

LODESTARS ON THE VIA APPIA:

Vjačeslav Ivanov's "Roman Sonnets" in Context¹

In a 1964 article, the Russian émigré writer and priest Kirill Fotiev (227f.) wrote that following the appearance of Vjačeslav Ivanov's "Rimskie sonety" ('Roman Sonnets'), "no one can doubt any longer that we, the 'barbarians', have been invited to the feast of the Western European spirit that Rome both was and continues to be". Ivanov, Fotiev concluded, had shown the Russian "barbarians" the way to Rome's culturally laden tables². Indeed, in Ivanov's nine sonnets, written shortly after his 1924 emigration from newly Soviet Russia to Rome³, the erudite Russian poet masterfully navigated an evocative path through the physical environs of his adopted city – its fountains, monuments, colors, and sounds – as well as its rich panoply of cultural associations, ranging from Greek and Roman mythology to Renaissance palaces and the sculptures of Bernini. Situating himself in the sonnets through repeated first-person references, Ivanov asserted the place of the Russian artist in the world of culture represented by Rome, calling to his company within the poems such compatriots as Gogol' and the painter Aleksandr Ivanov. Moreover, through the act of writing himself into his Rome-based work, and through suggestions within the poems of his life's journey, Ivanov claimed kinship with a series of epic literary personages – authors and characters – that include Virgil and his Aeneas; Augustine, both author and character, in the "Confessions"; and Dante the author and Dante the character in the "Divine Comedy". Meditating on the significance of his own experiences and values in the context of those of his predecessors, Ivanov defined what he believed to be the twentieth-century task of the Russian artist: the merging of East and West to join in the creation of a Kingdom of God characterized by the religious and cultural unity of humankind and the divine, of time and of space, through the active creativity of sacred memory.

Like other Symbolist renderings of Rome, Ivanov's vision of the city is one in which earthly power, often associated by Ivanov with nationalism, and heavenly dominion coexist. Whereas other Symbolists focus on the clash between these two forces, paying particular attention to the early Christian peri-

¹ I would like to thank Michael Wachtel and Gregory Freidin for their helpful suggestions on this article.

² Fotiev includes the poems from Ivanov's later "Rimskij dnevnik 1944 goda" in this assessment, but privileges the sonnets, referring to them as "the most perfect hymn to the Eternal City in Russian literature".

³ Ivanov began the sonnets upon his arrival in Rome in September of 1924; he sent the nine sonnets, titled "Rimskie sonety", to Mixail Geršenzon in Moscow the following January. While several sonnets were published in translation (German and Italian) in subsequent years, the sonnets were not published as a cycle until 1936, in "Sovremennye zapiski", vol. 62. At this point Ivanov moved the sonnet he had written second, "Monte Pincio", to the end of the cycle (Deschartes, "Primečanja", in Ivanov 1979, 849f.). I will be citing the sonnets from Ivanov 1979, 578-582.

od, Ivanov approaches the junction of the sacred and the imperial-nationalistic by inserting both into a master narrative of death and resurrection, according to which earthly power somewhat paradoxically may be sanctioned by divinity and then reborn into holy universalism. This process is based in sacred epiphany and myth, as the poet, drawing on the revelatory experiences of his predecessors, both prophesies and spurs a nation to fulfill its intended, unifying potential. As Virgil was said to have predicted and embodied in his 'messianic' fourth eclogue the transfiguration of worldly Rome into the overarching Christian kingdom sought by Augustine and lauded in its ideal form by Dante, Ivanov claims his role as Russian poet-prophet of a would-be age of Christian unity. In the "Roman Sonnets", Rome, pictured in its multitudinous guises and stages, represents this very state of creative unity, as worldly power is subsumed into the heavenly and both exist within a Russian artistic text.

Monuments and Spiritual Initiations

Ivanov's decision to depart Russia in 1924 for "his beloved Rome", as his daughter Lidija Ivanova (1992, 50) would later term it, was hardly incidental: the city was of long-standing historical and cultural interest to him. In 1886 the young graduate student Ivanov had embarked upon five years of studying Roman history in Berlin under scholars including the German historian Theodor Mommsen, after which he spent several years in Rome, where he completed his dissertation in Latin on the Roman taxation system of the imperial period⁴. While Ivanov's intellectual interests turned shortly thereafter to ancient Greek culture, and particularly the cult of Dionysus, Rome continued to play an important role in Ivanov's life, including on the personal level. In Rome in 1893 Ivanov met his second wife, Lidija Zinov'eva-Annibal, who was to prove his greatest poetic inspiration. Ivanov and Zinov'eva-Annibal then spent a year in England, where Ivanov, ensconced in the Reading Room at the British Museum, researched "the religious-historical roots of the Roman faith in Rome's universal mission", as he would recall in his 1917 "Avtobiografičeskoe pis'mo" ('Autobiographical Letter'; 1974, 21). Following Zinov'eva-Annibal's death in 1907, Ivanov found his love for her renewed, as he saw it, in his feelings for Vera Švarsalon, Zinov'eva-Annibal's daughter from her first marriage. Ivanov and Švarsalon, who would later marry, spent the summer of 1910 in Rome; their son, Dmitrij, was born in 1912⁵. The Ivanov

⁴ "During the nine semesters which he spent at the University of Berlin from the autumn of 1886 until the spring of 1891, he worked on the history of Ancient Rome and of the Byzantine Empire, specializing in questions such as the system of state taxation in Egypt under the Roman Empire, Latin and Greek paleography, Roman law, the exarchate of Ravenna, and Byzantine institutions in Southern Italy" (Davidson 1989, 26). For more information on Ivanov's studies in Berlin, as well as a list of his courses and instructors while there, see Wachtel 1994b, 353-376. Ivanov's dissertation, "De societatis vectigalium publicorum populi romani", was published in 1910 and reprinted in 1972. The Russian historian Mixail Rostovcev encouraged Ivanov to pursue publication of the dissertation (see Bongard-Levin, Wachtel, Zuev 1993, 213f.).

⁵ Deschartes (1971, 134) notes the parallels between Zinov'eva-Annibal's and Švarsalon's unions with Ivanov in Rome.

family passed the winter of 1912-13 in Rome, after which they returned to Russia and to war, revolution, cold, famine, and ill health. After the thirty-year-old Vera's death in 1920, Ivanov and his two children spent four years in Baku, where Ivanov taught literature, including the classics, to enraptured students at the newly established Baku University, before returning to Moscow⁶. Thus Ivanov's departure from the Soviet state was also a return to a city, culture, and history he knew intimately⁷. In his poem "Laeta" (1971, 638) written during his first trip to Rome in 1892, even as he proclaimed his loyalty to Russia, Ivanov had characterized Rome as "a new homeland".

Ivanov's "Roman Sonnets" are a joyous paean to this recovered "homeland": as he exclaimed in his diary (1979, 851) upon his September 1924 arrival, "To be in Rome – it seemed an unrealizable dream so recently!" Lidija Ivanova (1992, 139-148) recalls that her father set to work on the sonnets "without an established plan", writing "freely" and incorporating into the poems features of the Via delle Quattro Fontane on which they lived, the statues and fountains they passed en route to Dmitrij Ivanov's school, and the sights they took in on Sunday evenings after dining at a small café nearby. "The 'Roman Sonnets' were born here", Dmitrij Ivanov later wrote (1980, 101), "in the immediate vicinity of the Four Fountains, Bernini's Tritone, and the via Sistina". Indeed, in the immediacy of their impressions and in their informative details, the sonnets convey the impression of an elite Baedeker guidebook and recall in their emphases the Russian writer Pavel Muratov's 1911 "Obrazy Italii" ('Images of Italy'), a work that introduced many Russians to Italy and its cultural riches⁸. The sonnets begin with the poet's appearance on the Appian Way, an ancient road leading into the city, whence he proceeds to the Quirinal Hill and then to six of Rome's most famous fountains; he finishes his journey on the Monte Pincio, looking out over the city towards St. Peter's Dome. En route he encounters Renaissance palaces, the Piazza di Spagna, the former haunts of Gogol' and Aleksandr Ivanov, and the gardens at the Villa Giulia. The final sonnet takes place at sunset, as the poet appears to have completed his day's travels around Rome.

And yet the sonnets are much more than a record of Ivanov-the-émigré's day-long peregrinations through Rome. On another level, they represent the

⁶ On Ivanov's courses at Baku University, as well as his popularity among the students there, s. Kotrelev 1968, 326f. On Ivanov in Baku, see Al'tman 1995.

⁷ While Ivanov clearly seems to have had no intention of returning to Russia upon leaving it, in fact he quit Russia as a representative of the new Soviet state, with the (albeit meagerly) paid assignment – ultimately on his part unsuccessful – of forming a Russian Academy in Rome (s. Šiškin 1997, 517). A Soviet citizen who appears never to have renounced this citizenship explicitly (though it lapsed in 1936), Ivanov took on official status of "one who had not returned" only in 1929, when his annual request for a renewal of his working stipend and extension of his stay was rejected; the Narkompros considered his "business trip" to have gone on for quite long enough and ordered him, fruitlessly, back to the Soviet Union (Šiškin 1997, 520; Glad 1999, 258, 341, 554).

⁸ Muratov and Ivanov were well acquainted and spent time together in Italy, as Ivanova recalls in her memoirs (1992, 152). Like Ivanov, Muratov writes of Rome's fountains, of Gogol's presence in the city, and of the links between Rome and various European cultural figures (see, for instance, Muratov 1924, 15, 26f., 34f.).

complex symbolic journey of Ivanov's lyric hero through a lifetime of poetic creation, and therefore his participation – and, as will be suggested, Rome's own – in what Ivanov saw as an age-old and crucially important spiritual process. A brief overview of Ivanov's vision of spiritual creativity, which remained in ways constant throughout his life, is therefore essential to further exploration of the poems.

Ivanov's concept of 'reality' lies at the heart of his vision of Symbolism. It may be traced back to the 'realism' of medieval philosophy, characterized by Rudich (1998, 57) as "the view of reality as a hierarchy of meanings in which each lower element signifies a higher and, by extension, the highest, the transcendental". Thus, as Ivanov famously explained in his 1910 essay "Zavety simbolizma" ('The Testaments of Symbolism'), "The artist must [...] harmoniously discover a correlation between what art depicts as outer reality (*realia*) and what it intuits in the outer as the inner and higher reality (*realiora*)" (2001, 44)⁹.

