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*MEILICHA DÔRA*

Poems and Prose in Greek  
from Renaissance and Early Modern Europe

Edited by  
MIKA KAJAVA, TUA KORHONEN AND JAMIE VESTERINEN

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Ἦνιδε γράμματα γραψάντων εὐγνώμονα δέξαι.  
Ἐρῆκος ὁ ἐλάχιστος Σίρονεν

# Three Greek Poems by the Neohumanist Vyacheslav Ivanov (1866–1949)<sup>1</sup>

ELENA ERMOLAEVA

The Russian symbolist poet Vyacheslav Ivanov, a classical scholar and significant thinker in Russian cultural history, was a prominent figure of new Russian humanism. He wrote poems in modern languages but also composed some dedications in Latin and ancient Greek. In a way Russian scholars and men of letters experimented in composing Greek verses like their colleagues in Germany and other parts of Europe, but so far only a few studies of Greek versifying in Russian universities and literary circles have been published.<sup>2</sup> In Ivanov's case, the reasons why he wrote in Greek were to occasionally appreciate the men of his circle, classical scholars, the proponents of new humanism in Russia akin to the German *Neuhumanismus* movement focusing on Greek language and culture.<sup>3</sup>

Vyacheslav Ivanov was not only a poet, literary critic, and historian of religion but also a translator from ancient Greek, Latin, Italian, German, and French.<sup>4</sup> When he was a pupil in the First Moscow Gymnasium he achieved excellent results in ancient Greek and Latin. His first poems in Russian and his poetic translations from classical languages, e.g., a passage from the *Oedipus Rex* in Russian trimeters, were completed during his school years.<sup>5</sup> Unfortunately, we know too little about his gymnasium years to determine when he started his exercises in Greek and Latin versification. After school, he first studied history, philology and philosophy at the University of Moscow, and later, in 1886–1891, he was a student at the Berlin University where he attended lectures by many famous classical scholars such as Theodor Mommsen, Eduard Zeller, Ernst Curtius, Otto Hirschfeld,

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<sup>1</sup> My thanks go to the anonymous reviewers of my article for their helpful comments.

<sup>2</sup> Ermolaeva (2018, 165–180; 2019a, 120–129; 2019b, 375–386); Zeltchenko (2018, 115–137).

<sup>3</sup> Ivanov's attitude to *Humanismus* and its spiritual descendant *Neuhumanismus* was complicated and controversial, especially at the time of his passion for Nietzsche. For Ivanov's views on *Neuhumanismus*, see Ivanov (1934). The first part of the article concerns his reflections on nature and the essence of humanism.

<sup>4</sup> Davidson (1996). For materials on Ivanov's biography, archives and literature on him, see the Research Center of Vyach. Ivanov in Rome, see <http://www.v-ivanov.it/> (retrieved 26 April 2020).

<sup>5</sup> Zobnin (2011).

Johannes Vahlen and Emil Hübner, preparing his dissertation under Hirschfeld.<sup>6</sup> Ivanov completed his studies by travelling quite extensively. In Rome, he studied archaeology at the German Archaeological Institute, and in Athens he attended the lectures of Adolf Wilhelm and Wilhelm Dörpfeld. He was influenced by the German Romantics, like Novalis and Friedrich Hölderlin, and the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche. In his treatises on Dionysus “The Hellenic Religion of the Suffering God” (1904) and “Religion of Dionysus” (1905), Ivanov followed the ideas of Nietzsche’s *The Birth of Tragedy*.<sup>7</sup> After staying in Paris, London, Athens, Rome, Egypt and Geneva, among other places, Ivanov came back to Russia in 1905 and dwelt mainly in St Petersburg and Moscow. In literary circles, Ivanov was generally called ‘Vyacheslav the Magnificent’;<sup>8</sup> he attracted large audiences and his words enthralled many who were susceptible to his charm.

