

V. I. IVANOV'S BEETHOVEN POEMS

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Music was an essential element of Viacheslav Ivanov's philosophical writings on the nature of art. Like many Russian Symbolists, he placed music at the top of the hierarchy of the arts and often wrote about it. Frequently, Ivanov is discussed in conjunction with Alexander Scriabin, with whom he had a close personal friendship and a good deal of mutual influence. However, other composers also frequently inhabited his work, especially during the early years of his poetic and philosophical writing. The theoretical writings of Richard Wagner were newly coming into vogue in Russia during the period when Ivanov was becoming interested in music. Along with the ideas of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, Wagner's works proved instrumental to Ivanov's thinking about the future trajectories of both music and theater.

Ivanov wrote several essays about Wagner and the composer's place in his personal philosophy. A fair amount of scholarly attention has been paid to Wagner's influence on Ivanov.¹ In his 1904 essay "Wagner and Dionysian Performance," Ivanov spends most of his time discussing Ludwig van Beethoven, whom he presents as an important predecessor to Wagner and a "forerunner" to the new type of musical art he imagines.

Due to the general fascination with Wagner among the Russian Symbolists and Ivanov's personal, occasionally collaborative relationship with Scriabin, the bulk of scholarly attention has been paid to the poet's relationship with these two composers. However, there is a gap in scholarship on the topic of Beethoven, whom Ivanov considered the first pioneer of his own new style of ideal music. An examination of Ivanov's theoretical conception and

1 See in particular Rosamund Bartlett, "Ivanov and Wagner," in *Viacheslav Ivanov: Russischer Dichter—europaischer Kulturphilosoph*, ed. Wilfried Potthoff (Heidelberg: Universitaetserlag C. Winter, 1993), 67–83; Rosamund Bartlett, *Wagner and Russia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); A. Gozenpud, *Rikhard Vagner i russkaia kul'tura: Issledovanie* (Leningrad: Sovetskii kompozitor, 1990); Bernice Rosenthal, "Wagner and Wagnerian Ideas in Russia," in *Wagnerism in European Culture and Politics*, ed. David Large (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984), 198–245.

poetic treatments of Beethoven expands our understanding not only of Ivanov's treatment of the other two composers, but also of Ivanov's musical aesthetics in general. In fixing Beethoven as a starting point, we see both how Ivanov constructs his teleological narrative of music and the difficulties he faces in shaping the existing musical tradition to his own goals. We learn what Ivanov sees as already having been accomplished in the development of a new form of music, and we also see what has been left for future composers to perfect. A review of Ivanov's general conception of the future path of music, a Beethoven-focused discussion of his essays, and a reading of his poems on Beethoven will illustrate Ivanov's theoretical writings on Beethoven and raise new questions about Ivanov's conception of Beethoven and music in general.

Ivanov did not dedicate a single essay in its entirety to Beethoven, but he did write two lyric poems dedicated to the composer in his early collections of poetry, "Beethoven's *Missa Solennis*" and "Beethoveniana."² These poems are unique among Ivanov's poetic treatments of composers in that their purpose is to describe Beethoven in terms of the effect of his music and to place him at the forefront of the new movement in music that Ivanov predicts. The Beethoven poems differ from Ivanov's poems concerning Scriabin in that the latter evince a more elegiac approach to the man and his music. The Scriabin poems are personal rather than philosophical in nature, comprising for the most part remembrances of the composer from after his death in 1915. Their primary concern is not Scriabin's aesthetics. By contrast, the Beethoven poems constitute a noteworthy aspect of Ivanov's poetic writing about an aesthetic response to music. As such, they are important objects for study in light of the nascent philosophical ideas they contain regarding Ivanov's conception of the new form of music.

Ivanov became intimately familiar with the works of Beethoven (as well as those of Wagner, Schiller, and Nietzsche) while studying the Classics in Germany, long before his career as a poet. It was also during his study of antiquity that he began to formulate interconnected philosophical ideas about myth, art, and psychology. Although they underwent minor corrections and variations, these ideas would remain a touchstone for the rest of his life.³

For Ivanov, myth was "a means of understanding the working of the mind."⁴ It connected all of humanity to a common collective pre-consciousness. The most important of all myths to Ivanov was the myth

2 The full text of both poems can be found in the Appendix at the end of the article.

3 Robert Bird, *The Russian Prospero: The Creative Universe of Viacheslav Ivanov* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2006), 5–6.

