: Boris Pasternak's My Sister Life*, Stanford, pp. 26–65; many previous contributions to the subject are invoked here as well.

37 Tiutchev, 1984, p. 158. "There are twins—for the earthborn/They are two gods, —Death and Sleep,/Like brother and sister wondrously akin—/She is gloomier, he is gentler…" The poem is discussed by Ronald Vroon in his perceptive analysis of *A Twin in Clouds* (Ronald Vroon, 1998, "Znak bliznetsov," *Pasternakovskie chteniia* 2, eds. M.L. Gasparov, I.Iu. Podgaetskaia & K.M. Polivanov, Moscow, pp. 334–54); he relates its two pairs of twins (*smert' i son*, *liubov' i samoubiistvo*) to central themes in that collection (ibid., pp. 343–44), but does not comment upon the possible connection between "sister" and "death."

38 Interestingly, the formula (О том, чтобы Фаусту быть художником, позаботились заразительные примеры учителей. Шаг вперед в искусстве делается по закону притяжения, с подражания, следования и поклонения любимым предтечам) echoes a very specific case of *poklonenie*, namely Pasternak's inscription on a copy of his first verse collection *A Twin in Clouds*, which he presented to Valerii Briusov: *Дорогому мастеру* Валерию Яковлевичу Брюсову *С любовью* и *преклонением* от автора. 19.3.914. ("To the dear master Valerii Iakovlevich Briusov With love and admiration from the author," M.L. Gasparov & K.M. Polivanov, 2005, *"Bliznets v*

ess implied in this claim may need a certain requalification in light of the above analysis. The concept of *iskazhenie* and its creative potential as demonstrated by the novel may in some respects be compared to the role of *oshibka* (error) in Tynianov's conception of literary evolution as formulated in the article "Literaturnyi fakt" (1924): Собственно говоря, каждое уродство, каждая «ошибка», каждая «неправильность» нормативной поэтики есть—в потенции—новый конструктивный принцип […].[39] The difference seems to be a question of emphasis: in Tynianov's dynamic model it is on the element of "conflict" and "struggle," in Pasternak's synthesizing organicism it is on the element of "love."

tuchakh" Borisa Pasternaka: Opyt kommentariia (Chteniia po istorii i teorii literatury, 47), Moscow, p. 32). Though always highly ambivalent towards Briusov's poetry, Pasternak may have appreciated him as a "teacher" in another respect. While working on his début collection, Pasternak was absorbed by Tiutchev's poetry, which he read in an edition containing an extensive preface by Briusov. Here, as noticed by Ronald Vroon, "the latter set forth the important principle of contiguity as the foundation for metaphor that Pasternak was later to make theoretically explicit in his 'Vassermanova reaktsiia', and which later would be seen as a hallmark of his poetry." (Ronald Vroon, 2007, "Pasternak's Ontology of the Word," *The Real Life of Pierre Delalande: Studies in Russian and Comparative Literature to Honor Alexander Dolinin*, part 1, eds. D. Bethea, L. Fleishman & A. Ospovat, Stanford, pp. 276–92, p. 290, n. 14). In this sense, for Pasternak Briusov may be said metonymically to represent Tiutchev.

39 Iurii Tynianov, 1977, "Literaturnyi fakt," *Poetika. Istoriia literatury. Kino*, eds. E.A. Toddes, A.P. Chudakov & M.O. Chudakova, Moscow, pp. 255–70 p. 263. "Actually, every deformity, every 'error,' every 'irregularity' of normative poetics is—potentially—a new constructive principle […]." Cf. the significance of *oshibka* in Pasternak's poetics as articulated in his poem to Anna Akhmatova (1929): Мне кажется, я подберу слова,/Похожие на вашу первозданность./А ошибусь,—мне это трын-трава,/Я все равно с ошибкой не расстанусь. "It seems to me I'll pick out words that fit/Your nonpareil originality,/And if I get them wrong—so what?/I'll keep my errors, come what may." (Pasternak, 2008, p. 200).