In 1924, Ivanov emigrated from the Soviet Union to Rome, where he found employment *inter alia* as a professor of Old Church Slavonic at the *Collegium Russicum*. His most important articles on ancient topics at that time were “Vergils Historiosophie” (1931) and “Humanismus und Religion: Zum religionsgeschichtlichen Nachlass von Wilamowitz” (1934). His translations of almost all tragedies of Aeschylus<sup>9</sup> as well as the poems of Pindar (1899), Sappho and Alcaeus (1914), and some other Greek poets<sup>10</sup> into Russian are still considered classics – Sappho and Alcaeus were even recently republished.<sup>11</sup>

Ivanov’s three Greek poems were published in his poetry collection *Nezhnaja tajna*. ΛΕΙΠΑ (“Soft Secret. Light verses”) in St Petersburg in 1912. The Greek poems (and one poem in Latin) were included in the part titled *Humaniorum studiorum cultoribus*.<sup>12</sup> In his introduction to ΛΕΙΠΑ, Ivanov hinted at the Alexandrian character of his poems – not only the Greek poems but his Russian

<sup>6</sup> On Ivanov as a student of Th. Mommsen and Otto Hirschfeld, see Wachtel (1994, 35, 1–2, 352–376).

<sup>7</sup> Ivanov’s treatises were republished in 2012, see Ivanov 2012.

<sup>8</sup> ‘Vyacheslav the Magnificent’ is a title of the chapter dedicated to Vyach. Ivanov in Lev Shestov’s book “Potestas clavium” (2007).

<sup>9</sup> On the history and edition problems of Vyach. Ivanov’s translations from Aeschylus see Kotrelev (1989, 497–522); Yermakova (2015, 215–229). Ivanov translated all the tragedies of Aeschylus except the *Prometheus Bound*, while his translation of *The Suppliants* (vv. 1–323) and *Seven against Thebes* (1–777) are incomplete.

<sup>10</sup> See Lappo-Danilevsky (2014).

<sup>11</sup> See Ivanov (2019).

<sup>12</sup> Ivanov (1912, 112–113); Ivanov (1979, 59).

ones. Some of the poems are indeed quite obscure, full of allusions that would have been fully understandable only to the poet himself and his recipients, poets and friends.

Ivanov's three Greek poems were dedicated to his friends who were active in Russian *Neohumanismus*, the classical scholars Mikhail I. Rostovtsev (Rostovtzeff) and Tadeusz F. Zieliński, and the philosopher of religion Grigory A. Rachinsky. This article provides a translation, context and a commentary on these poems, arguing that they all can be dated to between 1910–1912, that is, around the time when they were published. Ivanov was then already forty-six years old.

### The Poem to M.I. Rostovtsev

The shortest of Ivanov's three Greek poems published in the *ΛΕΙΠΑ* consists of three verses in iambic trimeters and is addressed to Mikhail Ivanovich Rostovtsev (1870–1952), a historian of the ancient world and professor at St Petersburg University (1901–1918), later at Yale University (1925–1944). His most important books include *Iranians and Greeks in South Russia* (1922) and the very influential *Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire* (1926; 1957<sup>4</sup>).

The friendship between Ivanov and Rostovtsev began in 1893 when they were conducting their research at the German Archaeological Institute in Rome. They studied the ancient Roman wall paintings at Pompeii, listening *in situ* to the famous August Mau (1840–1909), who initially delineated them. Ivanov was writing his dissertation about tax farming in the Roman Empire. Rostovtsev, who was going to complete his dissertation about the wall paintings at Pompeii, changed his mind under the influence of Ivanov, among others, and began to work on his own dissertation on the same subject.<sup>13</sup>

After returning to Russia, Rostovtsev and Ivanov went their separate ways. Rostovtsev completed his master's and doctoral dissertations (1899, 1903); he was appointed a Professor at St Petersburg University (1901), and later a member of the Russian Academy of Science (1908). Ivanov saw himself more as a poet, a leader of the symbolic poetry movement and a philosopher of mysticism. Nevertheless, they maintained their friendship and close family relations, meeting either in "The Tower", Ivanov's famous literary salon, or in Rostovtsev's *jour-fixes* at his flat in the centre of St Petersburg.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Bongard-Levin (1997, 248–258).

<sup>14</sup> Bongard-Levin (1997, 249).