4 James West, *Russian Symbolism* (London: Methuen, 1970), 76.

of Dionysus, whose power of collective thought he emphasized and which he connected with religion. He saw the tradition of Dionysian worship, which was comprised of collective rites that emphasized chaos and musicality, as most closely exemplifying his psychological and artistic conceptions of myth. Per Robert Bird, “in his early aesthetics Ivanov focuse[d] primarily on the inculcation of Dionysian chaos in the hope and expectation that it [would] inspire transformative art.”⁵

Ivanov saw the collective element of the classical worship of Dionysus as stemming from the “pathos of individuation” connected with the god, whom Plutarch describes as being torn asunder into the elements of air, water, earth, and fire.⁶ The collective, frenzied nature of his worship therefore represents an attempt to reunite the separated pieces into the lost whole: the goal is for a group of individuals to become a single unity. In the words of Patricia Mueller-Vollmer, “for Ivanov, a more profound association of Dionysus with the spirit of music was suggested by the communal nature of the Dionysian religion, whereby the devotees of the god strove as a group through frenzied rites to attain union with him.”⁷

Ivanov opposed the fragmented nature of Dionysus to the “harmony and stability” of Apollo, these two forces of order and chaos being in constant conflict with one another.⁸ He saw traditional art and music as being the exclusive realm of Apollo and wanted to introduce Dionysian chaos and collective energy into artistic thinking in order to create a new form of art. He did not want completely to overthrow the Apollonian characteristics of art, but instead hoped to create a balance between the two poles of order and chaos. Per James West, Ivanov saw “the work of art as a representation of the phenomenal world, and insist[ed] that it should have its roots there, and nowhere else; but he envisage[d] a representation which, without distorting the appearance of things, reveal[ed] their essential nature and their place in the divine scheme.”⁹

Ivanov associates music with dynamism, describing it as “the embodiment of the element of motion.” He finds a corollary to this

5 Bird, *Russian Prospero*, 170.

6 J. West, *Russian Symbolism*, 77

7 Patricia Mueller-Vollmer, “Ivanov on Scriabin,” in *Cultura e memoria: Atti del terzo Simposio Internazionale dedicato a Vjacheslav Ivanov*, vol. 1, *Testi in italiano, francese, inglese*, Pubblicazioni della Facolta di lettere e filosofia dell'Universita di Pavia 45, ed. Fausto Malcovati (Florence: La Nuova Italia Editrice, 1988), 193.

8 Ivanov takes this idea, with some of his own developments, from Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy*. For a detailed comparison, see J. West, *Russian Symbolism*, 78–80.

9 J. West, *Russian Symbolism*, 57.

same dynamism in Dionysian worship, thus making music the most important facet of his concept of a new Dionysian art.¹⁰ Taking a page from Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, he also contends that music and Dionysian religion are connected, “on the psychological plane, asserting that both faith and music are a type of contemplation and willing.”¹¹ As such, all true works of art can be reduced to something essentially musical. In his essay “Premonitions and Portents,” Ivanov describes music in terms of “an epistemological metaphor for the ascent towards truth and the mystical union with God.”¹² For Ivanov, a collective spirit in music-making, involving both the performers and the audience—in other words, involvement in both the production and reception of an artwork—would be of paramount importance.

A traditional art music experience, Ivanov asserts, joins the audience with the performers, but only within the minds of the audience members. For the most part, the audience merely receives the music passively instead of actively participating. Ivanov’s idea of the music of the future was distinctly Dionysian: it would take the form of a dithyramb, a group hymn sung to Dionysus by a large group of dancers. Instead of simply perceiving and appreciating the music, Ivanov’s ideal audience would be active participants, who sing and dance, as well as listen. Ivanov also perceived this form of music as a return to old “folk” ways, when music had been a communal experience.¹³ When this ideal balance of both perception of and participation in the music was achieved (technically, this would be a restoration of past glories enjoyed by music and its participants, according to Ivanov), it would create a general movement forward and expose ineffable truths.