For Ivanov culture and revelation are synonymous. The artist in his creativity surrenders himself to an ecstatic state that Ivanov links to the rites of Dionysus. In his abandon, he becomes aware of a reality that transcends the "prison of the self", as Dmitriy Ivanov (1986, 374) writes, characterizing this phenomenon further as "the death of oneself, the initial impulse of every authentic religious experience". In keeping with Dionysian self-extinction and resurrection and with the Christian narrative that in Ivanov's view represents this process's fulfillment, the artist's death of self results in new life. Reborn into a recollected awareness of the original, forgotten unity of God and humanity, he descends from the heights of this "truth" to embody it in artistic, Apollonian forms that will be both accessible and recognizable to his audience¹⁰. For the poet "teaches [his audience] to remember", as Ivanov claimed (1979, 592) in his 1944 "Roman Diary". And the art he creates, motivated by and in turn inspiring unifying memory, thus carries within itself the ability to call participants to potential spiritual renewal, suggesting the possibility of a positive transformation of the world around them. As Ivanov explained to Geršenzon in their celebrated "Perepiska iz dvux uglov" ('Correspondence from Two Corners'), written in 1920 in a Moscow sanatorium room shared serendipitously by the two men, "culture itself, in its proper sense, is not at all a flat horizontal surface, not a plain of ruins or a field littered with bones. It holds, besides, something truly sacred: the memory, not only of the earthly, external visage of our fathers, but of the high initiations they achieved. [...] In this sense, culture is not only monuments but spiritual initiation" (Ivanov, Geršenzon 1978, 383). Sacrificial religion and art come together in this vision, as the poet, taking on the attributes of the perpetually deceased and resurrected god and of his celebrants, functions simultaneously as worshipper and worshipped in his ecstasy, mythmaker, priest, and prophet in his creativity¹¹.

⁹ I thank M. Wachtel for making "Selected Essays" available to me before its publication.

¹⁰ On the Dionysian and Apollonian interplay in this process, s. Anschuetz 1993, 22f.

¹¹ "Thus the god is preceded by the cult, the cult by the victim, the victim by ecstasy.

In the context of Russian Symbolism and the 'life-creation' it espoused, Ivanov's view of the poet as mythmaker took on personal as well as artistic significance. Like many of his Symbolist colleagues, Ivanov cast his own life in mythological terms, viewing his personal experiences as examples of the process of death and renewal relevant to the creation of his literary texts. Most significant in Ivanov's personal mythology was his relationship with Zinov'eva-Annibal, complete with her death and then the resurrection of their mutual commitment – a new, creative life – through his marriage to her daughter and the birth of their son. As Pamela Davidson explains (1989, 123), the relationship between Ivanov and Zinov'eva-Annibal "developed from an initial experience of ecstasy, at first Nietzschean and chaotic in character, but subsequently absorbed into a Christian context through a sense of sacrificial suffering, and eventually sanctified in marriage. The excess of life contained in the original experience of ecstasy resolved itself in death; but this in turn led to a renewal of life through Lidiya Dmitrievna's daughter, Vera, who became Ivanov's third wife".

In his attempts to perpetuate his relationship with Zinov'eva-Annibal beyond the grave, Ivanov was assigning to himself the role of the paradigmatic mythological or epic hero, who descends to the underworld in an attempt to find lost love and to create his future. Ivanov's poem "Ad Rosam" (1974, 449f.) discusses Orpheus, the poet-musician who travels to the underworld to find his beloved Eurydice, only to lose her again when he turns to look at her while exiting the world of the dead. Like Dionysus and Christ, Orpheus is then subject to a violent death; Ivanov's poem in a sense calls for his resurrection, as it summons a successor to the dismantled artist-hero (s. Davidson 1989, 208-218, for an analysis of this poem). Wachtel (1994a, 159-162) has discussed Ivanov's own attempts in the years following Zinov'eva-Annibal's death to achieve a reunion with his dead wife, as well as his conviction on various occasions that he had indeed achieved contact with her (in Ivanov's visions, Zinov'eva-Annibal spoke to him frequently in foreign languages, particularly Latin and Italian). In mythological terms, Ivanov had descended into the underworld and found his lost beloved, emerging from the realm of death to record this journey both in his writings and, through his third marriage, in his life. "[N]o upward step on the ladder of spiritual ascent is possible without a step down on the ladder leading to her subterranean treasures", Ivanov wrote in his "Correspondence". The combined imagery of fire and water that Ivanov employs throughout his oeuvre relates to the process described, as Ivanov's seeker undergoes Goethe's "Flammentod", or fiery death, which itself becomes a rebirth: "And death, that is, the personality's rebirth, is the liberation desired by man. Cleanse yourself with cold spring water – and be consumed. This is always possible – on any morning of the daily reawakening spirit" (Ivanov and Geršenzon 1978, 380f., 379, 376).¹² The epic hero, of course,

God, priest, and victim are one and the same, a notion corroborated by modern anthropology" (Rudich 1998, 53). S. also Malcovati 1986, 291; Anschuetz 1993, 21.

¹² One of Ivanov's books was titled "Cor Ardens"; on this see Wachtel 1994a, 165.

must pass through the water that separates the world of the living from the world of the dead, before he can once again ascend to life, completing one episode of an endlessly repeating narrative.

Home Is the Hero

Ivanov's move to Rome perpetuates his mythologies of art and life, permitting him to draw upon previous paradigms in his arsenal and pointing the way to their future developments. His declaration on the eve of his 1924 departure from Russia that he was "going to Rome to die" (Deschartes 1971, 173) marks the beginning of a newly reenacted process of death and resurrection that in its identification with and links to Rome ties Ivanov to a series of epic heroes who share aspects of his journey as seeker and creator. Most important among these figures is Virgil's Aeneas, a fellow fugitive to Rome. Aeneas was not a new figure of identification for Ivanov. For instance, in the poem "Kumy" ('Cumae'), which appeared in his first collection, "Kormčie zvezdy" ('Lodestars', 1903), Ivanov had situated the speaker of the poem, identified with a first-person dative reference (*mne* 'to me'), in the realm of ancient, Greco-Roman prophecy featured in the "Aeneid". Ivanov referred to Aeneas's father, Anchises, and suggested through mention of Hades Aeneas's trip, aided by the Cumaean Sibyl, to visit Anchises in the underworld (Rudich 1988, 134)¹³. In the "Roman Sonnets," the connection between Ivanov and Aeneas is developed more explicitly, in keeping with the circumstances of Ivanov's emigration from a Russia torn, like Aeneas's native Troy at the end of the Trojan War, by strife. Indeed, in a comment after his arrival in Rome, Ivanov cited the first book of the "Aeneid", comparing the friends left behind in Russia to a Virgilian "handful of swimmers in the bottomless deep" and noting that he and his family, by contrast, had found refuge from the storm (1979, 850; s. also Rudich 1988, 141)¹⁴. Once again, Ivanov had followed Aeneas, emerging from the water to be born anew into a world of creative productivity.

Ivanov's links to Aeneas are brought out from the beginning of sonnet I, which sets up the framework of his journey through the city, and then are perpetuated through further references in sonnet II. In keeping with Aeneas's story and with Ivanov's own prior experiences, Ivanov presents himself both as a newly arrived refugee from trials and as a homecomer, one intended to inhabit Rome. The first poem of the cycle is titled "Regina Viarum" ('Queen of the Ways') – a reference both to Rome itself ("All roads lead to Rome") and

¹³ In the pre-Roman period, Cumae was "the oldest permanent settlement of Greeks on the Italian mainland" (Cary, Scullard 1975, 16). It was the site of the oracle of Apollo. Ivanov's stress on Cumae as the site of Aeneas's vision of Rome's future accords with his conviction that Italy had absorbed and perpetuated aspects of the Greek heritage he loved. S. Šiškin 1997, 503, on Ivanov's praise of Italy's acceptance of the Hellenic heritage. As Rudich notes, the non-imperialist Ivanov's interest in ancient Rome focuses on the eschatological; "hence his interest in Virgil" (Rudich 1986, 278).

¹⁴ Dmitrij Ivanov (1980, 100) notes that for his father, "Rome was the land of the re-found spirit".

to the Appian Way, the ancient road into Rome traditionally known by that title¹⁵. Underlining his sonnets' Trojan resonance, Ivanov explains in a note to the first sonnet that in the ancient world, Rome was known as a "new Troy". Ivanov refers to Rome as a "skitaniy pristan'" ('a refuge from wanderings'), the high style of the latter word lending solemnity to his characterization, and he invests his arrival with religious significance, calling himself a "vernyj pilgrim" ('true pilgrim') to the city. He ends the initial stanza with an affirmation of Rome's ongoing status: "večnyj Rim" ('eternal Rome').

In the sonnet's second quatrain, this perpetuity is juxtaposed with the transitory quality of the world Ivanov is fleeing, as both Troy and Russia become actors in the text. "We are throwing the Troy of our fathers into the flames", Ivanov claims. "Tsar of the roads, you see how we burn". Ivanov's replacement of the title's "Regina" with the Russian "Car'" brings out the Russian subtext to his Trojan reference, as does the first-person plural pronoun he chooses for his pronouncement¹⁶. In a departure from the story of the Trojan War, in which the Greeks laid waste to an enemy society, Ivanov suggests that the Russians, unlike the Trojans, have committed themselves to the flames. The flame imagery associated with both Russia and Troy brings to mind Ivanov's assertion, voiced in his 1930 "Lettre à Charles Du Bos" ('Letter to Charles Du Bos') and evocative once again of Aeneas's tale, that in fleeing Russia, he had left "the fire devouring the sanctuaries of my ancestors" (1979, 420)¹⁷.

And yet, Ivanov suggests in the two tercets that follow, this death in flames gives hope for renewal. Regardless of the source of Troy's woes, it succumbed to flames and then, miraculously, "rose from the ashes". "Troy grew stronger", Ivanov claims in the sonnet's final lines, "When Troy lay in flames". In other words, the human vestiges of Troy, led by Aeneas, went on to found an even mightier kingdom, that of Rome. Death, then, in keeping with Ivanov's master narrative, makes future life possible: after all, inherent in the word *gorim* ('we are burning'), is its opposite – *Rim* ('Rome') – symbol of continuity, one dependent on its periodic phoenix-like resurrections. And this process is thus applicable both to individuals – epic heroes such as Aeneas and his twentieth-century counterpart Ivanov – and nations, as Troy's glorious rebirth as Rome attests. The crucial role of memory in this resurrection is brought out in the poem's tercets through "pamjatlivaja" ('retentive'), which characterizes the blue of the Roman skies, and "pomnit" ('remembers'), linked to the cypress tree that observes Rome's resurrection¹⁸. As Ivanov will demonstrate in the cycle's subsequent sonnets, the art that fills Rome bears

¹⁵ When Ivanov sent the sonnets to Geršenzon in 1925, each sonnet had a title he had assigned it. The titles, along with the notes Ivanov appended to the sonnets upon their publication as a cycle in 1936, are found in Deschartes's commentaries: Ivanov 1979, 850.