Rostovtsev persuaded Ivanov to complete his dissertation (in Latin), which to his mind was really valuable.<sup>15</sup> As the result, Ivanov published his dissertation *De societatis vectigalium publicorum populi Romani* (St. Petersburg, 1910); he dedicated it to his former supervisor in Berlin (*Otoni Hirschfeldio magistro*). It seems that Ivanov's Greek poem to Rostovtsev appeared shortly after that:

Φθορᾶς μὲν ἐκσώσαντι τὸν πάλαι σπόρον,  
 πόνου δ' ἄελπτον καρπὸν ἀντείλαντί σοι  
 σπείρας ἀπαρχῶν ἀξίμω φέρω χάριν.<sup>16</sup>

To you, who saved the seed of old from death, who made rise up the unhoped-for fruit of work, who promoted the growth of the first offerings, I, the sower, bring [my] thanks.

In lines 1–2, Ivanov expresses his gratitude for Rostovtsev's efforts in encouraging him to complete and publish, i.e. to save his *opus magnum* which he calls 'the seed of old' (τὸν πάλαι σπόρον) from perishing (φθορᾶς μὲν ἐκσώσαντι [...] σοι), in promoting its growth (ἀντείλαντί σοι [...] ἀξίμω), and in causing the 'unhoped-for fruit' (ἄελπτον καρπὸν) to rise. It seems that in these lines Ivanov, a religious philosopher, gives a *sui generis* poetical paraphrase of two famous parables in the New Testament. The first one is the "Parable of the Sower" (Mark 4:3–8): Ἴδου ἐξῆλθεν ὁ σπείρων τοῦ σπείρειν. καὶ ἐν τῷ σπείρειν αὐτὸν ἂ μὲν ἔπεσεν παρὰ τὴν ὁδόν, καὶ ἔλθόντα τὰ πετεινὰ κατέφαγεν αὐτά. ἄλλα δὲ ἔπεσεν ἐπὶ τὰ πετρῶδη ὅπου οὐκ εἶχεν γῆν πολλήν, καὶ εὐθέως ἐξανέτειλεν διὰ τὸ μὴ ἔχειν βάθος γῆς. ἡλίου δὲ ἀνατείλαντος ἐκαυματίσθη καὶ διὰ τὸ μὴ ἔχειν ρίζαν ἐξηράνθη. ἄλλα δὲ ἔπεσεν ἐπὶ τὰς ἀκάνθας, καὶ ἀνέβησαν αἱ ἄκανθαι καὶ ἐπνιξαν αὐτά. ἄλλα δὲ ἔπεσεν ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν τὴν καλὴν καὶ ἐδίδου καρπὸν, ὃ μὲν ἑκατόν, ὃ δὲ ἐξήκοντα, ὃ δὲ τριάκοντα.<sup>17</sup> The second one is

<sup>15</sup> Rostovtsev was even ready to proofread Ivanov's dissertation, when Ivanov, who seemingly got lost in his text, delayed making corrections to it. Furthermore, Rostovtsev pressed Ivanov into agreeing with the academician Sergey Zhebelev (1867–1941) to publish his dissertation in the journal of the Imperial Russian Archaeological Society. At that time, Zhebelev was the Society's secretary. Bongard-Levin (1997, 249–251).

<sup>16</sup> The Greek text follows the one published in the ΔΕΠΤΑ.

<sup>17</sup> 'A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path and the birds came and ate them up. Other seeds fell among thorns where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. And when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew



the “Parable of the growing seed” (Mark 4:26–29): Καὶ ἔλεγεν, Οὕτως ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ ὡς ἄνθρωπος βάλῃ τὸν σπόρον ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς καὶ καθεύδῃ καὶ ἐγείρηται νύκτα καὶ ἡμέραν, καὶ ὁ σπόρος βλαστᾷ καὶ μηκύνηται ὡς οὐκ οἶδεν αὐτός. αὐτομάτη ἡ γῆ καρποφορεῖ, πρῶτον χόρτον, εἶτεν στάχυν, εἶτεν πλήρη σίτον ἐν τῷ στάχυϊ. ὅταν δὲ παραδοῖ ὁ καρπός, εὐθὺς ἀποστέλλει τὸ δρέπανον, ὅτι παρέστηκεν ὁ θερισμός.<sup>18</sup>

