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PUBLICATIONS

VYACHESLAV IVANOV: POET, CRITIC AND PHILOSOPHER

VYACHESLAV IVANOV: POET, CRITIC AND PHILOSOPHER

EDITED BY
ROBERT LOUIS JACKSON
AND
LOWRY NELSON, JR.

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Vyacheslav Ivanov

To the memory of
Lydia Ivanova
1896–1985

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Note

The major source for citations from Ivanov's works is Vyacheslav Ivanov, *Sobranie sochinenij,* ed D. V. Ivanov and O. Deschartes, 3 vols. (Brussels, 1971–79). References are given in the text in brackets as "*SS*" followed by volume and page numbers.

The transliteration system is a modification of that used by the Library of Congress. In proper names used in the text, *ю* and *я* are transliterated as *yu* and ya, and *ŭ* is omitted. Elsewhere, *ŭ, ю, я* are transliterated as *j, ju, ja*; *ë* is rendered as *yo* in proper names and as *e* elsewhere.

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Vyacheslav Ivanov: An Introduction

Robert Louis Jackson

When the mists lift entirely from the period now known as the Silver Age of Russian literature and culture (a period extending roughly from 1895 to 1915) they will reveal a landscape slightly changed from the one historians have marked out on their maps: the most noticeable difference will be the vastly increased stature of the poet, philosopher and theoretician of the Russian Symbolist movement, Vyacheslav I. Ivanov (1866–1949).

Yet the importance of Ivanov certainly transcends the limits of the brief Symbolist movement. Here two things deserve to be noted: first, that Ivanov plays a central role in literary history only midway in a long and productive life; and second, that prolonged stretches of Ivanov's life—the "Silver Age" excepted—were spent not in Russia, but in Western Europe. These unusual circumstances have complicated to some extent the task of assessing Ivanov's place in Russian literature, since his art can only transiently be seen in direct relation to a concrete literary scene or movement. These same circumstances, however, underscore certain truths about Ivanov: more than for most writers, perhaps, his art constitutes a self-created world with its main points of reference—on the horizontal map—in both Russia and the West. As Fyodor Stepun has observed, Ivanov is "in the highest degree a Russian-European, entirely Russian and simultaneously entirely European."[1] At the same time, the concerns of Ivanov's poetry, "with its distinctive, intimate sense of the cultural memory of humanity, of the 'anamnesis' which struggles with oblivion" (as S. S. Averintsev has put it[2]), merge organically with his concerns as historian of the past, cultural thinker and religious philosopher. What is especially characteristic of the poet Ivanov, then,

and what must enter into any assessment of his importance in Russian literature is the historical and metaphysical, or vertical, dimension that so sharply defines his life and work and that complicates any effort to "place" him in a literary movement.

Vyacheslav I. Ivanov was born in Moscow, February 16, 1866, the son of a land surveyor who, in the spirit of the times, was taken up by the atheistic ideas of Ludwig Büchner, Jakob Moleschott and David Friedrich Strauss. Ivanov himself was to pass briefly through a phase of atheism and materialism in his early years. "Suddenly I realized that I was an extreme atheist and revolutionary," he recalled later in his *Autobiographical Letter* (*Avtobiograficheskoe pis'mo*, 1918).[3] But the same young atheist who at the age of seventeen attempted suicide out of despair was writing poems with the image of Christ as his "main hero"; and in the same period, Ivanov recalls, he had "a passion for Dostoevsky." Ivanov's philosophical atheism was but the obverse of a deep religious feeling.

Ivanov's father died when his son was five, and his mother, a "passionately religious" woman who came of a clerical family, became the decisive influence in the young Ivanov's evolution. She provided him with a religious education and with an intimate knowledge of Eastern Orthodox liturgy and of Church Slavonic. "I inherited elements of my mother's spiritual nature," Ivanov wrote in his *Autobiographical Letter* [*SS*, II, 7]. A woman with a strong bent for German culture of the time of Goethe and Beethoven, she also encouraged Ivanov's intellectual proclivities and his poetic interests.

Ivanov began the study of ancient Greek on his own at the age of twelve, and was to maintain a love for the language and all things Greek to the end of his life. After graduating from a classical gymnasium in Moscow with highest honors, Ivanov attended the historical-philological faculty of Moscow University where, early in his studies, he received a prize for his progress in the study of ancient languages.

Recognizing his promise as a scholar, Ivanov's teachers arranged for him to go to Berlin in 1886. There he studied mainly Roman history for five years under the renowned German historian Theodor

Mommsen, and simultaneously continued work in his favorite area of classical philology.

Ivanov recalls his immersion at the time in Goethe, Schopenhauer, and German classical music. Yet no sooner had he arrived abroad than "the need to know Russia and its idea awakened." It was then that he read Vladimir Solovyov and Aleksey Khomyakov. Though attracted enormously by German classical culture, Ivanov recalls that he was also repelled by the "depersonalizing force of modern German culture, its philistine character." "Perplexed, I noted how the State system [*gosudarstvennost'*] could serve as the source of exalted sentiment even for such a free and freedom-loving man as Mommsen" [*SS*, II, 18].

In 1891 Ivanov went to Paris for a year and then left for Rome where he prepared his doctoral dissertation, a work he wrote in Latin on the Roman system of tax-farming in Italy. He also studied archeology. Much taken by his scholarly work, Ivanov's teachers offered him in 1896 the post of *Privatdozent* in Roman history in a German university. His teachers, Ivanov later told M. S. Altman, had predicted a brilliant future for him in classical history: "But to everyone's surprise, I veered off in an entirely different direction; I immersed myself in poetry and my whole life has followed a different course."[4]

Ivanov's creative scholarly interests in all aspects of European history and culture were to remain with him all his life. Yet his erudition, though awesome in its scope and mastery of ideas and detail, differed from the style of the scholarship of those days. Commenting on Ivanov's way of lecturing, of conducting polemics, analyzing poetry or simply arguing in a circle of acquaintances, Fyodor Stepun called attention to Ivanov's "unique combination of profundity and brilliance, erudition and improvisation, weightiness and winged flight." The same quality marked his literary and philosophical essays.

> For all their scholarship they were not scientific tracts solidly constructed according to the rules of logic and method, but rather

> artfully and lightly woven wreaths made out of the living colors of friendly talks not only with contemporaries but also with "eternal interlocutors." The abundant references and citations [of these essays] were not scientific ballast, not the needlework-footnoting of a professor, but images of a living and grateful love for those geniuses of humanity with whom he carried on a warm exchange, and without whom he could not have lived a single day.[5]

At the time Ivanov turned down the offer of a teaching post in Germany he had already begun to concern himself seriously with poetry. Vladimir Solovyov, shown some of Ivanov's poems, spoke of their "absolute originality." Most immediately, Ivanov had plunged into a study of the works of Nietzsche. "Increasingly and ever more powerfully, Nietzsche became the master of my thoughts," Ivanov later wrote of his relationship to Nietzsche at the time.[6] Ivanov gave himself up to a study of the religion of Dionysus. "This study was prompted by a driving inner need: it was only by this means that I could overcome Nietzsche where matters of religious consciousness were concerned" [*SS*, II, 21]. An admirer of Dostoevsky and Solovyov, Ivanov ultimately diverged in fundamental ways from Nietzsche. Yet Ivanov could still write of Nietzsche in *A Correspondence from Two Corners* (*Perepiska iz dvukh uglov*, 1921) as "one of the great artificers of the ideal; from an iconoclast, he turns into an icon painter."[7] And as though reflecting on his own development, Ivanov observed that "it is doubtful whether any personal initiation can take place in the contemporary cultural climate without the 'initiate's' . . . meeting him [Nietzsche] as 'guardian of the threshold'" [*SS*, III, 402].

Ivanov met Lydia Zinovieva-Annibal in Rome in 1893 and began a relationship with her that was to leave a deep imprint on him for the rest of his life. Together with her he travelled widely, living for long periods in England, France, Italy, Switzerland and Greece, returning only occasionally to Russia. They visited Palestine and Egypt. In aggregate, Ivanov was to spend approximately forty-four years of his life abroad, though during these years he made frequent trips to Russia.

Ivanov wrote his first poems at the age of nine. He published

his first collection of poems, *Pilot Stars* (*Kormchie zvezdy*) in St. Petersburg in 1903 at the age of thirty-seven. The book immediately drew attention to the poet. In 1904, Ivanov published his second collection of verse, *Translucency* (*Prozrachnost'*), his tragedy *Tantalus* (*Tantal*) and various essays on esthetic and philosophical themes. In the same year he published a series of lectures entitled *The Hellenic Religion of the Suffering God* (*Ellinskaja religija stradajushchego boga*), a study of Dionysian psychology and Dionysian sacrifice. In the same period, Ivanov published his important essays, "Crisis of Individualism" (*Krizis individualizma*, 1905) and "Presentiments and Portents" (*Predchuvstvija i predvestija*, 1906). In the first he insists that "individualism, in its contemporary, involuntary and unconscious metamorphosis, is acquiring features of ecumenicity" [*sobornost'*].[8] In the second, he anticipates the arrival of "a new organic epoch and the theater of the future" that will foreground the "choral and ecumenical element."[9]

When Ivanov returned to Russia for a prolonged stay in 1905 he was already well known. His fifth floor apartment on the corner of Tavricheskaya Street and Nevsky Prospect was known, because of its bay-window turret, as the "Tower" (*bashnja*); it became a historic gathering place for intellectuals, writers and artists of various interests and tendencies. Together with the poets Alexander Blok and Andrey Bely, the poet and philosopher Ivanov in these years was the center of a symbolism with a mystical, religious and realist tendency that set it apart from such earlier symbolists as Valery Bryusov and Konstantin Balmont who followed more directly in the tradition of French Symbolism. As Johannes Holthusen observed in *Vjačeslav Ivanov als symbolistischer Dichter und als russischer Kulturphilosoph* (1982), "the issues of the debate in the literary discussion of those years in Russia were in fact Ivanovian themes which corresponded to his effort to determine his own cultural position."[10]

Ivanov's wife, Lydia Zinovieva-Annibal, died in 1907. In 1909, he published a collection of philosophical, esthetic and critical essays entitled *By the Stars* (*Po zvezdam*). In 1911, he published a long-delayed volume of verse, *Cor Ardens* (followed by another volume under that title later the same year), containing poetry that dated

back to 1904, but for the most part consisting of poems and sonnets dedicated to his wife's memory. He remained in St. Petersburg until 1912, teaching the history of literature and poetry. He spent the winter of 1912–1913 in Rome, working on the origins of the cult of Dionysus; the same year saw the publication in Russia of another volume of verse, *Tender Mystery* (*Nezhnaja tajna*). Ivanov had married Vera, the daughter of the first marriage of Lydia Zinovieva-Annibal and, together with her, he moved to Moscow in 1913, where he remained until 1920.

In this period, Ivanov worked especially on his translations from Aeschylus (the *Eumenides, Choephoroe, Persae* and *Seven against Thebes*); he had already completed his translation of the *Agamemnon* in Rome in 1913. In addition, he wrote a tragedy, *Prometheus* (*Prometej,* 1919) and published a second and third volume of collected essays, *Furrows and Boundaries* (*Borozdy i mezhi,* 1916) and *Matters Native and Universal* (*Rodnoe i vselenskoe,* 1917), completed and published an autobiographical poem, *Infancy* (*Mladenchestvo,* 1918), with its theme of childhood as an eternal paradise. Finally, Ivanov wrote a number of miscellaneous articles and verse, including a major lyric-philosophical "melopoieia," *Man* (*Chelovek*)—a work he began in the war years and completed in 1919.

The years of the revolution and civil war in Russia brought no little hardship for Ivanov and were marked by a second blow in his personal life with the death in 1920 of his thirty-year-old wife. In the years 1918–1919 Ivanov worked in various institutes. He suffered no persecution from the Bolsheviks. Unlike Blok, who had hailed the October revolution, or Merezhkovsky who had condemned it, Ivanov took no open political stand, though he spoke out in defense of religion on a number of occasions and wrote a short cycle of poems, *Songs of a Time of Troubles* (*Pesni smutnogo vremeni*), in which he was critical of militant atheism and the Red terror. Andrey Belý may have come closest to defining Ivanov's relation to the upheaval of the revolutionary years when he wrote in *The Sirin of a Scholarly Barbarism* (*Sirin uchenogo varvarstva,* 1922) that "the antinomies of our time intersect in Vyacheslav Ivanov."[11] Although the People's Commissar of Education A. V. Lunacharsky declared of Ivanov that

he was not "attuned to the times," Ivanov's concern with the times reached deeply below the surface of cultural politics. In the same year that Lunacharsky declared Ivanov to be out of step with the revolution, Ivanov and M. O. Gershenzon published *A Correspondence from Two Corners,* a work which the German cultural historian Ernst Robert Curtius referred to as "the most important statement about humanism since Nietzsche" (*das Wichtigste, was seit Nietzsche über den Humanismus gesagt worden ist*).[12] In a series of six letters (counterbalanced by six letters of Gershenzon) Ivanov insisted on the continuity of culture and the vital meaning of memory. He criticized Gershenzon's anarchistic rebellion against culture and gave voice to his own religious optimism. "The disintegration of religion," he later wrote in his *Lettre à Charles Du Bos* (1930), "must be considered an infallible symptom of the extinction of memory in a given society."[13]

The years 1919 and 1920 were a period of intense poetic creation for Ivanov. It was then that he composed his moving *Winter Sonnets* (*Zimnie sonety,* 1919) and a brief cycle of sonnets, *De Profundis Amavi* (1920); in both cycles Ivanov gave expression to the tragic mood of the period and to his own efforts to surmount suffering. At the time Ivanov exchanged letters with Gershenzon he was at work on a translation of Dante's *Purgatory.* Ivanov's work on translations extended over his lifetime. Apart from almost the whole of Aeschylus, he translated the first ode of Pindar (1899), a dithyramb of Bacchylides (1904), poems of Alcaeus and Sappho (1914), most of Novalis's lyrics, a number of Petrarch's sonnets, Byron's *The Island,* some of Baudelaire's poems, Dante's *Vita nuova,* some of Michaelangelo's sonnets, Armenian and Lithuanian poems, and other works.

In 1920, Ivanov moved with his son and daughter to Baku, where for four years he occupied the University Chair of Classical Philosophy. There he completed and published (in 1923) his important study, *Dionysus and Predionysianism* (*Dionis i pradionisijstvo*), a work which constituted his doctoral dissertation. In the autumn of 1924 he obtained permission to leave Russia with his family and went to Rome. Ivanov was to remain in Italy until the end of his life.

Shortly after his arrival in Italy, Ivanov wrote his remarkable

cycle of poems, *Roman Sonnets* (*Rimskie sonety,* 1924), the first of which, *Regina viarum,* begins with an invocation to the city of Rome and ends on an apocalyptic note of destruction and fiery renewal.

It was in Rome at this time that Ivanov moved further along a religious path that had always been integral to his spiritual evolution. In his *Lettre à Charles Du Bos,* in which he looks back on the decade of the 1920s and its significance for him, Ivanov wrote:

> Indeed, the atmosphere I met with in this [western] world was scarcely calculated to cure my pessimism; everything combined to belie dark omens with a forced optimism that contained elements of presumption and of apathy, with a tolerance more lax and more skeptical than ever, with a tendency to try everything and to reconcile everything, providing all dogmatism should be weakened and softened in advance; with a dilettantism that fancied obscure aberrations; it is a world beset by the ugliness of soulless machinery, where stupidity is a supreme symbol, steeped in a spirituality of nothingness coupled with an oriental cult of monsters; everything combined to belie those dark omens with a worn-out and glazed indifference propped up by a fatalistic doctrine of humanitarian progress, spreading out into a beatific dream of a society of human beings at peace and rationally responsible one for another, like a collective homunculus. In this atmosphere where the spiritual torpor of the bourgeois world corresponded by some sort of diabolical counterpoint with the revolutionary fever [in Russia], that familiar call sounded again imperiously in my soul; it was the persistent call which, ever since my youthful contact with that great and saintly man who was Vladimir Solovyov, had led me slowly but inexorably toward joining the Roman Catholic church [*SS,* III, 424].

Ivanov joined the Roman Catholic church in 1926, and "for the first time felt [himself] to be Orthodox in the full, true sense of the word," he wrote, again in his letter to Du Bos [*SS,* III, 426]. In that same year Ivanov was invited to teach the Russian language and literature at the University of Pavia and modern languages in the Almo Collegio Borromeo. During these years he wrote various articles for the Swiss review *Corona* and other journals, as well as a book on Dostoevsky, which included materials published in earlier collections of his essays. In 1934 he was offered the Chair of Russian Literature at the University of Florence, but the Italian government refused to confirm the appointment since he was not a member of the Fascist party. In 1934 Ivanov became professor of Slavonic Languages in the Pontificum Institutum Orientalium Studiorum. In his Roman years Ivanov led a generally retiring life, remaining aloof both from the emigré Russian community and from Western politics. It was in these years, however, that Ivanov established contacts with such notable figures as Martin Buber, Gabriel Marcel, Jacques Maritain, and others.

Ivanov's poetic output in the two decades following his departure from Russia was small, though he published a number of individual poems in emigré journals, as well as his long poem *Man.* A most significant work of those decades was his *Tale of Prince Svetomir* (*Povest' o Svetomire Tsareviche,* 1928–1949), an unfinished work in archaic prose in which elements from early Russian history and culture interweave with motifs from Ivanov's life.

In 1944, under the impact of the somber war years, Ivanov returned in a major way to poetry. It was in the last years of the war that he wrote his great verse cycle *Roman Notebook 1944* (*Rimskij dnevnik 1944*). During the war years Ivanov also worked on an edition of the Acts and Epistles of the Apostles and the Book of Revelation. One of his last works was an introduction and commentary to the Psalms.

Ivanov died in Rome, July 16, 1949.

Literary rediscoveries make us conscious not only of the tyranny of fashion but of the fact that irrespective of arrivals and departures on the cultural scene history has its own timetable. The great English poet, artist and mystic, William Blake (1757–1827), long reproached for his "obscurity," had to wait a century before criticism and scholarship were able to approach the uplands of his art and poetry and make an appreciation worthy of his genius. Like Blake, Ivanov was long relegated to the position of a difficult poet ("ob-

scurity," "oracular obscurity," "bookish poet," "verbal hieroglyphics," *gelehrte Poesie*, etc.); and like him, a victim of anthologies, he has had to wait for a full appreciation of his stature.