¹⁶ On the Russian subtext to the poem, and its resonances, see for instance Rannit 1964, 82; Klimoff 1986, 127, 131f.; Šiškin 1997, 514f.

¹⁷ Aeneas's city is engulfed in flames when he departs.

¹⁸ In the ancient world, the cypress was associated with the cult of the dead ("Slovar' antičnosti" 1989, 262).

witness, like the cypress tree, to the city's lengthy (self-)creative history, as earlier generations inspire meaningful creativity in generations to come.

Of course the *Aeneid* is dominated by Aeneas's quest to found Rome: this mission underlies his flight from Troy and justifies his decisions throughout the narrative. Despite his alien origins, Aeneas belongs in Rome and is fated to be there. In a further parallel to Aeneas, the Russian Ivanov, too, asserts his ownership of the city to which he comes as a pilgrim. In the third line of sonnet I, Ivanov welcomes the city "kak svod rodnogo doma", as the arch of his own home. His repeated visits to the city are brought out in the cycle's initial word (*vnov* 'again'), a theme that will be echoed in sonnet VIII, in which the poet refers to the custom of throwing coins into the Trevi Fountain as a hopeful pledge of returning to the city¹⁹. In sonnet VIII, Ivanov affirms that the agreed-upon vows have been carried out: the fountain has returned the fortunate pilgrim to his holy places. New personal sanctuaries have risen from the ashes of the old. The exiled poet's journey is elevated in sonnet VIII as in sonnet I by a preponderance of archaic pronunciations and high-style words ("reve" 'roar', here rhymed with "Trevi" in the first stanza, the "vodometov" 'fountains' of line 4)²⁰, and yet at the same time personalized, humanized, through the imperative-form address in line 3 in second-person singular – the only imperative form addressed apparently to an individual in the cycle. Through such personal references and repetitions in the early and later stages of the cycle, Ivanov reminds the reader that Rome is a place to which he has paid homage throughout his life: a place where he, like his fellow traveler Aeneas, has roots and connections – a resurrected home.

The Trojan theme, with its various resonances, continues in the second sonnet, devoted to the myths surrounding the semi-divine Dioscuri, the "horse-tamers" Castor and Pollux, brothers of Helen of Troy. Helen was the Greek warrior Menelaus's beautiful wife, abducted by the Trojan Paris in the act that initiated the Trojan War. In this sonnet, titled "Monte Cavallo" in reference to the hill on which two statues of the Dioscuri are found, Ivanov refers to the legendary role played by the brothers in the battle of Lake Regillus in 496 BCE, specifically mentioned in the second note Ivanov appended to the poems. The battle was fought between the Romans and Latium, and Castor and Pollux (long since dead) are said to have intervened on the Roman side, helping the Roman "quirites" ('citizens'). They then announced to the Romans that the battle was won. In gratitude, the Roman citizens established a cult to honor them. The Roman citizens, who have received help, are thus paralleled with the poet's lyric "I", whose prayers to return to Rome are answered in sonnet VIII by the waters of the Trevi Fountain. Like the Romans', Ivanov's presence in Rome, or his participation

¹⁹ In his sense of connection to Rome, Ivanov echoes Valerij Brjusov in his 1908 poem "Na Forume", written in Rome, the first lines of which read, "Ne kak prišlec na rimskij forum / Ja prixodil – v stranu mogil, / No kak v znakomyj mir". Brjusov's poem (1973, 530) also stresses the arches of the city, its palaces, and the theme of memory.

²⁰ This archaic pronunciation of "reve" was often used in rhymes during the Puškin period, though at this time the word would not have been rhymed with "Trevi".

in Rome's story, has been sanctioned by the sacred forces of ancient popular legend.

Ivanov's mention in line 6 of sonnet II of Castor and Pollux's stop "u Juturnskoj vlagi" ('by Juturna's pool'), where they lead their horses to drink before announcing their victory, signals a further Virgilian reference. In the "Aeneid", Juturna is sister and helpmeet to Turnus, the champion of the Latins. At the end of the epic, a merciless Aeneas, filled with a rage far removed from his usual *pietas*, defeats Turnus in a struggle for the hand of the Latin princess Lavinia and for her father Latinus's kingdom. With Turnus's defeat, Roman stock will take root in Aeneas and Lavinia's destined union, as the exiled invader and the invaded are unified as intended by the will of the gods. It is important for Virgil, writing under Rome's first emperor, Augustus, in the first century BCE, to assert this idea of specifically predestined unity between Romans and Italians: literature and divine sanction thus justify imperialism²¹. The Roman mandate is proclaimed by Anchises to his son in the kingdom of the dead: "remember by your strength to rule / Earth's peoples – for your arts are to be these: / To pacify, to impose the rule of law, / To spare the conquered, battle down the proud" (Virgil 1984, 190). Virgil purports in his epic to return to supernaturally inspired commandments in order to bring these commandments to pass in his nation through his literature.

Virgil's significance to Ivanov lies precisely in the Roman poet's assertion of a predestined, nationally based and divinely sanctioned universalism. In a 1931 article devoted to Virgil's philosophy of history, Ivanov (766-7) argued that through his use of the older gods of Rome and popular legend to ordain Aeneas's mission and, correspondingly, Rome's empire, Virgil had in fact demonstrated the long-standing religious intent inherent in Rome's sway over much of the then-known world (see Rudich 1988, 139f.). Moreover, as Ivanov (2001, 132) had noted somewhat paradoxically in his 1909 essay "O ruskoj idee" ('On the Russian Idea'), the universality of the Roman mission – "remember by your strength to rule / Earth's peoples" – "shows clearly that there was no national egoism in Virgil's words". Rather, Ivanov insisted, Rome's mission as formulated by Virgil, born in Aeneas's distress and culminating in his far-reaching triumph, had been a religious one (2001, 133), in that it reflected divine guidance and promoted world unity²². Thus national self-determination and universalism could be joined into a "harmonious whole", so long as a nation's individual mission was foreordained and sanctioned. The mission would then take on the role of "ecumenical entelechy", as it propelled the nation to fulfill its highest, spiritually unifying potential (1931, 769f.). This potential would eventually find its ultimate form in Rome's later conversion to a Christianity that would spread over the globe. Linking the pa-

²¹ In a 1931 article on Virgil (764), Ivanov argued that Aeneas had wanted to spare Turnus, but the gods would not let him do so; again, Aeneas's future – and Rome's – were planned and sanctioned by divinity.

²² Ivanov (1931, 771) notes that in this sense, "instead of a traditional heroic saga filled with fame and suffering", Aeneas's life story might be compared to a saint's life, or that of a figure from the Bible.

gan Virgil to this Christian future, Ivanov explained that through such works as Virgil's fourth eclogue – ostensibly a laudatory celebration of the first-century BCE consulship of the Roman Gaius Asinius Pollio but later interpreted as a prediction of the coming Christian era – the Roman poet had demonstrated a prophetically Christian sensibility (1931, 761, 773f.; s. also Ivanov 2001, 235)²³. For Virgil had stood, inspired, on the threshold of a new world, one he sensed and voiced in his art. Virgil represented a bridge between the pagan past and the Christian future. Ironically, therefore, Ivanov used the pre-Christian Virgil to justify a vision of the Roman Empire as predecessor to a universal Kingdom of God.

Ivanov's treatment of Virgil points to an inherent inconsistency in his reactions to the state power epitomized by the Roman Empire. As Rudich explains (1988, 138f.), Ivanov generally echoed St. Augustine in his mistrust and condemnation of such power. Particularly in his 1916 article "Legion i sobornost'"', for instance (1979, 254-261), Ivanov opposed the legions evocative of imperial might with the spiritually unifying tendencies he sought as Russia's ideal form of self-expression. Nonetheless, in his writings related to Virgil, Ivanov managed in a sense to justify Rome's empire by recasting it in a religiously intended, epiphanic light (see Rudich 1988, 138f.).

The Virgilian subtext of Ivanov's "Roman Sonnets" thus provides Ivanov with powerful models of exile, empire-building, and prophesied, complex transfiguration. Like Aeneas, Ivanov leaves a home in ruins, and like Aeneas, he finds a new, predestined home in Rome. Aeneas goes on to found the Roman Empire prophesied and approved by Anchises and the gods. Ivanov, too, is fated to take part in the formation of a widespread kingdom, but in his case, it is a creative kingdom of God, one rooted in the unifying nature of Aeneas's mission and then embodied both in Ivanov's Rome-based sonnets and in his life. For when he chose eventually to make St. Peter's Dome the final vision of his cycle, Ivanov was reflecting in part a milestone not only in Rome's history but in his own personal journey as a Russian, a humanist, and a Christian: his choice in 1926 to join the Catholic faith. In Ivanov's eyes (1979, 424-426; s. also Deschartes 1971, 174), this shift represented a unification within himself of Russian Orthodoxy and Catholicism, rather than a rejection of the former for the latter; he thus was taking part in creating an ecumenical construct of faith that others, such as Vladimir Solov'ev, had foretold. Ivanov (1979, 424) told Du Bos that his religious conversion came once he recognized that "it was high time to hasten my steps in order to arrive at the end of that long road that I had been following at first unconsciously (this was the time in my life when my faith began to reaffirm itself bit by bit on the debris of my pagan humanism)". Ivanov implied that he was moving from the classics to

²³ Pollio was instrumental in bringing about an agreement between Mark Antony and Octavian (later Augustus Caesar), one facet of which was the marriage of Antony and Octavia, the future emperor's sister. It was hoped at the time that such a union might bring to an end the years of civil war that had brought suffering to Rome and to Virgil's own family (Lee 1984, 19f.). As Ivanov notes, Rome's first Christian emperor, Constantine, was the first to publicize a view of the eclogue as "messianic", a prediction of Christ.

Christ in life; as a Symbolist, he embodied these stages simultaneously in his art. Stepun (1992, 388) later wrote that Ivanov's "Roman Sonnets" reflected the poet's journey from his youthful, "Dionysian" meetings with Zinov'eva-Annibal in the Coliseum in the 1890s to his eventual, more peaceful Christian conversionary experience decades later²⁴. In his Rome-based poetry, with its inclusion of Christian elements, Ivanov was presaging later developments and in so doing following in the prophetic footsteps he assigned to the "proto-Christian" Virgil.

Through the structure of his text – its rich inclusion of both Aeneas and himself – and through its Rome-based vision of Christian ascendance, Ivanov calls to mind other literary models: Augustine and Dante, both of whom moved through Virgil to Christianity via Rome and wrote of this experience in their own literary works. While neither Augustine nor Dante is mentioned explicitly in Ivanov's "Roman Sonnets", their enduring importance to him has been documented, as has Ivanov's tendency to respond to other thinkers in his work, and therefore the similarities between the journeys they describe in their literature and Ivanov's own path in the sonnets deserve attention²⁵. Both writers become further "forefathers" upon whom Ivanov relies as he constructs his own literary call for holy unity, even as their literary alter-egos provide him with more epic heroes with whom in ways to identify.

