

## APPENDIX I

### Viacheslav Ivanov's 'Vergils Historiosophie': Background, Translation, and Commentary

*Jam nova progenies* ['already a new generation'].

(Quote from Vergil, on Rafael's Sibyl frescos in  
S. Maria della Pace.)

Probably due to its roots in the mythological and magical realms, the medieval age possessed a refined, reliable, and instinctual feeling for all kinds of affinities, congruencies, analogies, and elective affinities<sup>1</sup> that rule over the nature and the spiritual realm.

This instinctual feeling characteristic of the medieval age lends the charm of persuasive spontaneity to its universal symbolism in thought and creativity. Such a divination of essential relationships then also became obvious in the medieval assessment of Vergil: 'the greatest of the poets' (*poetarum maximo*). In this formulation, the apostle Paul was said to have mourned the pre-Christian poet as he was spreading tidings of Christ among the heathens, according to a hymn, 'Ad Maronis Mausoleum', that was still performed on Paul's feast day in fifteenth-century Mantua.<sup>2</sup> The darkly foreboding belief and superstition of the medieval era attributed to the Roman poet Vergil a deeper grasp of his final role, namely as a mediator between two cultural realms. That grasp went deeper than some of the humanist judgements about his fine-sounding verse, the lovely natural truth of his *'rura'* ['countryside'], and the lack of success in a contest with Homer inflicted upon him.<sup>3</sup> It was not only because of the Fourth Eclogue, whose apparent miracle converts Dante's Statius to Christianity ('per te poeta fui, per te cristiano,' *Purg.* 22.73) ['Through you I was a poet, and through you, a Christian'], that the medieval soul selected the son of Magia Polla<sup>4</sup> to be the ideal portrait of the theurgic poet, with the Muses' power of memory and at the same time with the Sibyl's divinatory power: the medieval soul had by necessity to be pleased by the prevailing tone of all of his creations. Characteristic in this regard is the praise of the *Aeneid* that Dante places in Statius' pronouncement (*Purg.* 21.88–92).<sup>5</sup> The *Aeneid* was of course for 'thousands and thousands' truly 'mother and wet nurse' ('mamma e nutrice'); above all, it was their poet's [Vergil's] special focus on the teleological and the eschatological that appealed to the spiritual constitution of the age to the same degree as antiquity looking to the past was foreign to them.

## Appendix I. Viacheslav Ivanov's 'Vergils Historiosophie' 253

Whatever temporal position Vergil may assume—whether he, with the *Aeneid*, is striving towards the chosen promised land, or whether he sees Daphnis' resurrection mythically reflected in the world affairs of the present,<sup>6</sup> or even in proclaiming with holy impatience a greeting to the first rays of sunlight of the then just beginning '*novus saeculorum ordo*'<sup>7</sup> ['a great succession of ages is born anew'] with unprecedented hymns, '*o mihi tam longae maneat pars ultima vitae*' ['O, let the last part of a long life still linger for me'] (*Ecl.* 4.53)—Vergil, moved by a deeply felt longing, always practises that virtue [hope] undervalued by ancient wisdom that, according to the Christian 're-evaluation of all values', counts 'Hope', *Spes*, among the three cardinal virtues, as siblings of *Caritas* and *Fides*. As far as the last virtue [*Fides*] is concerned, does the *Aeneid*, in conflict with the Bible, not praise loyalty as the source of everything that is proven to be truly great and fruitful in human activity? It is amazing that this outwardly so robust age needed such an anachronistic spirituality to provide in a lasting fashion the memory of humanity with the puzzling news that it had arrived at a turning point. It seems, in fact, that the innermost strands and cell structure of this sensitive soul—one who is immediately conscious of the secret fact of standing on the threshold of a universal Transcensus<sup>8</sup>—will somehow transform themselves and change towards the waft of the approaching new world, so that this taciturn and shy man, the voice of his epoch, appears to even his closest friends and intellectual peers as a miraculous stranger. Do the shadows preceding the coming events reach so far back that the medieval age had already begun when great Pan, according to Plutarch's tale, had just died?<sup>9</sup> Does Vergil no longer belong completely to antiquity, but also already to the 'progenies' ['offspring'] who in fact know themselves to be installed in Heaven—announced by him even if not having come down from Heaven ('*caelo demittitur alto*', ['sent from the high heaven'], *Ecl.* 4.7)—and whose [offspring's] historical millennium began only after the final victories of the new religion?

'Anima cortese' (*Inf.* 2.58), 'ombra gentil' (*Purg.* 8.82)—with these words Vergil's noble and gentle nature is praised by the one who said, '*amor e il cor gentil sono una cosa*' ['love and a gentle heart are but one thing'] (*Vita Nuova* 20), and one will easily agree with the disciple [Dante] that these ornate adjectives ['cortese' and 'gentil'] suit his '*dolce maestro*' well—these linguistic symbols of values that quite accurately mark the high point of medieval civilization. Vergil's classical virtues are, in the light of his innate '*morbidezza*' [morbidity], in the process of what Nietzsche would call the 'degeneration' or what we would call the refinement and transfiguration of Christian virtues. In his piety, based in ritual tradition, a deeper and more spiritual devotion to God shines through, one that brings him a deep trust in divine providence and direction, '*o passi graviores, dabit deus his quoque finem*' ['Oh you, who have suffered greater evils, god will put an end to these



[sorrows] as well'] (*Aen.* 1.199).<sup>10</sup> A line from the messianic eclogue, '*incipi, parve puer, risu cognoscere matrem*' ['Little boy, begin to acknowledge your mother by smiling'],<sup>11</sup> reveals that the poet views the picture of pure motherliness—one can confidently say: the ideal of the Madonna—with the eyes of a Rafael.<sup>12</sup> His contemporaries—even those among them who were only joking—spoke of, were surprised and moved by, his '*castitas*' ['chastity']. The only amorous adventure to occur during Aeneas' wanderings, an adventure that imitates that of Odysseus<sup>13</sup> and is indispensable in the context of Dido's tragedy, one that would have provided Ariosto with a welcome opportunity for an elaborately decorated representation—the encounter with the royal huntress in a forest cave during a thunderstorm that interrupts the hunt—is not only dispensed with in modest and restrained manner, but is also accompanied with a harsh reprimand: '*ille dies primus leti primusque malorum causa fuit*' ['this day was the first one of destruction and the first cause of evils'].<sup>14</sup> Even if Vergil's Dido is as closely related to Medea of the Hellenistic '*Argonautica*' [*Argonautenfahrt*] of Apollonius<sup>15</sup> as Camilla<sup>16</sup> is to the classical Penthesilea of *Aethiopsis*,<sup>17</sup> the romanticism of Vergil's female figures contains a sense of sentimentality and chivalry that was, with good reason, taken up eagerly by Renaissance art both verbally and visually.