A period of renown in the early part of the twentieth century was followed, after World War I and the Bolshevik revolution, by fifty years of neglect in criticism and scholarship. The first Russian emigration after the revolution, of course, remembered Ivanov and made some signal tributes and evaluations. Noteworthy are Bely's essay, "The Sirin of Scholarly Barbarism," an article by Ilya Golenishchev-Kutuzov (1930) and a group of essays in the Italian journal *Il Convegno*, 1933–1934 (Deschartes, Ganchikov, Ottokar, Pellegrini, Zelinsky). But it was only in the 1950s and, increasingly, in the 1960s that interest in Ivanov began to revive. Renato Poggioli's essay on Ivanov's *A Correspondence from Two Corners* (1950) and S. Makovsky's two essays on Ivanov in *Novyj zhurnal* (1952) were followed by Olga A. Deschartes' publication of a wide selection of Ivanov's lyrics and sonnets (accompanied by commentary) in *Oxford Slavonic Papers* (1955, 1958). Johannes Holthusen's valuable *Studien zur Ästhetik und Poetik des russischen Symbolismus* (1957) gave special attention to Ivanov.

Ivanov's important collection of verse, *Evening Light* (*Svet vechernij*) was published in 1962 with an introductory essay by Sir Maurice Bowra. Special mention should be made here of Fyodor Stepun's two important critical essays in 1962 and 1964. Yet more than fifty years after the era of Russian Symbolism and twenty years after Ivanov's death one could still speak of only a handful of essays, articles and memoirs, and one could search in vain for a single monograph on Ivanov. The situation changed in the late 1960s and early 1970s with the publication of Carin Tschöpl's *Vjačeslav Ivanov. Dichtung und Dichtungstheorie* (1968), James West's *Russian Symbolism: A Study of Vyacheslav Ivanov and the Russian Symbolist Aesthetic* (1970) and Armin Hetzer's study of Ivanov's tragedy *Tantalus* (1972). Since that time there has been a slow but steady increase in scholarly interest in Ivanov, the last examples of which are Johannes Holthusen's *Vjačeslav Ivanov als symbolistischer Dichter und als russischer Kulturphilosoph* (1982) and Fausto Malcovati's *Vjačeslav Ivanov: estetica e filosofia* (1983).

"The proof of a poet," Walt Whitman once wrote, "shall be sternly defer'd til his country absorbs him as affectionately as he has absorb'd it."[14] Ivanov, along with many other Russian writers and artists of the pre-revolutionary period, suffered a near total eclipse in the Stalinist era. A revival of interest among Soviet Russian literati was signalled by the publication in the scholarly *Annals* of Tartu University of M. S. Altman's important memoirs of Ivanov in Baku (1968) along with an article by N. V. Kotrelyov. In 1975 a selection of Ivanov's verse was published in the series *Biblioteka poeta*. The poems were accompanied by an introductory essay and commentary by S. S. Averintsev.

Whatever the larger reasons for the scant attention given to Ivanov in East and West in the last fifty or sixty years, one factor has been the complete absence of any scholarly apparatus for even the most elementary critical, scholarly or historical work, namely, a standard edition (or *any* edition) gathering together Ivanov's complete poetry, his abundant theoretical writings, literary criticism and philosophical essays, along with basic biographical and bibliographical materials. The works of Ivanov had remained scattered for decades in original editions and forgotten journals throughout the libraries and archives of Russia, Western Europe, and the United States. It was only the dedicated and massive work of the late Olga A. Deschartes, Ivanov's close friend, editor and biographer, and Lydia and Dmitri Ivanov, daughter and son of Vyacheslav Ivanov, that made any renewed interest in Ivanov a realistic possibility, at least from the scholarly point of view. In the years after Ivanov's death they carefully ordered, maintained and expanded the western archives of Ivanov and, in the general dearth of Ivanov information and materials, were generous in granting scholars and critics access to their archives and their rich fund of information. Out of these archives have come, to date, three volumes (2,500 pages) of a projected six-volume edition of the complete poetry and prose of Ivanov. With the appearance of the first three volumes (1971, 1974, 1979), the renaissance of Ivanov studies has begun in earnest.

The international symposium on Vyacheslav I. Ivanov at Yale University in 1981—the first gathering of any kind devoted exclusively to Ivanov—must be considered a watershed in the development

of Ivanov studies. The success of this symposium, its signal achievements, would have been impossible without the long history of poetic appreciation and scholarly interest among an admittedly small but tenacious group of critics and scholars in East and West. What the symposium did was to bring many of these people together, to review the state of Ivanov studies and to found Convivium, an international scholarly association devoted to the study of the work of Ivanov and all questions related to the period in which he wrote and lived.[15] Last but not least, the symposium generated a varied and stimulating group of papers on the poetry, criticism, philosophy, translations and life of Vyacheslav Ivanov. It is this material that we offer to the reader in the hope that it will further bring into the foreground the achievements of Vyacheslav Ivanov.

Notes

1. Fedor Stepun, "Wjatscheslaw Iwanow," in *Mystische Weltanschauung. Fünf Gestalten des russischen Symbolismus* (Munich: Carl Hanser, 1964), p. 208.

2. See Averintsev's essay in this volume, pp. 25–48.

3. *Avtobiograficheskoe pis'mo, SS,* II, 13.

4. M. S. Al'tman, "Iz besed s poetom Vjacheslavom Ivanovichem Ivanovym," in *Trudy po russkoj i slavjanskoj filologii XI. Literaturovedenie* (Tartu, 1968).

5. Stepun, "Vjacheslav Ivanov," in *Vstrechi* (Munich: Tovarishchestvo zarubezhnykh pisateĭej, 1962), p. 143.

6. *Avtobiograficheskoe pis'mo, SS,* II, 19.

7. *Perepiska iz dvukh uglov, SS,* III, 403.

8. "Krizis individualizma," *SS,* I, 839.

9. "Predchuvstvija i predvestija," *SS,* III, 86, 102.

10. Johannes Holthusen, *Vjacheslav Ivanov als symbolistischer Dichter und als russischer Kulturphilosoph* (Munich: Verlag der Bayerischen Akademie, 1982).

11. Andrej Belyj, *Sirin uchenogo varvarstva* (Berlin: Izdatel'stvo 'Skify', 1922), p. 3.

12. Ernst Robert Curtius, *Deutscher Geist in Gefahr* (Stuttgart: Deutscheverlaganstalt, 1932), p. 116.

13. "Lettre à Charles Du Bos," *SS,* III, 428.

14. "As I sat alone by Blue Ontario's Shore" (1856), in *Leaves of Grass* (Philadelphia: David McKay, 1900), p. 302.

15. The second international symposium on Vyacheslav Ivanov, sponsored by Convivium, the University of Rome and the Cultural Department of the City Council of Rome, took place in Rome and Frascati, April 24–28, 1983.

The Symbolist Ambience and Vyacheslav Ivanov

Victor Erlich

One of the salient features of the copious and vivid memoir literature bearing on the brilliant chapter in Russian cultural history, often referred to as the "Silver Age," is the insistence on its distinctive ambience, its heady, intoxicating "air."[1]

It is a matter of record that the Russian Symbolist movement spurred the resurgence of poetic craft after years of mellifluous monotony and high-minded bleakness, and significantly enhanced the emotional suggestiveness and associative wealth of the Russian poetic idiom. It is equally true that in its most characteristic manifestations Russian Symbolism, as Vladislav Khodasevich put it, "was not content to be a school of poetry"[2] and aspired to become a mode of creating life, a vehicle for transforming or transfiguring reality, an approach to higher esoteric truth that alone could provide the way out of the deep-seated crisis which had gripped the Western world.

The notion of the visionary, redemptive or, in the language of the period, "theurgic" nature of art, and, most notably, of poetry, was especially pronounced in the writings of the so-called younger Symbolists—a strand in early twentieth-century Russian literature associated with the names of Alexander Blok, Andrey Bely, and Vyacheslav Ivanov. To be sure, to call Ivanov a younger Symbolist is, in a strict sense, a blatant misnomer. Born in 1866, he was closer in age to the initiators of the Symbolist movement in Russia, Konstantin Balmont, Valery Bryusov or Fyodor Sologub, than to either Blok or Bely. Yet where literary rather than personal chronology is at issue, the designation might yet be salvaged: Vyacheslav Ivanov's relatively late and uncommonly mature poetic debut *Pilot Stars*

(*Kormchie zvezdy,* 1903), preceded as it was by two decades of total immersion in classical scholarship and Greek mythology, nearly coincided with the emergence of Russian Symbolism's most charismatic lyrical poet and most stunning prose writer. Moreover, and more importantly, Ivanov, Bely and Blok were linked by a spiritual affinity, anchored in their common indebtedness to the ambiguous legacy of Vladimir Solovyov—a strangely affecting blend of heterodox religious universalism and darkly apocalyptic prophecy, a vision shuttling uneasily between the notion of the Second Coming and that of an imminent advent of Antichrist.[3]

The catastrophic, "end-of-history" strain in Solovyov resonates throughout the *oeuvre* and the life of Andrey Bely, the dazzling polymath, the uncannily articulate, mercurial and frequently embattled spokesman of Russian Symbolism. The apocalyptic bent of Bely's imagination has by now been amply documented.[4] The leitmotif of his remarkable novel *Petersburg* (*Peterburg,* 1916), a brilliantly nightmarish vision of the early twentieth-century Russian capital, tottering at the edge of an abyss, is the ominous ticking of a time bomb which is about to explode and finally does. In Bely's discursive writings a keen sense of the precariousness of pre-1914 Russian society—an incisive eyewitness, Fyodor Stepun, called Bely "an immensely versatile and sensitive seismograph"[5]—blended with his "personal apocalypse" and anguished rebelliousness rooted in a conflict-ridden and conflict-generated childhood to produce a permanent, overpowering sense of crisis. Bely's retrospective attempt in his fascinating and often unreliable autobiographical trilogy to present himself as a revolutionary and a near-Marxist, intermittently led astray by politically treacherous traveling companions, is less than persuasive. This baffling protean figure was congenitally immune to consistency. What is consistent, indeed obsessive in Bely, is a yearning for an "explosion," less a considered ideological position than a vaguely metaphysical postulate and a deep-seated political need. "Politics will dissolve in spiritual war," he wrote on the eve of Armageddon. "The old forms of the old society will be blown up. I am dynamite, I know my fate."[6] Some ten years later, in *Notes of a Crank,* he declared characteristically: "Thus my eternal explosions

became worldwide."[7] The bomb remains his favorite metaphor and his recurrent self-definition: "I am a bomb trying to explode into pieces."[8]

In moments of iconoclastic frenzy Bely was apt to scorn his far-flung sophistication to proclaim the cultural tradition useless and gone to seed: "Culture is a rotten head. Everything in it is dead. There is nothing left. Come the explosion," he exulted, "everything will be swept away."[9] When the explosion did come, he welcomed it in grandiloquent verse thrilling to his own imminent destruction: "And you, stormy element, rage, burning me to ashes" (*a ty, burevaja stikhija, bezumstvuj, szhigaja menja*).[10]

Though Bely's essential sincerity was hardly ever at issue, some of his contemporaries were prone to dismiss such outbursts as eccentric posturing or *outré* moral histrionics. Yet few of them would question the utmost seriousness of equally dire warnings and equally self-destructive gestures on the part of the poet whom Anna Akhmatova dubbed, in retrospect, "the tragic tenor of the era." Alexander Blok has been credited, not without justice, with keen responsiveness to the "music," the elemental rhythms of his nation's history, and with the moral courage to face the inevitable. (There is no question that in Blok the faculty which Lionel Trilling has called the "imagination of disaster" was developed to the highest degree.) By the same token, when on the eve of the First World War, he refused "to judge" the imminent cataclysm, even if it were to spell the destruction of "us the intelligentsia,"[11] he demonstrated an ability to reach beyond the vested interests of his group toward a wider ideal of social justice. Yet it has become increasingly clear that this selfless stance contained an element of sheer self-destructiveness, of a morbid fascination with doom, akin to what Blok himself once called the "love of perdition." (Anyone who cares about Blok the man and the poet is apt to find the reference in his diary of April 5, 1912, to "an immense joy [he] derived from the news about the wreck of the Titanic"[12] more than a little unsettling.) When in January 1918, bewitched, as he put it, by the noise produced by the collapse of the old world, Blok surrendered his sensibility and

indeed his poetic persona to the raging revolutionary elements, this act of lyrical self-effacement produced one of the most striking and truly innovative modern Russian poems, easily the finest poetic response to the October Revolution. The price of this Dionysian fling was, we will recall, an ever-deepening depression. Significantly, as he emerged from it, on the eve of his untimely death, to reaffirm in his memorable speech "On the Calling of the Poet" the importance of craftsmanship and the necessity of creative freedom, the language he used—"the gay truths of common sense," "the gay name of Pushkin"[13]—was unmistakably, indeed pointedly Apollonian.

If both Bely and Blok appeared spellbound by Solovyov's apocalyptic mood, it fell to Vyacheslav Ivanov to carry forth and elaborate both in his richly orchestrated, well-wrought verse and his stately prose the positive aspect of Solovyov's thought—his abiding sense of the underlying unity of the Christian tradition, his cultural and religious ecumenicity. In fact, when in 1926 at the threshold of one of the most creative periods in his career, Ivanov espoused Catholicism, he experienced this conversion not as an abandonment of his earlier allegiance but as an organic outgrowth of his spiritual evolution, a reaffirmation of his persistent belief in the universality of the Christian Church as well as a step toward the much overdue rapprochement between the East and the West. By temperament and endowment, he was a bridge-builder, a reconciler, a synthesizer, a gatherer of cultural energies. It is these qualities, combined with a learning formidable if lightly worn and an amazing intellectual and esthetic sensitivity that made Ivanov so pivotal a figure in the literary-artistic Petersburg of 1905–11, so resourceful and beguiling a moderator of that ongoing symposium, the "Wednesday evenings at the Ivanovs." An active participant in these high-powered gatherings, Nikolay Berdyaev spoke of Ivanov's "fifth-floor apartment," known as the "Tower," as a place where against the backdrop of social turmoil and political strife "values of spiritual and creative life, of poetry, art, philosophy, mysticism and religion were upheld and elaborated."[14] Another eminent habitué, Andrey Bely, recalled

half admiringly, half grudgingly: "It often seemed that Ivanov spun a fine ideational spiderweb, bringing together incompatible people and captivating them all" [*SS*, I, 94].

Ivanov shared with many of his contemporaries what Frank Kermode has called the "sense of an ending," the conviction of living at the turning point in Russian and European history. But even his eschatology had an affirmative, chiliastic bent: it was less a premonition of a disaster than a hope for the dawn of a "new religious consciousness" that would reach beyond the narrow confines of alienating individualism toward a *sui generis* Christian personalism, a collective state of mind which he often called *sobornost'* (ecumenicity), a lay theological term which hovers in meaning between spiritual community and spiritual communion. He paid his due to the prerevolutionary era's yearning for radical social change by lending at some point his prestige to the much contested concept of mystical anarchism.[15] But this former student of Mommsen was too strongly wedded to the classical tradition, too steeped in Aeschylus, Dante, Virgil and Goethe to yield, be it for a moment, to the utopian temptation of staking the prospect of spiritual renewal on a single climactic or cataclysmic event, let alone to succumb to the optical illusion of a totally new beginning, a clean slate.

How relevant is the cultural tradition in time of violence and social upheaval? This query lies at the core of the memorable dialogue between Vyacheslav Ivanov and his distinguished fellow humanist, a prolific literary and cultural historian, Mikhail Gershenzon. Slated by circumstances, in 1920, to share a room in a Moscow convalescent home for artists and scholars, the two old friends found themselves in an intense disagreement over a fundamental issue. After a few lively oral exchanges they decided to commit their contending views to writing. What ensued is that remarkable document, *A Correspondence from Two Corners* (*Perepiska iz dvukh uglov*, 1921).[16]

Writing to his roommate, Gershenzon gave vent to a mounting weariness with his erudition, to an urge to shake off the "tedious burden of mankind's accumulated intellectual achievements"[17] so as to recapture the freshness and spontaneity of the earlier phases of the Western civilization. Ivanov retorted: "To you it appears that

oblivion is a source of liberation while cultural memory spells enslavement and death. To my mind, memory is the dynamic principle, oblivion is weariness and cessation of movement, decline and reversion to the state of relative stagnation."[18] "Culture will become again the cult of God and of the earth. It will be a miracle wrought by Memory."[19]

The insistence on the liberating, life-preserving power of memory is quintessentially Ivanovian. In his first collection of verse he hailed "eternal memory" as a triumph over death: "Over death eternally triumphs / he in whom eternal memory dwells" (Nad smert'ju vechno torzhestvuet / v kom pamjat' vechnaja zhivet [*SS*, I, 560]). In a 1908 essay, "Sporady," he said: "According to an old Orphic belief, in order to become divine and immortal the soul must find again the keys of memory and quench its thirst in the lake of subterranean Mnemosyne."[20] The theme of the organic connection between poetry and memory reappears in a straightforward, almost vernacular vein in a lyric contained in *Roman Notebook 1944* (*Rimskij dnevnik 1944* under February 11):

The poet, too, has something to teach,
But what he teaches is not his wisdom:
with it he would all the sooner
Embarrass or bore everyone.

Whether life is sweet or bitter,
You had better find out yourself,
And each has his own sorrows:
What he teaches is to remember.

I poèt chemu-to uchit,
No ne mudrost'ju svoej:
Eju on vsego skorej
Vsekh smutit il' vsem naskuchit.

Zhizn' sladka l' na vkus, gor'ka li,
Sam ty dolzhen raspoznat',
I svoi u vsekh pechali:
Uchit on—vospominat'. [*SS*, III, 592]

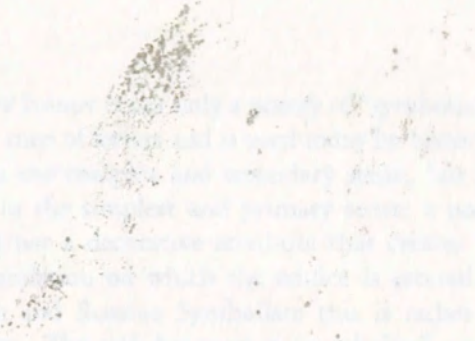
To return, finally, to the Ivanov-Gershenzon correspondence: it is singularly fitting or, if one will, symbolic that it should have been Vyacheslav Ivanov who at one of the most trying moments of modern Russian history, on the eve of major dislocations and tragic discontinuities, spoke gravely and eloquently on behalf of memory as repository of values, a warrant of cultural continuity and a mode of civilized survival.