In line 3, Ivanov portrays himself as the farmer-sower (σπείρας) in the famous parables. It appeared that his seed fell on good soil, and a harvest was obtained due to the efforts of his friend. Worth noting are the lexical borrowings from the parables in Ivanov’s lines: σπόρον (1), καρπὸν (2), ἀντεΐλαντι (2), σπείρας (4); to which Ivanov added a rare adjective ἀξίμω (3) ‘promoting growth’.<sup>19</sup> Stylistically, Ivanov uses such literary devices as the emphatic position of the cognate words σπόρον (1), σπείρας (3), at the end of the first line and the beginning of the last one; and *hyperbaton*: ἐκσώσαντι (1) [...] ἀντεΐλαντί σοι (2) [...] ἀξίμω (3).

Ivanov can be seen to follow the poets Friedrich Schiller, Alexander Pushkin and Dmitry Merezhkovsky (one of the founders of the Symbolist movement), who all wrote a poem called the “Sower”.<sup>20</sup> Additionally, the epigraph to Fyodor Dostoevsky’s *The Brothers Karamazov* (1880), a novel of great significance for Ivanov, comes from the parable of the growing seed, although not from Mark but John (John 12:24). Ivanov’s Russian poem *Samoiskanije* (“Self Seeking”), which came out in his poetry collection *Kormchije Zvezdy* (“Sailing Masters Stars”, 1903), contains the image of perishing and growing seed as a metaphor of human life.

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up and choked them, and they yielded no grain. Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.’ Translations are from *The Holy Bible*. English Standard Version. Crossway Bibles, 2001.

<sup>18</sup> ‘He also said, “The kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground, and would sleep and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow, he does not know how. The earth produces of itself, first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head. But when the grain is ripe, at once he goes in with his sickle, because the harvest has come.”’

<sup>19</sup> *LSJ*, s.v. ἀξίμω.

<sup>20</sup> Schiller in 1795, Pushkin in 1823 and Merezhkovsky in 1892. On Schiller’s “Sower”, see Ivanov’s article “Athena’s Shield” (1909) in his book *Po zvezdam* (“By Stars”), reedited in 2018 (I, 45–46; II, 141).

### The Poem to F.F. Zieliński

Tadeusz Stefan (in Russian Faddey Frantsevich) Zieliński (1859–1944) was a classical philologist and professor at St Petersburg University (1887–1921) and later at the University of Warsaw (1922–1939). ‘Zieliński was Polish by origin, German by scholarship, and Russian by way of living, but Classical Hellas was his real motherland’, as his student Salomo Luria wrote.<sup>21</sup> Zieliński’s translations of ancient poetry, and especially the complete tragedies of Sophocles from 1914–1915, are still considered classics. He was an irresistible orator and a charming lecturer with a romantic appearance. In his Russian poem, “Drugii gumanistu” (“To the fellow-humanist”, 1933), Ivanov compared Zieliński’s appearance to the famous statue of Sophocles in Rome, the Lateran Sophocles.<sup>22</sup> After Zieliński’s house in Warsaw was bombed and ruined in 1939, he took shelter with his son’s family in Schondorf in Germany, where he passed away in 1944.<sup>23</sup>

The friendship between Ivanov and Zieliński seems to have formed in 1905 in St Petersburg, and their correspondence confirms that it was maintained until Zieliński’s last period in Germany.<sup>24</sup> Soon a greater understanding and close collegial relationship developed between the two. Ivanov may have met Professor Zieliński at Rostovtsev’s place because Rostovtsev was one of his favourite students, and, after Rostovtsev’s appointment, university colleagues. In 1910, Zieliński helped Ivanov obtain the position of lecturer in ancient literature at the private women’s institute founded by Nikolay P. Raev called “Higher Historical, Literary, and Law Courses for Women” by writing a recommendation for Ivanov to the Minister of Education.<sup>25</sup> The following year he invited Ivanov to take part in the editorial house so he could participate in the project of the Sabashnikov brothers, Mikhail and Sergei,<sup>26</sup> to publish the complete translations of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides’ tragedies. The translation work was divided so that

<sup>21</sup> Luria (1959, 14, 407). Zieliński’s autobiography *Mein Lebenslauf* was translated from German into Polish in 2005, and, in 2012 published in its original language (Zieliński 2012a) and in a Russian translation (Zieliński 2012b). Zieliński’s ideas of his national identity and cosmopolitanism could now be better understood.

