

THE AESTHETIC CATEGORIES  
OF *ASCENT* AND *DESCENT*  
IN THE POETRY OF VJAČESLAV IVANOV

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I

Many Western aestheticians today will agree with Benedetto Croce who banned the so-called 'aesthetic categories' from his phenomenology of art.<sup>1</sup> At the same time the concepts of eighteenth-century British sensualist aesthetics, which Croce likewise dismisses out of hand,<sup>2</sup> are at the core of modern structuralist poetics. Regularity, symmetry, proportion, and order are the terms in which it seeks to capture the essence of poetic creation. Also, while the old aesthetic categories (such as the Beautiful, the Sublime, or the Tragic) rarely appear in literary analysis, at least in the West, new polarities such as 'Apollonian : Dionysian', 'static : dynamic', and 'line : color', are commonly used as 'distinctive features' in scholarly descriptions of works of literature.<sup>3</sup> A discussion of the polarity 'ascent : descent', which plays a focal role in Vjačeslav Ivanov's philosophy of art, does not seem to be too extravagant an undertaking.

Ivanov's aesthetic theory and poetic practice must be viewed against the background of his philosophy.<sup>4</sup> Ivanov believed that poetry is an immediate revelation of the highest truth<sup>5</sup> and regarded it as a mystical activity, a means of revealing in words the divine essence of the universe.<sup>6</sup> One may speak in Ivanov's case of 'aesthetic mysticism', since it is precisely the artist to whom it is given to perceive and to express truth. "God is an artist, and His judgment, it would seem, will be the judgment of an artist", Ivanov once wrote.<sup>7</sup> Art is an energy which produces a quintessence of being.<sup>8</sup> Ivanov is very much a Platonist in that he believes that poetic creation is an act of atavistic *anamnesis* which allows men to become once more aware of the World Soul.<sup>9</sup> Ivanov's conception of poetic vision often assumes Orphic traits.<sup>10</sup>

The so-called theurgic function of poetry is seen as a "release of true Beauty from under the coarse covers of matter",<sup>11</sup> a Neoplatonic conception. At the same time, Ivanov always insists that, while a mystic, he is also a realist and

that his poetry is to lead *a realibus ad realiora*.<sup>12</sup> Poetry is to him a quintessential, potent, and sacred form of the word, Ivanov's conception of reality is thus hierarchic.<sup>13</sup>

Ivanov is resolutely opposed to subjective idealism (to which he refers as "idealism", while his own objective idealism is called "realism"): "It is the artist's highest duty to refrain from imposing his will upon the surface of things, and rather to recognize and to pronounce with gratitude the hidden will of essence itself. Like a midwife who eases the process of birth, he must help things to reveal their beauty".<sup>14</sup> The danger of "idealism", says Ivanov, lies precisely in its leading toward subjective "creation", rather than to a faithful revelation of truth, in its tending to convert the artist into a "deceitful Sirene, a sorcerer who creates his illusions at will".<sup>15</sup> Hence Ivanov's ideal of art is "earthly" rather than "heavenly".<sup>16</sup> It is stated with overwhelming simplicity in one of his last poems:

Вы, чьи резец, палитра, лира,  
Согласных Муз одна семья,  
Вы нас уводите из мира  
В соседство инобытия.  
И чем зеркальной отражает  
Кристал искусства лик земной,  
Тем явственней нас поражает  
В нем жизнь иная, свет иной.  
И про себя даемся диву,  
Что не заметили досель,  
Как ветерок ласкает ниву  
И зелена под снегом ель.

(“Свет вечерний”, стр. 172)

Ivanov's mysticism can thus be reduced to what he calls the "inner canon", meaning "the law which says that the human individuality is structured according to universal norms", so that an intensification of human existence means an "enlivening, strengthening, and growing awareness of the bonds and interrelationships between individual existence on the one side, and communal, universal, and divine existence on the other".<sup>17</sup> The "inner canon" of the human soul is projected upon the "inner canon" of the work of art. This explains the striking chains of identities found in Ivanov's poetry, such as the identity of the inner heavens of the soul and the starry sky above us.<sup>18</sup>

With the content of art eternally and absolutely identical, it is clear that the artist's creative role is limited to discovering forms that are adequate to this content.<sup>19</sup> The work of art, insofar as it owes its existence to the artist, is *forma*

*formata*, while the creative process is *forma formans*.<sup>20</sup> Ivanov refuses to consider form independently of content: any play or ornamental use of words, arbitrary neologisms, conscious pursuit of sound symbolism and euphonic patterning as a mere display of the poet's virtuosity is to him a violation of the sanctity of the word.<sup>21</sup>

It is obvious that all of these positions are reformulations (and often mere repetitions) of the Neoplatonic philosophy of art based on the eighth chapter of Plotinus's fifth *Ennead* and found in, to name only authors who had a direct influence on Ivanov, Goethe, Schelling, Apollon Grigor'ev, Tjutčev, Foeth, and Vladimir Solov'ev.<sup>22</sup> Ivanov's aesthetic thought acquires some interest through the fact that his poetry offers a massive corpus of apt illustrations of his theoretical positions. There is no easy or immediate explanation for this phenomenon, although Ivanov himself would of course advance the familiar organicist notion that philosophy and poetry are but different avenues to the same truth. I shall try to approach this question in connection with some observations regarding certain specific elements of Ivanov's philosophy which, like his more general ideas, are perfectly mirrored in his poetry.

One meets in Ivanov's philosophy several dichotomies which can be understood as additions to the set of commonly known aesthetic categories. Thus, Ivanov distinguishes between artists who are 'mystifiers' (*oblačiteli*) and artists who are 'demystifiers' (*razoblačiteli*). The former create riddles, mysteries, and masks, the latter reveal the truth of life and tear off masks.<sup>23</sup> Another dichotomy often encountered in Ivanov's thought is that of the artist who creates from hunger, and the artist who creates from plenitude and generosity.<sup>24</sup> It is with this dichotomy that Ivanov himself links that of ascent (*vosxoždenie*) and descent (*nisxoždenie*).<sup>25</sup> All three dichotomies mentioned here are prominent in Nietzsche, with whom Ivanov is connected by strong and multiple ties.