The horrific deeds of war, whose cruelty increases, with a nod to the Homeric canon, by the feeding of Pallas' men with the blood of sacrificed prisoners of war (*Aen.* 10.517ff.), are not carried out by Aeneas in a gruesome craze, such as was the case with Achilles drunk with anger inspired by Ares. Instead Aeneas carries out these deeds as an impersonal executor of a cruel priestly duty. For otherwise his compassion far exceeds the measure of humanity corresponding to cultural standards, be they of the Homeric age, or of the era of the gladiatorial games. The hero [Aeneas] '*ingemuit miserans graviter*' ['groans heavily as he pities'] while looking at the youthful Lausus, who as a loyal son is just as '*pius*' ['duty-bound'] as he himself and who nonetheless is to be slain by his own hand (*Aen.* 10.823).<sup>18</sup> At the last moment he wants to spare Turnus (*Aen.* 12.940): the gods do not allow him to do so.<sup>19</sup> While self-sacrifice by virtue of the love for a friend, a moving example of which we have before us in the story of Euryalus and Nisus, is classical—not, however, the expression that the entire guilt of the heroic boy consists of his '*nimum dilexit*' ['loved too much'] (*Aen.* 9.430), a strange coincidence with the '*quoniam dilexit multum*' ['because she loved a lot'] of the Gospel of Luke (7:47)<sup>20</sup>—and the post-mortem call of the poet to the fallen: 'the two of you are most fortunate' ('*fortunati ambo*', *Aen.* 9.446),<sup>21</sup> rings paradoxical in spite of the assurance of eternal fame that is to motivate him, not until Christian ecstasy, which Rome was to witness a century later, did the martyr's death seem to be similarly enviable.

So much for the poet's spiritual constitution that distances itself from that of his environment, as the first yellowish autumnal leaves contrast with the green of high summer. You can best grasp his way of thinking, however, when you look more precisely at his treatment of the philosophical historical problem in his heroic poem.

The belief which for the Greeks is clearly characterized by the content of their ideas and the inherent dialectics of basic knowledge as the point of departure for a philosophy of history—verified, by the way, by Aristotle's concurrence—is especially Aeschylus' and Herodotus' magnificent view of the Persian Wars as the pinnacle of the age-old struggle between Europe, proud of the ethical make-up of the free ancient Greeks, and Asia, with its Libyan foothills, represented by the principle of theocratic despotism. Vergil remains true to this view, in his own, truly Roman way, as one for whom Hellas represents the transmitter of tradition, *Urbs Roma*, the universal city. This perspective provides him with a deeper justification for the dispute with Carthage over world rule, a struggle that was decisive for the development of national power, and helps to interpret the divine directive that conscientiously burdened his hero with the painful dispute with Dido. To be sure, the poet must, in order to adapt classical theory to his national point of view, undertake a colossal adjustment: he removes the Trojan War, where the Greeks perceive an important moment precisely in their struggle with the Orient, from the traditional connections, blames Ilion's fall only on Laomedon and the Priamides ('*Laomedontae luimus periuria Troiae*', *Georg.* 1.502;<sup>22</sup> '*culpatus . . . Paris*',<sup>23</sup> *Aen.* 2.602—Aeneas, as we know, belongs by lineage to an auxiliary strand of the royal house),<sup>24</sup> and, highlighting this artificially, has the Trojan people, after emigrating to Hesperia, appear to be the true bearers and shapers of the civic ideal ['*Polisidee*'] of the Occident. Yet even this very broad scope appears too narrow for the lofty flight of the poet; proof of the historical necessity and the beneficial effects of this new world regime, supplied (most insistently via Polybius) by political historiography, is not enough for him: he strives to make the case for transcendental justification of the events in order to prove for everyone the religious consecration of Roman political power.

In opposition to the early attempt at a historical synthesis, those old and new views on the cyclical course of world history attempted by Vergil (that is to say [in opposition to] the teachings [a] on ages of the world so different from each other and yet basically so insightful, [b] on the cataclysms periodically renewing the face of the earth, as Plato describes them in *Timaeus*,<sup>25</sup> [c] on the great year of the world and the ensuing return of all things—the *apokatastasis* of the Stoics,<sup>26</sup> and the expectations of the coming dawn of the '*aetas aurea*' [Golden Age] following the course of the first millennium since the destruction of Troy roused namely through the sibylline teachings) seemed [to be] more cosmological speculation than historico-



philosophical insights, as they contained no rational explanation of the historical process, no matter how productive they seemed to be in forming the foundation of a mystical historiography.<sup>27</sup> Vergil had then listened to and pondered over the wisdom of his ancestors and over the oracles with precisely the same devout fervour as he was to have later made the legend (canonized in Rome) of the founding of Lavinium by Aeneas, which was to remove any doubts about the Trojan origin of the Roman polity, an object of a teleological re-creation interpreting both the legendary prehistory as well as the history that was to grow from it. That is to say, we see him in his first creative phase as a bucolic poet<sup>28</sup> enthused by eschatological ideas and dedicated to dreamlike messianic faces, traces of which he indeed already found in his pastoral poet-master, Theocritus ('Herakliskos', 86ff.);<sup>29</sup> however, in later years, without breaking with the inspirational premonitions of his youth, as he searches for material for a national epos, following the track of the publicly acknowledged myth linking Rome with Troy, he immerses himself in meditations on the fate of his people—a fate at once wonderful and yet evolving so logically—and then finds once again confirmation and inspiration in the model itself: he was of course also reading in his Homer (among numerous prophecies, all of which pointed to the basic notion of predestination) that famous prophecy of Poseidon about the rebirth of Troy and the descendants of Aeneas down to the latest generation to be promised political power (*Il.* 20.305ff.).<sup>30</sup> Could he at this point be unsure where he should begin in order to let Rome's destination shine forth most effectively in all its glory and holiness? Did not the words of that god, favourably inclined toward the Trojan name, but furious over the treason of Priam's ancient city, already contain the core of the entire future fateful development?