Notes

1. Vladislav Khodasevich, *Literaturnye stat'i i vospominanija* (New York, 1954).
2. Vladislav Khodasevich, *Nekropol'* (Brussels, 1939), p. 8.
3. In a 1912 poem addressed to Blok, Ivanov spoke of sharing with his younger soulmate a "mysterious baptism by Solovyov" (*zatem chto oba Solov'evym tainstvenno my kreshcheny*). Vyacheslav Ivanov, *Stikhotvorenija i poemy* (Leningrad, 1976), p. 251.
4. Samuel E. Cioran, *The Apocalyptic Symbolism of Andrei Bely* (The Hague, 1973). Bernice G. Rosenthal, "Eschatology and the Appeal of Revolution (Merezhkovsky, Bely, Blok)," *California Slavic Studies* XI (1980).
5. Fyodor Stepun, *Byvshee i nesbyvsheesja* (New York, 1956), p. 277.
6. Quoted in N. Valentinov, *Dva goda s simvolistami* (Stanford, 1969), p. 62.
7. See Andrey Bely's *Zapiski chudaka* (Moscow-Berlin, 1922).
8. Valentinov, *Dva goda*, p. 98.
9. Ibid., p. 67.
10. Andrey Bely, "Rodine," *Stikhotvorenija i poemy* (Leningrad, 1966), p. 382.
11. A. Blok, *Sobranie sochinenij*, V (Leningrad-Moscow, 1960), 121.
12. Ibid., 139.
13. Ibid., 168.
14. See Olga Deschartes, "Vvedenie," in *SS*, I, 94.
15. In a polemic with Valery Bryusov's harsh review of a 1906 miscellany, *Fakely*, whose editor G. Chulkov declaimed somewhat portentously on behalf of "mystical anarchism," Ivanov sought to salvage the notion by defining anarchism as a synthesis of individualism and *sobornost'*.

16. Vyacheslav Ivanov and Mikhail Gershenzon, *Perepiska iz dvukh uglov* (Petrograd, 1921).
17. Ibid., p. 11.
18. Ibid., p. 29.
19. Ibid., p. 56.
20. *Zolotoe runo* XI–XIII (1908).

POET



The Poetry of Vyacheslav Ivanov

Sergey Averintsev

The poetry of Vyacheslav Ivanov is not only a poetry of "symbolism," as the word was used by men of letters and is used today by historians of literature, that is, in the complex and secondary sense, but also a truly *symbolic* poetry in the simplest and primary sense: a poetry in which the symbol is not a decorative attribute that creates "atmosphere," but the foundation on which the edifice is erected. In the history of European and Russian Symbolism this is rather the exception than the norm. The self-designation "symbolist" on the lips of Ivanov is, to an unusual degree, etymologically literal.

It seems that no one who has written about this poet has evaded the responsibility of devoting at least a few words to the problem of the symbol. Nevertheless, too little attention has been given to the study of the *concrete* life of symbols in his poetry. The symbol as a "category" of poetics somewhat overshadows the symbol as a reality of poetry. There are reasons for this. Ivanov himself was too influential and productive a theoretician for us to avoid the temptation to follow closely his theoretical declarations in the interpretation of his poetic practice. The temptation is the stronger since he was not only an influential and productive theoretician, but also an intelligent one, and it is only natural that we rejoice at the abundance of opportunities to hear at first hand what the poet wanted from his poetry. Nevertheless, the temptation is a temptation, and for three reasons.

First, when Ivanov engaged in theory, he engaged precisely in theory, and not in his own self-portraiture. "This, to my mind, is the way a poet should write," and "This, according to my observation, is the way I write," are two different themes—comparable to each other, but different.

Second, the theory of Ivanov and especially the verbal expression of that theory are more marked by the epoch, and are therefore further from us than his poetry.[1] This is entirely understandable. In order to write the sort of poems that Ivanov wrote, it was necessary to cease listening to his fellow men of letters and go his own way, not looking around at the "milieu." For all its civilization and civility, Ivanov's poetry is obstinate and undomesticated—qualities that assure its strength of survival as the carnival time of the "Tower" recedes into the distant past. The young Mandelshtam had reason to write to Ivanov: "You are the most unintelligible poet of our time, the most obscure, in the ordinary use of the word—precisely because you, like no one else, are true to your element—having consciously entrusted yourself to it."[2] The internal choice which stands behind all Ivanov's poetry is expressed in the lines from a poem of 1915:

Human talk and everyday lies,
Don't trouble my flock under the clouds.

I know all, ascending to the hut in the air
And passing an indifferent glance over the town squares:

If I parted with my native dovecote
My song would be more intelligible to you.

If I said "farewell" to the ethereal region
And disbanded my white flock,

I would become necessary, and akin, and dear to you,
Ailing with the ailing, doleful with the doleful.

Ljudskaja molva i zhitejskaja lozh',
Podoblachnoj stai moej ne trevozh'.

Vse znaju, v vozdushnyj shalash voskhodja
I vzgljad ravnodushnyj po stognam vodja:

S rodnoj golubjatnej rasstalsja by ja,—
Byla by ponjatnej vam pesnja moja.

Efirnomu kraju skazhi ja "prosti"
I beluju staju svoju raspusti,—

Ja stal by vam nuzhen, i sroden, i mil,
S neduzhnym neduzhen, s unylym unyl.[3]

On the other hand, engaging in theory, that is, descending several steps from the "hut in the air" and entering into explanations—no longer with that "providential interlocutor" (Mandelshtam's expression) to whom the poet addresses himself, but with an entirely predictable interlocutor, with the determinate, sociologically identifiable circles of the Russian and European intelligentsia of a certain time—he necessarily reckoned, if not with "everyday lies," then with "human talk." The codification of the Symbolist canon meant for him, more than for any other poet of his epoch (except perhaps Stefan George), a deliberate volitional act of cultural diplomacy, cultural "politics," and such an act is subject to considerations of prudence and the rules of etiquette.[4] Appearing as a theoretician, Ivanov said to his contemporaries what he considered to be appropriate, τὸ πρέπον. If—let us imagine for a moment the impossible—he saw before him not them but us, today's readers, what then? One must assume that his poetic voice would not change in the least (after all he promised not to disband his "white flock"); but it is very possible that as a theoretician he would say something different to us, something that it is not easy to imagine from his existing works.[5] It is completely clear what he would not repeat today: all those theoretical utopias which have been rendered impossible by our historical experience. Among his poems time, as always, has carried out an inevitable selection,[6] but those that survive the selection and have been cleansed *puritate ignium* reach us directly, right on target, like a letter addressed to us; while his theoretical works almost pass us by. To explain the poems by the theoretical works today means to explain the closer phenomenon by the farther.

Third, the reality of any poetry, even such a conscious poetry as that of Ivanov, by its very essence is not exhausted and cannot be exhausted by any theory, even a theory so homogeneous with it as Ivanov's; in poetry, there are many more secrets, hidden matters, unexpected moments. According to the wise advice of Horace, it is

better for the seafarer to make his journey not holding too closely to the "unreliable shore":

> . . . Neque, dum procellas
> Cautus horrescis, nimium premendo
> Litus iniquum.

For the interpreter, poetry is the open sea, the poet's theoretical declarations are the shore, and an "unreliable" shore; not because they are not adequate in their own way, but simply because they are only theoretical declarations, and not the actual reality of poetic practice. They may elucidate the latter but cannot explain it.

Before speaking of the system of symbols in Ivanov's poetry, one must note that his symbols truly constitute a system in the full sense of the word, a system that is closed to a greater degree than that of any other Russian Symbolist.

A closed system of symbols means that in principle there are no two symbols in Ivanov of which each would not require the other, would not assume the other in the dialectical sense of the word "assumption" (with varying degrees of insistence, of course); there are no two symbols which would not be connected by a chain of semantic couplings, in roughly the way that concepts are connected in the idealistic dialectic of Hegel or especially Schelling (*Konstruktion*).[7] It means further that each symbol occupies a precisely determined place in relation to the other symbols. It means, finally, that each of the meanings of each symbol (which, as we know, is polyvalent[8]) is turned in the direction of certain other symbols of the same system, indeed, precisely to them and not to the others, or if to the others, then only through them.

The symbolic lines, symbolic chains, and paired oppositions of symbols which constitute the "working realm" of Ivanov as a poet, could possibly be presented all together graphically in the form of a very complex diagram. The author of this essay is not convinced that there would be much use in such a diagram or that the undertaking would be in good taste; therefore the essay will do without a diagram.[9] But it is worthwhile to envisage the possibility of it.

Of course, the closed system of symbols cannot be mastered and revealed in the space of one poem, or even in the space of one poetic cycle or one poetic collection (a level of organization that is very important for all the Symbolists). No, for this system the entire sum of the poet's creation is needed, from the moment of its discovery by him to the very end. In other words, in order to be realized, a closed system of symbols must necessarily remain *stable* in the course of the poet's creative biography. It is indeed closed in still another and special sense: the poet closes it round himself like a magic circle from which he does not intend to exit. ("Making charms and closing circles. . . .")

The system also takes the reader *inside* itself, disposing him to a specific type of perception. Perhaps the most striking example is the *Tale of Prince Svetomir* (*Povest' o Svetomire Tsareviche*, 1928–1949): it is not "reading" at all—the sole means of contact with this work is to enter into it and let its verbal element close over one's head. (This, perhaps, relates it with *Romanzen vom Rosenkranz* by Clemens Brentano, and with *Ève* by Charles Péguy.) But there is no work by Ivanov that would not require a similar orientation on the reader's part. It is with good reason that in the letter cited above[10] Mandelshtam says that the reader agrees with Ivanov in roughly the same way that the traveler accepts the Catholic significance of Notre Dame—"simply by force of his being under those vaults." Ivanov's system of symbols is also conceived like vaults which close and come together from different sides, both over the poet and over *his* reader—the reader whom his poetry has in mind. The image of the closing circle appears in the same letter from Mandelshtam ("the astronomical circularity of your system"). The architecture of Ivanov's symbols, like the architecture of Hagia Sophia's cupolas, can be adequately perceived only by the view from within, not from without. Here is one parallel by way of elucidation: for the average Russian man of letters, German Romanticism is above all E. T. A. Hoffmann, but for Ivanov it is Novalis. One may regard Hoffmann as "reading" in the usual (by no means pejorative) sense of the word, but not Novalis. Hoffmann's world of images may be viewed from

afar as a spectacle; one must enter into Novalis's world of symbols as into an especially dense reality, *realiora*—or else they are not necessary at all.

We have said that the closed system of symbols is a stable system; by this we have answered the question of why no other Russian Symbolist had a system of symbols that was or could be closed to such a degree, could be a *system* to such a degree, as that of Ivanov.

There is little point in dwelling here on the symbolism of *Skorpion* in contrast to the symbolism of *Ory*, on that symbolism which in Ivanov's terminology is called "idealistic" in contrast to "realistic," and which proceeded from Baudelaire's "Les correspondances" and not from the ideas of Novalis or of Vladimir Solovyov. If symbols have no ontological status, they cannot form a system and are connected only by the principle of "correspondences," which are reflected in each other like mirrors face to face. "Only fleeting things do I put into verse" (*Tol'ko mimoletnosti ja vlagaju v stikh*) is Balmont's motto. "I want the Free Boat to sail everywhere" (*Khochu chtob vsjudu plavala svobodnaja Ladja*) is the motto of Bryusov, whom Tynyanov called "a traveler in the realm of themes" (*puteshestvennikom po oblasti tem*).[11] The central task of the symbolism of Balmont and Bryusov is decorative.

Matters are more complicated with the "Solovyovians," Alexander Blok and Andrey Bely.

When we try to apply the phrase "closed system" to Blok, we immediately feel that the image behind these words would have evoked utter claustrophobia in him. One recalls his youthful lines, which could serve as an epigraph for his entire output:

> I have one friend—in the damp night fog
> The road into the distance.
>
> Mne drug odin—v syrom nochnom tumane
> Doroga vdal'.[12]

The road leads into the distance, and it lies in the fog, that is, it is impossible to survey it, to see in advance what its final goal is; however, one can see what it leads away from—from that which

yesterday was home. The pathos of movement without looking back and without return ("no one will come back again"—*nikto ne pridet nazad*) which denies any stability and breaks any closedness, is for Blok's poetry simultaneously the most important objective characterization and just as important a subjective self-characterization, that is, a central theme.[13] Blok had always to retreat into the "lilac worlds" from the tower of his Tsarevna, from the chambers of his Beautiful Lady, in order to meet the Stranger in the restaurant, and he had to rebel, to revolt against the "lilac worlds" in order to see the Field at Kulikovo; there is not and cannot be a spiritual "space" which would gather his symbols together, unite them, make them compatible. This is not contradicted by the fact that there are image-emblems which traverse all periods of his lyric poetry (the same "road," "mother and son," etc.). D. E. Maksimov called such images "integrators."[14] It is precisely in their symbolic semantics, however, that these images are extremely unstable and subject to a radical reinterpretation that keeps them from identity with themselves. Each time, dramatic breaks with previous values lie behind the reinterpretation. The poetic biography of Ivanov, while of course by no means alien to movement, is characterized by a much greater immutability of its coordinates, its "pilot stars." Ivanov could say of himself, in the macaronic language of the polymath, what Blok could not have said in any form: "In truth, I am the same as always" (*semper idem*) although, of course, by force of law "everything flows" (πάντα ῥεῖ) and by force of the self-affirmation of my vitality "I also flow" (κἀγὼ ῥέω).[15] It is characteristic that for him historical time plays a limited role, and physical age plays a role still more limited (there are, for example, no "youthful poems" in the sense in which both of Blok's first cycles are characteristically "youthful"). In the organization of Blok's lyric poetry as a whole, the factor of temporal irreversibility works with great clarity. Blok himself understood the three volumes of his lyric poetry as a "trilogy of becoming a man" (*trilogiju vochelovechenija*);[16] this trilogy looks like the dynamic Hegelian triad of thesis, antithesis, and something like a synthesis—truly a "negation of a negation." When we speak of the poetry of Ivanov, Blok's "road" must be replaced by other metaphors: "source,"

"return," "seclusion." In the fullness of the "source" everything is given primordially, everything "flows out" from it, spreading and overflowing, but not changing its composition. On the personal level the "source" is "infancy," childhood as an image of eternal and immutable paradise:

> Immovable Eden, where anew
> We celebrate ancient love . . .
>
> Edem nedvizhimyj, gde vnov'
> Obrjashchem drevnjuju ljubov' . . . [*SS*, I, 242]

On the level of poetic biography, the "source" is the first collection, *Pilot Stars* (*Kormchie zvezdy*, 1903), where in abridged, preliminary form, "everything is already there." (One cannot say anything of the kind about Blok's first collections; no one would begin to seek in *Ante lucem* and the *Poems about the Beautiful Lady* [*Stikhi o prekrasnoj dame*] for the content of "Iambs" [*Jamby*], "Garden of Nightingales" [*Solovinyj sad*], or "The Twelve" [*Dvenadtsat'*]). Finally, on the metaphysical level, the "source" is *realiora*: the Platonic "idea," the Aristotelian "entelechy," of which the poetry of Ivanov senses itself to be the gradual realization. But this means that the "source" is simultaneously the "goal": not only *causa formalis* and *causa efficiens*, but also *causa finalis*. Movement proceeds *from* the "source," but also—and this is still more important, still more secret—*toward* the "source," and this is "return."

> As to an unintelligible reed,
> Hearken to these speeches:
> The path is by a reverse course
> To the native springs . . .
>
> Kak trostniku neponjatnomu,
> Vnemli recham:
> Put'—po techen'ju obratnomu
> K rodnym kljucham . . . [*SS*, III, 539]

In this theme of "return," "palirroia," "palirroj" is the esoterica of Ivanov's perception of time and life. For now, let us limit ourselves

to the statement that the logic of this theme leads Ivanov, in essence, to the assertion of the malignant quality of everything transient in comparison with permanence:

> Have we not with our treacheries
> Forged the prison
> That mortal men
> call time?
>
> Time whirls us away like wind,
> Divides us, separates us,
> It will bite its serpent tail
> and die.
>
> Ne iz nashikh li izmen
> My sebe skovali plen,
> Tot, chto Vremenem zovet
> Smertnyj rod?
>
> Vremja nas, kak veter, mchit,
> Razluchaja, razluchit,—
> Khvost zmeinyj v past' vberet
> I umret. [*SS*, III, 544]

In the context of this philosophical "accusation" of time as treachery, as a departure from memory and loyalty and so from existence, a symbolic meaning is acquired by preferring "seclusion" to "the road" (which, of course, also had a quite simple, literal meaning for the poet, who was close to 80 years old):

> "Go where your eyes are looking,
> Arrow-like the straight road flies!
> The wide expanse is a foretaste of God,
> And the turquoise of far eternity."
>
> The dry paths are trodden
> And the real disproves the fairy tale.
> The road is the run of a creeping serpent
> Cast down from the heights into the dust.

The far distance is Leah in a blue bridal veil
When love called Rachel.

And now as a free captive
I cherish my secluded enclosure,
The expanse is within me like a vast world,
By turning my gaze I'll not encompass it;
And to my homeless memory
Blueness shines beyond dark Lethe—
And I belong to myself.

"Idti, kuda gljadjat glaza,
Prjama letit streloj doroga!
Prostor—predoshchushchen'e Boga
I vechnoj dali birjuza" . . .

Iskhozheny tropy sukhie,
I skazku oprovergla byl'.
Doroga—beg polzuchij zmija,
S vysot nizrinutogo v pyl'.
Dal'—pod fatoj lazurnoj Lija,
Kogda ljubov' zvala Rakhil'.

I nyne tesnotoj ukromnoj,
Zatochnik vol'nyj, dorozhu,
V sebe prostor, kak mir ogromnyj,
Vzor obvodja, ne ogljazhu;
I svetit pamjati bezdomnoj
Golubizna za Letoj temnoj,—
I ja sebe prinadlezhu. [*SS*, III, 626]

"The straight road flies like an arrow"—it is hard to resist the temptation to recall a series of passages in Blok where the path is likened precisely to an arrow, e.g.:

Our path—like an arrow of the ancient Tatar will—
Pierced our breasts.

Nash put'—streloj tatarskoj drevnej voli
Pronzil nam grud'.[17]

Ivanov feels he belongs to himself[18] in the "secluded closeness" of home, for it is to him the place and symbol of *gathering himself* ("whoever does not gather with Me is lost . . .")—the overcoming of that which in Hegel's philosophy is called "evil" or "negative" infinity. Such is the late, final sum of the experience of the man and the poet. The sum of Blok's experience, formulated scores of times in his poems and prose, is completely the opposite:

I will never find a place in a quiet house
By a peaceful fire!

Ne najti mne mesta v tikhom dome
Vozle mirnogo ognja![19]

In one of his articles Blok celebrates "flight from home" (from the composed and closed life cycle) and "flight from the city" (from culture, that is, historical memory) as a joyful and liberating oblivion, a way to simplicity. "Simplicity of lines, simplicity of solitude is outside the city. In flight from home the feeling of one's own hearth, one's soul, separate and barbed, is lost. In flight from the city the complicated measure of this once proud soul, with which it measured its surroundings, is lost. And the gaze, which has lost its memory of the straight lines of the city, is expended in space."[20] "To become like a path" for Blok means in a certain sense to "forget everything."[21]

A kind of echo of these motifs can be heard in the voice of Gershenzon, arguing with Ivanov in *A Correspondence from Two Corners* (*Perepiska iz dvukh uglov*, 1921). For Gershenzon the sole possibility of renewal is in forgetting, "plunging into Lethe," departing from the given of the cultural tradition. For Ivanov the vertical of ascent is opposed to the horizontal of the path leading away. Of the goal—true simplicity—he says: "It is not by exit from a given milieu or country that it is achieved, but by ascent. In every place—I again repeat and testify—there is a Bethel and a Jacob's ladder—in the center of every horizon" [*SS*, III, 412]. Of the cultural tradition he says: "Culture is the cult of ancestors and of course—even now it is dimly conscious of this—the resurrection of the dead" [*SS*, III, 412].