In “Wagner and Dionysian Performance,” Ivanov calls Beethoven the “pioneer of a new Dionysian creativity” (*zrachinatel’ novogo dionisiiskogo tvorchestva*), preceding Wagner as the first Dionysian composer (2:83). He uses the example of Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony to demonstrate the “Dionysian” elements of this new type of creativity, and states that the symphony was made a complete work of art by the inclusion of a chorus in its last movement. For most of the symphony, the orchestral instruments strive unsuccessfully to state the ineffable alone. Ivanov argues that the musical experience only becomes complete when the

10 Mueller-Vollmer, “Ivanov on Scriabin,” 190, 193.

11 Ibid., 191.

12 Ibid., 192.

13 Viacheslav I. Ivanov, *Sobranie sochinenii*, 4 vols. (Brussels: Foyer Oriental Chrétien, 1971–86), 2:84. (Future citations from this source will appear parenthetically, indicating volume and page number.)

choir enters at the end. In this analogy, the instruments represent the performance aspect of music, while the choir is a fledgling gesture toward the audience participation necessary to complete the Dionysian musical experience. However, the experience is still imperfect—the choir, as a group of performers, is still separate from the passive, listening audience. The dithyrambic order that unites participant, performer, and observer remains to be restored. For this reason, Ivanov regards Beethoven as merely a forerunner to his imagined completely Dionysian musical experience. He writes, “It is not given to the pioneer to be the perfecter, and the forerunner must be diminished” (*Zachinateliu ne dano byt' zavershitelem, i predtecha dolzhen umaliat'sia*; 2:83).

For Ivanov, Wagner too is still a mere precursor to a truly new form of music, and for mostly the same reasons as Beethoven is. Like Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, Wagner's opera *Tristan and Isolde* is credited as being a portent of the music of the future. Ivanov believed that, out of Wagner's oeuvre, the harmonically unstable *Tristan and Isolde* came the closest to a Dionysian musical experience, as the work's post-tonal harmonic “chaos” and postponement of any sort of resolution (be it harmonic, dramatic, or sexual) were best aligned with the Dionysian rite's orgiastic tendencies and lack of control.¹⁴ However, Ivanov argues that Wagner's music is imperfect because, like Beethoven's, it remains too Apollonian in nature. Although Wagner takes steps toward introducing a Dionysian aesthetic to his work, he does not achieve the necessary balance between Apollonian and Dionysian elements with respect to the role of the audience.¹⁵ The same problems of performance exist in this opera as well: the music continues to belong to the realm of the musicians alone and there is no place in the spectacle for the active inclusion of the audience.

Ivanov completes his narrative of music's evolution when he finds the first truly Dionysian composer in Scriabin, who he sees completing the process initiated by Beethoven and continued by Wagner. Ivanov and Scriabin were very close in the last years of the latter's life. Their congruent ideas about the nature of music reflect this mutual influence, as is clearly reflected in the discussion of Ivanov's essay “Wagner and Dionysian Performance.”¹⁶ The implications of Ivanov's essays could not have escaped Scriabin, and his works of this period strongly suggest

14 Mueller-Vollmer, “Ivanov on Scriabin,” 194.

15 Bird, *Russian Prospero*, 171.

16 Malcolm Brown, “Scriabin and Russian ‘Mystic’ Symbolism,” *19th-Century Music* 3, no. 1 (1979): 48.

Ivanov's influence. In particular, Scriabin took up the notion of *sobornost'* in music, writing in a letter that he intended to ensure that everyone in his audience was "caught up in the common creative act" in his works.¹⁷

Because of their personal relationship, Ivanov's ideas about Scriabin's style of composition are a great deal more descriptive of Scriabin's actual compositional practice and its philosophical underpinnings than are Ivanov's writings about Beethoven and Wagner, with whom he obviously had no personal acquaintance. This is all the more so because Ivanov himself was one of the significant influences on Scriabin's style. Ivanov's selection of Beethoven and Wagner as early, partial representatives of his theory is far more prescriptive. In keeping with this, his interpretations of their music betray a clear teleological trajectory that aligns them with his own ideas about the mythical and collective nature of music. While Beethoven and Wagner were fitted (and occasionally, it seems, shoehorned) into the history of ideal Dionysian music, Scriabin's late music organically expresses and exemplifies Ivanov's ideas. This is not to say that Ivanov's readings of Scriabin are never colored by his theoretical program; on the contrary, Ivanov interprets many of Scriabin's artistic choices, such as his movement away from the traditional tonal system, as harbingers of the advent of Dionysian music and the completion of the tonal project started by Beethoven and Wagner. Ivanov did indeed guide and inspire Scriabin's musical progress. He phrases his analysis of Beethoven and Wagner's music as though he had done the same for them as well.