It was thus necessary to continue Homer's Bible, not, to be sure, solely as sacred history, in order to show how the word of the prophet had been fulfilled, but also as continuous prophecy so that, while seeing the past, one continuously has a view of the great future toward which the secretly working higher powers—*numina magna deum* ['the great powers of the gods'] (*Aen.* 2.623)—are wisely leading. To be sure, only in the light of this future was the reader able to assess the entire force of that which once was destined as rescue or as a test, and assess the complete value of that which was so laboriously achieved, by considering its most far-removed dire consequences for the fate of the world: *'tantae molis erat Romanam condere gentem'* ['of so great effort was it to found the Roman race'] (*Aen.* 1.33). Thus the Italic prophet's song of Aeneas' flight to Latium becomes a universal revelation of the divine plan of human history.

This expansion of the visual and mental sphere resulted, however, in its own retrospective force upon the mode of presentation, one that in no way represented a change for the better when seen and judged from a purely artistic point of view. The visage of the epic muse, who up to this point

looked into the past without asking the Fata residing therein as to its meaning and purpose, now consciously averts its gaze to the things that then had to come—in fact, she conjures them up because she recognizes their essence—and now we, deeply touched, see as her face suddenly turns pale. Myth flows into history without becoming one with it—Torquato Tasso imitated this manner with the greatest enthusiasm—and we now stand precisely at the confluence of the two differently coloured streams. An artistic antinomy springs from the intuition transcending time, unable to overcome the latter despite the high mastery of the poet. He neutralizes the opposition by transforming mythology into teleology and theology; no surprise that their original abundance of life [*Lebensfülle*]<sup>31</sup> is impoverished. The subjugation of the mythological under a notional heading that did not develop spontaneously from its original core resulted inevitably in a reduction of its fresh immediacy, of its naive joy in the 'free play of the living powers',<sup>32</sup> and resulted in a weakening of that poetic inhibition that we are accustomed to treasure as characteristic of 'pure poetry'; this is a congenital danger against which the organism of a work of art can protect itself as with an antidote by increasing the romantic element. One cannot avoid seeing the internal split between the muse and the sibylline in the final organic epic of antiquity: for, despite all the anguish and artificiality, this must indeed be considered an organically created product of its own dubious time, a time that had new meaning and that, in its own way, was one creating its own mythology. But is it not in the nature of things that a swansong should consist of something exaggerated that shows that a life is running dry? Thus it is no less beautiful because it no longer belongs to the earth, according to Plato, but glorifies Apollo, revealed to the dying in the glory of the eternal.

In this way, too, the hero's dehumanization<sup>33</sup> was predestined; this was so often blamed on the singer of the *Aeneid*, without properly appreciating his hieratic seriousness and his intention that reached almost beyond the limits of art: the intention aimed at presenting a being born on high, the son of a heavenly mother, indeed free of any individual desires, who finds his completely devout self anew in the fulfilment of his noble profession as bearer of the gods and saviour of his people.

In order to carry out his intention the poet had to know how to show the progression and the connections of the events in such a way as to be obvious at each step how each event—like a spark of electricity—results through contact with the earliest to the most remote promises and those occurrences only halfway revealed. To accomplish this, however, two theoretical conditions had to be met, and Vergil's drawing this double insight from the depths of his spirit capable of seeing the world in god is an irrefutable sign of his originality and the main reason for his historical impact.

He is probably the first classical poet to speak of national determination as a mission (and this was one of the two prerequisites). He claims that the



individual calling of his people develops its own special idea, an idea indeed necessary to achieve economic entelechy, and [that the people] represents this idea in its historical essence. This is the intuition forming the foundation of the celebratory warning 'tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento (hae tibi erunt artes)' ['Roman, remember to rule the nations with your sway (these will be your arts)'] (*Aen.* 6.851ff.)<sup>34</sup> and combining the two opposing postulates—national self-determination, on the one hand; the universal, on the other—within one harmonious single entity.

The second prerequisite, closely connected to the first, was the belief in divine providence. If we look more closely at the content of this belief we can, at first, hardly deny the impression of a striking similarity between Vergil's ideas and the Stoic teachings of *Pronoia*.<sup>35</sup> So, for example, the Stoic Q. Lucilius Balbus' speech in Cicero (*De natura deorum* II) ['On the nature of the gods'] seems to anticipate the poet's views on the methods, means, and goals of divine intervention in the course of history.<sup>36</sup> The gods take care of the human race; they desire its union with a society fulfilling the ethical ideal and especially favour those communities that contribute the most to that end. They lead and save the states and the statesmen whom they use for their high goal and teach them through inspiration and prophecies, dreams and wondrous signs. Without their help, even the greatest would not have been able to accomplish anything meaningful: '*nemo... vir magnus sine aliquo adflatu divino umquam fuit*' ['There was never a great man without some divine inspiration'] (*II.66, 167*). For this reason, Homer shows individual gods aligned with their favourite heroes as leaders and protectors. Providence directs the course of humanity towards the highest good. This is what the Stoa thought; the poet's pious notion was different. It [the Stoa] taught that the gods themselves, citizens along with humans in the common state called the Cosmos, were part of the cycle and realm of power of natural life. Stoic divination ('*anum fatidicam, Stoicorum Pronoia quam latine licet Providentiam dicere*' ['the fate bearing year, the *pronoia* of the Stoics which in Latin is called Providence']; *I.8, 18*) was thought to be pantheistic and derived from the perspective of a Logos immanent in nature. Vergil, however, still honouring Homer's '*Dios aisa*' ['divine fate'] and the monotheistic interpretation of this concept in Aeschylus,<sup>37</sup> understands '*deorum fata*' (and he already speaks of '*fatum*' in the first words of his heroic poem) as an absolutely transcendental effect of the supernatural powers that lead the select humans to their predestined salvation goal according to a preordained plan. All these beliefs were probably in agreement with native intellectual currents of his age that arose out of the mysterious Hellenistic religions. And once he has achieved this precise notion of divination he applies it to his own chosen people as a whole and to this people's individual male leaders.