The cultural traditionalism of Ivanov ("filial respect toward history" in Gershenzon's expression [*SS*, III, 407]) bears the most immediate relation to that of which we speak, namely, the prerequisites for the closed nature of his symbolic system, for such a system could not be constructed by the efforts of a single man without entering into the rights of inheritance of the huge "thesaurus" of traditional symbolism. Here the poet needed not only all his polymathy,[22] not only the professional philologist's habit of patiently and slowly examining the significance of any signifier, but also the faith, which lay at the very heart of his poetry, in culture as the "resurrection of the dead," in the *reality* of his unity with the past, with the "fathers":

> . . . Thus the crowd of the departed, the incorporeal
> crowd, thinks and sings in those who live . . .
>
> . . . Tak sonm otshedshikh, sonm besplotnyj
> V zhivykh i myslit, i poet . . . [*SS*, III, 234]

The point is not that Ivanov is a bookish poet; Andrey Bely is also bookish, but he is capable neither of a faith that would not immediately be washed away by a stream of nervous self-irony, nor of "filial" constancy, nor of patient scrutiny of any sort of objective fact, nor, finally, of the slackened pace of thought and emotion necessary for this. Bely tremulously takes symbols into his hands from the treasure-house common to mankind and has no time to look at them closely. Here is a very simple example:

> . . . O, the radiant Hosanna
> Of Matthew, Mark, and John!
>
> O, osijannaja Osanna
> Matfeja, Marka, Ioanna![23]

If these lines were by Ivanov, we would be obliged to ask ourselves why and on the basis of what special considerations and reflections Luke has been omitted from the list of Evangelists. This absolutely could not be without a reason, because for Ivanov the traditional name-symbols do not merge, as *from a distance,* into an indistinguishable series with an indeterminate meaning, but each of them

taken separately means what it means. In face of the lines by Andrey Bely, though, such a question has no meaning. The utter fortuitousness of the choice of names—Matthew, Mark, John—is even externally confirmed by the fact that immediately before this are mentioned the bull, the lion and the eagle, i.e., the symbols of the Evangelists Luke, Mark and John, with the omission of Matthew. The choice is obviously dictated by phonetics and metrics; on the semantic level the names "Matthew" and "Luke" are completely interchangeable for Andrey Bely. He is concerned with creating the necessary mood and effective sound image: "Matthew" (*Matfej*) and "Mark" are connected by alliteration, "Mark" and "John" (*Ioann*) by the assonance of the stressed vowel, which has a particular force in Russian verse; the feverish tempo of the poem allows neither the author nor the reader to meditate upon more hidden shades of meaning. The three names are hurled at the reader by the rush of the rhythm, and at the same moment all their diffuse meaning is given away without a remainder; there is nothing left to scrutinize. Here there is much "mysteriousness" but, strictly speaking, no real mysteries. It is the poetics of "glossolalia," not *philologia sacra*.

Here is yet another example from the same poem:

> You, sisters—
> —(You, Love, are like a rose,
> You, Faith, are trembling ecstasy,
> Hope is murmuring tears,
> Sophia is lofty Swedenborg!)—
>
> Having united four forces
> They were in a triple depth . . .
>
> Vy, sestry—
> —(Ty, Ljubov'—kak roza,
> Ty, Vera,—trepetnyj vostorg,
> Nadezhda—lepetnye slezy,
> Sofija—gornij Svedenborg!)—
>
> Soediniv chetyre sily
> V trojakoj byli glubinoj . . .[24]

The numerical symbolism of the last two lines seems to express the pretension of this passage to a special spiritual significance. The names which figure in the fragment are taken from the church calendar: "Faith [*Vera*], Hope [*Nadezhda*], Love [*Ljubov'*] and their mother Sophia [*Sofija*]"—according to tradition, Roman martyrs of the eleventh century, to whom the holiday of September 17, popular in Russia, is consecrated. At the same time, Sophia is the "Divine Wisdom" which plays such an important role in the Russian mystic tradition from the churches of St. Sophia in Kiev and Novgorod to the religio-philosophical conceptions of Vladimir Solovyov, Florensky and Sergej Bulgakov.

The poem "First Meeting" (*Pervoe svidanie*) stands in the shadow of Solovyov's image, and "sophiological" motifs are natural in it. But why is "Divine Wisdom" a characteristically Russian image that finds its embodiment on ancient icons,[25] so energetically connected with the name of the Swedish visionary and theosophist of the eighteenth century, the founder of a Protestant sect, the New Jerusalem Church, that was propagated mainly in England and America? What is "sophiological" about Swedenborg? Apparently, all the concrete connotations of the name "Swedenborg"—for instance, Swedish origin, or the sectarian and quasi-materialistic type of mysticism,[26] or whatever else—hardly exist for Bely. The semantics of the name is reduced here to a scant minimum ("something mystic, profoundly sagacious"); on the other hand, phonetics again triumphs. The accord of the consonants *n–r–g* and stressed vowel *o* bound the words "lofty" (*gornij*) and "Swedenborg" into a certain indissoluble semantic unit twice repeated in the poem.

But when the same name, "Swedenborg," appears in Ivanov—moreover, in a comic poem, written "for an occasion" and not included in a single collection—the name's meanings appear more concretely and fully. Describing, in a letter to Bryusov of January 3/16, 1905, his spending New Year's Day in the company of the still quite young V. F. Ern, Ivanov first speaks of their attempts to divine the military and revolutionary future of Russia in the coming year, that is, of efforts to perform, as it were, an act of clairvoyance (cf. contemporaries' accounts of the clairvoyance of Swedenborg who foresaw through space the fire in Stockholm, etc.). Secondly, he mentions the Swedish etymology of Ern's surname. After this there is not the slightest arbitrariness when Ern is called "young Swedenborg."[27] Even here there is something to ponder; the question, Why Swedenborg? is not meaningless. The historical name, transformed into a symbol, is used in Ivanov's poetic joke with greater deliberation and precision than in the pathetic and pretentious lines by Andrey Bely.

As for the personifications of Faith, Hope, and Love, their use by the two poets is also characteristic. In Andrey Bely, Love is "like a rose" (the symbol of the rose is degraded into a simile—"like"), Faith is "trembling ecstasy," Hope is "murmuring tears." The characterizations of the latter two do not reveal any distinction of nuances in meaning and are semantically interchangeable, leaving meter and phonetics aside. In Ivanov two examples may be given.

The first:

> . . . "I," grumbles Will, "do not accept the world."
> In reproach Wisdom tells her: "But the world is your phenomena."
> But Faith whispers: "Await Epiphany!"
> And with her, Hope: "It's near, near—I hearken!"
> And with her, Love: "I will lift the cross of the Earth!"—
> And she weeps tears and weeps without alleviation . . .
>
> . . . "Ja,"—ropshchet Volja,—"mira ne priemlju."
> V ukor ej Mudrost': "Mir—tvoi zh javlen'ja."
> No Vera shepchet: "Zhdi bogojavlen'ja!"
> I s nej Nadezhda: "Blizko, blizko,—vnemlju!"
> I s nej Ljubov': "Ja krest Zemli pod"emlju!"—
> I slezy l'et, i l'et bez utolen'ja . . . [*SS*, II, 266]

The second example:

> Wisdom has created "I am" in us,
> Love—"thou art." Over the abyss of darkness
> Faith has illumined God's city,
> Hope whispers: "I—am we . . ."

"Az esm'" Premudrost' v nas tvorila,
"Esi"—Ljubov'. Nad bezdnoj t'my
Grad Bozhij Vera ozarila,
Nadezhda shepchet: "Az—esmy" . . . [*SS*, III, 238]

As early as 1904, Blok wrote of Ivanov: "There is the kind of person . . . who is accustomed to reckoning with the whole multi-storied edifice of human history."[28] In both cases this is precisely what we see: the traditional symbols, while acquiring not only a new but a very personal meaning (one must feel the passion the poet invested in his thesis "man is united" in order to appreciate the syntactic oxymoron of the words "I—am we" [*az—esmy*]), do not become a private "myth" or a simple function of a momentary context; they do not fall prey to the author's self-will, they do not forget their concrete historical past. Wisdom, which in the first example exposes Will as the culprit for the transient world of phenomena[29] and in the second teaches people self-consciousness, that is, in both cases speaks of human freedom and responsibility, is truly Sophia or Sapientia, as the most common tradition of Christian-oriented philosophical idealism, the so-called *philosophia perennis*, knows it. The property of Faith is to oppose "epiphany"[30] (that is, *noumenon*) to "phenomenon," that is, the lying manifestation of phenomenon—in other words, to build the illuminated "city" of St. Augustine in the face of dark chaos. This is a quite definite action with which one may confuse neither the action of Love—to take upon itself the common burden of all people, teaching self-exposure toward "Thou" to the self-enclosed "I am"—nor the action of Hope—to affirm that the fulfillment of promise is "near, near," exposing the meaning of promise through the paradox "I—am we" as the imperative of ecumenicity (*sobornost'*), that is, of the *personal* unity of all humanity.[31] Nothing is diffuse or arbitrary and hence nothing is interchangeable. Each symbol taken separately preserves its inner adequacy and faithfulness to itself, which cannot be denied even by the reader for whom the world view expressed in those symbols is unacceptable. The correlation of the symbols has the precision of a mathematical proposition which satisfies the mind. (Reading Ivanov, it is hard not to recall Aristotle, who explained the very existence of poetry by the fact that "to come to know is a most pleasant occupation."[32]) The intellectual satisfaction is all the fuller and broader since from the given realm of symbols proceed utterly necessary connections to neighboring symbols (in the first of the poems cited above, Will, Wisdom, Faith, Hope and Love appear as the five Wise Virgins of the Gospel parable, while the five Foolish Virgins are identified with the five senses in their uncleansed, unenlightened state), and disperse outward to the entire symbolic universe of the poet.[33]

Was the order of this "universe" identical throughout Ivanov's creative career? Of course not! The point is that from beginning to end it steadily grew and accumulated. The meaning of the symbols, for all its polyvalence, was not allowed to turn into its opposite under the destructive action of Romantic irony, which for Ivanov, in contrast to the other Symbolists,[34] played no role whatsoever.[35] The degree of stability in Ivanov's system of symbols is, by the way, perfectly apparent from the passages just cited in which Sophia and her daughters figure. As we ascertained, it is quite possible to interpret them together, bringing them into a certain concordance, despite the fact that more than a decade (1906 to 1918/19) lies between them. It would perhaps be more difficult to "harmonize" the symbolism of just one of Blok's cycles, *On the Field at Kulikovo* (*Na pole Kulikovo*), which originated in the second half of 1908, than to carry out this task for the sum of Ivanov's poetic texts. For the latter, the relations among symbols are organized so that biographical time has only reinforced the stability of the edifice, compacting more tightly the bricks which form it.

The poetry of Ivanov, which has so often been found to be obscure, in fact turns out to be unusually clear—a poetry of precise contour and firm, slowly unfolding significance. Perhaps it is not quite "lyric poetry" in that special sense to which the readers of Blok or Esenin or Marina Tsvetaeva have become accustomed, that is, it is not the "lyric element"; but it is nonetheless true poetry. In the world of poetry of our century, where there is too much opaque

inarticulateness, mixing the author's overly personal idiosyncrasies with overly impersonal inculcations of "dynamic" rhythms, the voice of Vyacheslav I. Ivanov deserves renewed listeners.

Notes

1. Some time ago it was customary to accept Vyacheslav Ivanov more seriously as a theoretician than as a poet. Anna Akhmatova's well-known words are an expression of this: "an all-embracing intellect," but his poetry "no longer exists" (Anna Akhmatova, *Sochinenija*, vol. II, Mezhdunarodnoe literaturnoe sodruzhestvo, 1968, p. 340). It is somewhat strange to recall these words today. What comes to life once again is the poetry of Ivanov with its distinctive intimate sense of the cultural memory of humanity, of the "anamnesis" which struggles with oblivion. Poetry is necessary; theory is "interesting" or "instructive"—another hierarchical level.

2. Letter of August 13/26, 1909 (*Gosudarstvennaja biblioteka SSSR im. Lenina, Zapiski otdela rukopisej*, Issue 34, Moscow, 1973, p. 262). The word "element" as applied to Ivanov may seem unexpected; it is not as trite as when applied to Blok, but it is justified, for "philology" actually acquires the impetuosity of a lyric element in Ivanov's poems. The correlation of "artificial" and "elemental" is not at all simple here. As Andrey Bely once noted, "Vyacheslav Ivanov's artificiality is spontaneous in him" (*Russkaja literatura XX veka {1890–1910}*, ed. S. A. Vengerov, Moscow, 1916, p. 123).

3. "Dovecote" (*Golubjatnja*) (*SS*, III, 494). When we strive to comprehend the aspect of Ivanov as a poet, his human position in his poetry, a special problem is the correlation between cultural sociability and creative solitude. The "Tower" is a colorful and rather important fact of Russian cultural life at the beginning of the century; but when we think of poetry, it is better to forget about it for a while. The memoirists wrote what they remembered, and they remembered what they saw—the hospitable master of the "Wednesdays," "Vyacheslav the Magnificent," the tricliniarch and symposiarch in an environment of very lively but slightly feverish spiritual intercourse. "A door onto the street: crowds thronged," the irritable and impressionable Andrey Bely described it in *Beginning of the Century* (*Nachalo veka*, Moscow, 1933, p. 314). But even on a purely external biographical level, Ivanov's creative career begins with years of deep solitude and also ends with years of deep solitude; indeed the decisive turn in the middle of that career toward the new poetics of *Tender*

Mystery (*Nezhnaja tajna*), *Infancy* (*Mladenchestvo*) and *Winter Sonnets* (*Zimnie sonety*) is also connected with seclusion. The contrast of these times with the sociable times of the "Tower" constitutes the theme of the seventh sonnet in the cycle *De profundis amavi* (1920). But even at the time of the "Tower," the hidden basis of sociability was, of course, solitude, which the memoirists could not see: a quite empirical solitude at the writing desk, but also an inner solitude—"in mundo solus."

4. Cf. for example the very revealing letter to Bryusov, January 14/27, 1905 (*Literaturnoe nasledstvo*, vol. 85, Moscow, 1976, pp. 471–72); it explains much about the psychological orientation of Ivanov, who appeals to the wisdom of the "public man." It is because of the observance of a peculiar etiquette, by the way, that it is so difficult to reconstruct with even relative completeness the range of reading of this *poeta doctus*: as a rule, in his articles he quotes authors who are painstakingly selected and accepted into a certain canon, avoiding the quotation of "non-canonical" authors. Dante is included in his canon, but not the medieval Latin poetry of sequences, in which, however, the poet must have been steeped for the sequence *Breve aevum separatum* to have arisen by itself out of his dream into waking life (*SS*, I, 130–31; II, 395). Except for Calderón, sixteenth and seventeenth-century European poetry, so dear to Ivanov, is excluded; or, to dwell on more recent examples, Nietzsche is included in the canon, but not Richard Wagner who remains at best on the borderline of the canon. It is interesting that the sole passage from Wagner's texts that is cited several times in Ivanov's articles (in his own translation) is Hans Sachs's monologue in *Die Meistersinger* about the essence of poetry, already cited in Nietzsche's *Birth of Tragedy* and thereby somehow attached to the canon. N. V. Kotrelyov, to whose generous help I am in general much obliged in my work on this subject, drew my attention to the connection of this selection of "canonical" authors and texts with the cultural-"diplomatic" mission and cultural-"political" wishes of Ivanov.

5. Ivanov's last pronouncement on Symbolism was, as we know, the 1936 article "Simbolismo" for the *Enciclopedia italiana*, and it is already, in essence, written differently from the theoretical articles of the preceding years: the tone is different.

6. Akhmatova found that there was much "of Balmont" in Ivanov's poems (see note 1 above). In itself this is a truism: any poet, no matter how original, uncompromising, or intractable a creator he is, is also the contemporary of his contemporaries, and as such cannot be entirely protected from the diseases of the age. We are entitled to rejoin to Akhmatova's remark that we are interested in those of Ivanov's poems in which there is *no* "Balmont."

(Indeed, she herself said, "Now the *Winter Sonnets* I like."). A scholarly paper is not the place for categorical value judgments, but it can hardly be doubted that "Canzona I" in *Cor Ardens II*, almost all of *Tender Mystery*, the late sonnets, *Man* (*Chelovek*), especially its second half, and *Roman Diary* (*Rimskij dnevnik*), are much more vital today than are *Transparency* (*Prozrachnost'*) or *Arcana*, "Eros" and "Golden Curtains" (*Zolotye zavesy*) in *Cor Ardens I*.

7. "Die Kunst construiren heisst, ihre Stellung im Universum bestimmen. Die Bestimmung dieser Stelle ist die einzige Erklärung, die es von ihr gibt" (*F. W. J. von Schellings Sämtliche Werke. I. Abtheilung*, vol. 5, Stuttgart and Augsburg, 1859, p. 373). R. Halbuzel, *F. W. J. Schellings Lehre von der menschlichen Erkenntnis. Dialektik und Einbildungskraft* (Basel, 1954).

8. "A symbol is only a true symbol when it is inexhaustible and boundless in its significance. . . . It is many-faced, polyvalent and always obscure in its furthest depths" (*SS*, I, 713).

9. Besides which, such a diagram would require not an article but a voluminous book for its substantiation and explanation.

10. See above, note 2.

11. Ju. Tynjanov, *Problema stikhotvornogo jazyka. Stat'i* (Moscow, 1965), pp. 278–79.

12. A. Blok, *Sobranie sochinenij*, (Moscow-Leningrad, 1960), I, 22.

13. Cf. D. E. Maksimov, "Ideja puti v tvorcheskom soznanii Al. Bloka," *Blokovskij sbornik* (Tartu, 1972), II, 25–121.

14. Ibid., p. 48.

15. Letter to Bryusov of June 3, 1906, *Literaturnoe nasledstvo*, vol. 85 (Moscow, 1976), 492.

16. In the well-known letter of June 6, 1911, to Andrey Bely.

17. Blok, *Sobranie sochinenij*, (Moscow-Leningrad, 1960), III, 249. Cf. these passages from his letters: "I know that my path is, in its basic aspiration, straight as an arrow . . ." (*Sobranie sochinenij*, VIII, 265); ". . . You go along the same highway, still unknown, but straight as an arrow" (ibid., p. 239).