Ascent is, first of all, the upward striving of the soul, and descent the condescension of the divine. "Therefore", says Ivanov, "our sensation of Beauty is composed at once of a sensation of a winged victory over earthly heaviness and a sensation of return to the womb of the Earth".<sup>26</sup> (Here it must be kept in mind that Ivanov, a Neoplatonist, conceives of the Divine as immanent in the human soul). Hence ascent is linked with the male principle, and descent with the female, Apollo and Aphrodite respectively. (Dionysus stands for chaos and is androgynous).<sup>27</sup> Ascent and descent are thus concepts which belong, first and foremost, to the religious sphere:

In terms of religious thought, descent is an act of love and a sacrificial introduction of divine light into the darkness of the lower sphere seeking enlightenment. To man, righteous descent means, first and foremost, to bow down before what

is lowly in all Creation and to serve it (as indicated by the symbolic washing of feet), to lower oneself voluntarily at the urging of an individual sense of duty before those who have served one's exaltation.<sup>28</sup>

On the divine level this is of course the mystery of God's second *persona*, that of the Son.<sup>29</sup> In a concrete historical context, Ivanov sees a tendency toward spiritual descent as a trait of the Russian national character.<sup>30</sup> He also suggests, precisely in this context, that ascent and descent may be manifestations of the 'laws' of self-preservation and self-destruction (Eros and Thanatos), respectively.<sup>31</sup>

With specific reference to art and the creative process, Ivanov links the dichotomy of *ascent : descent* with the familiar dichotomy of *poet : artist*: "As a man, the artist must ascend, as an artist he must descend".<sup>32</sup> This means that the artist's intuition, like any other man's, should point him heavenward (this is the 'poet' in him, in organicist parlance), while his craftsmanship gives the ideal an earthly form (the 'artist's' task).<sup>33</sup> Among all the forms of verbal art, lyric poetry is the one in which the need for descent is felt least. Therefore, Ivanov concludes somewhat surprisingly, there is less 'pure art' in lyric poetry than in other art forms.<sup>34</sup> Carin Tschöpl has pointed out, no doubt correctly, that the emphasis of Ivanov's creativity shifted gradually from mystic ascent to artistic descent.<sup>35</sup>

Ivanov conceives of the creative process as of a movement up and down a vertical axis with these principal stages (in ascending/descending order): earthly objective reality → subjective mirroring of the Self → the desert beyond the Self → the point of transcendental contemplation of a reality-to-be-overcome → intuitive grasp of a higher reality (various stages, after the highest of which the descent begins) → "Apollonian contemplation of the apogees of ascent" → objective artistic incarnation.<sup>36</sup> Ivanov recognizes that the principal stages along this vertical are also those of religious experience. As he puts it, "God is on man's vertical".<sup>37</sup> He thus takes for granted that great art is always religious art.

It is important to note that Ivanov realizes the scheme of *ascent : descent* in his dramatic poems *Tantalus*<sup>38</sup> and *Prometheus*, and quite consciously so. A diagram to this effect is found in Ivanov's preface to *Prometheus*.<sup>39</sup>

## II

I now proceed to a description of Ivanov's last collection, *Svet večernij* ("Vespertine Light", Oxford, 1962), in terms of *ascent : descent* and some related features. Selection of this particular volume (a presentation of the

entire corpus of Ivanov's poetry being out of the question) was motivated by the following considerations. *Svet večernij* is artistically the finest of Ivanov's collections. The poetry here is less motivated by Ivanov's theoretical thought than the poetry of earlier collections. It is thus closer to an ideal of 'pure poetry'. Certainly only few of the poems of *Svet večernij* would seem to be directly connected with Ivanov's theoretical treatises dealing with *ascent* : *descent*. Finally, examination of Ivanov's earlier collections suggests that the points made here are even more apparent there. Yet the poetry of *Svet večernij* is as much as ever before in Ivanov's career an effort to fulfill the poet's mission as he conceived of it:

Nudus salta! Цель искусства —  
 Без покровов, без оков  
 Показать, кто ты таков,  
 Темные поведать чувства  
 Заповедных тайников —  
 ("Свет вечерний", стр. 123)

A significant trait of Ivanov's poetry, fully borne out by *Svet večernij*, is the prevalence in it of elementary imagery. While the human soul is the subject of most of these poems, its essence is revealed in images of air, water, earth, and fire, heaven and nether world, light and darkness. There is, if we disregard inevitable exceptions (the volume includes the cycles *Roman Sonnets* and *Roman Diary*, where the eternal city will occasionally appear quite plastically), little of the historical and regional flavor which we find in Mandel'stam, little of Axmatova's personal flair, few sacrifices to the 'great God of details' which make Pasternak so unique. Ivanov deals in poetic universals, not to say in poetic clichés. Ivanov's description of Novalis is also a self-portrait:

Он был из тех певцов (таков-же был Новалис),  
 Что видят в снах себя наследниками лир,  
 Которым на заре веков повиновались  
 Дух, камень, древо, зверь, вода, огонь, эфир.  
 ("Свет вечерний", стр. 93)

Ivanov's elementary imagery may very well be one aspect of his 'pure lyricism': lyric poetry has, it seems, an inherent tendency toward a certain vagueness and abstractness, as Emil Staiger has pointed out, among others.<sup>40</sup> It is precisely in this sense that Gumilev, a fine critic, understood this trait of Ivanov's poetry.<sup>41</sup> Ivanov's frequent cosmic ecstasies may be but another side of the same phenomenon.<sup>42</sup> It must not be overlooked, though, that a tendency toward elementary imagery is characteristic of Symbolist poetry at large.

But in none of the Russian symbolists does it appear quite as massively as in Ivanov.

Significantly, heaven and earth prevail among Ivanov's imagery, both in variety and in number of images. Unlike in many poets with a great deal of airborne imagery, earth is in balance with heaven. The heavens (*nebo, nebesa, ěfir, lazur'*) appear most often as the cloudless dome of azure, or as "the sky", without a qualification.<sup>43</sup> But the starry sky appears almost as often.<sup>44</sup> Accordingly, the frequent appearances of the Sun<sup>45</sup> are almost matched by the Moon, the signs of the Zodiac, and astrological imagery.<sup>46</sup> Dawn and dusk are approximately in balance.<sup>47</sup> The recurrent image of the music of the spheres seems to refer to the diurnal sky in most instances.<sup>48</sup>

Earth appears both without a qualification and as Mother Earth (*zemlja rodnaja*, and such).<sup>49</sup> There is a great wealth of subterranean imagery. The nether world (*nedra, glub', preispodnja, ad, čistilišče*)<sup>50</sup> and cave imagery (*peščera, labirint, grob, mogila*)<sup>51</sup> appear as often as sky imagery. The salient point is that in a great many instances the sky and the earth, the nether world and the heavens appear in the same poem, creating the vertical dynamics so characteristic of Ivanov.<sup>52</sup>