The Ivanov family left Russia for Italy in August of 1924 on St. Augustine's Day, a day that Ivanov, according to his daughter Lidija, always considered significant (Ivanova 1992, 124). Ivanov had echoed the author of the "City of God" when he titled a portion of his 1915 work "Čelovek" ('Man') "Dva grada" ('Two Cities'), and in "Legion and Sobornost'" (1979, 257f.), Ivanov had referred quite evidently to Augustine's opus, characterizing the "City of Man" as the result of the love of self to the exclusion of God, and the "City of God" as the result of the love of God to the exclusion of self²⁶. In the years immediately following his emigration, Ivanov turned to Augustine repeatedly, on separate occasions in 1925 and 1928 naming the fourth-century priest the thinker closest to his spirit (Deschartes 1971, 175)²⁷ and writing of "City of God" as his favorite book (Klimoff 1988, 164). Given the autobiographical thrust of Ivanov's own work, it is understandable that he would have been drawn as well to Augustine's "Confessions" – a book that did in

²⁴ Ivanov (1971, 521) described a meeting with Zinov'eva-Annibal in the Coliseum in his poem "V Kolizee" ('In the Coliseum'), and wrote further of their early meetings in his "Avtobiografičeskoe pis'mo" (1974, 10).

²⁵ Wachtel (1998, 303f.) explains that Ivanov "uses his verses to *respond*", writing further, "We find in Ivanov's poetics far less patricide than we do ancestor worship". On Ivanov's relationship to Dante, s. in particular Davidson 1986, 1989. Ivanov's links to Augustine have not received as much attention, but are noted in the specific sources below, including Ivanov's letters. Once again, I am grateful to Prof. Wachtel for his generosity in making these letters available to me.

²⁶ For a helpful synopsis of Ivanov's links to Augustine, both in terms of ideas and in terms of life experiences, s. Kondjurina et al. 2001, 194f., note 20.

²⁷ Deschartes also notes in conjunction with Ivanov's move to the University of Pavia in 1926 the fact that Augustine's remains were buried there.

fact form part of Ivanov's library – in which the future saint movingly described his intellectual and emotional passage through the culture of the pagan classical world to the faith of Christianity²⁸. For Augustine's "Confessions" may be read in a sense as an anti-"Aeneid". Like Aeneas, who stops in his lover-to-be Dido's Carthage on his way to Italy, Augustine, a native of North Africa, spends time in Carthage before moving on to Rome. Again like Aeneas, early in his tale Augustine is involved in a physical relationship that precedes – and impedes – his greater mission. In fact, Augustine refers explicitly to the "Aeneid", writing of the relationship between Aeneas and Dido and noting to his discredit the tears he shed over Dido's fate while neglecting his own soul. "These were the stages of my pitiful fall into the depths of hell", Augustine would later recall (62, 68), adding that God had redeemed him from "the depths of this darkness", his "spiritual death". And like Aeneas, who is the son of the goddess Venus, Augustine is blessed with a mother possessed of divine insights and determined to see her son succeed in accordance with God's plans²⁹. Aeneas, of course, goes on to found Rome, while Augustine moves beyond Rome literally and figuratively, meeting St. Ambrose in Milan and explicitly rejecting Virgil's paganism as he converts to Christianity³⁰. And yet Augustine then returned to North Africa, in a sense integrating his past with his present and future, and there he became a priest of the Rome-based Church. More importantly, when Augustine chose to write about his past, he used Virgil as a literary model.

Dante, meanwhile, was of enormous importance to various Russian Symbolists, but as Davidson (1986, 149f.) writes, Ivanov's approach to the Italian writer differed in ways from that of his contemporaries: "first, it was based on a much closer knowledge of Dante's works and deeper understanding of his ideas; and second, Ivanov turned to Dante for guidance in the context of his own spiritual outlook on a much more profound level than the other Symbolists did". Ivanov translated portions of Dante's works, including the "Divine Comedy", into Russian, and at the University of Baku, Ivanov taught Italian using Dante's "Vita Nuova" as his textbook (Davidson 1986, 151). He also employed Dantean images and themes throughout his own oeuvre, finding in Dante's thought, and particularly in Dante's love-inspired search for unity with the divine, inspiration for his own ideas³¹. This inspiration is evident in the "Roman Sonnets".

²⁸ In a 6 December 1928 letter from Ivanov to Ol'ga Šor (Deschartes), Ivanov, who was in Pavia, requested a list of books that Šor was to send him from Rome. First and second among the many books listed in Ivanov's collection, in the company of Ivanov's dissertation and early books of verse, Tadeusz Zielinski's study of Hellenistic religions, and Afanas'ev's "Russkie narodnye skazki", were "1) Virgili. Opere (1 tom)" and "2) S. Augustini. Confessionum" (Kondjurina et al. 2001, 339, note 3).

²⁹ Augustine's mother, Monica, herself a convert to Christianity, prays constantly that her son will follow in her footsteps.

³⁰ On the broader relationship between Virgil and Augustine, s. MacCormack 1998, Spence 1988.

³¹ On the influence of Dante on three of Ivanov's poetry collections, s. Davidson 1989, chapter 5.

Like Augustine's text and Ivanov's own, Dante's "Divine Comedy" describes the "path of our life", as the first line of his work characterizes it (1996, 2), as the poet inserts himself into his text as an example and then chooses Virgil as his guide³². Dante the character professes his admiration for and identification with Virgil, describing Virgil as his "Master" and telling him, "You are my guide and author, whose verses teach / The graceful style whose model has done me honor" (1996, 7). In fact, from one perspective Virgil has created Dante the author, by inspiring him in his verse – verse that then features Dante the character, who proclaims his own author's allegiance to Virgil. While both Dante the author and his hero rely on Virgil until Paradise nears, Dante the author dismisses Virgil at that crucial point, asserting that Virgil as a pre-Christian cannot partake of the Christian God's heavenly salvation. Indeed, by recreating Virgil as a character in his own text, even as he relies upon and lauds Virgil Dante in a sense diminishes him, as he asserts his own power over him as both author and Christian.

Nonetheless, Virgil, and particularly his vision of Rome, remain essential to Dante, who accepts the glorified Rome that Virgil presents and then, somewhat akin to Ivanov, takes it one crucial step further. Rome for Dante becomes the empire that was "later established Holy, / Seat of great Peter's heir" (11)³³. The Roman Empire, in other words, has paved the way for the church that has then replaced it. Thus Dante the author can place in the depths of hell Brutus and Cassius, murderers of Julius Caesar, who was adoptive father of Rome's first emperor, Augustus. Both men are in Judecca, the region of hell Dante names for Judas, the betrayer of Christ. Aeneas, meanwhile, is linked to St. Paul, as they both, according to Dante, descended into Hell and then ascended to the world of the living. As in the Christian interpretation of the Pentateuch, the classical world in this model constitutes a text that can be read as "prefiguring" the Christian era. Dante, of course, will echo Aeneas and Paul in his own text, after which he will move on to the mountain of the Lord and then return to write of his experiences.

Thus both Augustine and Dante undergo experiences that involve figurative descents into hell and ascents to heaven, a combination of pagan humanism and Christianity, an increased knowledge of God, and an awareness of Rome's complex role in this process. And each author writes himself into his text, thereby asserting a similarity or equivalency with those who have gone before, such as Aeneas and then St. Paul. In the "Roman Sonnets", Ivanov follows in the footsteps of Augustine and Dante, styling himself a successor to Aeneas, finishing his journey on a mountaintop overlooking God's dome, and perpetuating the self-referential quality of the cycle's first stanza through a series of first-person references. In sonnets IV, V, VI, VIII, and IX, for instance, he employs a first-person singular verb; sonnet VII contains the first-

³² The translation of this phrase alone from the Dante is mine, to provide a literal reading.

³³ I am grateful to Ruth Rischin for suggesting in the initial stages of this project that I explore this passage from Dante.

person plural *nas* ('us'). Through such personal references Ivanov underlines his active participation in the story that is Rome: he welcomes, loves, rejoices, catches echoes of the past, and drinks in the Roman sunset. In keeping with the shift of his predecessors' allegiances from the earthly to the heavenly, the image of ascent, physical and spiritual, dominates the cycle. In sonnet III, the water of the Acqua Felice aqueduct splashes into sarcophagus-like depths and then shoots up into the sky like a column. The rising water is echoed in sonnet IV's soaring Spanish Steps, which, as Ivanov describes in the second stanza of this poem, split into two as they mount the hill to the Trinità dei Monti Church. The final image of this stanza is the obelisk, surrounded by two towers set off against the blue sky, that dominates the Piazza di Spagna. In sonnet V, devoted to the fountain known as "Il Tritone", the ancient sea demon Triton blows into a conch shell, out of which spurts a stream of water, which in turn once again pierces the blue sky. The blueness of the Roman sky, noted throughout the cycle, will turn to gold at day's end in sonnet IX, while St. Peter's Dome will take on its blueness in the evening light. Nature and art, ancient sea demon and church of Christ are connected in a swirl of colors, sounds, and images, as Ivanov shows himself to have been reborn, resurrected, in the "cold spring water" of the fountains of Rome.

And yet, the unabashed syncretism of Ivanov's imagery sets him apart somewhat from both Augustine and Dante, who despite their textual and mythological dependency must assert rejection of the pagan Virgil in accepting Christ fully. While Ivanov did wonder in his 1927 poem "Palinodija" (1979, 553) whether he had in fact ceased loving Hellas, following this poem with his words to Du Bos regarding the "debris of [his] pagan humanism", his conversion did not in fact signal an end to his devotion to the humanistic, classical tradition. Nor did Ivanov's conversion mark a completely new allegiance to Christianity on his part, though clearly his particular turn to the Catholic Church represents both a significant new departure and an intensification within an ongoing Christian context (see Deschartes 1971, 174-176). With the exception of a brief spell of atheism in his teens, Ivanov had never moved far from Christian faith, instilled in him by his highly devout Russian Orthodox mother, though he had immersed himself for a time in Nietzscheanism and searched for a Christianity revitalized by Hellenism³⁴. Ivanov's oeuvre may be seen rather as an ongoing effort to merge the classical-humanistic and Christian traditions. As Davidson writes (1989, 8), "To this day his work provides the most important model in the Russian tradition of an artist who sought to integrate religion and culture, both in theory and in practice, rather than regarding them as distinct or conflicting forces".