18. Did he perhaps recall the words of St. Bernard: "Ubicumque fueris, *tuus esto*; noli te tradere"?

19. Blok, *Sobranie sochinenij*, III, 286.

20. Blok, *Sobranie sochinenij*, V, 73.

21. . . . And you won't understand the blue eye,
Until you yourself become like a path . . .
. . .
You will not forget everything and stop loving everything . . .
(Blok, *Sobranie sochinenij*, II, 84).

22. Ivanov's erudition was more substantial than that of any of the other Symbolists. He could not have permitted himself accidentally to confuse hermetics with hermeneutics, as did Blok (*Sobranie sochinenij*, V, 8), or include the seventeenth-century French philosopher Gassendi among the medieval Arab scholars, as did Bely (*Ofejra*, Moscow, 1922, p. 157), or involuntarily substitute the German *lügen* (to lie) for the Latin *lugere* (to mourn), as did Bryusov, who was proud of his high-school Latin (according to the testimony of S. V. Shervinsky).

23. Andrej Bely, *Pervoe svidanie* (St. Petersburg, 1921), p. 6.

24. Ibid., p. 53.

25. Cf. G. D. Filimonov, "Ocherki russkoj Khristianskoj ikonografii, I. Sofija Premudrost' Bozhija," *Vestnik Obshchestva drevnerusskogo iskusstva* (Moscow, 1874–1876); P. G. Lebedintsev, "Sofija Premudrost' Bozhija v ikonografii Severa i Juga Rossii," *Kievskaja starina*, December 1884, and others.

26. Let us note that Vladimir Solovyov, who displayed a certain interest in Swedenborg, rather sharply reproached the Swedish mystic for his "dry and sober intellect, with its formal-rational modes of thought," and for his "coarsely rationalistic polemics," as well as for his lack of philosophical culture (V. S. Solov'ev, *Sobranie sochinenij*, IX, [St. Petersburg, 1907], 242). He clearly would not have admitted Swedenborg as the embodiment of his Sophia. These facts have no connection with Andrey Bely: for him what is real and concrete is not the image of Sophia and not the image of Swedenborg, but the purely private "myth" about Nadezhda Lvovna Zarina—more precisely, his late "myth" about this youthful "myth" ("I wander before my very self . . ."). This arbitrariness is not at all like the symbolism of the *Tale of Prince Svetomir*, in which even the most intimate autobiographical *realia* (Georgievskij Lane and the Church of St. George, the poet's place of birth and christening, are turned into "the Egor boundary marker" and "the Egor spring"; Volkov [Wolves'] Lane, which intersects with Georgievskij Lane, becomes the packs of wolves before "Egor'e"; the return of the dead beloved Gorislava in her daughter Otrada is like Lydia Dmitrievna, who "returned" in Vera) are included in a strictly disciplined system and reconstructed with an orientation toward the objective facts of a suprapersonal—Russian national, Helleno-Byzantine, and omni-human—tradition. For Ivanov the suprapersonal is in principle *more real* than the mere personal: in the 1908 article "Two Elements in Modern Symbolism," he firmly opposed "objective truth" to "subjective freedom" (*SS*, II, 546) and demanded "self-restraint and renunciation of *ego* for the sake of *res*" (*SS*, II, 547).

27. *Literaturnoe nasledstvo*, 85, 470–71. It is worth recalling that contemporaries emphasize that Ern, who was of the Orthodox religion, had the

physiognomical and psychological traits of Protestant sectarianism. A. V. Kartachev wrote of him: "Tall, with a pale, beardless, never smiling face, in the black frock-coat customary at that time, he seemed to be a Protestant pastor of some moralizing sect, and was an example of the Protestant pathos in Orthodoxy" (*Pravoslavnaja mysl'*, 1951, VIII, 48). This shows the sort of concreteness of connotation there was even in such a comic and brief mention of Swedenborg's name by Ivanov.

28. Review of *Transparency* (Blok, *Sobranie sochinenij*, V, 538).

29. The world as a phenomenon of Will—this formula in itself, of course, inevitably brings to mind the philosophical language of Schopenhauer, and it would be unrealistic to assert that Ivanov was not thinking at all of the German metaphysician. The matter, however, is not so simple. First, this motif has correspondences in earlier thinkers than Schopenhauer, for example, Plotinus. Second and more important, it appears very often in the context of Ivanov's poetry and is subjected to interpretation in an ethico-Christian spirit like that of certain ascetic Orthodox authors; to me, precisely *to me* the world appears as a lie, "a dream," and "darkness," while not being such in its essence (in contrast to the "maya" of the Buddhists):

> . . . And the tender paradise, inherent in the earth,
> Has been covered with a fog, that races toward death
>
> . . . I nezhnyj raj, zemle prisushchij,
> Maroj pokrylsja, v smert' begushchej (*SS*, III, 616)

and this action of *my* distorted will is my fault:

> . . . For a long time now my eyes have not cherished
> The pattern that cleverly wove darkness.
> That I was the weaver I will understand at the last moment;
> I will say: "You're right," to the judge without reservation.
>
> . . . Uzhe ne dorog
> Ocham uzor, khitro zatkavshij t'mu.
> Chto tkach byl ja, v poslednij srok pojmu;
> Sud'e: "Ty prav,"—skazhu bez ogovorok. (*SS*, III, 574)

30. For Ivanov, to put the words of the same root *javlen'e* (phenomenon) and *bogojavlen'e* (epiphany) next to each other and bind them by rhyme means to reveal their philosophical contrast ("epiphany" as the transcendence of "phenomenon"). Such rhyming ranks with the punning rhyming of homonyms which is characteristic of the poet, but generally unusual anywhere but in

comic poetry: *lik*—"assembly, chorus, clergy" and *lik*—"face" (*Milost' mira*, "Mercy of the World," *SS*, I, 556); *trusu*—"earthquake" and *trusu*—"coward" ("An attack, like an earthquake [coward] . . ," *SS*, III, 598). It has its closest parallels in medieval poetry, in which punning rhymes are used in the most serious sacral context. For Ivanov the confrontation of words of the same root serves the same goal of reactualization of the etymological core of the word as it served for Plato. Cf. S. S. Averintsev, "Klassicheskaja grecheskaja filosofija kak javlenie istoriko-literaturnogo rjada," in *Novoe v sovremennoj klassicheskoj filologii* (Moscow, 1979), pp. 41–81.

31. Of course, this conception of humanity as a personality can be divorced neither from the ideas of Vladimir Solovyov nor from the trend of Christian personalism in twentieth-century philosophy. One must note, however, that it has parallels in ancient mysticism, especially the teachings of the Byzantine theologian Maxim the Confessor (662) about the "pleroma of souls" as a sort of multiple unity and suprapersonal personality.

32. *Poet.*, 4, 48b12.

33. One can see this very well in the example of two lines from *Man* (*SS*, III, 218):

> The boundary river has no time for flesh,
> Where for the *obolus* you give the *milot* . . .
>
> Ne do plota reki predel'noj,
> Gde za obol otdash' milot' . . .

The reader is obliged, first, to comprehend in one glance the image of the worlds divided by the river of the afterlife, an image which belongs among the fixed motifs of Ivanov's poetry and is, for example, given in one early poem (*SS*, I, 568):

> With the soundlessly splashing Lethes
> God divided his worlds . . ."
>
> Bezzvuchno pleshchushchimi Letami
> Bog razgradil svoi miry . . .

Second, his imagination is referred to the classical symbol of the *obolus* as payment to Charon for passage across this river. Third, still another line leads to the biblical symbolism of *milot* (μηλωτή —"goat's hide," the word which, by the way, designates the cloak of the prophet Elijah, given by him to Elisha at the River Jordan upon his parting with this world). All three symbolic aspects are given with characteristic conciseness.

34. Besides Ivanov, one may perhaps note the full absence of total irony (described, by the way, in Blok's frightful article "Irony," 1908) only in Balmont. A certain quality of wholeness in praising existence unites the two poets (cf. Ivanov's word to Balmont: "We are both glorifiers," cited in the article by Olga Deschartes, *SS*, I, 74). But in Balmont it is, first, bathed in the simplicity, if not inanity, of the general setting, and second, devalued by the essential denial of any coherent significance ("Only fleeting things do I put into verse . . .").

35. This does not at all mean that Ivanov lacks humor. Irony and humor are rather opposites: irony is pride, humor is humility. A quiet, "old man's" humor comes to the poet together with humility:

To the neophytes by the threshold
I prophesied as a mystagogue.
I make fruit of repentance:
I speak in common language.

And what is there to say? A lot?
Gogol's stopped being folksy,
While making the fruit of repentance.
But I repent, being folksy,

Should I take a simile
From Homer's garden?—like a cicada.
To cicadas he (one himself!)
Likened old men . . .

K neofitam u poroga
Ja veshchal za mistagoga.
Pokajan'ja plod tvorju:
Prostorech'em govorju.

Da i chto skazat'-to? Mnogo l'?
Perestal gutorit' Gogol'
Pokajan'ja plod tvorja.
Ja zhe kajus', gutorja,—

Iz Gomerova li sada
Vzjat' sravnen'e?—kak tsikada.
On tsikadam (sam takov!)
Upodobil starikov . . . (*SS*, III, 593)

—Translated by Suzanne Fusso

Vyacheslav Ivanov the Poet: A Tribute and a Reappraisal

Vladimir Markov

But the pure treasure of lofty art
Is too heavy for the people

No vysokogo iskusstva
Ljudjam tjazhek chistyj klad

One night back in 1940, the famous jack-of-all-literary-trades, Korney Chukovsky, came to the Philosophical Division of the University of Leningrad to read from his no less famous (and now recently, at last, published) *Chukokkala*, a visitors' book in which, for about thirty years, everybody who was anybody had left his or her impromptu contribution. The auditorium was packed with students; I was among them. Somewhere in the middle of the evening, he said: "Guess who wrote this?" And he recited a short *Gelegenheitsgedicht*, admirably crafted and rich in sound, with internal rhymes echoing toward the end of the poem. My fellow students began to shout out their guesses: Blok! Mayakovsky! Esenin! (My generation was not especially noted for either its taste or its imagination.) Chukovsky smiled slyly and kept saying, "No, better! No, greater!" and finally, after having teased those young barbarians to his satisfaction, he declared, "Vyacheslav Ivanov"—no doubt to everyone's disappointment.

The present generation is more sophisticated. They can discuss Pasternak, Akhmatova, Mandelshtam, Tsvetaeva and even Khlebnikov, but they still look at Ivanov's name "like a sheep at a new gate" (*kak baran na novye vorota*), or, to quote Mayakovsky, "like a

goat at a poster" (*kak v afishu koza*). He is still little known, little read and little appreciated.

Genuine students of Russian poetry need neither proof nor reminder that Vyacheslav Ivanov was a major poet. Still, it is not too much of an exaggeration to say that he is the last great Russian poet of this century who remains to be established as such, who, in fact, is in need of a society to promote his work (similar, say, to the Gustav Mahler Society of only a decade and a half ago). What kind of a poet was Ivanov? Why do his admirers love his verse? Is there anything to love in it? What prevented his being recognized to the full extent until now? What is the critical consensus about him?

Twelve years ago, when I met the late and unforgettable Olga A. Shor in Rome and very cautiously ventured that I simply loved Ivanov's poetry but did not care much about Nietzsche, Dionysus, mystical anarchism, theurgy, mythopeia or ecumenicity (*sobornost'*), I fully expected to be shown the door. Instead, she smiled happily, saying, "that is exactly what Vyacheslav Ivanovich wanted." Having cited these two highest authorities, I proceed with more confidence, even if realizing that, often, while reading Ivanov, I listen to him "as a curious Scythian [listens] to an Athenian sophist" (*kak ljubopytnyj skif afinskomu sofistu*).

A description of Ivanov's poetry is a collective task for the future. In the meantime, Mandelshtam's words about another, quite different poet will suffice:

> Nobody [has] these undulations of sounds . . .
> And never [has there been] this murmuring of waves . . .
>
> Ni u kogo—etikh zvukov izgiby . . .
> I nikogda—etot govor valov . . .

The poet himself also helps us with his line:

> Speak only gold and honey.
>
> Tol'ko zolotom i medom govori.

But nothing helps as much as a poem read through from beginning

to end. Let us choose one at random: the "Taormina" from *Pilot Stars* (*Kormchie zvezdy,* 1903):

> Beyond the darkness of Ausonia, the sky is reddening from the East;
> Amber smoke rises above snow-peaked Aetna;
> The snow glows and burns, and flame-colored purple
> Flows from its head, like royal unction,
>
> Onto calm wooded slopes, onto peaceful fields
> And olive groves and the fore-dawn coast,
> Where the indistinct Pontus will soon glisten
> With a translucent blue amidst the ruins of the sacred propylaeum.
>
> The theater sleeps in shattered pieces; the orchestra has grown silent,
> But thy thymele smolders in the snows eternally,
> Thou who comest with the east of the day with the triumph of the sacred!
>
> And from thy citadel, Evius, as in days of old,
> The mournful Melpomene espies a magic circle of wilderness
> And Tartarus breathing beneath a garden of captivity.
>
> Za mgloj Avzonii vostok nebes alej;
> Jantarnyj vskhodit dym nad snegoverkhoj Etnoj;
> Sneg rdeet i gorit, i purpur ognetsvetnyj
> Techet s ee glavy, kak tsarstvennyj elej,
>
> Na sklony tikhie dubrav, na mir polej
> I roshchej maslichnykh, i bereg predrassvetnyj,
> Gde skoro smutnyj pont golubiznoj prosvetnoj
> Sverknet v razvalinakh sviashchennykh propilej.
>
> V oblomkakh spit teatr, orkhestra onemela;
> No vechno kuritsja v snegakh tvoja fimela,
> Grjadyj v vostoke dnja i torzhestve svjatyn'!
>
> I s tvoego kremlja, kak drevle, Mel'pomena
> Zrit, Evij, skorbnaja, volshebnyj krug pustyn'

I Tartar, dyshashchij pod vertogradom plena![1]

This sunrise, ray after ray, is one of the finest crescendos in Russian poetry, worthy of the company of some of the Fet elegies or of that accumulation of cacophony in Nekrasov's "On Weather." The combination of colors is rare and remarkable: amber, white and dark red, which in a moment are to be joined by blue—the color which is not yet present. The allusions are subtle, too.[2] The poem echoes Pushkin's "The Dispersing of the Clouds" (*Redeet oblakov*) which, by contrast, describes evening; and a kremlin in Sicily should not surprise us: this metaphor of the jagged ruins of the amphitheater is another in a long series of Ivanov's "connections." Being a true symbolist, he tied things together; we may recall the unions of St. Francis and the sweet Cythera, of a knight and a tsarevna, Perun embracing Gaea, or the meeting, in one sonnet, of the Roman Coliseum, a Greek maenad, the New Testament lamb (*agnets*) and the Old Testament Eden (*vertograd*).[3]

I am far from suggesting that the marvelous "Taormina" is a tourist postcard (as most of Bunin's travel poems are), but it pays to begin to read it as such in order to experience the magnificent shock of seeing how a postcard becomes a metaphysical snapshot, how it is transfigured into a mythological landscape worthy of Tyutchev (or of Nicolas Poussin), with a beautiful sunrise ending in a premonition of an earthquake and with chaos throbbing beneath your very feet. A lesser poet would develop this into a sentimental sadness about the death of the gods. Ivanov's poem, however, ends on the precarious coexistence of the realm of terrifying, hidden noumena with a pleasing desolation in the phenomena. I have not even begun to admire the stately variety of the sonnet's sentences, the *o*'s of line 1, the *e*'s almost invariably ending the lines—with the stunning junction between lines 2 and 3—and a quantity of other beautiful things. To be sure, this relatively early poem does not demonstrate Ivanov fully. In a sense it is not even typical, although it does contain so many of his favorite ideas and themes; but it is as good a stepping-stone as any to his many other wonderful sonnets as well as to such small gems as "The Finger" (*Perst'*), "Subtile virus

caelitum," "The Meeting" (*Vstrecha*), "The Sail" (*Parus*), "The Grave" (*Mogila*), "The First Purple" (*Pervyj purpur*), "A Siren" (*Sirena*), "The Sphinx is Looking" (*Sfinks gljadit*), "The Sorcerer-Cat" (*Kot vorozhej*) and "Taedium phaenomeni," as well as "Dryads" (*Driady*), "A Vision" (*Videnie*), "Chimeras" (*Khimery*), "Rainbows" (*Radugi*) and "Ad rosam."

If I were forced to do the impossible and to sum up in a short phrase what Vyacheslav Ivanov is about, I would say: the language of the gods. This language of the gods was, for centuries, considered to be the *sine qua non* of poetry, and it scarcely exists any longer. Many eighteenth-century Russian poets wanted to speak in it, few knew how to sustain it and only Derzhavin was truly bilingual: he could both soar and snore in his poems. But the death of the gods was imminent, and the nineteenth century sealed it. Perhaps the most important contribution of Russian Symbolism was its crazy, quixotic attempt to return the language of the gods to poetry. Ivanov's effort was the most consistent and, perhaps, the most successful.

The other party was stronger, however. Acmeism and Futurism are, in this instance, not enemies, but allies. Finally, Pasternak successfully filled the familiar five traditional meters with the spoken language, seemingly for good; and Akhmatova, in her old age, contemptuously dismissed Ivanov as unreadable.[4] (I am sure that she did not remember "Taormina" when she went there in December 1964 to collect her prize.)

The victory of the language of the mob created the greatest stumbling block on the reader's path to Ivanov. Firstly, it opened the doors for countless second-rate virtuosos of colloquial diction, such as Tvardovsky, Slutsky, Smelyakov (and I name the best), who managed to drown the organ of Vyacheslav the Magnificent with their balalaikas. Secondly, and more significantly, the process made us almost forget that Virgil, Dante, Milton and Derzhavin used the language of the gods to speak about lofty and significant things, and that, indeed, there is no other way to speak about them.

Ivanov moved easily in the world where Love and Beauty begin with capital letters; yet he was not the high-priest he is often made

out to be: he did not exchange an augur's smile with other high-priests, as Bryusov was fond of doing;[5] and it obviously seldom occurred to him that any of these lofty and significant things could be inaccessible to anyone. In short, he is perfectly democratic and it was not his fault that his world knew only brotherhood (*bratstvo*) and not vulgar camaraderie (*panibratstvo*). Ivanov lacked the gift of vulgarization and he never popularized. He knew full well that the important meanings looming behind his lines could not avoid sounding oracular most of the time; he did not mind as long as his poetry was heard:

> Even if the world finds what I sing obscure
> It will hear my sonorous lyre.
>
> Puskaj nevnjatno budet miru,
> O chem poju,
> Zvonchatuju on slyshit liru. [*SS*, III, 29]

If and when, however, the vulgarization of poetry is arrested or even reversed, the name of Vyacheslav Ivanov will be written on banners in large golden letters. Perhaps he foresaw this when he wrote, "My lot is a golden one" (*Zolotoj mne zhrebij vypal* [*SS*, I, 763]), or when he rhymed—tautologically, but so aptly—*-zlato* with *zlato* [*SS*, III, 33–34].