Water imagery is somewhat less common in Ivanov's poetry. There is a great deal of 'flowing water' imagery, but this is largely accounted for by the fact that a whole cycle of sonnets is devoted to the fountains of Rome.<sup>53</sup> The river of time (it occurs quite often) would seem to be a metaphor rather than an image in its own right in most instances.<sup>54</sup> There is a good deal of ocean imagery, almost always dynamic, as Tschöpl has observed.<sup>55</sup>

Finally, there is an impressive array of fire imagery.<sup>56</sup> It could be enlarged if the Sun (in particular the frequent fiery sunset images) and a number of striking images of single stars are assigned to this element.<sup>57</sup>

This extraordinarily massive accumulation of elementary imagery is interesting as such. What makes it even more interesting is the fact that in a great many instances these elementary images are explicit projections of the states of the poetic persona's soul, so much so that one is inclined to consider even Ivanov's 'nature poetry' as descriptions of an 'inner' landscape. There are numerous examples of the 'inner sky' (*vnutrennee nebo*), all more or less in accord with the image created in a sonnet of that title (p. 91).<sup>58</sup> Somewhat more surprisingly we find as many instances of an 'inner sea' as we find of an 'inner sky'.<sup>60</sup> Also, the 'bark of the soul' is a recurrent image.<sup>61</sup> Lastly, in a striking image, the soul becomes the fiery, whirling wheel of Ixion, and an 'inner Sun' also appears.<sup>62</sup> Such projections are psychologically motivated by the exceedingly frequent side motifs of 'sleep', 'dream', and 'night'.<sup>63</sup>

We may now proceed to a description of the dynamic aspect of Ivanov's imagery. What movement there is in the poems of *Svet večernij* tends to be vertical or airborne. The horizontal movement of the wayfarer on the road (Goethe's *Wanderer*) is uncharacteristic of Ivanov. Among the 260 poems in *Svet večernij*, 199 feature a dynamic vertical image or images which, in my judgment, may be said to dominate the poem in question. In some of these instances several such images appear. My count is based on the one image which I consider to be the dominant. Obviously other readers of the same poem may have a different impression.

Among these 199 dominant images, there are a total of 27 which can be defined as horizontal flight (12), soaring (8), or floating (7), where no vertical movement can be discerned.<sup>64</sup>

*Ascent* and *descent* are almost as equally balanced as *heaven* and the *nether world* are among Ivanov's static images. Among images of ascent one may distinguish images of anastasis,<sup>65</sup> various cosmic images (such as the ascent of heavenly bodies),<sup>66</sup> mythological images (including Christian),<sup>67</sup> images featuring ascent to the summit of a mountain,<sup>68</sup> and vertical movement involving stationary vertical objects such as towers, trees, and the Cross.<sup>69</sup> The most important category of ascent is of course 'ascent of the soul' which dominates 15 poems.<sup>70</sup> In all, at least 40 of the poems of *Svet večernij* can be called 'ascent poems'.

Among images of descent the following may be distinguished. There is some water imagery here, and in particular the image of the descending river of time.<sup>71</sup> Cosmic imagery (descent of heavenly bodies and such) is well represented.<sup>72</sup> But more often descent is symbolic. It may be the descent of a vision, of the Light, or of the word.<sup>73</sup> It may also be the descent of peace, of love, of the Divine, or of death.<sup>74</sup> Finally, there is a great deal of religious-mythological imagery, including descent *ad inferos*.<sup>75</sup> The descent of the soul understandably appears less often than its ascent (5 times).<sup>76</sup> In all, I counted 72 'descent poems'.

Another body of poems combines ascent and descent. There are, again, cosmic images.<sup>77</sup> Also, descent : ascent (or *vice versa*) of a vision,<sup>78</sup> or in religious-mythological images.<sup>79</sup> Descent : ascent between heaven and earth may be considered a special category.<sup>80</sup> Finally, the human soul is involved in 22 'ascent : descent poems'.<sup>81</sup> There are 49 'ascent : descent poems' in all. Ivanov's cosmos resembles that of Foeth's famous poem "Na stoge sena nočju južnoj". The sky can turn into a bottomless abyss: *struj ěfirnyx glubina* (7: 3). Conversely, the Sun may rise "from the depths": *A v nedrax — Solnca, solnca roždestvo!* (100: 8).

There remain 11 poems which I can only classify as being structured around movement on a vertical axis.<sup>82</sup> In addition to the large number of poems which explicitly deal with the descent and/or ascent of the soul, there are others which express the movements of the soul in metaphoric terms. These instances are not included in my count.

It is then true of Ivanov's imagery at large that it is dominated by elementary images, that its movement proceeds on a vertical axis, and that it is often symbolic of the attitudes and movements of the soul. It must be noted that many of the poems that do not fall within this description are relatively trivial, incidental pieces. There are not many great poems that must be excluded from these generalizations.

### III

How is one to account for this peculiar nature of Ivanov's poetry? To begin with, Ivanov's elementary imagery and its symbolism follow ancient traditions. To mention only the less obvious instances, both the 'inner sky' and the 'inner sea' images go back as far as classical antiquity.<sup>83</sup> They appear, specifically, in German romantic poetry.<sup>84</sup> The labyrinth of the heart is an ancient conceit,<sup>85</sup> while the cry of the soul from the depths is of course biblical (Psalm 130). In effect, Ivanov uses a great deal of biblical, classical, and other (Indian, Teutonic, Slavic) elementary imagery throughout his poetry.

In a beautiful poem, Ivanov singles out Tjutčev, Foeth, and Vladimir Solov'ev as his masters.<sup>86</sup> Obviously their imagery largely coincides with Ivanov's. Tjutčev in particular has a similar emphasis on the heavens, the starry sky, the inner sky, sky and earth, music of the spheres, flight imagery, the inner sea, the lower depths, etc.<sup>87</sup>

Airborne imagery as well as images suggesting movement along a vertical axis are likewise easily found in the poetic tradition upon which Ivanov's opus rests. To begin with, the ascent and descent of the human soul on a ladder which extends from the lower depths to exalted moral perfection and heavenly bliss is an ancient cliché of mystic poetry and prose. We find it in St. John of the Cross (e.g., in his poem "En una noche obscura") to whom Ivanov devotes one of the most moving poems of his "Roman Diary".<sup>88</sup> The descent of the Divine (as the Holy Ghost, beauty, grace, etc.) is likewise a mystic cliché. Significantly, this particular image is characteristic of Nietzsche, Ivanov's master: "Wenn die Macht gnädig wird und herabkommt ins Sichtbare, Schönheit heisse ich dieses Herabkommen" (*Also sprach Zarathustra*, "Von dem Erhabenen"). Images of ascent (to the sky, to the summit of a mountain,



to a tower, etc.), of the upward surge of flocks of birds, smoke, architectural structures, and of the imagination dominate Nietzsche's poetry, as Gaston Bachelard has shown.<sup>89</sup>

Descent to the nether world is another classical cliché. It may be mentioned that Orpheus appears repeatedly in *Svet večernij*, as do other denizens and visitors of Hades and other underground caverns: Persephone, Ariadne, Heracles, Tantalus, and Sisyphus.