<sup>22</sup> Ivanov (1979, 350–351).

<sup>23</sup> Gavrilov (2012, 32–45).

<sup>24</sup> Takho-Godi (2002, 181–276)

<sup>25</sup> Lappo-Danilevsky (2011, 4, 66–79).

<sup>26</sup> The publishing house operated from 1891 until 1934.

Zieliński himself translated Sophocles; the poet Innokenty Annensky<sup>27</sup> Euripides and Ivanov Aeschylus. The date of Ivanov's Greek epigram to Zieliński is uncertain. However, Ivanov could have composed it in the period from 1910 until 1912, when they both begun their translations of tragedies.

In his Greek elegiac couplets, Ivanov compares Zieliński to an ancient prophet, an interpreter of Apollo and Dionysus. Ivanov may imply that Zieliński, who was both an extremely popular and charismatic lecturer on ancient religion and literature and a brilliant translator and scholar, could be seen as a kind of mediator between antiquity and his contemporaries:<sup>28</sup>

Δελφίδος ἑρμηνεῦ καὶ βακχευτῶν ὑποφήτα,<sup>29</sup>  
 ἐξ Ἀίδαο δόμων ἀγκαλέσας Ἑλένην,  
 ἧς φάτιν ἠδυμελῶς ἔλληνίδα φωνησάσης  
 ἔκλυες ἀνταυδᾶν καλὰ διδασκόμενος,  
 ὄλβιε, χαίρε φίλει τε συνένθεον, Ἑλλάδος εἴπερ  
 μουσοπόλῳ συνερᾶν εὐχόμεθ' ἀμφοτέρῳ. 5

You, interpreter of Pythia and expounder of the Bacchants, who has invoked the ghost of Helen from Hades, to whom you listened face to face, learning beauties, when she was speaking sweetly in Greek. [5] [You] blessed, rejoice and love [me] full of the god together [with you], if we, the servants of the Muses, boast to love Hellas together.

The word ὑποφήτης in line 1 means basically 'suggester, interpreter, expounder of divine will or judgment, e.g., of a priest who declares an oracle' (cf. *LSJ*, s.v.). In a letter sent on 8 July 1933 from Warsaw to Ivanov, who was then staying in Pavia, Zieliński calls himself Ivanov's "juror *hypophetes*",<sup>30</sup> because he was then writing an article on Ivanov for an issue of the Milanese journal *Il convegno* (the issue was specially dedicated to Ivanov).<sup>31</sup> In his letter, Zieliński reminds Ivanov

<sup>27</sup> Innokenty Annensky (1855–1909) was a symbolist poet, philologist, translator and a teacher of ancient languages.

<sup>28</sup> Zieliński (1926).

<sup>29</sup> In the edition of the ΛΕΙΠΑ 1912, there is a misprint ὑποφήτα.

<sup>30</sup> See Takho-Godi (2002, 240). Takho-Godi edited the letters by Zieliński to Ivanov and the articles by Zieliński about Ivanov.

<sup>31</sup> Zieliński (1933–1934, 8–12); Zieliński (1934, 12, 9).

of his previous publications about him: 'I have already *hypopheted* on you [...].'<sup>32</sup> Here Zieliński is definitely alluding to Ivanov's poem published in the ΛΕΙΠΑ in 1912, that is, 21 years earlier, when Ivanov called him ὑποφήτης.

In line 2, Zieliński is said to invoke the ghost of Helen from Hades. Ivanov uses here the verb ἀνακαλέω, 'to call up the dead' from below. The verb was especially used of magical invocations (cf. Aesch. *Pers.* 621; Eur. *Hel.* 966). Ivanov uses here its poetical form (ἀγκαλέω), which is attested in Apollonius of Rhodes' *Argonautica*, where first Medea (3.861), and later Jason (3.1212) call up Hecate from the underworld. Presumably, Ivanov implicitly compares Zieliński even to Goethe's Faust, who summoned Helen of Troy from Hades so he could peruse eternal beauties. Zieliński was known as a woman charmer and admirer.