Russian criticism is partly responsible for the present lack of interest in Ivanov. There is precious little of it, it is lacking in insight and for the most part is on the trite side. It is simply astonishing how uninformed criticism and judgments will often accumulate, take on the appearance of a consensus and finally inundate textbooks and reference works with worn phrases and arbitrary labels. Let us consider some of them: Ivanov is often seen as cold and bookish, an intellectual poet who is difficult to understand and devoid of spontaneity, a poet for scholars. But cold intellectuals do not write poetry. Even the verse of a mediocre poet originates in the subconscious. The difference between Dante, on the one hand, and Surikov or Surkov on the other, is that the subconscious of the former is immense, while that of the latter two is shallow and undeveloped. Ivanov was a passionate and human being steeped in life. Reading

his biography, one can not help but realize that his love life was richer than that of many poets and he always responded sensitively to what was going on around him. This so-called "rationalist" (in the phrase of Ivanov-Razumnik) spent most of his life in visions and dreams, and voices dictated Latin poetry to him.

It is certainly wrong to dub as "cold" the poet who "spoke gold and honey." What is more, coldness is not necessarily a poetical defect; a great poet can be cold, to wit, Alexander Blok: why else would he choose a blizzard to symbolize love? Those given to counting how many times a poet uses this or that color ought to consider the fact that when you read Blok's "The City, to the Red Limits" (*Gorod v krasnye predely*), with its orgy of the color red; you shiver. Ivanov's colors are not only warm by themselves (gold, red), but they communicate warmth. He is a poet of openness, roundness, fullness, mellowness and sweetness. It is not, however, the sweetness of sugar, but that of the slow-flowing, aromatic, sparkling and glowing, golden honey of poetry in which pipes "sounded out as did lyres and a sistrum, and a timbrel and a cymbal" (*zvuchali tsevnitsy i liry, i sistr i timpan i kimval* [*SS*, I, 541]). In short, it is no mere Pan-pipe; it is an orchestra with a Brahms-like density and opulence of sound.

This leads us to another quality of Ivanov's poetry, which renders it not only unique, but also desirable, relevant and even indispensable. It is the affirmative character of this poetry. Unique is, perhaps, the wrong word. After all, Russian poetry has Fet and Pasternak, who, even when in despair, wrote in a major key. Still, those two poets could not have written *Cor Ardens* (1911), a book born out of the death of a deeply beloved person, yet a positive and sweet book. This is why Ivanov is often, albeit mistakenly, deemed a non-tragic poet, a notion which only adds to his lack of popularity. Russians love what Dostoevsky called "lacerations"(*nadryv*), and so they feel uneasy in Ivanov's "expanses of divine never-ending plenitude" (*prostory bozhestvennoj, bezdonnoj polnoty* [*SS*, II, 428]). Was not Pushkin, someone may ask, no less life-affirming, indeed, the epitome of this very quality, and justly celebrated as such? Yes, indeed, but let us pursue the comparison. Ivanov could not have written

"My useless gift, my fortuitous gift" (*Dar naprasnyj, dar sluchajnyj*) or "Remembrance" (*Vospominanie*), and not because their themes were completely alien to him, but because, in his poetry, doubt and bitterness are overcome and transfigured.

Even the language of the gods consists of words, and so far we have neglected them. Who has not heard of Ivanov's predilection for rare words, his seven or more foreign languages, his Homeric epithets and the classical names which send us on yet another trip to the university library to consult Pauly-Wissowa? I cannot agree that these lexical features render Ivanov's poetry heavy and dry. Remember that he called Danaë a dark-bellied woman, open to the skies (*zhenoju temnolonnoju, otverstoj nebesam* [*SS*, II, 379]). What could be better? And is this dry? The point is, however, that not only the Old Church Slavonicisms and the other lexical curios,[6] but practically every word in Ivanov's poetry sounds new, strange and even odd. Sometimes he achieves this with a "wrong" stress that your dictionaries can tell you nothing about, as in "One generation after another on an ambush of eagerness" (*Za rodom rod na nakoval'nju rven'ja* [*SS*, III, 225]). And sometimes the effect is created by a most subtle intersecting of planes, as in the very first line of his *Man* (*Chelovek*, 1919): "When the azure is, like a giant fan" (*Kogda lazur' kak opakhalo . . .* [*SS*, III, 198]). I remember first reading this line and not immediately comprehending from where the pleasure derived. Later I saw, of course, that the cliché quality of *lazur'*, the neighbor of the unusual, and the very graphic *opakhalo*, simply and naturally is purified because its single *-u-* (and we all know that Ivanov knew a thing or two about this sound) is surrounded on both sides only by unstressed, half-stressed and stressed -a-'s; thus it stands out and is quite expressive. Even a hostile critic will fail to detect a trace of Ivanov's proverbial heaviness here; the line is as light as a feather.

We seldom realize how varied Ivanov is in his excellence. His poems seldom, if ever, resemble one another. Surprises await the reader at every step. The examples are numerous. I could point at the miracle of the verb rhyme in "Enthusiasm" (*Uvlechenie*); the Dantesque "Sphinx" (*Sfinks*) with its incredible ramifications of sentences; the marvelous diminuendo in stanza 6 of "The Morning Star"

(*Utrennjaja zvezda*); the fine Russian handling of the Alcaics in "Prayer of Camillus" (*Molitva Kamilla*). The anthologists have not yet created the "golden fund" of Ivanov: a selection of poems which ought to be in every anthology—except that they invariably select "The Sphinxes by the Neva" (*Sfinsky nad Nevoj*). In addition to the poems that I have mentioned earlier, my candidates for the "golden fund" would be Ivanov's difficult but rewarding masterpiece "The Dream of Melampos" (*Son Melampa*), his Gobelin-like "Theophilos and Maria" (*Feofil i Marija*) and his "Letter to the Caucasus" (*Poslanie na Kavkaz*)—so very different from the last two poems. Or his incredible ghasel "Rebirth" (*Vozrozhdenie*), or the name-studded "Cumae" (*Kumy*), or the color-filled "Sogno angelico." The list is endless.

If at least half of what I have said is correct and makes sense, then the problem is not whether to rediscover Ivanov or not, as some doubting Thomases still think, but to try to envisage how this rediscovery is going to unfold: which of his works might form a bridge to a future universal recognition and what segment of the community of *literati* could possibly initiate that rediscovery of Ivanov. The cultural historians and religious thinkers in Europe between the wars obviously viewed *A Correspondence from Two Corners* (*Perepiska iz dvukh uglov*, 1921) as the signal work here. Perhaps the Jungians should belatedly recognize the importance of Ivanov's concept of myth in connection with the ideas of their mentor. The narcissistic "peace and love" generation certainly missed its chance to discover in Ivanov the prophet of the universal Eros. Perhaps *Man*, with its intersecting planes, will prove such a starting point. Or Ivanov's prose? It may well be that the peaks of post-revolutionary Russian prose will, one day, form a triangle of unlikely bedfellows: Zoshchenko's stories, Bunin's *Life of Arseniev*, and Ivanov's *Tale of Prince Svetomir* (*Povest' o Svetomire Tsareviche*, 1928–1949). (This, of course, excludes Remizov, who is welcome at any time, but I do not know which of his post-war masterpieces to include.)

One thing is certain, Vyacheslav Ivanov's time is coming. His poetry, however, not only cries out for study, it needs crusaders. Millions knew—and forgot—Evtushenko; Brodsky may soon become a Nobel laureate, but Ivanov still has only a handful of admirers,

although we all know that he is far more than a cult figure. To some of us his greatness is obvious, and we also know what a vast stretch of work lies before us. It is imperative, however, that we approach the poet without the critical clichés of the past, and not only with respect for his poetry, but with love as well.

Notes

1. *SS*, I, 623. Unfortunately there is a misprint in *SS*,I: the word *krug* in the next to the last line is absent.

2. See, for example, Fet's "Kogda medlitel'no ja predan tishine" or "O, dolgo budu ja, v molchan'i nochi tajnoj." For Nekrasov, see Part I of his "O pogode," section III ("Sumerki," the seventeen lines beginning with "V nashej ulitse zhizn' trudovaja").

3. "Old Testamental," courtesy of Pushkin, to be sure.

4. See her *Sochinenija*, ed. G. P. Struve and B. A. Fillipov, 2 vols. (Washington, D.C., 1965–68), II, 346.

5. It takes real courage, after Kozma Prutkov's famous fable, to use *prozjabshij*/*prozjablo* in its original meaning, as Ivanov does three times in *Prozrachnost'* (*SS*, I, 777, 781, 783).

6. Cf. also *SS*, III, 499.

Vyacheslav Ivanov's *Cor Ardens* and the Esthetics of Symbolism

Johannes Holthusen†

The term "esthetics of symbolism" is to be understood here as the Symbolists' conception of the literary function of their poetry as well as of the cultural function of Symbolist literature. Poetic techniques play a role here, as well as explicit statements on esthetic questions: these techniques may have not only a structural function in the individual poem, but may also have a specific function in the Symbolist literary system. It seems to me characteristic of Symbolist poetry that the poetic method functions in any given case on three levels: in the individual poem, in the cycle of poems, and in Symbolist poetry as a whole with all its cultural implications.

The cycle, indeed, would appear to me to constitute an appropriate subject for investigation. Here the framework of the individual poem no longer constitutes a limit. Thematic centers become visible that in turn highlight the role of important symbols and their corresponding semantic fields in the context of the personal and supra-personal process of creation.

Quite early the Symbolists were united in broadly defining the cultural function of literature as prophecy. "Let the artist prepare himself as a prophet for the feat of life" (*k podvigu zhizni*), writes Bryusov in his essay "On Art" (*Ob iskusstve*, 1899). "Let him above all be wise. Years of silence lie ahead for the chosen ones."[1] The creative process, however, is at the same time an act of daring (*derzanie*), or, as Valery Bryusov puts it later in "Keys of the Mysteries" (*Kljuchi tajn*, 1904), "bold venturing beyond limits."[2] Vyacheslav Ivanov shares this notion. In his essay, "The Symbolism of Esthetic Principles" (*Simvolika esteticheskikh nachal*, 1905), dedicated to An-

drey Bely, Ivanov describes the emergence of the artist from the bog of everyday life as follows: "Behind you is your sacred path which is open to those who are daring" [*SS*, I, 824]. Two years later Ivanov writes in "On the Gay Craft and Wise Gaiety" (*O veselom remesle i umnom veselii*, 1907): "The symbol was that principle which had undermined individualism, leaving as its only legitimate sphere of activity the autocracy of bold ventures [*samovlastie derzanij*]" [*SS*, III, 75].

On the other hand, Symbolist art, as Bryusov points out in "Keys of the Mysteries," cannot abandon its unifying cultural function. "Art brings people into communion [*obshchit ljudej*], opens the soul, allows everyone to share in the creative process of the artist."[3] Ivanov later considerably developed this notion of the "social" function of art with an emphasis on religious matters. There is no question, however, that some of the basic ideas of Symbolism may be seen emerging here. Bely set down similar thoughts quite clearly and provocatively in his essay "Song of Life" (*Pesn' zhizni*, 1908). He linked the idea of the "bold venture" of art to its context of cultural activity. "Modern times, through the experience of daring [*opytom derzanija*] has strengthened the innovators in art in their efforts to find a form—through combining different art forms—that would illumine the depths of the moving forces of life [*zhiznennykh ustremlenij*]."[4] When Ivanov contrasts "art for life" with "art for art's sake," he is arguing along the same lines. In "On the Gay Craft" he calls for an art that "in the final analysis and in the deepest sense of the word would create life, an art of seekers after a religious synthesis of life" [*SS*, III, 66].

The process of rupture (*razryv*) and reunification (*vossoedinenie*), of renunciation (*otreshenie*) and restitution (*vozvrat*), represented for the Symbolists the most important law of the esthetic of the creative process, while at the same time it meant a rhythm of life determined by religion. In his essay "On the Boundaries of Art" (*O granitsakh iskusstva*, 1913) Ivanov puts it this way: "Taking and giving: life is the interaction of these energies. In spiritual life and creation they correspond to ascent and descent."[5] Ivanov gave much thought to the concepts underlying this esthetic of the creative process, beginning with his study "The Poet and the Crowd" (*Poet i chern'*, 1904). Every Symbolist would surely have approved his statement that no great work of art can come into being before "great events in the spiritual life of the creator" have taken place [*SS*, II, 636].

As many able critics have noted, the Symbolist esthetic of literary reception is in contrast much less well-developed. We may recall Osip Mandelshtam's criticism of Balmont: "the rejection of an interlocutor" not only seriously devalues poetry as such, but also obliterates poetry's awareness of its "poetic rightness" (*soznanie poeticheskoj pravoty*).[6] Such criticism could hardly be directed at Ivanov. He had already defined the role of the poet in the "universal" process of communication in "The Poet and the Crowd." Ivanov's point of departure here is the concept of a "split" between poet and public, a split from which Lermontov and Tyutchev suffered, but one that Symbolism should overcome. Symbols lead the poet back to myth, to the forgotten and lost archetypal possession of the soul of a people: the poet himself becomes in this way the "instrument of the people's memory."[7] The inner freedom of the poet is at the same time the inner necessity of return and of becoming one (*priobshchenie*) with the ancestral element. The poet expresses this concisely. "He invents the new and discovers the ancient" [*SS*, I, 714]. The whole essay in its conclusion links up with Bryusov's "Keys of the Mysteries" in saying that these keys entrusted to the poet are above all the keys to the "inviolable recesses of the people's soul" [*SS*, I, 714].

Ivanov's short study "On the Lyric" (*O lirike*) in the collection *Sporady* (1908) tells us what techniques the lyric poet has at his disposal to bring about the esthetic effect. First of all, very specific esthetic demands are made, such as the "mastery of rhythm and number" as the "moving and structuring principles of man's inner life," as well as "order" (*stroj*), "harmony," and "consonance" (*sozvuchie*). In contrast to the epic with its temporal chain of events and to the drama with its resolution of conflicts "of opposing wills," the single happening (*sobytie*) of lyric poetry is the "chord of the moment" (*akkord mgnovenija*) that has touched the strings of the "lyre of the world" [*SS*, III, 19].

The transitions from one mental image to another constitute

the lyric style: they are the "lightning-like flashes of the imagination." It should be noted, however, that a unifying mood, that is, a "lyric idea," holds together the plurality of images evoked. To abstract the lyric idea from "visual and phonic elements," according to Ivanov, is "to experience it concretely" in the musical sense. He believes that the "natural movement of rhythm," as well as that of rhyme, should be brought to life through strengthening and refinement (*izoshchrenijem*): this is the most important task for the future. The energy of rhyme aims at "calling forth such an intense excitement of the phonic fantasy in the 'reader'" that the soarings and vibrations of the musical rhythm may be supported by an equivalent force [*SS*, III, 120].

Ivanov stresses further the importance of the "colon," or phrasal cadence, for vocal harmony and internal rhyme. The overarching principle for him, however, is the musicality of the verse; this is what is decisive for the listener's receptivity. "The poet was a 'singer' only metaphorically speaking and by virtue of his inherited title; he was not capable of creating out of his own personal convictions a universal experience and participation by means of the musical enchantment of communicating rhythm" [*SS*, III, 121].

This passage expressly deals with the esthetic side of poetry, and the notion of "communicating rhythms" is broadened to encompass a dancing quality and a bodily plasticity in the lyric. Ivanov, following Gogol as he himself admits, pleads in his essay for the "sacerdotal verse of conjurings and prophecies" (*zaklinanij i proritsanij*) [*SS*, III, 123]. This demand reflects the "magical" thinking through language of the Symbolists as well as their dynamic conception of language. Andrey Bely, for example, puts it this way in his essay "The Magic of Words" (*Magija slov*, 1909):

> The word, therefore, always reveals causality: it creates causal relationships that are only later recognized as such. In the earliest stages of the development of mankind, the explanation of ultimate causes lay in the creation of words. The magician [*vedun*] is he who most of all knows words, who most of all speaks and therefore the one who casts a spell. . . . Creating a living language is always a struggle of man against hostile elements surrounding him. The word illuminates with victorious light the darkness that surrounds me.[8]

Cor Ardens as a whole is a "grand" poetic cycle symmetrically organized and consisting of five books in the final version (1911). The great cycle is divided into several smaller cycles, each with its own thematic and structural centers of gravity, which at times can be found outside any single poem or group of poems taken in themselves, for example, "Sun–Heart" (*Solntse–Serdtse*). The cycle *Eros* would seem to be the centerpiece in the architecture of *Cor Ardens*; it is especially closely tied up with the personal passions of the poet, was written in a very short period of time (autumn 1906), and was in print in early 1907 before the rest of the poems.[9] This centerpiece is bracketed by two books: "Cor Ardens" (Book 1) and "Speculum speculorum" (Book 2), on one side, and "Love and Death" (*Ljubov' i smert'*) (Book 4) and "Rosarium" (Book 5), on the other. While the two last mentioned were not written until after the death (October 17, 1907) of Lydia Zinovieva-Annibal, Ivanov's wife, Books 1 and 2 are more wide-ranging and represent a collection of poems over the years 1904–1909.

It was precisely during these years that the esthetic of Symbolism became the subject of heated debate, thanks partly to the journals *Vesy* and *Zolotoe Runo*, and it was at this point that it became possible to give final formulation to the esthetic. Ivanov played a particularly important part in formulating this esthetic and in applying it to a larger form—the lyric cycle.

During these years, to judge at least from the works of Blok and Bely, two intellectual stimuli that gave rise to much controversy were particularly important for the further development of Russian Symbolism: the doctrine of Dionysian "madness," of the Dionysian countervalence of life (*Gegenwertung des Lebens*),[10] as Ivanov understood it in his own scholarly terms and through his own particular reading of Nietzsche, and the doctrine of "peoplehood" as the supra-national vehicle of true culture, the universal Christian "ecumenicity" (*sobornost'*).

The preoccupation with Dionysian "ecstasy," which especially characterizes Russian Symbolism in the years 1908–1909, finds its roots essentially in Ivanov's understanding of Nietzsche's *Birth of Tragedy.* Ivanov begins his essay "Nietzsche and Dionysus" (1904) with a consideration of the myth of the Thessalonian military leader Eurypylos whose lot it was to receive the potent cult image of the god Dionysus as his share of the Trojan plunder. Ivanov compares the fate of Eurypylos, steeped in holy madness, with the fate of Nietzsche, and he develops the comparison: "Like that hero, he was in his lifetime a madman, and he rendered great services to the people he freed; he was a true hero of the new world, from the bosom of the earth. Nietzsche gave Dionysus back to the world: therein lay his calling and his prophetic madness" [*SS*, I, 716].