The heaven-earth axis, so characteristic of Ivanov's poetry, is also a most common cliché of romantic poetry, German as well as Russian.<sup>90</sup>

Ivanov is one of the few Russian poets who consistently and successfully cultivated the sonnet, a poetic form the structure of which is traditionally associated with a pattern of ascent : descent.<sup>91</sup> Even in Petrarch's sonnets (to whose spirit and form Ivanov's are close) this pattern often corresponds to a perfectly literal ascent to and/or descent from heaven.<sup>92</sup> The ascent : descent pattern (or descent : ascent, or variations of either pattern) certainly prevails in Ivanov's sonnets. It is observed in every single one of the sonnets of the cycle "De profundis amavi": note how the last line of each of them features a vertical image: *Ljubit' iz preispodnej byl moj dar — Svergalsja zolotom bezlikix livnej — Rassekla Smer' sekiroj bespoščadnoj — Net igl ostrej Ljubovi dikix ternij! — I molot po serdcu udarit vdrug — I žarkij lob dyxa'em tonkim studit — Za tiximi sozvezd'jami tonu — L'ju žarkix žil ostatočnuju krov'...* (pp. 102-105).

An explanation of the idiosyncrasies of Ivanov's poetry in terms of poetic traditions is unsatisfactory, because Ivanov is clearly an original poet.<sup>93</sup> The three basic traits of his poetry (elementary imagery, ascent : descent, and direct projection of both upon the states of the soul) are so strong that they demand an intrinsic explanation even if they were induced by the influence of an existent poetic tradition.

Ivanov believed that his poetry was the vehicle of a Platonic *anamnesis*,<sup>94</sup> an expression of the identity of the world soul and the human soul:

Будит звездное служенье  
 В нас ответное движенье.  
 Миг — и в нашей келье тесной  
 Свод вращается небесный,  
 Запредельные пустыни  
 Веют ужасом святыни,  
 Ночь браздят светил орбиты ...  
 ("Свет вечерний", стр. 146)

The identity of the cosmic sky and the 'inner sky', as discovered by the poet's intuition, is therefore to be taken quite literally:

Когда б лучами, не речами  
 Мы говорили; вещей дум  
 Наитье звездными очами  
 С небес в неумствующий ум  
 Гляделось, а печаль, уныла,  
 Осенним ветром в поле выла,  
 И пела в нас любви тоска  
 Благоуханием цветка:  
 Тогда бы твой язык немотный  
 Уразумели мы дыша  
 Одною жизнью дремотной,  
 О, мира пленная душа!  
 (“Свет вечерний”, стр. 118)

From Ivanov’s point of view, then, the visual images of ascent : descent in his poetry are not so much metaphors of some psychic movement, as they are symbols of it, that is, expressions of a psychic reality. By the same token, these images are not ‘illustrations’ of Ivanov’s metaphysical ideas, but each is a different expression of the same movements of the soul.

It is in this context that Gaston Bachelard’s phenomenology of imagination can be applied to Ivanov’s poetry. Bachelard treats the poetic image not so much as a symbol of a structure (like some literary critics), but would like to observe it *per se*, phenomenologically.<sup>95</sup> The underlying objective notion is the Jungian,<sup>96</sup> that certain dream images, which tend to appear in poetry also, are primary psychic phenomena, preceding sensory experience and thought: they are immediate experience, on whose basis thought can develop.<sup>97</sup> Hence Bachelard emphasizes that certain basic images ought to be understood in terms of their generation by the human psyche, rather than in terms of a reception of impressions from the outside world.<sup>98</sup>

Bachelard’s conception of the generation of poetic images essentially coincides with the Plotinian *endon eidos* and with Ivanov’s version of the same.<sup>99</sup> As Pire has pointed out, Bachelard also continues the tradition of Rimbaud (“on me pense”), the automatism of the Surrealists, and similar notions, all based on the supposition that cosmic rhythms are dormant in the human subconscious.<sup>100</sup> The distinction which Bachelard makes between imaginative powers (*forces imaginantes*) nurtured by the novelty of experience, and imaginative power generated by the inner depths of the human soul, is more specifically relevant to Ivanov and his poetry.<sup>101</sup> If this is a true distinction, Ivanov’s imagination is a very pure example of the latter type. His imagery is dreamlike, vague, and to an extent rarely met in other poets, elementary. The

substance of Ivanov's imagination persistently assumes the elementary form of air, water, earth, and fire, rather than the form of well-defined and structured objects of pragmatic experience.

Bachelard has pointed out how one or the other element dominates in the imagination of certain poets. Nietzsche is of course the aerial poet *par excellence*.<sup>102</sup> Despite his dependance on Nietzsche, Ivanov does not share this quality with him, the 'inner sea' is as prominent in his imagination as the 'inner sky'. The earth and the depths of the nether world are as important for him as are the heavenly bodies. Ivanov's *imagination matérielle* is rather evenly balanced.

Another distinction made by Bachelard is even more relevant to Ivanov's imagination: *imagination matérielle : imagination dynamique*.<sup>103</sup> To put it concretely, Nietzsche is a *poète aérien* in the context of *l'imagination matérielle*; he is a *poète vertical* in the context of *l'imagination dynamique*. (Similarly, Jung's archetypes are not only images but also foci of energy). Ivanov also makes such distinction, as he sees myth as the 'dynamic mode' of symbol.<sup>104</sup> In the context of *imagination dynamique*, again, the experience of movement (such as airborne ascent) is seen as primary, and its metaphysical, religious, moral, or simply pictorial equivalents as secondary. Thus, Nietzsche, *poète ascensionnel*, precedes Nietzsche, *moraliste du surhumain*.<sup>105</sup> In fact, Bachelard goes as far as to claim that every statement of value is a verticalization to begin with.<sup>106</sup>

It would seem that the dynamic component of Ivanov's imagination is, like Nietzsche's, vertical. The movement characteristic of his imagery is not that of the march, or of the dance, of floating on the gentle waves of a quiet sea, or even in the gentle breeze of the ether. In Ivanov's poetry, the movement is vertical, and almost always it also stands for a movement of the moral substance of the soul.