Ivanov expands upon his essays asserting Beethoven as the initiator of the Dionysian trend in music in his two Beethoven poems. The first, entitled "Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis*,"¹⁸ describes Ivanov's reactions to, and a Dionysian-inflected interpretation of, a particular work by the composer. The second, "Beethoveniana," while seemingly only tenuously connected to the composer, contains a similar wealth of Ivanov's more general theoretical ideas about Beethoven and his music.

"Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis*," published in Ivanov's first collection of lyric poetry, *Pilot Stars (Kormchie zvezdy)*, celebrates the power of Beethoven's music by stating that it exceeds the power of the lyre and becomes the true call of God's word. The Psalms and the lyre alone are not sufficient for praising God, Ivanov writes: a large choral work is necessary as well. This is

17 For further comparisons of the echoes of Ivanov in Scriabin's pronouncements, see Brown, "Scriabin," 50–51.

18 The poem's title refers to Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* in D Major, op. 123. While Beethoven's piece is conventionally known as *Missa Solemnis*, "solennis" is also an attested version of the Latin.

familiar territory for those acquainted with Ivanov's ideas on the nature of Apollonian versus Dionysian music. Here, Apollonian music, represented by Apollo's characteristic lyre, is unequal to the task of praising God for the "great choir of believers" mentioned in the poem's second stanza (1:534). Instead, a Dionysian conception of music is required: a large group of communal music-makers (a large choir and orchestra) rather than an individual with a lyre (a solo instrument). Because of this, Ivanov sees Beethoven's music as better suited to religious purposes.

In the opening stanzas of "*Missa Solennis*," the days are dark and the people's faith is waning. Beethoven is hailed as a genius and a prophet for hearing the faded, almost imperceptible prayers of the faithful. In general, Beethoven is treated in such encomiastic terms that, notwithstanding the title, one might have difficulty understanding that it is a composer who is being addressed. Instead of being discussed as a musical composer, he is described as a superhuman, nearly godlike "genius higher than the stars" (*nadzvezdnyi geniï*; 1:534). Later in the poem, Beethoven is likened to a prophet, suggesting that he is ahead of his time by virtue of his ostensible early embrace of the Dionysian approach to music. Simultaneously, however, Beethoven is shown to be sensitive to the current moment, because he is able to sense the nearly imperceptible Christian praise, power, and religious ecstasy that had almost become extinct. In addition, the word "prophet" connects the poem to the sung text of the Mass. In the Credo movement of *Missa Solennis* and other Masses set to music (the words of which are the Nicene Creed), it is affirmed that the Holy Ghost speaks through the prophets. By anointing Beethoven as a prophet, Ivanov suggests that both he and his music have a direct link to God.

In connection with Beethoven's almost godly musical powers, his music is described as a storm, but not a destructive force. Rather, it is a nourishing, guiding phenomenon that calls humanity back to the true faith. This depiction of the storm again combines a descriptive and a prescriptive approach to experiencing Beethoven's music. First, it functions as a descriptor of musical sounds that are inaudible in a merely literary text; it recalls the distinctly tempestuous tone of much of Beethoven's piece. But it also serves as a reminder of Ivanov's philosophy of musical/aesthetic progression. The metaphor of a powerful yet nourishing storm emphasizes the strength of Beethoven's proto-Dionysian music in relation to the relatively weak, quiet music of the Apollonian lyre. In Ivanov's poetic description, the choral voices of the Mass are, like a storm, out of control. This comparison is intended

to recall a frenzied, orgiastic Dionysian rite. The storm envelops every person and stirs every emotion (praise, tears, etc.) simultaneously, creating an all-encompassing, communal experience.

Beyond seeding the poem's content with clues to his aesthetic program, Ivanov also arranges the poem's language and form to support his message. Ivanov employs archaic syntax to create Latinate figures of speech, such as hyperbaton in the fourth stanza, where there is a gap of three lines between the subject, "ty," and the verb, "sozval" (1:535). While characteristic of much of Ivanov's oeuvre, in this instance the Latinate syntax connects the poem to the Latin religious texts that comprise the words of Beethoven's Mass. This syntax serves an additional purpose: through its displacement, it positions the most meaningful words of the poem, all of which are connected with the human voice, into the most significant spatial positions of the poem. For example, the first stanza ends with the word "voices" (*golosa*), the third stanza with "speaking" (*govoria*) and the last stanza with "called together" (*sozval*). One of the words located closest to the center of the poem, in line 11, is "voice" (*glas*; 1:534–35). These significantly placed words, all connected with the voice and speaking, serve to portray Beethoven as a Dionysian composer. In Ivanov's hearing of the *Missa Solemnis*, the human voice rises above the instruments of the orchestra to state the clearest truth.