It is no accident, then, that the entire cycle "Cor Ardens" opens with the poem "Menada" in dancing homage to the god in the prayer of the water nymphs:

> Liquid, liquid, liquid god! . . .
> Slaughter,
> Slash
> With lightning tooth my stone, Dionysus!
> With sounding sledge pound out
> From my congealed breast the springs of rejoicing tears . . .
>
> Vlagi, vlagi, vlazhnyj bog!. . .
> Ty rezni,
> Polosni
> Zubom molnijnym moj kamen', Dionis!
> Mlatom zvuchnym istochi
> Iz grudi moej zastyloj slez likujushchikh kljuchi . . .
> [*SS*, II, 227]

Likewise it is no accident that Ivanov concluded "Speculum speculorum" (Book 2) with the sonnet "To the Poet" (*Poetu*) as epilogue. This poem appeared in the first number of the journal *Apollon* (October 1909) under the title "Apollini" [*SS*, II, 742]. It is characteristic of the author's method that the two other epilogue poems devoted to the "poet" appeared in the last installment of the journal *Vesy* whose publication was interrupted in 1909. The cycle "Speculum speculorum" thus mirrors the entire range of the poet's personal inclinations, while the first two books of the cycle "Cor Ardens" represent as a whole a tension between Dionysian and Apollonian traditions. It is of particular interest that the "springs of rejoicing tears" in the poem "Menada" correspond exactly to the last sonnet's "springs of tears" with which love soaks the roots of the laurel trees in the place sacred to Apollo:

> When Love soaks your buried root
> With springs of tears, and bleak gloom
> Like Death's canopy implants in the magic grove
> Where Dante wandered a living trunk . . .
>
> Kogda vspoit vash koren' grobovoj
> Kljuchami slez Ljubov', i mrak surovyj,
> Kak Smerti sen', volshebnoju dubrovoj,
> Gde Dant bluzhdal, obstanet stvol zhivoj . . . [*SS*, II, 359]

The name of the god is mentioned only at the end of the last tercet of this sonnet on the laurel, a plant sacred to Apollo, yet it is an exceedingly effective conjuring up of this divine energy that is the counterpart to that of Dionysus.

> Who took soothsaying Daphnes into skyey captivity
> And clad them in laurel, and reflected them in the well
> of immortal transparency?—Apollo.
>
> Kto veshchikh Dafn v efirnyj vzjal polon,
> I v lavr odel, i otrazil v krinitse
> Prozrachnosti bessmertnoj?—Apollon. [*SS*, II, 359]

There is no need at this point to emphasize further the great importance that transparency had as an esthetic principle of Symbolism.[11] In making use of the word "transparency" (*prozrachnost'*), Ivanov is quoting himself, as this is the title of his second volume of poetry (1904).

Ivanov's Dionysus studies were very much in the foreground at the time *Cor Ardens* began to take shape. Bely's essay "Friedrich Nietzsche" (1904) which appeared in *Arabeski* (1911) was most certainly written under the strong influence of Ivanov. According to Bely, one should speak of the "crucified Dionysus in his bloody rags" rather than of the "teaching of Friedrich Nietzsche," and he asks Nietzsche the question: "Who can compare to this madman?" Bely comes to the significant conclusion that after Nietzsche there could no longer be any irreligious culture: "everything is encompassed in the religion of the creation of life (*religija tvorchestva zhizni*), even the ancient gods."[12] In "Song of Life" a year later, Bely expressly refers to Ivanov's "Hellenic Religion of the Suffering God" (*Ellinskaja religija stradajushchego boga*) that came out in *Novyj put'* in 1904 and *Voprosy zhizni* in 1905.[13]

Ivanov himself returns in *Cor Ardens* to the Eurypylos myth through which he related Nietzsche to ancient Greece. The myth of Eurypylos is told once more in the short poetic narrative "Judgment of Fire" (*Sud ognja*) in the first book: it is freely adapted here, to the effect that the fire that Eurypylos extols not only remains element and symbol of Dionysus—"Heady flame plows the field / Greedily harvests the harvest of life" (*P'janyj plamen' pole pashet / Zhadnyj zhatvu zhizni zhnet* [*SS*, II, 247]), but also acquires a universal meaning. The ballad-like poem appears under an epigraph from Heraclitus, πάντα τὸ πῦρ κρῖνει (the fire will take care of everything), and the madness of Eurypylos relates the fire to the symbol of the phoenix that rises out of its ashes; this is a symbol which is important in *Cor Ardens* itself, but also relates it to the Slavic god Perun, a fact which can be explained by Ivanov's personal attachment to Sergey Gorodetsky to whom the entire poem is dedicated. Ivanov adds considerable weight to this dedication, as shown by the fact that "Judgment of Fire" is placed at the beginning of the cycle: it is the first of all the dedicatory poems in this work, apart from the dedication of the entire cycle to Lidija Dmitrievna Zinovieva-Annibal.

In any case, it is noteworthy that in the ecstatic song of Eurypylos, the myth of Gaea, the mother of creation, merges with the Slavic myth:

Perun plighted with Gaea
Will lick and judge all things.
Who dares to be shall be:
Ancient Phoenix is eternally young.

Alive through murdering thunderbolt,
By duel the world is red.
Discord in chordal pitch
And concord in strife of lyres.

Vse liznet i vse rassudit
S Geej spletshijsja Perun.
Kto prebyt' derznet—prebudet:
Vetkhij Feniks vechno jun.

Zhiv ubijtseju-perunom,
Poedinkom krasen mir.
Raznoglas'e v stroe strunnom,
I sozvuch'e v spore lir. [*SS*, II, 247]

Esthetically it is important here that the semantic structure conjures up an antithesis (even a near oxymoron): *Zhiv/ubijtseju/:sozvuch'e/v spore*—the force of which is increased by the "mythic" oxymoron (*Vetkhij Feniks/vechno jun'*.

The fire or the torch as symbol of purification and of rebirth already brings into play the preceding "dithyramb" entitled "Firebearers" (*Ognenostsy*, 1906). The link to something outside the text is disclosed by the fact that this cult-drama scene had already been printed in the first annual *Fakely* (1906), a journal which was reputed to be a manifestation of "mystical anarchism." It is not only the tradition of Prometheus that is echoed in "Firebearers":[14] the burning torch also visits judgment on an earth that appears to be encircled by an "evil ring" (*kol'tsom nemilym*). Ivanov attaches the poem "Creation" (*Tvorchestvo*) from the cycle to his poetic manifesto: in this poem the act of artistic creation is already compared to an "uprising" (*mjatezh*) of the Promethiads. The chorus of "Firebearers" addresses itself to the fire in dithyrambs—the chosen form is also an echo of Nietzsche—beginning with the following strophe:

Of rebellious flames
The living streams!
O feathers of Phoenixes!
O harbingers
Signaling to stars
About the raging heart
Of earth stung
By holy conflagration!

Mjatezhnykh plamenej
Ruch'i zhivye!
O per'ja Feniksov!
O vestovye
Zvezdam glashatai
O serdtse jarom
Zemli, uzhalennoj
Svjatym pozharom! [*SS*, II, 240 ff.]

The image of the phoenix inevitably reminds us of Bely's essay "Phoenix" (1906) that appeared later in *Arabeski* (1911). After the revolution of 1905 Bely too could only envisage society in the future as faced with two alternatives: either the social mechanism of "socialism" as the embodiment of the "sphinx" with its empty and "dark eyes" or the social dynamic of the "free community" (*obshchina*).[15] In the latter case it is not the "petrified sphinx on the margin of national productivity" that regulates economic relationships, but rather the "high flight of the phoenix of life with its wings like lightning [*na molnijnykh per'jakh*] rising from the scattered ashes of national life."[16]

The poems gathered together as "Sun-Heart" (*Solntse-serdtse*) are of fundamental importance for the cycle *Cor Ardens* in the context of Dionysian symbolism. In "The Treatment of the Sun" (*Zavet solntsa*) the sacrificial fate of the "sun-heart" (the rising and setting of the sun) is foreseen:

All of you is joy, early to early,
My brother, all of you is blood and wound
On the sacrificial brink.

Ves' ty—radost', rannim-rano,
Brat moj,—ves' ty krov' i rana
Na kraju vecherovom! [*SS*, II, 233]

The central semantic field of *Cor Ardens* is marked out in this poem: heart, flame, blood, wound, martyrdom, sacrifice, crown of thorns, loss, and resurrection. The incantatory magic of the language reveals itself in rhythm as well as in rhetorical techniques such as alliteration, rhyme, assonance, paronomasia, that is, in the lexical and phonic dynamics.

Assonances and paronomasias in words with the same root vowel or suffix rhyme ("echo") are particularly numerous in "The Sun Psalm" (*Psalom solnechnyj*):

Net zharkomu Sertsu,
Bezyskhodnomu svetu,
Podspudnomu, skudnomu, trudnomy svetu,
Otzvuch'ja zemnogo: [*SS*, II, 234]

Or

Tsarstvennoj
Darstvennoj,
Zhertvennoj siloju . . . [*SS*, II, 234]

These paronomastic repetitions can be traced directly back to Nietzsche, who used them abundantly in *Thus spake Zarathustra*. One example may serve for many others: "Einen goldenen Kahn sah ich blinken auf nächtigen Gewässern, einen sinkenden, trinkenden, wieder winkenden goldenen Schaukel-Kahn!" (I saw a gold bark glittering upon dark waters, a submerging, surging, re-emerging golden tossing bark!).[17]

The burning heart and the sun are of course closely related to the theme of rebirth and fruitful sacrifice. Ivanov makes the same allusion also in the essay he dedicated to Bely, "On the Descending" (*O niskhozhdenie*, 1905), when, crossing the boundaries of esthetics, he explains the religious symbolism of suffering and sacrifice. In this connection, Ivanov paraphrases the biblical parable of the grain of

wheat (John 12:24) which Dostoevsky used as the epigraph for *The Brothers Karamazov*: "The sacrifice is the payment of the individual, through himself alone, for universal bail [*za vselenskuju poruku*]. He who isolates himself from the world for the world dies for the world. He must lose strength and die, just as the seed will not sprout unless it dies."[18]

For Ivanov the concepts of "bright" sun and "free" light complement those of the "dark, narrow, trapped" heart ("The Sun Psalm"), and so the heart becomes for him a winter-hard grain of seed:

> The heart, a winter seed of living fire!
> Serdtse, ozimoe semja zhivogo ognja! [*SS*, II, 234]

The poet had already experienced the sense of remoteness from the sun in the winter of 1904–1905, when he wrote the beautiful poem "Winter Crop" (*Ozim'*). He will cite that poem again in his lecture "On the Russian Idea" (*O russkoj idee*, 1909). This poem, which belongs in the section "Year of Wrath" (*Godina gneva*), consists of only one sentence that unfolds in eight verses and two strophes by means of ingenious enjambments:

> Winter Crop
> As in foul autumn decays
> The sacred winter crop, the spirit secretly
> Ripens above the black grave
> And only the hearing of lightest souls
>
> Catches the not yet rustling quiver
> Among sluggish clods—so my Russia
> Contradicts mute death
> With unheeding pregnancy of life.
>
> Ozim'
>
> Kak osen'ju nenastnoj tleet
> Svjataja ozim',—tajno dukh
> Nad chernoju mogiloj reet,
> I tol'ko dush legchajshikh slukh

> Nezadrozhavshij trepet lovit
> Mezh kosnykh glyb,—tak Rus' moja
> Nemotnoj smerti prekoslovit
> Glukhim zachat'em bytija . . . [*SS*, II, 251]

As we are attempting here to present an index of the structural and literary functions of symbols, it may also be pointed out that the image of sowing winter grain (*ozim'*) appears again in the second book ("Speculum speculorum"), namely in "The Scales" (*Vesy*), a poem first printed in the almanac *Severnye tsvety assirijskie* (Northern Assyrian Flowers). The winter grain acquires the concrete meaning of a spiritual sowing, since the poem concerns as much the constellation Libra as it does Bryusov's journal *Vesy*:

> And not in vain, in corona of nocturnal beauty,
> Above sowing of winter crops, burns the constellation
> To which the spirit, having signaled world requital,
> Gave in secret the name Libra.
>
> I ne votshche gorit, v ventse nochnoj krasy,
> Nad sevom ozimej sozvesd'e,
> Chtò dukh, znamenovav vsemirnoe Vozmezd'e,
> Narek tainstvenno: Vesy. [*SS*, II, 289]

What is of course striking and interesting in this strophe is the relationship between the sounds in *sev* and *Vesy, sozvezd'e* and *Vozmezd'e*, and finally *vsemirnoe*.

Cor Ardens is an inexhaustible treasury of literary and universal symbols, religious emblems and Symbolist experiences. The symbolism of sun and heart that had already evolved in Ivanov's work by 1905 was later consolidated in Alexander Blok's cycle *Snow Mask* (*Snezhnaja maska*, 1907). While the images find their most intense and magical expression in "The Sun Chorus" (*Khor solnechnyj*), a poem Ivanov had already published in *Voprosy zhizni* in 1905 ("Sun-heart, of suns of hearts," *Solntse-serdtse solnts-serdets* [*SS*, II, 231]), Blok later wrote in "Overtaken by the Snowstorm" (January 3, 1907) the two verses: "Yet beyond the distant pole roams / the sun of my heart" (*No bredet za dal'nim poljusom / Solntse serdtsa moego*).[19] This

symbol remains fixed in the memory of the poet for the next few days: "Heart grown cold! Where are you, sun?" (*Ostylo serdtse! Gde ty, solntse?*).[20] Moreover, at the beginning of the poem "Away" (*Proch'*) of the same day (January 8) we find the verse, "And again they opened this door of the sun. / And again they draw from the heart this shade" (*I opjat' otkryli solntsa / Etu dver'. / I opjat' vlekut ot serdtsa / Etu ten'*).[21]

There are other parallels between *Cor Ardens* and *Snezhnaja maska* besides those of symbolism. The dance-like rhythm that plays such an important role in Ivanov's esthetic conception of the chorus is an expression of a Dionysian mood and emerges as early as the "Menada":

Sacrifice, drink from the cup of peace
Silence,
Silence!—
Blend of wine with heedless myrrh—
Silence . . .
Silence

Zhertva, pej iz chashi mirnoj
Tishinu,
Tishinu!—
Smes' vina s glukhoju smirnoj—
Tishinu . . .
Tishinu . . . [*SS*, II, 228]

This folk dance rhythm (trochees and anapests) is taken up again in the poem "Dawn-dawning" (*Zarja-Zarjanitsa*), in the second book of *Cor Ardens* (first published in *Vesy*, 3, 1906), a poem whose language, too, is closely connected with that of folk poetry:

With that sickle of cold potions
Mow down;
On the dewdrops of sweet hops
Graze!

I, O queen, some field brews
Will distill;

Or whip up meads of hops
For the king.

Tem serpom okhladnykh zelij
Nakosi;
Po rosam usladnykh khmèlej
Napasi!

Ja l', tsaritsa, zelij sel'nykh
Navarju;
Natvorju li medov khmel'nykh
Ja tsarju. [*SS*, II, 320]

One can compare this in turn to Blok's poem "Her Songs" (*Ee pesni*, January 4, 1907) which closes with the following verses:

With thread tangled in tow
I'll wind.
With light ale of snowy hops
I'll sing.

Prjazhej sputannoj kudeli
Obov'ju.
Legkoj bragoj snezhnykh khmelej
Napoju[22]

The stylized use of folk rhythms came into fashion particularly during the years 1906–1907. Sergey Gorodetsky also experimented with this style in his poetry, a style that was quite popular for a time. The fact that Blok's *Snow Mask* was strongly influenced by Ivanov in style and theme is clearly indicated in a letter from Ivanov to Bryusov dated January 28, 1906: "The literary event of the day is Blok's *Snow Mask* which has already been printed in *Ory*. . . . Blok reveals himself here for the first time, and for that matter in a new way, as a source of truly Dionysian, demonic, and deeply occult experiences. The sound (*zvuk*), rhythm, and assonances are captivating" [*SS*, II, 730 ff.]. We know too that Blok in his poem to Ivanov expressly acknowledged their spiritual affinity at this time.

And shying till now
From your piercing eyes,
I glanced . . . And our souls chimed
Those days in the very same verse.

I ja, dichivshijsja dosele
Ochej pronzitel'nykh tvoikh,
Vzgljanul . . . I nashi dushi speli
V te dni odin i tot zhe stikh.[23]

Of all Ivanov's works, the cycle "Cor Ardens" certainly shares to the highest degree the common strivings of Russian Symbolism in the years after the disastrous war with Japan. In this connection, the second book "Speculum speculorum" not only reveals the erudition of the poet, but also constitutes a signal effort to reflect as fully as possible upon the esthetic of Symbolism. The large number of personal dedications in this cycle seem to document convincingly the poet's interrelationships with other people in the years 1905–1906. The personal inclinations (*pristrastija*) of the poet are as evident in his concern with older poets as in his passionate disputes with both his closer and his wider circle of friends (Bryusov, Blok, Gorodetsky, Kuzmin, I. Annensky, Gumilev, Khlebnikov, and many others).

Such dedications, of course, might also have a polemical side as in the case of one poem dedicated to Sologub bearing the significant title "Apotropeia" (*Apotropej*), a warding-off. Here Ivanov is replying to a poem of Sologub that he had just received (May 26, 1906) in which one finds the following verses:

The name Vyacheslav hovers.
  Magus? Divinator?
Or glorifying things?
  Council? Or crown?
Glory? Word? Or send?
How shall I decipher the signs?

Reet imja VJACHESLAV.
  Vjaschij? Veshchij?

Proslovljajushchij li veshchi?
  Veche? il' venets?
Slava? slovo? ili slat'?
Kak mne znaki razgadat'?[24]

A comment on this poem may be found in Ivanov's notebook under the date June 2 of the same year: "Some sort of new attempt at sorcery. A game of riddles behind which is concealed something that he has experienced deeply" [*SS*, II, 326]. Ivanov answers Sologub with the poem "Apotropeia" from the section "Inclinations":

The secret of your counter feelings
And the sweetness of your twilight charms

Wish to capture with a magic ring,
To calm, like a muffled sound,
Him who with a song of praise
Was born to hymn the Greater Light.

Tvoikh protivochuvstvij tajna
I sladost' sumerechnykh char

Khotjat plenit' kol'tsom volshebnym,
Ugomonit', kak smutnyj zvon,
Togo, kto peniem khvalebnym
Vosslavit' Vjashchij Svet rozhdën. [*SS*, II, 326]

Such rejoinders among the Symbolists often led to an entire poetic correspondence, and Sologub in this instance was not slow in replying. Since for him the sun had always remained a destructive evil dragon-serpent in the heavens, he forthwith fell upon this symbol, and in defense of his own "Dulcinea" unmasked Ivanov's "simple-hearted"' Aldonsa (Dulcinea's "real" name in *Don Quixote*):

In vain do you glorify the Sun,
Chasing me down from your heights—
Aldonsa, laughing at your summons,
Shears the shaggy fleece.