Ivanov, it would seem, was a greater lyric poet than playwright, philosopher, or prophet. The poetry of *Svet večernij* rings true, and probably will, so long as the language in which it was written will live. Meanwhile most of Ivanov's dramatic, theoretical, and polemic works lack this ring of truth. Yet they all say essentially the same thing. It is, then, not too farfetched to assume that Ivanov's Neoplatonic philosophy is a projection upon an intellectual plane, of movements of the soul more directly and forcefully expressed in his poetry. 'Ascent' and 'descent' are, then, true aesthetic categories, highly relevant to a description of the deep structure of his poetry, rather than mere poetic 'themes' or 'motifs', or even 'metaphors'.

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Benedetto Croce, *Aesthetic as Science of Expression and General Linguistic* (New York, 1966), 87.
- <sup>2</sup> Croce, 259-60.
- <sup>3</sup> Ivanov assumes that art fluctuates between static and dynamic manifestations of its energy. See V. Ivanov, "Predčuvstvija i predvestija: novaja organičeskaja èpoxa i teatr buduščego", *Po zvezdam* (St. Petersburg, 1909), 189-219. Yet the same terms are also used by the Russian Formalists.
- <sup>4</sup> This has been done, with considerable success, by Carin Tschöpl, *Vjačeslav Ivanov: Dichtung und Dichtungstheorie* (Munich, 1968).
- <sup>5</sup> See C. M. Bowra's introduction to *Svet večernij*, xv.
- <sup>6</sup> Bowra, xix.
- <sup>7</sup> V. Ivanov, "Sporady", *Po zvezdam*, 344.
- <sup>8</sup> The Plotinian *dynamis*, Goethe's *Kraft*. Ivanov speaks of "energy whose name is Art". See "Predčuvstvija", 199-200.
- <sup>9</sup> See, for instance, V. Ivanov, "Drevnij užas", *Po zvezdam*, 394.
- <sup>10</sup> See, for instance, "Poèzija", *Svet večernij*, 3, or "Pamjati Skrjabina", *ibid.*, 92-3.
- <sup>11</sup> V. Ivanov, "Dve stixii simbolizma", *Po zvezdam*, 284.
- <sup>12</sup> For a discussion of Ivanov's interpretation of 'realism', see James West, *Russian Symbolism: A Study of Vyacheslav Ivanov and the Russian Symbolist Aesthetic* (London, 1970), 153-80.
- <sup>13</sup> See, for instance, Vjačeslav Ivanov, "Granicy iskusstva", *Borozdy i meži* (Moscow, 1916), 220-21.
- <sup>14</sup> V. Ivanov, "Dve stixii", 250.
- <sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 254-55.
- <sup>16</sup> Vjačeslav Ivanov, "Mysli o simbolizme", *Borozdy i meži*, 158.
- <sup>17</sup> Vjačeslav Ivanov, "Granicy iskusstva", 210.
- <sup>18</sup> "Est' Mlečnyj Puť v duše i v nebesax; / Est' množestvo v obeix six vseleennyx: / Odin glagol dvux knig zapečatlennyx" (*Cor ardens*, I, 61). Cf. Tschöpl, 104.
- <sup>19</sup> Vjačeslav Ivanov, "Granicy iskusstva", 211.
- <sup>20</sup> See Aleksis Rannit, "Vyacheslav Ivanov and his *Vespertine Light*: Notes from my Critical Diary of 1966", *Russian Literature Triquarterly*, 4 (1972), 268.
- <sup>21</sup> V. Ivanov, "Sporady", 351.
- <sup>22</sup> A philosophy of art, moreover, which had been current in Russia for a long time. See Victor Terras, *Belinskij and Russian Literary Criticism: The Heritage of Organic Aesthetics* (Madison, 1974).
- <sup>23</sup> V. Ivanov, "Sporady", 345-46.
- <sup>24</sup> *Znaet Boga serdce veščem gladom / Za stolami polnoty* ("Bogopoznanie", *Svet večernij*, 78).
- <sup>25</sup> *Brat' i davat' — v obmene ètix dvux ènergij состоit žizn'. V duxovnoj žizni i dejatel'nosti im sootvestvujut — vosxoždenie i nisxoždenie* ("Granicy iskusstva", 197).
- <sup>26</sup> V. Ivanov, "Simvolika èstetičeskix načal", *Po zvezdam*, 29.
- <sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 29-30.
- <sup>28</sup> V. Ivanov, "O ruskoj idee", *Po zvezdam*, 329-30.
- <sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 332-34.
- <sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>32</sup> V. Ivanov, "Granicy iskusstva", 210.
- <sup>33</sup> Cf. Tschöpl, 177.
- <sup>34</sup> V. Ivanov, "Granicy iskusstva", 208.
- <sup>35</sup> Tschöpl, 172.
- <sup>36</sup> Vjačeslav Ivanov, *Borozdy i meži*, 194, 218.
- <sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 163.

<sup>38</sup> See Armin Hetzer, *Vjačeslav Ivanovs Tragödie "Tantal": Eine literarhistorische Interpretation* (Munich, 1972), 141-83.

<sup>39</sup> V. Ivanov, *Prometej: Tragedija* (St. Petersburg, 1919), xxiv.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. Ivanov's above mentioned remarks on the 'ideal' nature of lyric poetry.

<sup>41</sup> *Neizmerimaja propast' otdeljaet ego ot poetov linij i krasok [...] Ix poezija — èto ozero, otrražajuščee v sebe nebo, poezija Vjačeslava Ivanova — nebo, otrražennoe v ozere. Ix geroi, ix pejzaži — čem žiznennoe, tem vyše; soveršenstvo obrazov Vjačeslava Ivanova zavisit ot ix prizračnosti* (Nikolaj Gumilev, review of *Cor ardens, Sobranie sočinenij*, 4 vols. (Washington, D.C., 1964-1968, IV, 266).

<sup>42</sup> Cf. Tschöpl, 134. Some examples from *Svet večernij*: "Garmonija sfer" (4-5), "Lira i os" (16-18), "Rimskij dnevnik", January, No. 11 (118), and November, No. 2 (164-165).

<sup>43</sup> (I am listing page and lines in *Svet večernij*): 7: 1ff., 8: 1ff., 12: 1, 24: 1ff., 33: 18-20, 92: 12-18, 94: 1-6, 96: 3-4, 102: 27-28, 104: 21-25, 105: 15-16, 106: 19-20, 109: 19-28, 110: 23-28, 120: 13-16, 132: 11-12, 147: 17-25, 153: 13-14, 154: 25-26, 155: 5-12, 158: 8-9, 162: 27-30, 163: 1-4.