Ivanov's interpretation of Beethoven's Mass highlights the choral nature of the music as an essential aspect of the composer's triumph. The Mass is intrinsically a choral genre, and in the poem Ivanov speaks of the "great choir of the faithful" (*vern'ykh khor velikii*; 1:535). This representation, and Ivanov's choice of composition from Beethoven's opus speaks directly to his conception of music as a choral, communal experience. By this reckoning, a great choral piece such as *Missa Solemnis* is a greater, more effective work of musical art than an orchestral or solo work (which does not allow for the necessary proto-*sobornost'* of performers and listeners), and the emphasis in the poem on words connected specifically with the voice, rather than music in general, underlines both of these beliefs.

In addition to being a vehicle for Ivanov's Dionysian ideas about music, there are a number of ingenious gestures in the poem that point to the particular qualities of the music of Beethoven's Mass itself. Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* is divided into five major sections instead of the usual six (Beethoven combined the Sanctus and the Benedictus, traditionally treated in separate movements, into a single movement). Likewise, in the poem there are five stanzas. There are broad textual references to the text of the Mass as well: a mention of the Lamb of God, which in the Mass

is prominently featured in the Agnus Dei movement, and reference to a prophet, also found in the text for the Credo movement of a Mass. In addition, the meter of the poem is somewhat suggestive of the distinctive opening bars of the Mass, the Kyrie. The choral part begins with a heavily accented *sforzando* on the first syllable, which drops away to *piano* (and a solo voice) at the end of the word. The trochaic tetrameter of the poem, with its strong first stressed syllable, produces a similar effect.

The second poem Ivanov wrote about the composer, "Beethoveniana," belongs to the collection *Transparency*, Ivanov's second book of lyric poetry, which was published in 1904. Rather than offer an aesthetic reaction to a single piece of Beethoven's work, "Beethoveniana" states more obliquely Ivanov's ideas about the composer, preserving many of the same aesthetic underpinnings.

The poem, despite its title, does not invoke Beethoven specifically, but instead offers a general idea of his music, which Ivanov couches in a portrayal of the moods of pagan gods. Neither Beethoven nor any of his works are named, and even the instruments used to make the poem's Dionysian music are alien to Beethoven's instrumentation (while he wrote parts for timpani and cymbal, he certainly never scored anything for the *duda*). Ivanov here gives a more catholic representation of the effect of Beethoven's works on the ancient and modern history of music, rather than an individual reaction to any single piece, performance, or compositional aspect. It is a philosophically inclined interpretation of Beethoven's style and goals. Ivanov seems little concerned with Beethoven's specific Dionysian techniques, outside of the obvious aspects of choral performance and harmonic experimentation. Instead, Ivanov occupies himself with the music's effect on an ancient audience prepared to experience Dionysian-style music. In this way, Ivanov turns Beethoven's work into an abstract symbol of world culture. Without specific musical description or analysis, the whole of Beethoven's musical production becomes a vaguely classical/Western European abstraction to be perceived and decoded according to Ivanov's own idiosyncratic, Dionysian key.

The poem concerns the narration of a dream in which Zeus forms a dark mood, and later lets it pass, in response to music. The dream is depicted in terms of weather, a repetition of the storm imagery from "Beethoven's *Missa Solennis*." Zeus, the god of the sky and thunder, is shown to express his emotions in meteorological terms, such as in the line "The sky is Zeus's damp gaze" (*Nebo—vlazhnyi vzor Zevesa*) and in the poem's description of rain: "transparent Zeus is melancholy" (*prozrachnyi grustit Zeves*; 1:778). The bad weather is caused by Zeus's mysterious

melancholy, which cannot be relieved by either godly order or golden ideas, his usual amusements. Instead, his melancholy can only be banished by wild, distinctly Dionysian music.

The music that successfully cheers Zeus is created by a group of satyrs overseen by the god Pan. This group of unruly musicians and dancers is clearly meant to evoke a *thiasos*, or human retinue of Dionysus.¹⁹ As in the previous poem, music only attains emotional power when it is a choral, group experience. In “Beethoveniana,” not only does the group of satyrs make music, but also the instruments themselves seem to come alive and participate *sua sponte*. This stands in contrast to the emphasis on solitude in the first part of the poem, where Zeus’s melancholy descends in part because he is alone and his light goes unreflected. In addition to the emphasis on group activity, there is an equal stress on the ancient folk roots of Dionysian music-making. In keeping with the poem’s oblique, symbolic treatment of Beethoven’s music, the *duda* and other primitivizing, percussive instruments are invoked, rather than the instruments of a modern Western orchestra.