³⁴ "This new brand of Christianity based on Dionysiac mysticism was the spiritual ideal which Ivanov proposed for his age" (Davidson 1989, 33). West (1988, 349) writes, "To an extent matched by none of his contemporaries, he turned to the Eastern Christian tradition, and the threads that link it to the mysteries of ancient Greek religion, perceived as the matrix from which Christianity sprang". In his "Avtobiografičeskoe pis'mo" (1974, 12), Ivanov wrote that at age seven, he had fallen in love with Christ for life. S. also Rosenthal 1990, 33-50.

Christ joins with epic heroes and their authors to inspire Ivanov on his creative quest.

For the religious significance with which Ivanov invested culture meant once again that in his view, Christianity was a sacrally-intended extension of the classical world, rather than a replacement of it, just as Nietzsche's Dionysus was a precursor of Christ and, in the context of the art portrayed in the sonnets, the spiritual was an extension of the material. This is why, in sonnet IV, a fountain in the shape of a half-drowned boat can give way within several lines to a church. The earthly can become spiritual, particularly when baptized in water; art leads to initiation. Thus the pagan half-men, half-gods featured in the sonnets, from the semi-divine Aeneas to the Dioscuri, prepare the way for the Godman Christ celebrated in the cycle's final sonnet, even as this repeated combination of human and divine reminds the reader of their ultimate, ideal unity. And Ivanov, immersed poetically and repeatedly in Rome's fountains and blue sky, follows in their footsteps, reborn and ascending "on any morning of the daily reawakening spirit". Augustine the character weeps for Dido, but Augustine the author condemns his tears. Dante the character despairs when Virgil cannot join him in Paradise, while Dante the author enforces this prohibition. For Ivanov the Symbolist, however, art and life are not in such conflict. Accepting the past and looking towards the future, Ivanov celebrates the creative potentiality of both, incorporating classical humanism and Christianity freely into his sonnets' broad vision of Christian faith. In keeping with Ivanov's Virgilian vision of Rome, worldly power, too, becomes a part of this larger kingdom of faith, as kingdoms of this world are reborn, transformed, through sublimation into the creative text. As further explanation and analysis will suggest, the syncretistic and mythologically-focused portrait of Rome that the Russian poet presents in the sonnets both evokes and moves beyond the vision he had held earlier of an ideal Russia as a "Third Rome". A section on Ivanov's historiosophical views connecting Russia and Rome will be followed by a final section devoted to a close analysis of the poems in the context of the preceding material.

The Russian Poet and the Third Rome

In a diary entry of 2 December 1924, Ivanov recorded his state of mind as he was writing the sixth sonnet in the cycle: "Wrote 'Fontana delle Tartarughe'. Constant thoughts about our revolution, and about the spread of propaganda, about what tomorrow will hold for Europe" (1979, 852). Ivanov's portrayal of one of Rome's most playful fountains, which features a group of boys dancing on dolphins, would appear to have little in common with Russia's revolution, though Ivanov does temper the joyous mood of the boys' play with a reference to the "melancholies" afflicting Lorenzo de Medici, the fifteenth-century patron of Michelangelo and Botticelli whose name "Lorenzo the Magnificent" inspired Ivanov's own sobriquet, "Vjačeslav the Magnificent" (Fotiev 1964, 22). His entry the following day elaborated upon his earlier theme: "The entire time I've been abroad, I've been maintaining, 'Hannibal *ad por-*

tas. I mean communism. Everyone said in unison that it wasn't true. Now all of France is crying out fearfully about the communist danger" (1979, 852). The Roman-Russian connection thus becomes clear: the communism that had captured Ivanov's own country, and its ensuing menace to Europe, were comparable in the poet's mind to the third-century BCE events of the Second Punic War, during which the Carthaginian, "Eastern" Hannibal journeyed beyond the Alps to invade and conquer parts of the "Western" nation Italy³⁵. Russia had met its own Hannibal, and the battle could now spread to Europe, threatening its centuries-old, spiritually imbued culture.

Such a linkage of Russian and Roman history was not unusual for the cyclically-minded Ivanov, who previously had viewed such major events in Russian history as the 1905 revolution and Russia's involvement in World War I through a Roman prism. In his comments about Hannibal, for instance, Ivanov was harking back to his earlier 1909 essay "On the Russian Idea". Writing in response to events that followed the 1905 revolution, Ivanov had characterized the Russo-Japanese War as Russia's "first Punic War", a conflict between Russia and a non-Christian, "Yellow Asia" that was intended to determine "whether Christ is still alive and vital in Europe" (2001, 129). Russia at this time had not lived up to the Christ-bearing role Ivanov assigned to his nation. Divided in spirit, opting "neither to mount the Beast and raise high its scepter, nor to take up wholly the easy yoke of Christ," Russia had battled unsuccessfully "in no one's name" (2001, 130).

Despite this failure, however, Ivanov had referred explicitly in this essay to the concept of Russia in its ideal form as a "Third Rome". Warning against the nationalism often associated with the concept, he had gone on to assert an image of a Russian Rome in terms characteristic of Dostoevskij's 1880 "Puškin Speech" and also clearly linked both to Virgil and to Ivanov's own master narrative of descent and resurrection. "[T]he very christening of our universal idea (for 'Rome' is always 'the universe') with the name of the 'Third Rome,' the 'Rome of the Spirit,' reveals to us: 'You, Russian, must remember one thing: universal truth is your truth and if you want to preserve your soul, do not be afraid to lose it'" (2001, 133)³⁶. Continuing his professions against

³⁵ Despite Hannibal's links to Spain (see Cary and Scullard 1975, 124 ff.), his roots in Carthage meant that the war was largely seen by the Romans as a struggle between the Carthaginian East and the Roman West. Looking back on the Punic Wars, Virgil provided a pretext for them in his "Aeneid" through the story of the ill-fated love affair between Aeneas and the Carthaginian Dido, who upon being abandoned by the driven Aeneas swears everlasting hatred between her nation and his. As Ivanov noted in his "Vergils Historiosophie" (1931, 765), though, Virgil managed in his rendering of the Trojan War to take the conflict out of its traditional Greek context, according to which the Trojans were the Eastern foes of a Western Greece, and cast the Trojans instead as carriers of a Western ideal. This reading is convenient for Ivanov, who would go on to claim that the Russians, too, had ended up as carriers of Roman universalism. It is worth noting, however, that Virgil's Latins clearly scorn Aeneas and his band as Eastern invaders, though they are indeed meant to found the Roman state along with its values (see, for instance, Turnus's characterization of Aeneas as a "Phrygian tyrant" (Virgil 1984, 370)).

³⁶ S. Ivanov's association of this idea with Dostoevskij in his 7 December 1935 letter to the Russian émigré Godjaev (cited in Ivanov 1995, 18).

nationalism and imperialism, Ivanov had described the Russian intelligentsia's "historically unprecedented example of a will to poverty, simplification, self-abnegation, and descent", as well as the general Russian "love of descent", for Ivanov "the distinguishing feature of our national psychology" (2001, 138f.). The Russian soul, Ivanov had concluded, expressed the "central content of the Christian idea, the categorical imperative of descent and burial of the Light", and, through its stress on Easter, "the categorical postulate of resurrection" (2001, 142). Having characterized Dionysus in an earlier essay as "our barbarian, our Slavic god" (2001, 120), Ivanov linked Russia's Christian character with its Dionysian roots, finding in the dissolution of self he associated with Dionysus a central feature of the Russian character. "Our most attractive and noble aspirations are sealed with a craving for self-destruction, as if we were secretly bound to the inescapable charms of a peculiar Dionysus [...], as if other peoples were deadly selfish, whereas we, a nation of self-immolators, represented the vital principle in life, which Goethe saw as the butterfly Psyche who yearned for a fiery death" (2001, 138). Ivanov's rhetoric of national death followed by universal resurrection presages his portrayal of Troy/Rome's fiery, phoenix-like death and rebirth in the "Roman Sonnets", thereby linking Russia and Rome further.

Thus Russia's talent for loss of self, for descent, would culminate in its resurrection, as Russians in losing their own identities would follow in Rome's some-time footsteps to be reborn into a glorious, holy universality. The loss of boundaries and the overall unity associated with this process embodied what Ivanov termed in a Russian context *sobornost'*, defined by Ivanov's associate Deschartes (1954, 48) as "the principle of unity in the City of God; it unifies the living with the living and the living with the dead, it springs from the *Memoria Aeterna* and creates the *Communio Sanctorum*". *Sobornost'* "must surmount spiritual entropy and alienation", Venclova explains (1989, 210). *Sobornost'*, then, can be associated with Ivanov's vision of an ideal Russia, a self-sacrificing, descending and ascending "Third Rome" that unifies time and space and negates the barriers of nationalism and individualism³⁷. In the same essay, after quoting Anchises' words to Aeneas about Rome's destiny, in terms he would echo in his 1931 article on Virgil Ivanov noted "the providential will and idea of imperial Rome, which was becoming the world". He added that the *pax romana* had been "developed through a complex process of collective mythopoesis: they needed both the legend of the Trojan Aeneas and the Hellenic and oriental Sibylline prophesying in order gradually to strengthen the vital sense of Rome's universal role" (2001, 132). The creation of religious unity, therefore, was in essence an artistic act, one in line with Ivanov's concept of the poet's holy creativity and here associated with national destiny, be it that of Rome or, in Ivanov's case, Russia.

For it was now Russia's turn to assume this "Roman", unifying role in the world, Ivanov had insisted in 1909: "Mystics of East and West alike are

³⁷ As West notes (1998, 353), Ivanov distinguishes between "Russia as an ethno-geographical entity" and Holy Russia as "a spiritual entity, a universal."

agreed that Slavdom, and particularly Russia, is being handed a certain torch precisely at this moment; whether our nation carries it high or lets it fall is a question of world destiny. If our nation [...] carries [the torch] aloft, it will benefit the entire world" (2001, 133). Russia could follow Virgil's and Aeneas's paths in the recognition and creation of holy unity.

At the time of Russia's entrance into World War I, Ivanov once again proclaimed his faith in Russia's fated mission as witness to Christ. And again, he couched this conception in Rome-based terms, this time focused upon Rome's Eastern, Christian successor, Constantinople. As Ben Hellman notes (1995, 117), Ivanov came to construe the entire war as a struggle for "Car'grad" between two adversaries: Germany, associated in Ivanov's mind – perhaps because of Germany's alliance with the Moslem Turks – with the non-Christian East and thus with the Mongols, and Orthodox Russia, by implication heir to Byzantium and its specifically Christian Eastern heritage. In his 1916 poem "Budi, budi" ('So Be It, So Be It') (1987, 51), for instance, Ivanov wrote, "Rus', in Constantinople's purple / Robed, [...] / Do not serve the prince of this world!" And in poems such as "Čaša Svjatoj Sofii" ('The Chalice of Holy Sophia', 1915), and essays including "Pol'skij messianizm kak živača sila" ('Polish Messianism as a Living Force', 1916) and "Duxovnyj lik slavjanstva" ('The Spiritual Face of Slavdom', 1917), Ivanov called for the 'liberation' of Constantinople from Turkish, Moslem rule, insisting that the city should return to Christianity and become the capital of a united, Christian Slavic community that would then speak its holy "word" to the rest of the world (1987, 36, 660, 664, 667-672). Thus, as in 1905, during World War I the Russians had an important task before them: the fervent affirmation of a Christianity under threat from the non-Christian "East", with its paradoxical associations in this case of both Islam and Germany. "I believe this war to be holy in its inner essence and a war of liberation, and I regard it as something very positive", Ivanov wrote in a 1914 letter (Hellman 1995, 84).