<sup>44</sup> 3: 10, 3: 21-28, 13: 23, 33: 30ff., 37: 7-8, 38: 32, 59: 19-21, 59: 23-31, 65: 3-8, 78: 25, 79: 26-33, 81: 8-13, 81: 21-30, 85: 8, 86: 4, 89: 5, 92: 1, 105) 14, 140: 3, 145: 18ff., 149: 8ff., 151: 13ff., 162: 25.

<sup>45</sup> 6: 25, 14: 19-21, 16: 7-21, 18: 9-14, 24: 11-13, 32: 15-16, 43: 5-6, 59: 14, 61: 5, 69: 23, 89: 4, 97: 2, 100: 8, 105: 15-16, 110: 15-16, 122: 26-29, 142: 2ff., 149: 5, 155: 27-28, 166: 7-9.

<sup>46</sup> 17: 31-33, 26: 13-14, 96: 4, 98: 15, 99: 1, 101: 9, 103: 15-16, 148: 11-12, 151: 13-14, 161: 13, 169: 26, 174: 2.

<sup>47</sup> 3: 19, 5: 10ff., 13: 29ff., 25: 18, 29: 5ff., 29: 21ff., 30: 13ff., 69: 14-15, 93: 25, 99: 13-14, 102: 27-28, 162: 1, 162: 28ff., 166: 7-11, 166: 16-19.

<sup>48</sup> 3: 12-13, 4: 24ff., 11: 6-7, 15: 1ff., 16: 29ff., 17: 30-31, 81: 1ff., 95: 21-22, 115: 9, 122: 21, 128: 3-4, 130: 10-12, 140: 3-4, 142: 5-10.

<sup>49</sup> 4: 5, 25: 20, 27: 1ff., 43: 2, 44: 1ff., 84: 1ff., 95: 13ff., 98: 4, 117: 1, 119: 20, 123: 27-28, 128: 6, 141: 24-27.

<sup>50</sup> *nedra*: 4: 13-15, 6: 26-27, 61: 10, 79: 1, 89: 30, 100: 8, 119: 11-12 (*tajnik rodimyj*), 123: 5 (*zapovednyx tajnikov*), 142: 7, 149: 4; *glub', glubina, bezdna*: 3: 24, 52: 32, 78: 1, 92: 17, 95: 16, 106: 1, 149: 2, 160: 3, 164: 20; *preispodnja, ad, čistilišče*: 13: 9ff., 71: 9ff., 77: 27ff., 79: 3ff., 96: 17, 102: 14, 105: 20, 123: 20, 133: 9-12, 138: 2, 140: 19-20, 165: 38; *omut, bezdna morskaja*: 123: 6-7, 171: 19-20; *Lethe*: 6: 26-33, 130-132 ("Lethaea"), 155: 12.

<sup>51</sup> *grob, mogila, rov, sarkofag*: 12: 10, 24: 9, 38: 13ff., 39: 7ff., 40: 11, 42: 17, 44: 2, 62: 6, 64: 20, 66: 12, 73: 5, 85: 1ff., 92: 7ff., 97: 8, 101: 27-28, 114: 14, 116: 29-30, 129: 5-8, 140: 32, 148: 6, 148P 21-22, 150: 10, 152: 22, 161: 19, 163: 14-16, 167: 21, 168: 17, 168: 38; *peščera, vertep, berloga*: 61: 15, 81: 18ff., 83: 5ff., 100: 15-17, 104: 16; *labirint*: 14-16, 71: 23, 89: 2.

<sup>52</sup> 3: 18ff., 4: 8ff., 17: 21, 24: 1ff., 25: 15ff., 29: 11-12, 33: 17ff., 41: 1ff., 72: 22ff., 84: 1ff., 95: 11ff., 122: 22, 138: 4, 139: 1ff., 140: 21-28, 155: 27-28, 162: 27ff., 171: 6.

<sup>53</sup> "Roman Sonnets", 106-10.

<sup>54</sup> 38: 24-25, 42: 14ff., 50: 7-8, 54: 15-21, 60: 26ff., 113: 7, 128: 12, 140: 1-2.

<sup>55</sup> Tschöpl, 110. Examples: 10: 3ff., 22: 1-4, 23: 1-8, 23: 9ff., 25: 1ff., 29: 5-16, 90: 1-14, 117: 15-23, 139: 1-12, 143: 17-27, 151: 8-9, 154: 18-22, 171: 15-18.

<sup>56</sup> 4: 18-19, 14: 16-17, 40: 3, 65: 21ff., 68: 9-12, 77: 10, 92: 28-30, 95: 22, 97: 10, 98: 14, 99: 28, 100: 23-27, 106: 19-38, 139: 24, 151: 18ff., 152: 27-29, 161: 18, 173: 6.

<sup>57</sup> 5: 4, 5: 16, 28: 23-29, 46: 19-20, 94: 19, 107: 14, 115: 5-16, 171: 7ff.

<sup>58</sup> 3: 10, 3: 27-29, 11: 10-13, 15: 6-7, 17: 29-31, 26: 24-27, 37: 8-9, 59: 5, 65: 5-9, 80: 13-16, 91: 7-31, 104: 15-28, 115: 11-12, 118: 9-12, 128: 8, 139: 1-16, 146: 3-14, 154: 25-26.

<sup>59</sup> 71: 9ff., 77: 27ff., 96: 17, 102: 14, 106: 1, 160: 3.

<sup>60</sup> 3: 16-17, 3: 19ff., 8: 7-12, 9: 6-7, 10: 1ff., 37: 1ff., 62: 1-7, 89: 17-18, 90: 1-2, 91: 23ff., 92: 27-28, 139: 10-12, 142: 13-14, 143: 16ff., 146: 2, 148: 22-26, 154: 18-22, 171: 15-20.

<sup>61</sup> 37: 1ff., 89: 19-20, 98: 9-10, 122: 1-12, 125: 16-19.

<sup>62</sup> 61: 5-6, 122: 26-29.