And so in Vergil's presentation of the wanderings and warring struggles of *pater Aeneas* we have before us a kind of saint's life reminiscent of Bible

stories—instead of a heroic saga of the classic mould full of fame and suffering resulting in a mythological justification of the respective heroic cult.<sup>38</sup> This life introduces an unpredictable series of deeds not all carried by that single hero, but at a later time by the inheritors of his mission. This life also merely functions as the beginning of an immeasurable exposition of fate, in the face of which Vergil sees himself more as precursor of that exposition and as God's tool than as the creator of the exposition. Like Abraham, Aeneas can only find solace during his tribulations in the distant vision of his lineage, numerous and glorious as the stars in the heavens.<sup>39</sup> For the *pater Indiges*<sup>40</sup> sees as his lineage not only his Trojan descendants, but the entire Roman people entrusted to his care. This is his state of mind in the Elysian 'Parade of Heroes' (*Aen.* 6.752–892), where he becomes acquainted face to face with the unborn succession of predestined multipliers of the Roman name, or while he watches the images presenting the future history of Rome, including the battle at Actium on the shield forged for him, as once for Achilles, by Vulcan: '*imagine gaudet, attollens umero famamque et fata nepotum*' ['he rejoiced in the imagery taking upon his shoulder the glory and the fates of his descendants'] (*Aen.* 8.730f.). Strange in all of this is that in the unworldly region of timeless being—as in God's thinking—all of these souls, chosen to carry out the divine plan and not yet become flesh, yes, even the events themselves that will only play out in long centuries to come, stand finished and firmly formed as ethereal images of light that Aeneas observes and the god of the arts depicts. And from the viewpoint of the poet there is no doubt that a determination so far-reaching is indeed reconcilable with human free will: so pure and complete is the conviction of the '*candida anima*' ['beautiful soul'], the good man being '*ut melior vir non alius quisquam*' ['such that no other man is better']—as Horace imagined and admired his character as the moral foundation of his '*ingenium ingens*' ['immense talent'] (*Sat.* 1.5.41; 1.3.32f.)<sup>41</sup>—that the free will of the chosen is seen as one with the will of God.

Still, not even the glory of the earthly realm, shown to the ancestor, is the bottom line of Vergilian historical wisdom. The visionary is able to see further; and his early, pleasing vision 'is ever present in his mind'. He sees a child of God in the cradle smiling at the pure mother and the whole of nature all around wondrously transformed. Who is the *puer* who causes the paradise of the Golden Age on earth to blossom anew? Is Aeon of the Greek-Egyptian mystery rites,<sup>42</sup> born of the virgin, whose happy news long echoes in the sounds of sibylline voices (as Norden, *Die Geburt des Kindes*, thinks),<sup>43</sup> probably the same young Aeon at play about whom Heraclitus (fr. 52) had whispered dark things, probably following the Orphic notion of the dallying child Dionysus-Zagreus and the representative of his father, Zeus, in ruling the world?<sup>44</sup> Whatever the case, in any event, Vergil is true to himself. Anchises' shadow is a reference to the final goal of the entire development



in the *Aeneid*, in that he, in the 'Parade of Heroes', pointing to Augustus' shining image, says, '*hic vir, hic est . . . aurea condet saecula qui rursus Latium regnata per arva Saturno quondam*' ['He is, he is the man . . . who will establish again the Golden Age in Latium throughout the lands once ruled by Saturn'] (6.791f.).<sup>45</sup> The Pax Romana itself, according to the poet's innermost thoughts, is only a precondition and preparation for the return of the *Saturnia regna* ['the realm of Saturn'] (*Ecl.* 4.6): then 'the remaining tracks of our sins will be erased and the earth will be saved from eternal horror' (4.13ff., in Norden's translation<sup>46</sup>). It would hardly be possible to more precisely define in advance the teachings of the Christian era, beginning with the Golden Age of the Redeemer.

It would surely never have occurred to the Homeric Hephaestus to use his art for prophecies, something the *Aeneid* inappropriately entrusts to its journeyman's seriousness; however, no other fate was to be ordained to the author himself than that of an artist. Quite far away he [the artist] removes himself without notice from the epic military path, yes, from the whole classical view of *res gestae*, a view that up to then Mnemosyne alone had been responsible for along with her golden daughters. And the further he strays from the trodden path, the more obvious it becomes for us, who can see broader horizons, the basic convergence of his *historiosophy*, half concealed by the veil of poetry, with the first perfectly uniform and complete *historiosophic* system; a system, presented magnificently, that draws us into a long series of texts extending from the Book of Genesis to Daniel. Accordingly, Vergil's interpretation of history lies temporally between the Bible and St Augustine's masterpiece *De civitate dei*. The interpretation becomes the foundation of the medieval teaching about the meaning of Rome (cf. Dante's *Inf.* 2.20–4). It is only natural that the texts that led to this interpretation found their place in the literary treasure chest of the Christian era from the beginning. When Emperor Constantine begins the negotiations of the first ecumenical council in Nicaea by reading the messianic *Eclogues* in a Greek version, the translations of the *Aeneid* used by the oriental church fathers prove, on the other hand, that its universal meaning for Christianity has been grasped and honoured prophetically.

Following the collapse of the ecumenical ideal that fades out in Dante's treatise *De monarchia*, the newly born national consciousness mines from the same quarry, fulfilling its needs in accordance with its capacity. The songs of praise of Italy in the *Aeneid* and in the second book of the *Georgics* inspire Petrarch to patriotic hymns. Vergil's vernacular becomes a holy relic, a spiritual palladium of nations proud of belonging to the *genus Latinum* by descent, language, moral stance. If the feeling of ecumenical unity of Christian culture is to awaken anew as a stirring force, the forehead of the great poet—who combined through mediation the historical prerequisites of this comprehensive unity (Rome and the Greek Orient, classical heritage, and

New Testament hope) in his gentle sensitivity and even more gentle premonition—must be adorned with more abundant and more fragrant laurel branches than with wilted ones sprung up not in sacred groves, more abundant than our epoch—practising memory as archaeology, not experiencing time as the eternal present in the spirit—is able to weave.<sup>47</sup>

## NOTES

The translation was first published in Jeep and Torlone (2009). It appears here with minor modifications. The German text can be found in W. Iwanow, 'Vergils Historiosophie', in *Wege der Forschung: Wege zu Vergil*, ed. Hans Oppermann, (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1963), 19.220–32. It first appeared as 'Vergils Historiosophie', *Corona* 1.6 (May 1931): 761–74. Available at: <[http://imwerden.de/pdf/wjatscheslaw\\_iwanow\\_corona\\_1931-37.pdf](http://imwerden.de/pdf/wjatscheslaw_iwanow_corona_1931-37.pdf)> [last visited 24 January 2014].

For the convenience of the reader the translation of Greek and Latin citations in Ivanov's and Fedotov's essays are provided inside the body of the text in square brackets. The latter are also used in the text of the translation to clarify some difficult passages by adding words that are not in the German text of Ivanov's essay and by including in the text of the translation German words that do not have an exact equivalent in English.