When the February Revolution of 1917 occurred, Ivanov rejoiced, convinced that the time had now come for Russia to fulfill its Christian mission to the rest of the world. Poems such as "Gimn" ('Hymn', April, 1917) proclaimed, "Peace on earth! Freedom in holy Russia!" (1987, 60). As the months passed, however, Ivanov became concerned that Kerenskij's government was insufficiently religious, a failing to which he would attribute the Bolsheviks' success in November³⁸. Horrified by the Bolsheviks' overt rejection of Christianity, which he excoriated particularly in a series of poems written between 1917 and 1918, Ivanov exhorted Russians to remember their faith in God, the only force that could resurrect their nation³⁹. In his 1918 poem "Lazar'", for

³⁸ On Ivanov's view of the revolution as areligious, see in particular his 1917 essay "Revoljucija i narodnoe samoopredelenie" (1979, 354-364). On the mystical roots of Ivanov's reception of the revolution, as well as a discussion of this essay as an instance of the beginning of Ivanov's revolutionary disillusionment, s. Obatnin 2000, 164f.

³⁹ S. his "Pesni smutnogo vremeni", in 1987, 72-75. Ueland (1992) argues that in these poems Ivanov puts Russia's recent troubles into the context of earlier Russian history, in so doing asserting a potential resurrection inherent in his own dark times.

instance (1987, 77), Ivanov called for the rebirth of Russia in Christ, akin to Lazarus's own resurrection – a rebirth that would come with the defeat of the Bolshevik regime. Ivanov's stress in his war-time works on Constantinople as the head of an Eastern, Christian, Slavic entity, bolstered by his continuing emphasis throughout the revolutionary period on Russia's need to be a sanctifying, universalizing force, echoes his visions in 1909 of Russia as a "Third Rome" – though beyond his somewhat myopic pronouncements during the First World War, Ivanov never provided any details on how this desired vision was to be realized.

In the years following the revolution, Ivanov's opposition to the atheistic Soviet regime deepened, and throughout the 1920s and 1930s, when he wrote and then published his "Roman Sonnets", he became increasingly disillusioned over Russia's contemporary state and its current ability as a nation to achieve the goals he had sought for it. In his 1924 diary, kept briefly as he was writing the sonnets, Ivanov acknowledged the dangerous appeal Communism held to those unable to withstand its seductive but misleading qualities: "Communism [...] can be a surrogate for faith, and answers the question about the meaning of life in terms that are nearly cosmic" (1979, 852). Communism, therefore, was the opposite of Russia in its ideal form, of Russia in its guise as a universal and unifying Rome. It had created an imperial collective supported by legions, rather than the free, prophesied Kingdom of God Ivanov had envisaged. As he wrote to Du Bos in 1930, the Bolsheviks, with their opposition to Christianity, had posed the question, "Are you with us or with God?"⁴⁰ Ivanov explained that he had realized in the period following his emigration that "the Boat of the Fisherman was the only bulwark against the flood that had submerged my native country and threatened to swallow up all of Christendom" (1979, 424). His embrace of Catholicism upon his emigration was thus in a sense a response to Russia's new, godless rulers, determined to carry their Communist brand of faith beyond Russian borders.

Ivanov's sonnets reflect his complex and evolving views during this period of Rome and its links to Russia⁴¹. Ivanov had not renounced his ideal vision

⁴⁰ Ivanov himself debated Soviet Commissar of Education Anatolij Lunačarskij on matters of reason and faith in the early days following the Bolshevik coup and then again in 1924 before his departure, with Lunačarskij advocating Bolshevik atheism while Ivanov impassionedly spoke for Christ (Deschartes 1971, 160).

⁴¹ Scholars disagree on the extent of the continuity of Ivanov's thought. James West (1988, 233) writes that "Ivanov's thought is striking for its relative lack of evolution over a period of some forty years. It did not need to evolve; what he wrote in 1904, or 1907, or 1910, or in some of the blackest times in 1921 was sufficiently mature and well-expressed that the almost, seventy-year-old poet-sage felt no pressing need to completely restate it". On the other hand, Alexis Klimoff (1988, 163) asserts a "striking degree of discontinuity" in Ivanov's creative path, noting, for instance, the seventeen years following the "Roman Sonnets" during which Ivanov wrote almost no poetry, after a highly prolific period between 1903 and 1912. Klimoff analyzes the "philosophical revisionism" of two of Ivanov's later works. Each argument is somewhat tempered. Klimoff notes that in one of the works he discusses Ivanov does not appear to sacrifice "the hope of ultimate redemption" (1988, 167). West (1988, 235) writes that Ivanov's early optimism "was perhaps one of the few components of Ivanov's thinking that was subject to later revision". I argue that while Ivanov underwent certain important shifts, much of his fundamental vision remained intact.

of Russians as universal: he reaffirmed the concept in a 1935 letter, referring to Dostoevskij's belief that "a truly Russian person is above all a 'universal person' (*vsčelovek*)". "You mourn the 'destruction of Russian culture', but it is not destroyed, but rather called to new accomplishments, to a new spiritual consciousness" (s. Ivanov's letter to Godjaev: in Ivanov 1995, 18). It was in this "universalizing" context that he explicated his own move to Catholicism (1995, 18), telling Du Bos in 1930 that with the conversion he had fulfilled his own "duty" and, for his part, "that of [his] nation" (1979, 428). In addition, he republished "On the Russian Idea" in German translation in 1930 with revisions but few substantive changes to the essay's major ideas (Bird in Ivanov 2001, 280). But a move from Russia to Rome, both physical and metaphorical, had taken place, as Ivanov journeyed along the path marked by his predecessors and sought in the Catholic Church the unity he desired. Ivanov's sonnets paradoxically reflect both his consistency – his continued, non-nationalistic vision of an all-embracing Russian character, and his commitment to revive and fulfill it – and his journey from East to West, to the "bulwark" provided by Roman Catholicism and the "first" Rome.

In his 1907 essay "O veselom remesle i umnom veselii" ('On the Joyful Craft and the Joy of the Spirit'), in terms he would re-use in a 1917 essay, Ivanov had, as noted, linked Russia and Dionysus. He had then gone on to characterize both as "barbarian", in contrast with the "formal harmony" of Apollo and the West. "The old tale of Helen's abduction by her uncivilized lovers is repeated eternally: eternally the barbarian Faust falls in love with the Beautiful One, eternally Chaos seeks harmony and an image, and the Scythian Anacharsis travels to Hellas for the wisdom of form and measure" (2001, 120). Russia the "barbarian", therefore, was comparable to Scythians and to Paris, the Trojan who had spirited Helen away from her Greek husband. Paris's compatriot Aeneas, to continue the thread of the argument, was then a barbarian as well, one once again comparable to the Russians. The "oriental Sibylline prophesying" (2001, 132) to which this barbarian had been privy as he moved from East to "civilized", Apollonian West had led to world unity when sung by the poet Virgil. In his letter to Du Bos, written twenty-three years after "On the Joyful Craft and the Joy of the Spirit", Ivanov wrote that with his emigration he had left the provenance of "sibylline prophecies" and ended his difficult journeys (1979, 424). Once in Rome, Ivanov the Russian "barbarian" had then proceeded to function as Virgil, recording the universalizing prophecies of his native land through formal, Western, Apollonian poetic structure⁴².

In the formal and thematic unity they demonstrate – "for 'Rome' is always 'the universe'" – the "Roman Sonnets" embody the unifying Slavic "word" Ivanov had once proclaimed. The poems reflect *sobornost'*, and the world of

⁴² The formal aspect of Ivanov's rendering of Rome is brought out additionally in the fact that the sonnets are an example of ecphrasis. Thus Ivanov's poetry becomes part of a further chain, as he describes previous works of art and, in keeping with his theories of art, perpetuates an ongoing sequence of acts of memory and inspiration. For a discussion of ecphrasis in Russian modernism, see Rubins 2000.

the sonnets is one in which a series of Russian "words" melds with other cultures, time periods, and individuals, and with Rome in various guises. While the cycle is clearly focused on the city of Rome, it is also grounded in the specifics of Russian culture and the Russian poetic tradition through specific allusions and word choices. Ivanov thus makes a place for Russian culture within the world of Rome, as creative colleagues such as Gogol' and the painter Ivanov join him in a journey to the "Eternal City"⁴³. In Ivanov's text, Russia thus becomes associated yet again with the universality and unifying tendencies that Rome represents throughout the cycle. The phoenix-like resurrection ascribed in Ivanov's first sonnet to Troy becomes in that sense potentially applicable to Russia – though this rebirth occurs not on the national level, but within an individual artistic text. Out of the chaos of loss, new, unified life is created through the holy and memorializing act of art. Ivanov's country was unable at this point to fulfill its Christian, artistic task, but that task had been shouldered by the Russian poet, now newly grounded in the "first" Rome, and yet faithful through his art and life to his role as voice of what he still believed ideally to be the Russian "national ideal."

Sobornost' in the Sonnets

Ivanov's choice of the Petrarchan sonnet for his tribute to Rome was a fitting one, both because the form originated in Italy, and because of Ivanov's long-term mastery of the sonnet form, one he had used repeatedly throughout his poetic life and one he considered of a particularly "didactic, philosophical" nature (Klimoff 1986, 124, 129)⁴⁴. While Ivanov had told Geršenzon in their "Correspondence" that the world around them was "disjointed and scattered" (Ivanov, Geršenzon 1978, 396), he countered that disunity in the sonnets by painting through words and images a religiously inspired cultural domain that spans genres, cultures, and centuries⁴⁵. More specifically, the sonnets encapsulate Rome in all its stages and ramifications as viewed by a Russian poet: ancient, Renaissance, Catholic, modern, and, through the links Ivanov establishes between Rome and Russia throughout the text, Russian. The sonnets provide an example of what Frank (1991, 62f.) has called "spatial form" in lit-

⁴³ Rudich (1988, 141) notes that the "first" Rome and the "third" come together in the first sonnet to create a picture of "Eternal Rome". See also Cazzola (1988, 86), who argues that the first sonnet recalls Filofej's vision, as well as T. Zielinski's dreams of a "Slavic Renaissance". As I will show, the interlacing of Romes found in the first sonnet continues in various ways throughout the cycle.