- <sup>63</sup> *sleep, dream*: 4: 16ff., 13: 21ff., 25: 28ff., 31: 1-8, 45: 18ff., 40: 6ff., 47: 26ff., 59: 12ff., 66: 24ff., 89: 16ff., 106: 21, 113: 10, 114: 9ff., 117: 4-6, 125: 15ff., 127: 21-24, 148: 22ff., 161: 12, 166: 23, 167: 30ff., 169: 6-8; "Life is a dream": 60: 6ff., 101: 15-28, 102: 1-14, 102: 23-28, 144: 25ff., 171: 21-22.
- <sup>64</sup> *flight, aerial view*: 26: 17ff., 37: 1ff., 62: 1ff., 66: 24ff., 71: 5-6, 77: 1ff., 94: 7ff., 96: 1-14, 126: 21-24, 132: 5-12, 132: 19-20, 141: 16ff., 159: 16-17; *soaring (ether)*: 31: 18ff., 94: 1-3, 101: 9-11, 118: 1ff., 123: 25-26, 145: 4-5, 168: 3-5; *floating (waves)*: 25: 7-8, 89: 19-20, 90: 23ff., 122: 1ff., 125: 17-18, 143: 17, 154: 18-22.
- <sup>65</sup> 21: 23, 38: 15ff., 45: 25ff., 52: 34, 92: 16-18, 103: 22-23, 106: 18-20, 117: 7-8, 119: 20-22, 156: 24ff., 157: 22-24, 161: 8 (6 of these were counted as 'dominants').
- <sup>66</sup> 5: 3-4, 59: 12ff., 115: 2-4, 115: 844., 149: 8ff., 153: 13-20, 162: 23-26, 166: 7-11, 169: 21-22 (9 'dominants').
- <sup>67</sup> 9: 11ff., 51: 21ff., 128: 27ff. (3 'dominants').
- <sup>68</sup> 21: 19-21, 150: 16ff., 152: 9ff., 156: 14, 167: 13ff. (1 'dominant').
- <sup>69</sup> *Stolp, bašnja*: 94: 20, 97: 14, 104: 7, 105: 11, 108: 7-8; *šater, šalaš*: 11: 22ff., 30: 8-11, 33: 7, 68: 10, 79: 33, 81: 5, 105: 2, 128: 7, 130: 6, 162: 11; *trees*: 3: 2-3, 21: 1ff., 21: 30-31, 22: 26-27, 27-32 ("Serebrjanyj bor"), 53-56 ("Derevja"), 60: 7-8, 61: 24, 67: 17ff., 84: 18ff., 106: 22, 116: 3, 117: 15, 124: 18, 142: 15ff., 149: 4, 150: 25, 165-166 ("Kiparisj"), 167: 23-24, 169: 9ff.; *the Cross*: 92: 8, 128: 26, 139: 17ff., 152: 9, 153: 3, 156: 26-27, 170: 23 (5 'dominants').
- <sup>70</sup> 59: 4ff., 63: 10ff., 64: 1ff., 64: 19ff., 77: 20ff., 82: 1ff., 83: 29-33, 85-86, 91: 7ff., 92: 1-6, 100: 27-28, 106: 1-9, 123: 1ff., 139: 1-16, 154: 23ff., 172: 9ff.
- <sup>71</sup> 38: 24-25, 54: 13-20, 61: 2-6, 113: 7ff. (4 'dominants').
- <sup>72</sup> 5: 9ff., 24: 1ff., 22: 25ff., 33: 14-15, 34: 1ff., 38: 26ff., 110: 15ff., 117: 1-14, 118: 9-20, 122: 13ff., 147: 17-25, 151: 13-16, 158: 21ff., 161: 13ff. (14 'dominants'). In five of the 'fountain poems' (107-10) the image of descending water appears to be the 'dominant'.
- <sup>73</sup> 3: 18ff., 3: 7ff., 11: 5ff., 11: 22ff., 13: 23ff., 27: 14-18, 37: 26ff., 5: 5-8, 59: 21ff., 69: 4ff., 81: 1ff., 98: 28, 124: 5ff., 128: 1-4, 160: 6 (15 'dominants').
- <sup>74</sup> 40: 6ff., 41: 5ff., 41: 14ff., 42: 1ff., 45: 6ff., 70: 7ff., 126: 9ff., 134: 19-28, 136: 6-7, 139: 27-28, 140: 7-8, 168: 22-23, 170: 27-29 (13 'dominants').
- <sup>75</sup> 7: 8ff., 7: 26ff., 26: 4-6, 102: 27-28, 121: 9-16, 130: 11-22, 140: 21-24, 148: 6-9, 158: 1ff., (9 'dominants'); *descent ad inferos*: 13: 17-20, 13: 24-25, 130: 20-23, 131: 9-12, 131: 21ff., 138: 20-21, 163: 13-16 (7 'dominants').
- <sup>76</sup> 72: 1ff., 72: 20ff., 119: 11-12, 160: 3-4, 162: 7-8.
- <sup>77</sup> 100: 5ff., 145: 18ff., 146: 15ff., 148: 23ff., 164: 17ff. (5 'dominants').
- <sup>78</sup> 99: 5-14, 103: 1-14, 114: 9-17 (3 'dominants').
- <sup>79</sup> 6: 9ff., 14-16, 21: 24ff., 60: 6ff., 119: 23ff., 150: 10-11 (6 'dominants').
- <sup>80</sup> 25: 14ff., 33: 16ff., 42: 14ff., 81: 18ff., 95: 11ff., 129: 21ff., 138: 1-6, 142: 1-14, 155: 27-30, 162: 27ff., 170: 24ff. (11 'dominants').
- <sup>81</sup> 22: 17ff., 41: 5ff., 45: 18ff., 59: 21ff., 79: 1ff., 89: 1ff., 90: 1ff., 92: 7ff., 97: 1-14, 97: 15-28, 101: 15-28, 102: 1-14, 103: 15-38, 104: 15-28, 105: 1-14, 105: 15-28, 118: 21ff., 121: 9-16, 126: 1-4, 144: 21-24, 154: 5ff., 156: 5ff., 157: 13ff. (24 'dominants').
- <sup>82</sup> 16-18 ("Lira i os"), 21: 1ff., 67: 17ff., 79: 25ff., 84: 1ff., 95: 1-10, 142: 15ff., 148: 14ff., 160: 17ff., 165: 7ff., 171: 7ff.
- <sup>83</sup> See E. R. Curtius, *Europäische Literatur und lateinisches Mittelalter* (Bern, 1948), 136-38 ("Schiffahrtmetaphern") and 46-47, 118, 121, 128, 181, 197, 362-363 ("Himmelsreise").
- <sup>84</sup> Novalis, in particular, has many striking examples, e.g., "Tiefgerührt von heilger Güte / Und versenkt in selges Schauen / Steht der Himmel im Gemüte. / Wolkenloses Blau", (Novalis, *Werke und Briefe* [Munich, 1962], 297); "Eine göttlich tiefe Trauer / Wohnt in unser aller Herzen. / Löst uns auf in eine Flut. / Und in dieser Flut ergiessen / Wir uns auf geheime Weise / In den Ozean des Lebens / Tief in Gott hinein" (*ibid.*, 299).
- <sup>85</sup> It appears in German romantic poetry as well, e.g., "Labyrinth der Brust" in Goethe's "An den Mond".
- <sup>86</sup> *Svet večernij*, 162.