Ivanov links ancient and modern form throughout the poem, and as in “Beethoven’s *Missa Solennis*,” he uses the poem’s structure as well as its content to achieve his ends. One of the poem’s most distinctive features is its unusual meter, which alternates lines of trochaic tetrameter with a rare classical meter known as glyconic meter.²⁰ Lesbian poets such as Sappho and Alcaeus traditionally used this meter for monodic lyric poetry.²¹ Ivanov’s use of the meter here is quite clever: besides drawing attention to the classical Greek tints in the text, it can be argued that this poem too, with its single lyric “I,” can be considered a monodic lyric poem.

Initially, the two poems appear to offer antithetical religious visions. “*Missa Solennis*” is laden with Christian imagery, whereas “Beethoveniana” is oriented toward the classical pantheon. But in Ivanov’s usage, these systems may not be as incompatible as they seem. A devout

19 *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 4th ed., s.v. “thiasos,” <http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780199545568.001.0001/acref-9780199545568-e-6407?rskey=BmBuTT&result=1>

20 This meter is represented as [X X / _ _ / _ /], with X indicating an anceps (a syllable which can be either short or long), / representing a stressed syllable (or a long one, as in Greek poetry), and _ indicating a short or unstressed syllable. See M. L. West, *Greek Metre* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 195.

21 The term “monodic” is here used in the Classical Greek sense, meaning that it refers to lyric poetry from the perspective of a single person as opposed to a chorus, not the modern term indicative of a lament over another’s death. See M. West, *Greek Metre*, 117, 141–2.

Christian, Ivanov saw in Dionysianism not a cult or a religion unto itself, but something that was complementary to Christianity. In keeping with this idea, he frequently compared Dionysian symbolism to that of Christ in his writings.²² This tendency is also reflected in the language about Beethoven in each of the poems.

In the Christian-oriented "*Missa Solennis*," Beethoven is called a prophet and a genius, and while he occupies an elevated position, he is not God. Rather, he is a gifted interpreter of God's will through music, and his effectiveness derives not only from his sensitivity, but also from his Dionysian style of writing. However, in "Beethoveniana," Ivanov describes the pagan god Zeus directly, without the remove of a prophet or a crowd of faithful. In a way, the same powers accorded to Zeus (thunder and storms) are transferred to Beethoven through the power of his music: while the composer cannot become God, he is able to take on the mantle of Zeus.

Also present in each poem is the opposition, either explicit or implied, between the two Greek gods of music: Pan, the god of rustic music (i.e., shepherds' pipes), and Apollo, the god of (and inventor of) the lyre. Pan, as mentioned above, is associated with Dionysus, and as such his music is presented as an absolutely necessary complement to the Apollonian style.²³ This treatment of Pan accords, of course, with Ivanov's theoretical writings.

For Ivanov, Beethoven's music is always associated with Pan's music (and, by extension, Dionysus's) and its coming into balance with Apollo's. Although Pan and his music are referenced by name only in "Beethoveniana" and Apollo's lyre is mentioned only in "*Missa Solennis*," the opposition between the two types of music is clear in each poem. The primacy of Apollonian music is denigrated, and its supremacy eroded, both on Christian and pagan levels in the two poems: in "*Missa Solennis*," even the "psalm-singing lyre of the tsar" (*lira / psalmopevnaia tsaria*) is not sufficient to praise the Lamb of God, and in "Beethoveniana," pure light and reason alone do not banish Zeus's melancholy (1:535). In both cases, Dionysian music prevails, and meaningful musical synthesis is achieved.

The possible parallel between Beethoven and Zeus may even suggest that the melancholy of the king of the gods and his eventual return to

22 This is explored most thoroughly in Ivanov's essay "Ellinskaia religiia stradaiushchego boga." See also J. West, *Russian Symbolism*, 79.