1. Here Ivanov probably alludes to the title of a novel by Goethe, *Die Wahlverwandtschaften*. Ellis Dye comments: 'It seems certain [...] that the chemical concept referred to in the work's title, imported from the arena of human relations into the natural sciences and here carried back into the world of human relations, refers to the unpredictable separations and realignments that may result when new personal encounters disturb an equilibrium.' 'Die Wahlverwandtschaften', *Literary Encyclopedia*, 5 December 2005. Available at: <<http://www.litencyc.com/php/sworks.php?rec=true&UID=5600>> [last accessed 21 January 2014].
2. Ivanov here refers to the hymn that commemorates the legend according to which St Paul visited the sepulchre of Vergil at Naples:

Ad Maronis mausoleum  
Ductus fudit super eum  
Piae rorem lacrymae;  
Quantum, inquit, te fecissem  
Vivum si te invenissem  
Poetarum maxime.

When he was led to the tomb of Maro  
He bedewed it with tears of piety



'How much would I have extolled you,'—  
He said, 'if only I had found you alive,  
The greatest of all poets.'

See Hare (1889), 154.

For some reason Ivanov misquotes the hymn above, replacing *maxime* (vocative case) with *maximo* (perhaps translating his own German dative 'dem größten unter den Dichtern').

3. Here Ivanov refers to the age-old comparison of the *Aeneid* with Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. For a long period of time, perhaps even well into the twentieth century, the *Aeneid* was considered inferior to its Greek epic predecessors. Even such fundamentally formative works as Richard Heinze's *Virgils epische Technik* (3rd edn, Leipzig, 1915) or the invaluable commentary of J. Conington and H. Nettleship (3rd edn, London, 1881–83) viewed Vergil to some degree as an epigone of Homer. A seminal study of V. Pöschl, *Die Dichtkunst Virgils: Bild und Symbol in der Aeneis* (3rd edn, Berlin, 1977), took a more revolutionary approach by interpreting Vergil's epic as a truly Roman poem which emulates rather than imitates Homer and which has a powerful dark undercurrent.
  4. Servius gives Vergil's mother's name as Magia; Probus, as Magia Polla. For more information on Vergil's parents, see Levi (1998).
  5. The lines in Dante's *Purgatorio* where Statius praises the *Aeneid* are 97–102: 'de l'Eneida dico, la qual mamma / fummi e fummi nutrice poetando: / sanz'essa non fermai peso di drama' ('I speak of the *Aeneid*; when I wrote / verse, it was mother to me, it was nurse; / my work, without it, would not weigh an ounce'; trans. A. Mandelbaum, *The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980; available at: <[http://dante.ilt.columbia.edu/books/dc\\_mandelbaum/pur\\_21.html](http://dante.ilt.columbia.edu/books/dc_mandelbaum/pur_21.html)>) [last accessed 23 March 2014].
- Publius Papinius Statius (40/50–96) is mostly known for his *Thebaid*, the subject of which is the Theban cycle of myths, famous from Sophocles' Theban plays (*Oedipus Rex*, *Oedipus at Colonus*, *Antigone*). It was above all in the Middle Ages that Statius achieved great popularity. One medieval legend had Statius converting to Christianity upon reading the Fourth Eclogue (Conte, 1994, 487). That legend found its reflection in Dante's words cited here by Ivanov. Pamela Davidson (1989), 44, also suggests that Statius presented special interest for Ivanov, because Thebes was the birthplace of Bacchus and centre of his cult. The figure of Statius then linked together 'the cult of Dionysus to Christianity through the intermediary of Vergil's influence'.
6. Daphnis' death and resurrection is the subject of Vergil's Fifth Eclogue. In this poem two shepherds, a younger and an older, Mopsus and Menalcas, compete in a singing contest. Mopsus performs a song about the death of

Daphnis, whereas Menalcas offers 'The Apotheosis of Daphnis'. The phrase 'world affairs of the present' ('Weltereignissen der Gegenwart') refers to an interpretation of Daphnis' resurrection in Menalcas' song in the light of Roman history. Menalcas was supposed to establish a cult in Daphnis' honour, and his altars were to be built together with the altars for Phoebus (*ecce duas tibi, Daphni, duas altaria Phoebus*, 'look, Daphnis, two altars for you and two for Phoebus': *Ecl.* 5.66). In Servius' commentary on this passage we read *et quibusdam videtur per allegoriam Caesarem dicere, qui primus divinos honores meruit et divus appellatus est* ('to some it seems that through allegory he [Vergil] is talking about Caesar because he was the first one who earned divine honours and was declared a god'). This interpretation is disputed by Clausen, who thinks that the identification of Daphnis and Caesar is rather 'grotesque' and does not do justice to the 'allusiveness and complexity of the poem' (Clausen, 1994, 152). Ivanov's evocation of and reliance on that interpretation serves his goal of viewing Vergil as a poet with prophetic vision.

7. A quote from Vergil *Ecl.* 4.4–5: 'Ultima Cumaei venit iam carminis aetas; / magnus ab integro saeculorum nascitur ordo' ('The last age of Cumaean prophecy is coming / A great succession of centuries is born anew').
8. Ivanov's own term.
9. Plutarch's *De defectu oraculorum* 419B ('On the failure of oracles') contains a story attributed to someone named Epitherses, a grammar teacher. He narrates how his ship sailing for Italy approached the small island of Paxi in the Ionian sea. A mysterious voice emanating from the island commanded the pilot of the ship, an Egyptian named Thamos, to sail to Palodes, another island nearby, where he was to proclaim that the great god Pan was dead. When the wind was favourable, Thamos drove the ship close to Palodes and shouted: 'The great Pan is dead (*Pan ho megas tethneken*)'. In response a great sound of lamentation resounded through the dark sky and the forests, although there was nobody seen on the shores of the island. Plutarch then relates that this story reached Rome and provoked the curiosity of Tiberius Caesar, who summoned Thamos to question him and then dispatched scholars to investigate the story further. This event occurred perhaps between 14 and 37 CE, though the Christian tradition makes it coincide with the birth of Christ. Eusebius Pamphili, fourth-century bishop of Caesarea, even suggested that Pan in the story stands for Christ. This view continued to gain faith and was strongly reinforced centuries later by Rabelais, whose Pantagruel in retelling the story promoted Eusebius' interpretation. Ivanov's interpretation of the story is consistent with his interpretation of the Fourth Eclogue. The