The verb ἀνταυδάω ('to address face to face', l. 4) is attested only in Sophocles' *Electra* (1478). Zieliński published his translation of *Electra* into Russian during February and March of 1912.<sup>33</sup> It is noteworthy that Ivanov published his three Greek poems, among them the one to Zieliński, relatively soon afterward, at least before Christmas of the same year. Obviously, it is impossible to prove that Ivanov took this verb from Sophocles with the objective of alluding to Zieliński's translation.

The adjective συνένθεον in line 5, which means 'together [with you] full of the god', seems to be *hapax legomenon*, coined by Ivanov from the adjective ἔνθεος under the influence of συνεργῶν and *dualis* in the next line, μουσοπόλω συνεργῶν εὐχόμεθ' ἀμφοτέρω. By μουσοπόλω, 'two servants of the Muses', in line 6, Ivanov means Zieliński and himself as poets and translators (cf. μουσοπόλοι, Eur. *Alc.* 445; Μουσάων ὑποφήται, Theoc. 16.29, 17.115). Thus, the two last lines seem to hint at Zieliński and Ivanov's conceptions of the new renaissance of classical antiquity then occurring in the Slavic world.<sup>34</sup> The use of the dual emphasises the shared nature of their ideas.

<sup>32</sup> Zieliński thus jokingly inserted a Greek word in Russian letters by shaping it like a Russian verb. In other words, the sentence means, 'I have already been your *hypophetes*'.

<sup>33</sup> Zelinsky (1912, 47 (3), 34).

<sup>34</sup> On the fate and failure of the Slavic Renaissance ideas of Zieliński and Ivanov, see Nikolaev (1997, 343–350).

### The Poem to G.A. Rachinsky<sup>35</sup>

The most enigmatic of Ivanov's Greek poems is that addressed to Grigory Alekseyevich Rachinsky (1859–1939).<sup>36</sup> Rachinsky was a Moscow philosopher of religion who chaired the open-minded forum called the Moscow Religious-Philosophic Society in Memory of Vladimir Solovyov. Rachinsky translated literature and philosophy from German and French into Russian (Nietzsche, Goethe, Maupassant and Balzac, among others). He was an expert in theology, and in 1906 he published his translation of "The Canon on the Great Saturday" from ancient Greek into modern Russian.<sup>37</sup> We know about Rachinsky mostly from the memoirs of two men: Andrey Bely,<sup>38</sup> a symbolist poet and novelist, and Nikolay Berdyaev,<sup>39</sup> a religious philosopher. However, he is mentioned very often in the correspondence and diaries of his contemporaries involved in religious philosophy.<sup>40</sup> We know very little about his fate in Soviet times.<sup>41</sup>

Ivanov's archives in Rome and Moscow contain some unpublished letters written to him by Rachinsky between the years 1910–1914.<sup>42</sup> The correspondence indicates that cordiality and even friendship between the two developed during 1910–1911. Ivanov dedicated two poems to Rachinsky in his *ΛΕΙΠΑ* (1912), one in Russian and one in Greek, in iambic dimeters and trimeters respectively. The Russian poem was called "On receiving a Greek Prayer". Indeed, Rachinsky sent a Greek prayer from Moscow to Ivanov in St Petersburg on a Christmas card dated 25 December 1910.<sup>43</sup> The greeting in Rachinsky's Christmas card consists

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<sup>35</sup> My thanks go to Ksenia Kumpan, Gennady Obatnin, Alexander Sobolev for the expert consultations, and Andrey Shishkin for the possibility to read Grigory Rachinsky's unpublished letters to Ivanov.

<sup>36</sup> For a detailed commentary on the two poems, in Greek and Russian, by Ivanov dedicated to G. A. Rachinsky, specifying the date of both, and a comprehensive bibliography, see the article of Ermolaeva (2019, XIV, 120–129).

<sup>37</sup> However, during services the Old Church Slavonic translation is normally used, not modern Russian.