⁴⁴ Ivanov wrote a total of 219 sonnets, including two sonnet-garlands; s. Deschartes (1954, 56-58). The traditional Petrarchan sonnet has fourteen lines, divided into two quatrains and two tercets. The rhyme scheme in the quatrains is generally abba abba, and, while the rhyme scheme of the tercets is often more varied, Šengeli (303f.) asserts that the canonical form for the tercets' rhyme scheme is ccd ede. Of Ivanov's nine "Roman Sonnets", three (II, VI, and IX) follow this pattern. Zillman notes however (1974, 781) that the rhyme scheme of the sonnet "has, in practice, been widely varied despite the traditional assumption of limited freedom in this respect".

⁴⁵ Ivanov told Du Bos (1979, 428) that culture, through memory, means that "the instruments of natural disunity – space, time, and inert matter" – are transformed into instruments of harmony, in keeping with divine unity.

erature: time is collapsed within a sonnet as ancient and contemporary meld, and the reader apprehends them simultaneously in a newly created poetic space. Emblematic of this space and of Ivanov's message of culturally inspired, holy unity is Rome, the City of Man resurrected into an artistic City of God.

In lines 2 and 3 of sonnet I, Ivanov's lyric hero greets Rome with a Latin salutation: "Ave Roma." The introduction of the Latin alphabet into an otherwise Cyrillic text semantically links Russia to the Western world, thus echoing from the cycle's initial lines the poet's own journey from Russia to Rome. This union is underlined through the rhyme scheme of both quatrains, throughout which the morphemes *rim* ('Rome' in Russian) and *roma* ("Rome" in Italian) are repeated. Klimoff (1986, 127) notes that such repetitions emphasize "the pilgrim's prayerful attitude" towards the city, adding, "Repeated invocation of the object of worship is, after all, the central feature of all liturgical language"⁴⁶. The repeated rhyming of a Russian and an Italian Rome also serves to link the two, underlining the connection between Troy and Russia that is made in these two quatrains. The final line of the second quatrain, with its reference to the "Tsar of the roads", linguistically links the two "Romes" further. Along with space, various times also merge, as words connoting temporality – "drevnix" ('ancient'), "pozdnij" ('late'), "večernij" ('evening') – are juxtaposed with "večnyj" ('eternal') Rome, be it Roman-Trojan or Russian. This melding of time periods, or indeed disregard of expected order, is reflected in Ivanov's rhythms, as in line 10, with its unusual three skipped stresses ("I pamjatlivaja golubizna" 'and the retentive blueness'). Concepts synaesthetically take on color, with blue linked to memory and gold linked to the caress of a dream, as the senses, too, merge in this first, unifying sonnet⁴⁷.

Sonnet II, with its continued Trojan focus that recalls the first sonnet's linkage of Ivanov and Aeneas, combines the Greek mythological tales of the Dioscuri with the ancient Roman statuary that has commemorated them. Ivanov uses the plural form of the rare Germanic loan-word "saga" to characterize the tales of the brothers' miraculous post-death appearance at Juturna's Pool, as cultures, popular memory, and time periods come together in the context of divine epiphany. Republican Rome takes center stage in Ivanov's text and then merges with the modern world the poet inhabits, as in the poem's final tercet Ivanov explicitly asserts the statues' contemporary location on the Quirinal Hill, one of the legendary seven hills of Rome. Through this reference, the poet evokes the legends that in sonnet VIII's description of the Trevi Fountain will sanction his own presence in the city. Echoes of previous Rus-

⁴⁶ S. Toporov's analysis (1987, 211f.) of Ivanov's use of *rim* and *roma* in the sonnets. Toporov notes as well (207f.) that Virgil's linkage of Rome with the world finds particularly fitting expression in Russian, where the two words are mirror images (*rim* and *mir*). Reworking the traditional linkage of *Roma* and *Amor*, Ivanov uses the *rim-mir* palindrome at various points in the cycle, underlining his dominant theme of universality.

⁴⁷ Ivanov's use of blue recalls Belyj's "Pervoe svidanie" (which refers in turn back to Solov'ev's "Tri svidanija" and, through Solov'ev's reference, to Lermontov; s. Ivanov 1987, 739), as well as Belyj's "Zoloto v lazuri".

sian poets enter into this sonnet and correspondingly into the multi-layered world of Rome through Ivanov's rhymes (the combination of *mira* 'world' and *kumira* 'idol' used by Puškin in Part II of his "Mednyj vsadnik" 'Bronze Horseman', and particular word choices: "saga", for instance, recalls Lermontov's use of the word in his 1837 "Kogda volnuetsja želtejuščaja niva" 'When the Yellow Grainfield Ripples', virtually the only such use in 19th-century Russian poetry)⁴⁸, as Greek and Roman tales and statues merge with Russian culture to perpetuate the connections already established.

Sonnet III continues the linkage of cultural forms and worlds, as it features literature, music, and architecture, with references to the sixth-century BCE Greek poet Pindar, the playing of water in fountains, and sculpted aqueducts. Meanwhile, the title of the sonnet, "L'acqua felice", suggests both the aqueduct by this name, built from 1583-87 under the reign of Pope Sixtus V, as well as the fountain near Dmitrij Ivanov's school, as chronological periods come together once more and the Russian émigré interacts with Rome⁴⁹. As Ivanov wrote in a note to the sonnets, the aqueduct feeds several of Rome's fountains (the quantity of these fountains is suggested through the plural "rodnikov sčastlivyx" 'happy springs'); these include one found adjacent to the statues of the Dioscuri. In a further link between sonnets II and III, the poet Pindar was known for his poem celebrating Olympic victories, while the Dioscuri participated in the Olympic games. Line 11, with its mention of "morskije bogi" ('sea gods'), ancient gods of Greco-Roman legend, provides another connection to the preceding sonnet, with its own ancient gods, and the fact that a "rezec" ('chisel') shapes these gods links Rome's past, along with its former religion, to its art. Meanwhile, Ivanov's combination in line 5 of "kladjaz" ('well') and "sarkofaga" ('sarcophagus'), one word of Old Church Slavic descent and the other found in both Greek and Latin, again semantically suggests the linkage of Russia and the classical tradition⁵⁰. The final tercet of the sonnet serves, as did the tercets of sonnet II, to bring the reader from Rome's past to the present, as the reader takes in the sleepy, evocatively-deserted Renaissance-period halls that listen to the voices of the fountains.

Sonnet IV, "La Barcaccia", is named for the fountain in the shape of a half-drowned boat, said to have been created in memory of the flood of 1598 that brought a capsized boat to this segment of the city, at the foot of the Piazza di Spagna (MacVeagh 1915, 197f.). Ivanov evokes through that location the Caffè Greco nearby, known to have been frequented by various artists, including Gogol', who will appear in the next sonnet⁵¹. As in previous sonnets,

⁴⁸ Silver Age poets did, however, use "saga". I am grateful to M.L. Gasparov for these observations.

⁴⁹ The Pope's name was Felice Peretti; hence the aqueduct's name (see Baedeker 1909, 189; MacVeagh 1915, 22).

⁵⁰ Ivanov's use of the Old Church Slavic *praga* ('threshold') in line 8 recalls its use in the poetry of the Puškin period, including repeated instances in Gnedič's translation of Homer's "Iliad" (I: 591, XV: 23, XXII: 70, XXIII: 202, XXIV: 527), as well as Ivanov's own "V Kolizee".

⁵¹ On the links between Ivanov's sonnets and Gogol's own Rome reception, s. Cazzola 1988.

Ivanov uses the tercets to establish a connection between Rome's past and his own present: in line 9, in his first appearance since sonnet I, the poet uses a first-person verb ("ljublju" 'I love') to paint himself into the portrayal of the piazza filled with crowds, musicians, palms, and orange, old walls. The "brodjačej [...] mandolin" ('strolling mandolin') of the poem's final line adds music to the mix of artists featured or implied in the sonnet and recalls the singing of the poet Pindar (1) and the running water (14) of sonnet III.

Sonnet V, "Il Tritone", takes its title from the fountain of that name, sculpted by Bernini for Pope Urban VIII from 1632-37 (Fischer 1991, 101). It is found in the Piazza Barberini, at the end of the Via Sistina. Gogol' lived at 126 Via Sistina from 1838-42 (a plaque notes the building as the location of the composition of his "Dead Souls"; Baedeker 1909, 185), and the Ivanovs' first Roman apartment in 1924 was located nearby, as Dmitriij Ivanov later recalled. Thus the location of sonnet V follows directly from that of the preceding poem, in keeping with the poet's stroll through the city and with Rome's own chronology, spanning both Renaissance popes and 20th-century Russian émigrés. The fountain features several dolphins with their tails extending upwards. On top of the tails is a large shell, upon which sits the pre-Greek sea "demon" Triton; Ivanov's use of the high-style "demon" echoes the word's ancient usage as a generalized term for a divinity. As Triton blows into his snail-shaped shell, here identified with the unusual term "ulita", rather than "ulitka", the reader notes once again Ivanov's stress on the interrelationships among various modes of art and the senses: there emerges "ne zyčnyj ton" ('not a strident note'), but a "struja lučom" ('stream of light'), which pierces the blue sky. The connection between art and nature is brought out further in the second quatrain, in which the Italian heat, which causes the stone slabs of the fountain metaphorically to cry out for the shade of the Italian pines, is juxtaposed with the green moss growing on the Triton. Ivanov renders explicit the theme of the interrelationship of nature and culture in lines 7 and 8, as he notes the similarities between the fanciful qualities of the "starinnyj son" ('ancient dream') of Bernini's chisel and of nature's lines. The dream of this sonnet recalls the sleeping palaces of sonnet III (12), as Ivanov's poems once again come together in an intricate artistic and chronological system in which the remnants of the powerful live on as inspirational art.

Again repeating his practice of earlier sonnets, Ivanov employs the tercets of sonnet V to inject himself into the poem, here using "veseljus" ('I rejoice') to commend Bernini's work and, further, describing his walks from the Four Fountains to the Pincio, earlier visited by Gogol', Aleksandr Ivanov, and the 18th-century sculptor and engraver Piranesi. Ivanov places himself explicitly in the company of previous Rome-based artists, evoking Dante the character's communion with earlier epic poets in his "Inferno"⁵². The Russian writers and painters thus take their place with the Italian sculptor and engraver, com-

⁵² "[T]hat fair company / Then made me one among them" (Dante 1996, 31). Dante, already accompanied by Virgil, encounters Homer, Horace, Lucan, and Ovid. On sonnet 5 and its attention to Bernini and Piranesi, s. Rannit 1964, 82-86.

ing together in a celebration of memory: in line 14, Ivanov refers to the Titans, one of whom was Mnemosyne, or Memory, mother of the muses. Ivanov's rhyme of "Titanov" ('Titans') with "Fontanov" ('Fountains') underlines the crucial links between the two: the water that perpetually ascends and descends in the fountain suggests the sacred path that results in the remembering of self through recollection of human and divine unity, a recollection then embodied in spiritually inspiring artistic forms. Thus Rome and Russia continue to be linked through their artists, past and present, who perpetuate their holy, eternal assignment of resurrecting the substance of this world into a religiously coherent vision of unity.