- story and its meaning have attracted the attention of many modern writers since 1890. See Irwin (1961).
10. Aeneas utters these words in an attempt to console his comrades after a devastating storm which left them shipwrecked.
  11. *Ecl.* 4.60.
  12. Consistent with his overall perception of the Fourth Eclogue, Ivanov prefers to read these Vergilian lines as a metaphor for the Virgin Mary and Christ.
  13. Ivanov most likely means here Odysseus' encounter with Nausicaa on the island of the Phaiakians in *Odyssey* 6. Just like Aeneas in Carthage, Odysseus finds himself shipwrecked on the island of Scheria, where he is welcomed by the princess Nausicaa, who expresses romantic interest in him. Unlike Aeneas, however, Odysseus wants to go home to his wife and does not encourage Nausicaa's advances.
  14. *Aen.* 4.169. This line refers to the consummation of love between Dido and her Trojan guest in the cave where they had to hide during the hunt from the storm arranged by Juno, who wanted to delay Aeneas' arrival in Italy. Dido becomes a 'casualty' in the great divine design for the foundation of the Roman race. We might disagree with Ivanov's opinion that Vergil dismisses the whole episode with Dido with a reprimand. If anything Vergil feels enormous sympathy for the Carthaginian queen, whose love for Aeneas proves to be her undoing. See Ross (2007), 32–5, and Spence (1999), 94–5.
  15. Apollonius of Rhodes was a Hellenistic poet, a contemporary of Theocritus, who lived in Alexandria at the court of Ptolemy III (246–222 BCE). He was the author of the *Argonautica*, the only epic poem that survived from Hellenistic times. The myth of Medea helping Jason to retrieve the Golden Fleece (especially the third book of the poem) might have influenced Vergil's depiction of Dido as a powerful queen in love with a foreign hero.
  16. Camilla is a legendary Volscian maiden who supported Turnus in his fight against Aeneas and was killed by the Etruscan Arruns. Vergil narrates her story in *Aen.* 7.803; 11.539–828.
  17. *Aethiopis* is a lost Greek epic poem of the eighth–seventh century BCE which supposedly covered the events of the Trojan War after the *Iliad*. The *Aethiopis* was sometimes attributed by the ancient writers to Arctinus of Miletus. According to a summary of the *Aethiopis* given by an unknown Proclus in his *Chrestomathy* and a few other references, Penthesilea, the Amazon warrior, arrived to help the Trojans fight the Greeks after Hector's death and was killed by Achilles, who then mourned her (*Aethiopis*, fr. I Allen, in N. G. L. Hammond and H. H. Scullard, eds, *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 2nd edn, Oxford: Clarendon, 1970, 798).

18. Lausus, the son of Mezentius, the exiled Etruscan king, was killed by Aeneas in Book 10. It is noteworthy that Ivanov sees all these 'victims' of the *Aeneid* (Ross, 2007, 32) in the light that highlights and elevates the mission of Aeneas. It has to be noted, however, that Vergil requires more of his readers. In his epic the grief and loss of the young lives in the war is ubiquitously emphasized—see Galinsky (1996), 247, and Conte (1994), 283–4. Pallas, Dido, Camilla, Lausus, Nisus, and Euryalus: all of these 'casualties' of Aeneas' mission Ivanov prefers to interpret in the context of the great providential cycle of history whose harbinger is Aeneas.
19. Turnus, king of the Rutulians, led the Italian forces against Aeneas, since Aeneas claimed Lavinia, Turnus' betrothed. At the end of Book 12 Aeneas faces Turnus in the final battle closely fashioned on one between Hector and Achilles in the *Iliad*. Turnus admits his defeat and begs Aeneas not to kill him. Aeneas hesitates but then does go on to kill Turnus. It is not the gods, however, as Ivanov suggests here, that do not allow Aeneas to spare his arch-enemy. Rather, Aeneas catches a glimpse of the sword belt once won by his ally and protégé Pallas, who was killed and stripped of the belt by Turnus. The sight of the belt turns Aeneas' indecision into revenge for his slaughtered friend. The end of the *Aeneid* provoked much debate as to the meaning of that final and unnecessary killing for understanding Vergil's authorial intent: was it meant to glorify Roman valour or serve as a warning about the brutalizing effects of war? See Conte (1994), 284. For a comprehensive treatment of Book 12 and the final battle between Turnus and Aeneas, see Putnam (1999).
20. The context is the story of the sinner who anointed Jesus' feet.
21. The example from the *Aeneid* that Ivanov uses here to argue Vergil's anticipation of the Christian ideal of martyrdom is not very convincing. The story of the two Trojan youths Nisus and Euryalus is one of a romantic, homoerotic love and as such would hardly fit into the idea of Christian martyrdom. '*Nimum dilexit*' is a quote from Nisus' speech as he tries to protect his friend from the attack of the Rutulians, who catch Nisus and Euryalus leaving the Rutulian camp after a killing expedition where they snatched a bright enemy helmet and garments: '*me, me, adsum qui feci, in me convertite ferrum, / o Rutuli! Mea fraus omnis, nihil iste nec ausus / nec potuit; caelum hoc et conscia sidera testor; / tantum infelicem nimum dilexit amicum*' ('Against me, me, the one who did it, turn your sword, / Oh, Rutulians! Mine is the treachery, this one never dared / Nor was he able to commit it; I call the heavens and the stars as my witnesses: / That is how much he loved his unhappy friend). He says that Euryalus was too young to be the mastermind behind the attack and the plunder, and that his only fault was his