<sup>38</sup> Bely (1990, 339–349); Lavrov (2014, 499–518); Malmstad (2005, 127–147).

<sup>39</sup> Berdyaev (1983, 181–183, 224).

<sup>40</sup> Keydan (1997, 312–385).

<sup>41</sup> Guchkov & Kotrelev (2007, 266–269).

<sup>42</sup> On Rachinsky's unpublished letters to Ivanov, see above note 35.

<sup>43</sup> Russian State Library. F. 109, 33, 44.

of three Greek lines, which form the beginning (*Irmos*) of the fifth ode of the choir in the morning service for Christmas:

Θεὸς ὢν εἰρήνης, Πατὴρ οἰκτιρμῶν,  
τῆς μεγάλης Βουλῆς σου τὸν Ἄγγελον,  
εἰρήνην παρεχόμενον, ἀπέστειλας ἡμῖν.

As Thou art God of peace and Father of mercies, Thou hast sent unto us Thine  
Angel of great counsel, Granting us peace.

The wording of Ivanov's Greek poem to Rachinsky is reminiscent of Rachinsky's Christmas greeting:

Πρόμαντις οἰκτιρμῶν τε τοῦ Πατρὸς φίλοις  
πέφυκας εἰρήνης τε συντεθλιμμένοις,  
αὐτὸς συνοικτεῖρας μὲν, ἐν καιρῷ δέ πως  
θεοπροπήσας εὐστόμως νέαν χάριν  
σὺν τοιγαροῦν χαίρ' ὡγάθ' ἐν Χριστῷ φίλε. 5

You are a preacher of the Father of mercies and peace, for friends distressed, you yourself having pity upon them, but over time becoming somehow a prophet of a new delight with propitious words: [5] hence, good friend in Christ, rejoice together.

As well as recalling the wording of the *Irmos* (Θεὸς ὢν εἰρήνης, / Πατὴρ οἰκτιρμῶν), the expression οἰκτιρμῶν τε τοῦ Πατρὸς [...] / πέφυκας εἰρήνης τε (in the first line) evokes formulas from the New Testament: ὁ Πατὴρ τῶν οἰκτιρμῶν καὶ Θεὸς πάσης παρακλήσεως (2. Cor. 1:3) and Παρακαλῶ οὖν ὑμᾶς, ἀδελφοί, διὰ τῶν οἰκτιρμῶν τοῦ Θεοῦ (Rom. 12:1). Taking into account the context of the verse and Ivanov's recognition of Rachinsky's identity as a poet, prophet, and preacher,<sup>44</sup> the first, emphatic word of the poem, πρόμαντις, can be understood here as a 'preacher' in more than a religious sense. As an efficient rhetorical device, the poem employs the deliberate repetition of *clausulae* in the beginning and in the end: τοῦ Πατρὸς φίλοις (line 1) – ἐν Χριστῷ φίλε (line 5).

In line 2, the participle συντεθλιμμένοις is a *hapax*, coming from θλίβω, 'to squeeze', metaphorically 'to oppress'; thus in the passive voice it means 'a heavy-

<sup>44</sup> See Kotrelev (*s.a.*).

laden person, distressed person'.<sup>45</sup> In line 3, there is another *hapax* with the same prefix. The verb συνοικτεΐρας comes from οἰκτεΐρω, 'to have pity upon' (the variant οἰκτίρω is used in the Gospels) but the verb never occurs with the prefix συν in the ancient or Byzantine corpus. The *hapax* could have been coined by Ivanov himself to stress the meaning of compassion (cf. συν-τεθλιμμένοις, συνοικτεΐρας and σύγ-χαϊρε in *tmesi*). The expression ἐν καιρῷ δέ πως (l. 3) seems implicitly to refer to the Christmas time.