23 For more on the contrast between Apollonian and Dionysian music in classical literature, see Lydia Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works: An Essay in the Philosophy of Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 124–31.

cheerfulness is a metaphor for the composer's inspiration from Dionysian, folk elements. This font of inspiration—from the common people instead of earlier composers, whom Ivanov characterizes as having generally preferred Classical, Apollonian order in their works—would explain in Ivanov's terms how and why Beethoven is able to write the type of music that he does. While "*Missa Solennis*" puts Beethoven a rung below godliness, it is not inconceivable that, by portraying him as a pagan god in "Beethoveniana," Ivanov would thereby communicate the immense earthly power of Beethoven's music, a power that is also attested in "*Missa Solennis*."

Ivanov's Beethoven poems illustrate his aesthetic treatment of Beethoven, an understanding of which augments his better-known discussions of Wagner and Scriabin. Importantly, Ivanov set Beethoven within a teleological line of three composers, betraying a surprising literary pedigree as well. A century earlier, E. T. A. Hoffmann, in his landmark analysis of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, created a remarkably similar teleology of composers, consisting of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven.²⁴ Hoffmann's goals were in many ways the opposite of Ivanov's; for example, he intended to show the ascent and perfection of instrumental, not vocal, music, and his evaluative criteria were focused on the music's ability to enable a glimpse into the Romantic absolute.²⁵ For Hoffmann, Beethoven is the pinnacle of musical evolution, not its forefather. Yet the structure is strikingly similar: both authors list a trio of composers, whose music they interpret through narrow aesthetic criteria, and Beethoven occupies a prominent position for each.

By these means, Ivanov updates a surprisingly familiar model, consisting of a prescriptive aesthetic treatment of composers by a literary figure. Not only does the poet engage in pagan/Christian universalizing of Beethoven's Dionysian music in his two poems, he creates a meta-narrative in his essay by replicating Hoffmann's historicizing teleology. As he would do with many other major historical events, personal experiences and aesthetic ideas throughout his life, Ivanov inscribes Beethoven's modern-era music into a classically inflected Dionysian tradition. His appropriation of the tripartite structure of Hoffmann's famous review achieves the twofold task of framing events into a narrative and fitting that narrative itself into the historical tradition. Scriabin, Wagner, and Beethoven become part of Ivanov's obsessive tendency to create historical or mythic narratives, but the genius

24 The review can be found in Ian Bent, ed. *Music Analysis in the Nineteenth Century*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 2:141–60. The teleology is described on page 146.

25 In fact, Hoffmann goes out of his way to label Beethoven's vocal music as "less successful." Bent, *Music Analysis*, 146.

of Ivanov's Beethoven mythmaking is in its very unoriginality. For Ivanov, music and its interpretation become part of the same synthesizing ritual, and by repeating Hoffmann's tripartite teleology of Dionysian composers, Ivanov ironizes his statement that "it is not given to the pioneer to be the perfecter" (2:83).

APPENDIX

"MISSA SOLENNIS, БЕТХОВЕНА"

"БЕЕТHOVENIANA"

В дни, когда святые тени
Скрылись дале в небеса,
Где ты внял, надзвездный гений,
Их хвалений голоса?

В дни, как верных хор великий,
Разделенный, изнемог,
Их молитв согласны клики
Где подслушал ты, пророк?

У поры ли ты забвенной,
У грядущей ли исторг
Глас надежды неизменной,
Веры мощь, любви восторг?

Но и в оны веки лира
Псалмопевная царя
Не хвалила Агнца Мира,
Столь всевятно говоря!

Ибо ты в сем гrome пирном,
В буре кликов, слез и хвал
Слиться с воинством эфирным
Человечество созвал.

Снилось мне: сквозит завеса
Меж землей и лицом небес.
Небо — влажный взор Зевеса,
И прозрачный грустит Зевес.

Я прочел в склоненном взоре
Голубеющую печаль.
Вспухнет вал — и рухнет — в море;
Наших весен ему не жаль.

Возгрустил пустынный неба,
Что ответный, ответный лик —
Ах, лишь омутом Эреба
Повторенный его двойник...

Вечных сфер святой порядок
И весь лик золотых Идей
Яркой красочностью радуг
Льнули к ночи его бровей, —

Обвивали, развевали
Ясной солнечностью печаль;
Нерожденных солнц вставали
За негаданной далью даль.

Но печаль гасила краски...
И вззвенел, одичав, тимпан;
Взвыл кимвал: сатирам пляски
Повелел хохотливый Пан.

Их вскружился вихорь зыбкий,
Надрывалась дуда звончей —
И божественной улыбкой
Прояснилась печаль очей.