- excessive love for him, Nisus. Rudich (2002b), 348–9, aptly points out that *fortunati ambo* should not be understood as a parallel to the envy-provoking ecstasy of a martyr's death but in terms of Platonic *eros*.
22. The full quote is: '*satis iam pridem sanguine nostro / Laomedontae luimus periuria Troiae*' ('long since we have paid with our blood for the sacrileges of Laomedon's Troy'). Instead of using the neutral 'Trojan' or 'Dardanian' here, Vergil chooses to remind his readers of King Laomedon, Priam's father, who tricked the gods twice by perjuring himself and caused the first destruction of Troy. See Mack (1999), 140.
23. This quote is taken from Venus' appeal to Aeneas when he amid burning Troy sees Helen and wants to kill her for Troy's destruction. Venus in fact says: '*Non tibi Tyndaridis facies invisa Lacaenae / Culpatusve Paris, divum inclementia, divum, / Has evertit opes sternitque a culmine Troiam*' ('It is not the hated face of the Spartan daughter of Tyndareus that you must blame, nor Paris, but the cruelty of the gods, the gods, destroys these riches and topples Troy from its height'). Ivanov's choice of the first quote supports his argument, but this quote does not. Paris, according to Venus, his most eager supporter, should *not* be blamed for the Trojan disaster.
24. Aeneas was the son of Anchises, brother of Priam, king of Troy, father of Hector, the champion of the Trojans.
25. It is perhaps not surprising that out of all the Platonic dialogues Ivanov references only *Timaeus* in this essay. In the *Timaeus* Plato presents an elaborately wrought account of the formation of the universe. The universe, he proposes, is the product of the handiwork of a divine Craftsman ('Demiurge', *dēmiourgos*, 28a6), whose Intellect (*noûs*) fashions the perfect universe from the disorderly state initially prone to erratic movement. For more, see Tarán (1971).
26. *Apokatastasis* translated from Greek means 'a complete restoration, re-establishment'. In Stoic philosophy *apokatastasis* is reconstitution of the Cosmos by the perfect Logos (identified with Zeus) after the stars and the planets return to their original position aligned with Cancer. In Christian doctrine the concept was promoted by Origen of Alexandria, who understood it as a reunion of all souls with God.
27. This sentence presented a challenge in rendering it in English. Thus it is divided into constituent parts indicated by the letters in square brackets in order to clarify the meaning.
28. The *Eclogues* or *Bucolics* are Vergil's earliest surviving poetic corpus, written sometime between 42 and 39 BCE—see Conte (1994), 263. Closely fashioned after the bucolic idylls of the Hellenistic poet Theocritus of Syracuse (fl. third century BCE), it, nonetheless, included a wider range of specifically Roman experience such as politics, civil war, and contemporary poetic debates.

29. Ivanov is referring here directly to Theocritus of Syracuse and his *Idyll* 24. In this poem there are clear points of identification between Ptolemy Philadelphus and the ten-month-old baby hero Herakles (Herakliskos). Ivanov sees this as an inspiration for Vergil's 'messianic vision' of the miraculous child in the Fourth Eclogue. Theocritus is considered the father of the so-called 'bucolic' genre and his influence on Vergil's early poetic corpus is substantial. However, *Idyll* 24 does not strictly belong to Theocritus' 'bucolic' corpus, but is more of part of his 'court poetry'.
30. In *Il.* 20.302–4, 306–8, Aeneas is rescued by the gods from the murderous hands of Achilles. The following lines spoken by Poseidon decide his fate and might have been the starting point for Vergil's creation of his hero as the founder of the Roman race: 'It is destined that he shall be the survivor, / that the generation of Dardanos shall not die, without seed / obliterated... For Kronos' son has cursed the generation of Priam, / and now the might of Aeneas shall be lord over the Trojans, / and his sons' sons, and those who are born of their seed hereafter' (*The Iliad of Homer*, trans. R. Lattimore, Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1951; paperback edn, 1961). The evocation of this prediction in the *Iliad* by Ivanov demonstrates yet again his constant search for continuity and the syncretic view. Here he sees the relationship between the *Iliad* and the *Aeneid* as parallel to the one between the Old and New Testaments. See Rudich (2002b), 346–7.
31. Ivanov may have borrowed this term from Friedrich Schiller, who had a considerable influence on him. The Grimms' *Deutsches Wörterbuch* in fact has Schiller's poem *Götter Griechenlands* ('Greece's gods'), l. 11, as the first citation for *Lebensfülle* (q.v.). This entry represents the earliest use of the term maybe even coined by Schiller.
32. Ivanov puts 'freien Spiel der lebendigen Kräfte' in quotation marks, but does not indicate the source of the quotation. He most likely alludes here again to Schiller, who in a prologue to his play *Die Braut von Messina* writes: 'Der höchste Genuss aber ist die Freiheit des Gemüts in dem lebendigen Spiel aller seiner Kräfte' ('the highest pleasure is, however, freedom of the mind in the living play of all its powers'). See 'Über den Gebrauch des Chors in der Tragödie', <<http://www.wissen-im-netz.info/literatur/schiller/messina/chor.htm>> [last visited 23 February 2013].
33. The German word Ivanov uses here is 'Entpersönlichung'. We translated it as 'dehumanization' with an understanding that it is not quite what it means in German but suggesting that it is what Ivanov means to emphasize in Aeneas' transformation by the end of the *Aeneid*, which some critics found unsettling in Vergil's hero.



34. These words Anchises addresses in the underworld to his son in Book 6, making explicit the emblematic function of Aeneas as a Roman hero.
35. *Pronoia*, Roman *providentia*, is the Stoic concept of divine providence or fate. In Greek *pronoia* means 'planning in advance, foresight'. For the Stoics, unlike the Epicureans, the universe is made by the controlling power of God, who is equated to uncreated and imperishable nature or universal *Logos* (Reason). Humans merely act out the plan prescribed by Nature's *pronoia* (providence). See Long (1974), 168–9.
36. Ivanov recalls here a celebrated passage of Cicero's treatise *On the Nature of the Gods* which he places in the mouth of Lucilius Balbus as an exposition of Stoic theology.
37. Ivanov is most likely referring to Aeschylus' tragedy *Agamemnon*, the first play in his *Oresteia* trilogy, in which the chorus extols Zeus as the only powerful god who ordains everybody's fate.
38. This view of Aeneas' character is certainly in tune with Ivanov's overall reading of the *Aeneid* as a prophetic poem on the threshold of upholding Christian values. However, that view ignores (and knowingly so) the complexity of Vergil's hero and the ambivalence of the authorial intent. While Aeneas' heroic quest is a study in *pietas* ('devotion to his duty'), it is also contemplation on the brutalizing effects that war has on his character. See Putnam (1999), 223–5, and Ross (2007), 26–7.
39. In this parallel between Aeneas and Abraham we can undoubtedly detect the influence of Solov'ev's approach to Vergil.
40. According to Livy (Book 1) Jupiter Indiges was a name given to the deified Aeneas. Ovid in the *Metamorphoses* (14.581ff.) uses the term *Pater Indiges* or simply *Indiges*. The word *indiges* in Latin seems to be of doubtful meaning. What is beyond any doubt is that *indigetes* (the plural of *indiges*) means a certain class of Roman gods. Scholars have suggested several interpretations of what these gods actually represented: from deities of extremely limited function to native Roman deities as distinct from imported, foreign gods. Ivanov seems to support the latter interpretation and views Aeneas as a truly Roman god who extends and then converts his Trojan lineage in the 'promised land' of Italy. See N. G. L. Hammond and H. H. Scullard (eds), *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 2nd edn (Oxford: Clarendon, 1970), *Indigetes*.
41. Ivanov is referring here to two of Horace's *Sermones*. The first one (*Satires* 1.5) tells the story of Horace's journey from Rome to Brundisium in 37 BCE, when the poet accompanied Maecenas with the goal (not explicitly stated in the poem) of achieving reconciliation between Antony and Octavian. The exact lines Ivanov has in mind here refer to Horace's meeting on the road with Plotius, Varius, and Vergil, to whom Horace refers with praise: '*animae qualis neque candidiores / terra tulit neque quis me sit devinctior alter*' ('persons of which kind the earth has