Sonnet VI, featuring the fountain of the Tartarughe, presents a visual picture of the present, complete with the poet, joined with the fountain's roots once again in an aristocratic Roman past. The sculpted "otroki" ('youths') who dance on the dolphins in the sixteenth-century fountain recall the dancing sea gods Ivanov mentions in sonnet III (10-11). Contrary to Ivanov's usual practice of introducing a new theme in the tercets, the first tercet of this sixth sonnet continues the themes brought out in the two quatrains: the boys continue, in a happy picture, to gambol. In the final tercet of the poem, however, the poet appears once again in the present tense, as he catches the echo of Lorenzo's melancholies and notes the "nege leni i privolij" ('languor of indolence and freedoms') created by the fountain. Ivanov's use of "leni", followed by 'privolij', is a clear instance of poetic language evocative of the Puškin period in Russian poetry. And yet, the profusion of plurals in this tercet ("privolij" 'freedoms', "melanxolij" 'melancholies'), meanwhile, is a Symbolist-style innovation, as Russian literary language describing Rome reflects once again Ivanov's goal of merging time periods as well as locations. In this sonnet worldly power in its melancholy is eclipsed and then reborn in the artistic text.

In sonnet VII, "Valle Giulia", the poet describes the fountain of Asclepius, found near an avenue leading to the Villa Giulia and commemorating the Greek god of healing who, according to legend, brought the dismembered youth Hippolytus back to life in an ancient episode of death and resurrection. In a further Trojan reference, Asclepius was also the father of two Trojan heroes (Slovar' antičnosti 1989, 55). His fountain is located near the Pincio, as the poet's walk through the city continues. The fact that the grounds of the Villa Giulia originally belonged to a prince but were given to the city of Rome in 1902 illuminates the reference in line 2 to the "Bagrjancem niščim carstvennyx otrepij" ('the beggarly purple of kingly rags'), though Ivanov's combination of "carstvennyx" ('kingly', with its root "car") with "otrepij" ('rags') also suggests the end of tsardom in his native country and continues the theme of empire turned to art. The arch under which Asclepius stands in line 4 recalls the Roman arches first mentioned in Ivanov's greeting to the city in sonnet I, upon his arrival in Rome from Russia, as does the "sinij svod" ('dark blue vault') of line 5, and art and nature are associated yet again, as the enveloping leaves mentioned in line 7 are compared to a picture frame. Further connections among the sonnets are brought out through the use of "mxov i

skal” (‘mosses and rocks’) of line 3, which recalls the Triton covered in moss in sonnet V, as well as through the autumnal focus of the poem (the “vodoem osennij” [‘autumnal reservoir’] of line 1; the foliage of line 7), which in conjunction with “beggarly” and “rags” perpetuates the melancholy of the preceding sonnet’s conclusion. In a twist from previous sonnets, however, Ivanov here broadens the circle of contemporaries in the poems, as rather than a first-person singular verb form, he uses here the word “nas” (‘us’), bringing a companion – or, in an ever-widening circle of participants in the world of Rome, the reader – into the picture. The poet and his companion are viewed sadly by the “blažennye” (‘Blessed’), an adjectival form used without a noun and without antecedent, whose mood once again peacefully echoes the slight sadness of the preceding lines and sonnet. The “blažennye” appear to look at “us” as the sun would on a withered plane tree, an image of dryness counteracted, though, in the same line, which again introduces the theme of water. The final image of the poem – “Asklepij, klen, i nebo, i fontan” (Asclepius, the maple, and the sky, and the fountain), which appear “oprokinuty” (‘capsized’) in their reflection in the water – recalls La Barcaccia, with its associations of baptismal resurrection, thus joining the Asclepius of the first quatrain with the sonnet’s ending and with the cycle’s overall vision of death and resurrection⁵³.

Sonnet VIII, “Aqua Virgo,” derives its name from the aqueduct that feeds the fountain the poem describes: the Trevi Fountain, constructed in 1762 under Clement XIII and known as one of Rome’s most famous sights⁵⁴. The figure of Neptune, the Roman sea god, is in the middle of the fountain, in a chariot drawn by two sea horses and two tritons (one recalls the triton of sonnet V). The sonnet differs in mood from the two preceding ones, as it is filled with images of ongoing power, brought out from the second word of the poem (“moščnyx” ‘mighty’). Ivanov evokes the “rastuščem reve” (‘the growing roar’) of the fountain, advising his unidentified companion through the singular, imperative “idi” (‘go’) to follow the “gul” (‘rumble’) of the fountain, which is significantly more powerful than the palaces near it: art and life-giving water continue to overcome worldly power. The fountain itself is described as the “Carica vodometov” (‘the Queen of fountains’) an appellation that recalls the “Car’ putej” of the initial sonnet as well as the demoted royalty of sonnet VII and thus further links Russia and Rome as sites of vanquished imperialism reborn into art. Ivanov uses the tercets to identify himself as a “beglec nevol’nyj Rima” (‘an unwilling fugitive from Rome’), and then proceeds in the poem’s remaining lines to note his earlier dreams of returning to the Eternal City, expressed through coins thrown into the Trevi Fountain, and to give thanks for his return. By resurrecting the self-image of the pilgrim first found in sonnet I, and through his reference to his resurrected “holy places”,

⁵³ Ivanov’s sequence in this line recalls Aleksandr Blok’s 1912 poem “Noč’, ulica, fontan’, apteka”, though Ivanov’s focus on resurrection differs from Blok’s more pessimistic picture (s., too, Cazzola 1988, 94).

⁵⁴ Ivanov’s final note to the poems identifies the Aqua Virgo as the source of the Trevi Fountain.

the poet reestablishes the personal and religious framework of the first sonnet and prepares the reader for the concluding sonnet, which ties together the themes of the preceding poems.

The cycle's final sonnet, "Monte Pincio", is named for the hill Ivanov has visited in sonnet V. Standing atop the hill, it is possible to look across the whole of central Rome directly to St. Peter's Dome, evoked as the cycle's last image. Ivanov's lyric hero thus is overlooking the location of the Apostle Peter's martyrdom and, through his sacrifice, Rome's transformation from pagan to Christian⁵⁵. The poet ends his journey at sunset in a thoughtful mood: his spirit is filled with a "pečal'ju bespečal'noj" ('griefless sadness') as he reflects on the city he now inhabits and its significance. He refers to day as a "kubok venčal'nyj" ('wedding goblet'), filled with the honey of resurrected years, and, continuing the wedding imagery, writes that "Večnost'" ('Eternity') has given to Day a wedding ring. Thus time and events contain an eternity, one made possible, as Ivanov has made clear throughout the cycle, by memory. For memory is that unifying force which serves to bring together time periods and people, as well as humankind and the divine, an idea underlined by the nuptial imagery of the sonnet's two quatrains. Forging his own present with the city's rich associations one last time, Ivanov is present from the sonnet's initial word ("P'ju" 'I drink'). The trajectory of the sonnet moves from sunset in the quatrains to the sun's "drowning" in a golden "nebesnogo rasplava" ('heavenly fusion') atop the pines of Rome in the tercets. The image of the sun's splendor is replaced at that point with St. Peter's Dome, circling in its blueness the gold of the sky. Ivanov's use of two such favorite Symbolist colors as blue and gold, often emblematic of heavenly unity, in his cycle's final image, suggests his faith in St. Peter's as a potential source of such unity, in keeping with his views regarding his refuge not only in Rome but in Catholicism as a gateway to an all-Christian culture following his departure from Soviet Russia. The cupola of the church echoes the arches found earlier in the cycle, as Rome in all its phases, ancient and modern, republican, imperial, and Catholic, comes together, subsumed into one final image of unity celebrated by the Russian poet.

Ivanov's poems are thus a reminder and embodiment of the individual's reach upwards towards unity with God, a unity reflected in the world that art, remembering that unity, can create. This is the spiritual kingdom that Ivanov creates for himself by evoking the mythology of Rome; this is the newly re-created "holy place", infused with an Ivanovian, paradoxically non-nationalistic Russianness, into which he invites the reader. It is a spiritual setting that asserts the union of humankind and the divine and celebrates the potential for rebirth out of death: in the poems, Ivanov is repeatedly resurrected by the fountains of Rome; Rome itself – and by association, one might suggest, Russia – emerges from ashes; and Asclepius and Christ bring humankind back to

⁵⁵ Rudich (1988, 141) writes that through Peter's martyrdom, "pagan and imperial Rome through the agony of self-destruction and annihilation was transformed into Christian Rome".

life. The world of the sonnets, therefore, is one in keeping with Ivanov's master narrative of life, death, and resurrection, one that echoes the hero's path and asserts his closeness to an all-embracing God. Celebrating the art made possible by Rome's earthly power, Ivanov sublimates this power by placing Rome's artistic glory into a spiritual framework, as the City of God overcomes a City of Man not through condemnation but through inclusion and holy resurrection in art. The worldly and the spiritual, both facets of Rome, are sanctified in artistic, catholically Roman unity. And Ivanov the Russian poet, having traveled from East to West and made an accepted home for himself in Western culture, succeeds in giving Apollonian structure to the message of unity he brings along with his own cultural heritage, linked significantly to that of Rome. Sobornost' takes form in the sonnets, therefore, as the barriers of space, time, and nationality are overcome through careful ecphrasis to provide unifying and inspirational communion with the living and the dead of East and West.

In a discussion of Ivanov's poetry, Baxtin (1979, 377) claimed that Ivanov's "thematic world is as unified, separate moments of his thematics are just as mutually dependent, as in a philosophical tractate. Thanks to such strength of thought, strength of penetration, and strength of erudition, it is impossible to imitate him". Introducing an Italian audience to Ivanov's work in a 1933 article, T. Zielinski (241) shared Baxtin's awe, noting that when one has evaluated Ivanov as a poet, a philosopher, and a philologist, "all that remains is to marvel". Studying Ivanov's "Roman Sonnets" in the context of other Ivanovian texts yields an example of the "marvelous" erudition and unifying systematization lauded by his contemporaries. Despite a lifetime of journeying, the Russian poet's fundamental ideal of a world characterized by the ongoing, creative memory of human and divine unity endured. Rome in its many guises provided a symbol of this vision.

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