In line 4, we find the Homeric verb θεοπροπέω, 'to be a prophet (θεοπρόπος)'. In Homer, this verb refers to the seer Calchas (*Il.* 1.109, 2.322; *Od.* 2.184), whereas Pindar uses it of the seer Mopsus in his fourth Pythian ode: μάντις [...] θεοπροπέων (*Pyth.* 4.190). Subsequently the verb was rarely used and it is not attested in the New Testament.<sup>46</sup> It is possible that Ivanov adopted the verb from Pindar. As mentioned earlier, his translation of Pindar's poems was published in 1899. Furthermore, Ivanov might have modified Pindar's expression μάντις [...] θεοπροπέων into προμάντις [...] θεοπροπήσας in his poem. The reference to 'new delight' (νέαν χάριν) in the same line may simply refer to the approach of Christmas or even to Rachinsky' openminded philosophical ideas on religion.

### Concluding Words

The three Greek poems by Vyacheslav Ivanov belong to a genre of cordial dedicatory poetry, the key words of which seem to be related to the semantic field of friendship and thankfulness: φέρω χάριν (poem to Rostovtsev), χαΐρε φίλει τε συνένθεον (poem to Zieliński), νέαν χάριν / σὺν τοιγαροῦν χαΐρ' ὡγαθ' ἐν Χριστῷ φίλε (poem to Rachinsky).

Ivanov, a translator of ancient Greek poetry, uses such literary devices as 1) expressive repetitions, e.g., in his poem to Rachinsky: οἰκτιρμῶν – συνοικτεΐρας (lines 1 and 3); σύν- in συντεθλιμμένοις (l. 2), συνοικτεΐρας (l. 3) and σὺν [...] χαΐρ' (l. 5); and in that to Zieliński: συνένθεον, Ἑλλάδος ἔγπερ / μουσοπόλῳ συνερᾶν εὐχόμεθ' ἀμφοτέρῳ (l. 5–6); 2) emphatic positioning of cognate words and, 3) *hyperbaton* in his poem to Rostovtsev, as well as 4) alliterations in all his three Greek poems. His lavish use of metaphors is remarkable. Furthermore, Ivanov incorporates elements from the New Testament into his dedication to

<sup>45</sup> Lampe (1961, 1331).

<sup>46</sup> It is noteworthy that in *The Paraphrase of John* attributed to Nonnus, Caiaphas (11.51) and Jesus (4.29) were said to be θεοπρόποι. See Lampe (1961, 632), Bauer (1988, s.v. θεοπρόπος).

Rostovtsev. He uses the image of the ancient Greek prophet and poet as well as that of the medieval philosopher (Faust) in his poem to Zieliński. In his iambic trimeters to Rachinsky, there is evidently a deliberate mixture of pagan (πρόμαντις, θεοπροπήσας) and Christian vocabulary (οἰκτιρμῶν τε τοῦ Πατρὸς φίλοις πέφυκας εἰρήνης τε; ὡγάθ' ἐν Χριστῷ φίλε).

Ivanov was clearly following the humanist tradition of versification in ancient Greek with Christian elements, which has been quite a popular practice, especially in Germany in previous centuries but also of his time. The influence of the German tradition on him needs further study. A single Russian predecessor whose verses Ivanov might have known was Fyodor Korsch (Theodorus Korsch Mosquanus), an honored professor of Classics and Oriental languages at Moscow University and a member of the Imperial Academy of Sciences. His scope was broad enough to include Slavistics, Indo-European linguistics, theory of versification, metrics, and translations. Korsch published his collection of Latin and ancient Greek verses in Copenhagen in 1886. The small book was titled ΣΤΕΦΑΝΟΣ. *Carmina partim sua Graeca et Latina, partim aliena in alterutram linguam ab se conversa*. It consists of 17 Greek<sup>47</sup> and 88 Latin poems, both original and translated into ancient Greek and Latin from Russian, German (e.g., Goethe and Schiller), Arabic, Persian, Sanskrit, Armenian, and Slovenian. The poet and scholar Vyacheslav Ivanov seems to have had more humble goals: he wished to express his thanks to his friends in ancient Greek. However, these short Greek poems offer insights into Ivanov's complicated poetic style and personality as well as into Russian *Neuhumanismus*.

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<sup>47</sup> Korsch 1886, Nos. IV, XIV, XVIII, XXV, XXVIII, XXXV, XLIII, XLIX, LXIII, LXV, LXXIV, LXXX, LXXXIV, LXXXVII, XCIV, XCVII, C.



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