- never carried anyone more beautiful and nobody else is closer to me'). The second poem (*Satires* 1.3) is primarily concerned with how to handle the shortcomings (*vitia*) of human beings and contains lines 32–4 that refer to the idea that looks can be deceiving: '*at est bonus, ut melior vir non alius quisquam, at tibi amicus, at ingenium ingens inculto latet hoc sub corpore*' ('but he is a good man, and no other man better, but he is your friend, and great talent hides underneath this coarse body').
42. The work of Johann Jacob Bachofen (1815–87) *Mutterrecht und Urreligion* may have influenced Ivanov also. Bachofen talks both about these mystery services and Aeneas claiming the centrality of the Trojan hero for the Romans as a representation of their emancipation from their oriental origins.
43. Eduard Norden (1868–1941) was one of the most influential scholars of his generation, whose work on Vergil influenced numerous classical scholars. His book *Die Geburt des Kindes: Geschichte einer religiösen Idee* ('The birth of the child: the history of a religious idea': Leipzig, Berlin: B. G. Teubner, 1924) was 'impressive and obscurely learned' (Clausen, 1994, 129) and without a doubt formative for Ivanov's reading of the Fourth Eclogue. Norden connected this poem with Eastern theology and ritual, especially with two religious festivals celebrated annually in Alexandria—that of Helios on 24–5 December (Christmas Eve) and that of Aeon on 6 January (Epiphany). See Clausen (1994), 129, who points out that Norden made 'a religious or mystical interpretation of the Fourth Eclogue seem intellectually respectable'. For more on Aeon, see note 44.
44. Fr. 52 of Heraclitus preserved by Hippolytus and confirmed by Lucian reads: 'Aeon is a child at play, playing draughts; the kingship is a child's.' The meaning of the word 'aeon' in this fragment presents some difficulty. G. S. Kirk (1954), xiii, maintains that 'in early contexts ... the word is most likely to refer to human lifetime, perhaps with the special connotation of the destiny which is worked out by the individual during his lifetime'. The Orphic myth of Dionysus Zagreus that Ivanov refers to here presents some difficulty because we do not have anything approaching a complete narrative about it earlier than Olympiodorus, a Neoplatonic philosopher of the sixth century CE. Olympiodorus narrates the myth briefly in his commentary on a passage from Plato's *Phaedo*, in which Socrates and his friends are debating the justification of suicide. Many other authors—some as early as Pindar and Plato—offer details or variations of what Olympiodorus says. In sum the story of Dionysus Zagreus is a story of death and rebirth. According to this story Dionysus was the child of Zeus and Persephone who was to succeed Zeus and be declared the new king of the cosmos.



The jealous Titans, encouraged by Hera, killed and dismembered the god-child, cooked his flesh, and ate it. Zeus punished the Titans and brought the child back to life. For detailed discussion of the sources and variations of the myth, see Graf and Johnston (2007), 66–93.

45. In Vergil's *Aeneid* the myth of Saturn follows the traditional story of blending him with the Greek Kronos, Zeus's (Jupiter's) father (*Aen.* 8.319ff). In the mythological tradition Kronos (Saturn) was the ruler of the universe in the Golden Age. After being overthrown by Zeus (Jupiter), he came to Italy. However, the important feature of Vergil's Golden Age is that, as Karl Galinsky (1996), 93, has observed, it 'comes to connote a social order rather than paradisiac state of indolence' characteristic of the Golden Age before Jupiter and seen as a 'slothful existence that required no mental or physical exertion'. It is also noteworthy that Ivanov avoids any political interpretation of the passage, although it is a part of the panegyric to Augustus and his Pax Romana.
46. Norden: 'werden etwa noch vorhandene Spuren unserer sünde getilgt und wird die Erde erlöst werden von dem ewigen Graus'.
47. The final paragraph of Ivanov's essay on Vergil recalls Ivanov's and Gershenzon's *Correspondence from Two Corners*. See Davidson (2006).

## APPENDIX II

## Georgii Fedotov's 'On Vergil' («О Виргилии»), Translated from Russian

A century of French romanticism coincided with the 2000th anniversary of Vergil's birth. It allows us if not to see at least to palpably sense the significance of such phenomena as classicism and romanticism. Even now romanticism is already controversial, outdated, although not completely outlived. Will anyone ever celebrate Hugo's 1,000th anniversary? Romanticism is an episode, taste, perhaps even an illness of youth. Classicism is no longer a school or a tradition, but rather blood. It is the inherent sign of culture. Western culture is a culture that has grown out of Vergil. To be more precise: out of the Bible and Vergil. But today I am talking about Vergil.

The young Augustine recited, as a part of a school assignment, the monologue of the abandoned Dido, and her suffering moved him to tears. The mature Dante, a stern emigrant and a mystical lover, chose Vergil to be his guide in the *Inferno*, to be his teacher of ethics, a harbinger of Grace: *Tu duce, tu maestro*. The practical politician Pitt, justifying in the House of Commons his powerlessness to save the life and the throne of Louis XVI,<sup>1</sup> could not find more eloquent, more commonly accessible language than Dido's sorrowful lament over Priam's kingdom: *Me si fata meis* (4.340).<sup>2</sup> It is not a problem if Pitt stumbles in his citation; the whole auditorium can finish it for him.

In the Middle Ages, when Vergil was known by heart, it was customary to compose whole poems (cantos) from the verses and half-verses of the *Aeneid*. Thousands of young men in Oxford and Cambridge could do the same in our days. We Russians are not attentive enough to this most permanent fact of Western culture, and we are always amazed when we read that Spencer, for example, wrote poetry in Latin.<sup>3</sup> What do Spencer and poetry have in common? But Vergil is precisely the common language of the West—what unites St Augustine, Dante, Pitt, and Spencer. The Bible may be forgotten; Vergil remains.

That is why there is so much measured pace—the cadence of the hexameter—and so much virtue in the battle of Aeneas, and in Western history.

But what is Hecuba to us?<sup>4</sup> Are we, as Scythians, even invited today to the feast? It seems that Vergil was always foreign to the Russian soul. Out of millions of Russian youths who have gone through Vergil, how many grew to