<sup>87</sup> See F. I. Tjutčev, *Lirika*, 2 vols. (Moscow, 1965), I, 9, 46, 216 (music of the spheres), 16, 63 (sky and earth), 17, 26, 46, 66 ('inner sky'), 29, 51, 137, 195 ('inner sea'), 57, 118 ('inner chaos').

<sup>88</sup> "Todo nada" (*Svet večernij*, 156-57). It is quite likely that the Socratic *katabasis* of the soul into Hades as a step to its *epanodos* from the day that is night to the true day (in Plato's *Republic*) is one of the sources of Ivanov's *ascent : descent* imagery. On this and other Platonic traits in Symbolism, see Miroslav John Hanak, *Maeterlinck's Symbolic Drama: A Leap into Transcendence* (Louvain, 1974), 45-55.

<sup>89</sup> Gaston Bachelard, *L'Air et les Songes* (Paris, 1943), *passim*.

<sup>90</sup> Joseph von Eichendorff's famous "Es war als hätt' der Himmel die Erde still geküßt" appears in many variations in Tjutčev, Xomjakov, Foeth, Majkov, a.o.

<sup>91</sup> See Johannes R. Becher, *Das poetische Prinzip. Mit einem Anhang: Philosophie des Sonetts oder kleine Sonettlehre und "Ein wenig über vier Seiten"* (Berlin, 1957), 420-21. His terms are "Gefälle" and "Aufstieg".

<sup>92</sup> Some typical ascent poems: "Levommi il mio pensè in parte o'era", "Quel sol che mi mostrava il camin destro", or "Ipensava assai destro esser su l'ale".

<sup>93</sup> Cf. Gumilev's assessment of Ivanov, quoted note 41 above.

<sup>94</sup> Cf. Heinrich Stammler, "Vjačeslav Ivanov's Image of Man", *WSJ*, XIV (1967/68), 139.

<sup>95</sup> See François Pire, *De l'imagination poétique dans l'œuvre de Gaston Bachelard* (Paris, 1967), 30.

<sup>96</sup> See Pire, 49. Bachelard himself quotes Jung often.

<sup>97</sup> In other words, Bachelard assigns to *le signifiant* a full existence quite independent of *le signifié*. So then: "Le rêve avant la réalité — le cauchemar avant le drame — le terreur avant le monstre — la nausée avant la chute" (*L'Air et les Songes*, 119).

<sup>98</sup> Cf. Pire, 115.

<sup>99</sup> Plotinus's concept of creation 'from inside' (*endon eidos*) corresponds to Bachelard's concept of the imagination. Cf. the chapter "Innere Form" in Franz Koch, *Goethe und Plotin* (Leipzig, 1925), 128-83.

<sup>100</sup> Pire, 126-27.

<sup>101</sup> Gaston Bachelard, *L'Eau et les Rêves: Essai sur l'imagination de la matière* (Paris, 1943), 1.

<sup>102</sup> Bachelard points out Nietzsche's criticism of Wagner's music: rather than inviting man to march or to dance, it invites him to just float along on its waves. To the aerial poet Nietzsche, aerial music is infinitely superior to water music (*L'Air et les Songes*, p. 152).

<sup>103</sup> See Pire, 96.

<sup>104</sup> Vjačeslav Ivanov, "Zavety simbolizma", *Borozdy i meži*, 129.

<sup>105</sup> Pire, 105.

<sup>106</sup> Gaston Bachelard, *L'Air et les Songes*, 18.

## COMMENTS

(*de Mallac*) Professor Terras' **explication** of Ivanov's aesthetic categories in terms of their Plotinian, Goethean, Novalisian and other resonances is a fascinating one indeed.

Especially in view of the fact that the majority of Slavic scholars have failed so far to acquaint themselves with Bachelard's theory of the poetic imagination, it is particularly fortunate for us to have the extremely thoughtful analysis by Mr. Terras of Ivanov's categories in terms of Bachelard's theory.

I would be grateful to Mr. Terras for commenting on the following points:

(a) the extent of the inspiration which Ivanov may have derived from Baudelaire (whether or not this is explicitly acknowledged by him); and

(b) the extent to which, specifically, the poem "Elévation" in *Les Fleurs du mal* could have had a direct bearing upon Ivanov's conception of the categories of **ascent** and **descent**.

(*Winner*) I would like to express a disagreement with the historical-methodological remarks with which you open your written paper. You speak of the concepts of 18th century aesthetics: regularity, symmetry, proportion, and order as being at the core of modern structuralist poetics. I think it is very important to note, and I am sure that this was intended by you, though not expressed, that structural poetics sees the essence of poetic creation not only in the elements of regularity and symmetry, but also in their opposite. Structural poetics is concerned with both symmetry *and* non- or anti-symmetry, with norm and anti-norm, and the tension between them.

*Additional discussion:* Green, Hrushovsky, Markov, Segal

#### AUTHOR'S REPLY

I am very grateful to Professor de Mallac for pointing out a parallel of which I was not aware. It can be taken for granted that Ivanov was familiar with Baudelaire's "Elévation" in *Les Fleurs du mal*. But it is not very likely that this poem triggered Ivanov's poetic and theoretical preoccupation with ascent and descent. If there was any such direct and identifiable stimulus, it must have been Plato (in his *Phaedrus*, for example). I believe that the ascent/descent of the soul is a human universal, whose poetic expression may occur spontaneously, but in many cases will be triggered or enhanced by earlier examples. My essay is concerned with Ivanov's creative *Gestalt*, rather than with an investigation of diachronic connections between his opus and that of earlier poets and thinkers. Hence my allusions to descent/ascent in some other poets, quite sketchy, to say the least, merely serve the purpose of suggesting that we are dealing here with a very widespread phenomenon. Professor de Mallac's remark strengthens this contention.

I fully agree with Professor Winner's remark. The matter which he touches upon is obviously merely a part of my preamble and has no bearing on the substance of my paper. Hence I believe I can allow my paragraph to stand as is. My readers will surely read this paragraph the way Professor Winner did.