Naprasno proslavljaesh' Solntse,
Gonja menja s tvoikh vysot,—

Smejas' na tvoj prizyv, Al'donsa
Runo kosmatoe strizhet.[25]

Ivanov dedicated this part of *Cor Ardens* to Bryusov in the name of "Sancta sodalitas" (holy comradeship), and he explained the title with a Latin commentary: "The image distorted by the mirror becomes a perfect representation by means of mirrors set opposite" (Immutata dolo speculi recreatur imago adversis speculis integram ad effigiem).[26]

The concept of "Speculum speculorum" emphasizes the basic unity of an individual phenomenon in all its external contradictions and plurality, that is, in terms of Ivanov's idea of *sobornost'*, and we can see that this form of communication is an important element in the esthetic of symbolism.

When Bryusov dedicated his volume of poetry *Stephanos* (1906) to Ivanov, the latter took the sonnet relating to "Stephanos" of January 1906[27] and placed it in the section of "Inclinations" from the cycle "Speculum speculorum"; such an act is understandable after years of almost completely harmonious and successful cooperation between them. Ivanov renders Bryusov's two sides through the images "Pale magician" (*Volshebnik blednyj*) and "Triumphant singer" (*Pevets pobednyj*); by making use of the structure of the central oxymoron from the preceding "Carmen saeculare"—"honey defiled with hemlock" ("Vitiato melle cicuta")—he introduces the antithesis "black poison" and "honeylike sun":

From gold-bottomed cups sorrow's hostage
Poured black poison. But now he scoops up charms
Of honeyed suns in bright-faceted crystal.

Iz zlatodonnykh chash zalozhnik skorbi
Lil chernyj jad. A nyne cherplet chary
Medvjanykh solnts kristallom jasnogrannym. [*SS*, II, 327]

One may also cite here, by way of comparison, a poem that belongs to the important section "Arcana" and whose title is a quotation from Dante's *Inferno* (XXV, 4): "The serpents were my friends" (Mi fur le serpi amiche). In this poem, Ivanov defines his own position

in contrast to that of Bryusov, but this considerably earlier reaction suggests similarities as well as differences between them.[28] Ivanov looks down from the snow peaks (*uzh ja topchu verkhovnyj sneg*) at his friend who finds himself still under the spell of decadence and its sweet poisons:

You, in the sultry haze where wormwood's spirit is,
Gather the poisons of bitter languors.

Ty, v znojnoj mgle, gde dukh polyni,—
Sbiraesh' jady gor'kikh neg. [*SS*, II, 290]

It is noteworthy that in its first publication in the almanac *Severnye Tsvety Assirijskie* (1905) this poem, together with several others, constituted the cycle "Serpents and suns" (*Zmei i solntsa*), to the effect that not only the poison, but also the serpents stand in opposition to the sun.

The snake, which plays an important role in Decadent and Symbolist art as a symbol of the head of Medusa and of the tempter snake of the Garden of Eden, represents in *Cor Ardens* a negative mythic force related to the symbol of the "evil ring" (*kol'tso nemiloe*). In the poem just cited, therefore, the poet's liberation from the power of the snake represents the decisive stage of occult experience. It is the last trial by fire before rebirth in the new light:

And I was a slave in the knots of the snake
And in spasms I called for the stigma of a sting;
But fire of the final ordeal
I conjured up, and by the sun of Emmaus
My days were gilded.

I ja byl rab v uzlakh zmei,
I v korchakh zval klejmo ukusa;
No ogn' poslednego iskusa
Zakljal, i solntsem Emmausa
Ozolotilis' dni moi.[29]

The "knots of the snake" (see also the adjacent poem, *Uzly zmei* [*SS*, II, 291]) and its "rings" represent at the same time symbolically

the subjugation of man to the laws of cyclical time. The immediately preceding ghasel "Regeneration" (*Vozrozhdenie*), the poem that originally introduced the cycle "Serpents and Suns," expresses this very clearly:

> We, in the gold and rings of ductile snakes and suns
> Enrobed, officiate as priests and seers;
> Prophesying, we preside on the crags of snakes and suns.
> By centuple fate we are condemned to drag
> Recurrent scales of perennial snakes and suns.
>
> My, zolotom i kol'tsami moguchikh Zmej i Solnts
> Oblacheny, svjashchenstvuem, zhretsy i veduny,—
> Prorocha, verkhovenstvuem na kruchakh Zmej i Solnts.
> Sud'binoju stokratnoju vlachit' osuzhdeny
> My cheshuju vozvratnuju zhivuchikh Zmej i Solnts.
>
> [*SS*, II, 290]

The rising and setting of the sun, as well as the ring of the snake that bites its own tail, symbolize causality, moving from past to future. Ivanov, however, proposes yet another causal movement, from the future into the past, which is called—in the notes to the important verse-tale "Melampos' Dream" (*Son Melampa*, 1907)—"the causality of coming to meet" (*vstrechnaja prichinnost'*). This kind of movement is also symbolically represented by means of snakes that are male and are characterized as "Snakes of Goals (*Zmijami Tselej*).

This philosophy of time is the central theme of "Melampos' Dream," an epic poem composed in hexameters that concludes the cycle "Arcana." Ivanov dedicated the text, which appeared for the first time in 1907 in *Zolotoe Runo*, to Maksimilian Voloshin, and he attributed great importance to its message.[30] Here Ivanov makes use, for his purpose, of the tale of the Greek seer Melampos to whom snakes have spoken in his sleep, so that after awakening he understands the language of animals. The myth of Melampos has a particular meaning for Ivanov's esthetic, namely, that the seer (*zrjashchij Melamp*) ties both chains of causality together as "Hymenaeus," so that the disunion (*razryv*) of the two vanishes and the true image of the "renewed Dionysus," as the son who belongs to the father (that is, as Christ), can appear:

> It shall be: in maternal lap shall Dionysus' face be glorified
> In its right image, on that day when mother's face grows faint.
> Marriage icon will fuse the break, and wash away guilt
> Of refraction, and revived Dionysus will imbibe father's heart.
> For son's heart is in the Father; and fusion will be completed
> In the Third of you severed ones, O Zeus-Persephone and Victim!
>
> Budet: na maternem lone proslavitsja lik Dionisa
> Pravym oblich'em—v tot den' kak roditelja lik iznemozhet.
> Brakov svjatynja spajaet razryv, i vinu otrazhen'ja
> Smoet, i otchee serdtse vop'et Dionis obnovlennyj.
> Ibo synovnee serdtse v Otse: i svershitsja slijan'e
> V Tret'em vas razluchennykh, O Zeus-Persefona i Zhertva!
>
> [*SS*, II, 298]

Melampos himself becomes an "absolver" (*razreshitel'*) of souls from the age of disunity, he becomes conductor of souls and harbinger of what is to come:

> Keen-Ear became the absolver of souls and the mixer,
> Shadow of the future, eye in the night, unerring leader.
> Thus the snakes made sleepy Melampos a seer.
>
> Dush razreshitelem stal i smesitelem Chutkoe-Ukho,
> Ten'ju grjadushchego, okom v nochi, nezabludnym vozhatym.
> Sonnogo tak bogoveshchim sodelali zmei Melampa.
>
> [*SS*, II, 299]

The "causality of coming to meet" is an important element of the Symbolist esthetic: all prophecies of the Symbolists were built on this idea of causality and without it Bely's novel *Petersburg* could hardly be understood. Ivanov deals with this also in his famous essay "Presentiments and Portents" (*Predchuvstvija i predvestija*, 1906). Here the prophetic art of Symbolism is contrasted with Romantic art. Romanticism, according to Ivanov, represents the "yearning for that which cannot be fulfilled" (*toska po nesbytochnomu*), whereas Prophecy is rather the yearning for that which is not yet fulfilled (*toska po nesbyvshemusja*). Romanticism, therefore, would be *odium fati*

and Prophecy would be *amor fati*. Romanticism struggles against historical necessity, while Prophecy is in a "tragic pact" with necessity. The impossible (Ivanov speaks once of the "Eros of the impossible" as the "most divine legacy" of the human spirit),[31] the irrational, the miraculous—for Prophecy all of that is self-evident; for Romanticism, however, it is simply a pious desire (*pium desiderium*). Ivanov goes on to distinguish it from mere futurology: "By prophecy we do not mean necessarily the exact foretelling of the future, but we mean always a creative energy that conceives (*zachinaet*) and anticipates the future, fundamentally a revolutionary energy."[32]

From all that I have said, may this point remain: the constructive function of the conjurings, of the symbols, and of the myths of Russian Symbolism reaches far beyond the framework of individual works; it generates its own role in general literature; and it characterizes a rich culture that urgently and continuously calls for our scholarly understanding and endeavor.

Notes

1. Valery Bryusov, "Ob iskusstve," *Sobranie sochinenij* (Moscow, 1975), VI, 45.

2. Bryusov, "Kljuchi tajn," *Sobranie sochinenij* (Moscow, 1975), VI, 92.

3. Ibid., p. 91.

4. Andrey Bely, "Pesn' zhizni," *Arabeski* (Moscow, 1911), pp. 58 ff.

5. *SS*, II, 633. The essay "On the Boundaries of Art" (*O granitsakh iskusstva*) represents a significant elaboration of rise and fall, as this was first formulated in the article "On Descending" (*O niskhozhdenii*, 1909).

6. Cf. Osip Mandelshtam, "O sobesednike," *Sobranie sochinenij* (1966), II, 278 ff. Krystyna Pomorska puts it in a similar way about a particular tendency within Symbolism: "The speaker seems to ignore whether anyone is listening to him or not, because he knows that he is surrounded by emptiness (Gippius)." See Krystyna Pomorska, *Russian Formalist Theory and Its Poetic Ambiance*, Slavistic Printings and Reprintings, 82 (The Hague-Paris, 1968), p. 66.

7. *SS*, I, 713. This characterization of poetic perception is substantiated with the Platonic idea of "anamnesis."

8. Bely, "Magija slov," *Simvolizm* (Moscow, 1910), p. 431.

9. The sonnets of the cycle "Zolotye zavesy" appeared simultaneously with *Eros* and were printed separately in 1907 in the almanac *Tsvetnik Or, Kosnitsa 1-aja*, by the same publisher (Ory) as the book *Eros*. The two publications constitute the third book in *Cor Ardens* (Volume I, 1911, published by Skorpion). Books 4 and 5 appeared in the same year as Volume 8 of the complete edition of *Cor Ardens* in Moscow. See the commentary in *SS*, II, 698.

10. The expression "countervalence of life" is to be found in Nietzsche's own commentary on *The Birth of Tragedy*, which is entitled "An Attempt at Self-Criticism" (1866).

11. See Johannes Holthusen, *Studien zur Ästhetik und Poetik des russischen Symbolismus* (Göttingen, 1957).

12. Bely, "Fridrikh Nitsshe," *Arabeski*, p. 78.

13. Bely, "Pesn' zhizni," p. 54. Elements of the Dionysus theme are to be found throughout Bely's works, even in the novel *Peterburg* (see the segment "Dionis" in the sixth chapter of the novel, where Nikolay Appolonovich appears as "suffering Dionysus" [*Dionis terzaemy*]).

14. Parts of this dithyramb were later inserted in the tragedy *Prometheus* (*Prometej*, 1919). See the commentary to *Prometheus* in *SS*, II, 685.

15. In his manifesto of "mystic anarchism" (*Ideja neprijatija mira*) of 1906, Ivanov speaks of the ideal of *obshchina* as mystic union; see *SS*, III, 89.

16. Bely, "Feniks," *Arabeski*, p. 151.

17. This passage is taken from Part III of *Also sprach Zarathustra*, the chapter entitled "Das ander Tanzlied."

18. *SS*, I, 824. The same thought permeates Ivanov's discussion with M. O. Gershenzon; see *A Correspondence from Two Corners*, *SS*, III, 383–417, originally published in 1921.

19. Alexander Blok, *Snezhnaja maska*, *Sobranie sochinenij* (Berlin, 1923), II, 191.

20. *Golosa*, II (January 8, 1907), p. 203.

21. Ibid., p. 197.

22. Blok, *Sobranie sochinenij*, II, 193.

23. Blok, *Raznye stikhotvorenija*, *Sobranie sochinenij*, III, 131. See Ivanov's commentary in *SS*, II, 729 ff.

24. Fyodor Sologub, *Stikhotvorenija* (Leningrad, 1975), p. 331.

25. Ibid., p. 333.

26. *SS*, II, 284. In his treatise *Religioznoe delo Vl. Solov'eva* (1911), Ivanov characterized the correcting "other mirror" (*Speculum speculi*), that is, the other person, as important for mystic perception and for the mystic communion: for

man himself is only a "living mirror" that registers what is perceived inadequately (that is, backwards) (*SS*, III, 303). Here one should also recall what Ivanov had written on art in "Zavety simvolizma" (published in the journal *Apollon*, 8 [1910]) in connection with the "inner canon": "Your mirror, which is set opposite the mirrors of the disjointed centers of consciousness, reestablishes the original truth of that which is reflected, in that it atones for the guilt of the first mirroring, which had distorted reality. Art becomes the "mirror of mirrors"—*speculum speculorum*—everything is, in its mirror-like quality, alone (*v samoj zerkal'nosti svoej*), the one symbolism of unifying being (*edinogo bytija*), in which every tiny cell of the living, fragrant fabric creates and celebrates its petal, and every petal is a shining forth and glory for the glowing center of the unfathomable blossom, of the symbol of symbols, of the flesh of the word" (*SS*, II, 601).

27. The letter to Bryusov of January 2, 1906, gives us an idea of Ivanov's enthusiastic reaction to Bryusov's "Venok." See the commentary, together with the letter, in *SS*, II, 727 ff.

28. Bryusov's correspondence with Ivanov shows how much he was impressed by this very poem. See the commentary in *SS*, II, 713.

29. *SS*, II, 291. For the significance of the concept "solntse Emmausa," see M. M. Bakhtin, "Vjacheslav Ivanov," *Estetika slovesnogo tvorchestva* (Moscow, 1979), pp. 380 ff.

30. See the commentary in *SS*, II, 716.

31. See Ivanov's "Simvolika esteticheskikh nachal," *SS*, I, 825.

32. *SS*, II, 87. With regard to this passage see also Igor Smirnov, *Khudozhestvennyj smysl i evoljutsija poeticheskikh sistem* (Moscow, 1977), pp. 60 ff., on the "chronogenetic organization of the universe" in Ivanov's works.

—Translated by Emily Robin Jackson

The Poetics of Vyacheslav Ivanov: Lectures Given at Baku University

Anna Tamarchenko

Vyacheslav Ivanov is not only a distinguished poet, but also one of the greatest thinkers of the Russian Silver Age. In the early 1920s, M. M. Bakhtin said of him: "As a thinker and a personality, Vyacheslav Ivanov had enormous significance. In one way or another the theory of Symbolism was created under his influence. All his contemporaries are only poets, but he was also a teacher. If he had not existed as a thinker, Russian Symbolism would probably have taken a different path."[1]

The course Russian Symbolism took under the influence of Ivanov's esthetic ideas was the most significant in Russian artistic thought of the time. The younger Symbolists were not just one school of poetry among many which had arisen: they attempted to oppose decadence and extreme individualism in art, combining the pursuit of poetry with a search for a way out of the general crisis of culture. In contrast to Bryusov or Balmont, as Bakhtin rightly noted, "they strive for understanding of the innermost life of existence. Symbol is for them not only a word that characterizes an impression of a thing, not just a product of the artist's soul and of his accidental fate: symbol signifies the real essence of the thing."[2] The high theoretical level of the esthetics of Russian Symbolism accounts for its great influence on all the schools and currents of Russian Modernism without exception both in poetry and in the other arts. The influence of Ivanov's theatrical ideas on the subsequent development of Russian theater was especially great.

It is necessary to emphasize the significance of Ivanov as an esthetic thinker not only in the name of historical justice (which is

happening little by little even in Russia today) but in the interest of culture. None of the deadly forces of disintegration and rampant individualism against which Ivanov fought has yet been overcome. These forces have only become more widespread and dangerous.

Especially pertinent here is a course of lectures on poetics given by Ivanov at Baku University, where he was a professor in the Department of Classical Philology from November 1920 to June 1924. Reports about this course have begun to appear in specialized publications since 1968,[3] and in 1981 an article about it by Elena Belkind appeared in print. "The archives of Prof. V. A. Manuilov," she writes, "contain a synopsis of lectures on poetics read by Vyacheslav Ivanov in 1921–1922 (the synopsis was made by a student of Baku University, O. Ter-Grigorian; the whole volume consists of 175 pages of manuscript text; the synopsis has not been published)."[4] This synopsis, in E. Belkind's typescript, is in my hands.

Although it consists of notes by a student and is not a full stenographic transcript, the synopsis contributes much to the understanding of Ivanov's views in the realm of poetics. The sole systematic statement of his ideas, it is moreover an academically rigorous one: he sets forth here a system of views on poetry as a form of art, and proposes criteria for its esthetic analysis and evaluation. In the synopsis Ivanov also formulates his attitude toward various trends in university scholarship on poetry: the historical poetics of Aleksandr Veselovsky and the ideas of Humboldt and Potebnya on poetry and language. Finally, the course on poetics supplies a missing link in the evolution of Ivanov's esthetic ideas and his views on poetry. This link is all the more important since the Baku period, many indications suggest, was a turning point in the development of the writer's world view.

The course on poetics is divided into three major sections. The first consists of a definition of the subject of poetics (lectures 1–3), followed by a detailed and wide-ranging definition of poetry as a form of art (4–10). The second section (11–17) is devoted to the division of poetry into types and genres and to study of styles. The third section (18–22) is given over to problems of prosody.

The second most important theoretician of Russian Symbolism,

Andrey Bely, always strove to break down the subject of his studies analytically. He separates art from culture, poetry from art, and lyric from poetry. From Russian lyric poetry he chooses iambic tetrameter for further analysis, and in the innumerable variants of the iamb he distinguishes those elements that are connected with the unique poetic *rhythm*—with the rhythmic intonation of the poem. As a result, it appears that it is precisely the course of the intonation embodied and reinforced by the rhythm of the verse which is "decisive for form and context, amplifying both in a new direction."[5] In lyric poetry, rhythmic intonation is a structural factor which determines the dynamics of the artistic whole. Thus Bely arrives at his main conclusion in regard to the essence of poetry as an art form.

Probably the single most important feature of Ivanov's esthetic thought, on the other hand, is its constant striving toward integration, toward synthesis; and in his course on poetics Ivanov establishes first of all *connections* between things, the interdependence of various spheres of culture, and various elements of poetics itself. Historicism and a global perception of culture are especially characteristic of his thought. He presents poetry and poetics in the context of the universal development of culture. Ivanov traces every form, category, or term from its origin, from its sources. Thus, the synthetic nature of his thought does not lead him into abstractions or incorporeal categories. His thought is always concrete.

It is as though Ivanov sums up the history of culture in order to emerge on the threshold of its new stage, a stage, however, of which one can only have a presentiment; one can only ready oneself for it and prepare the consciousness of others, because it must be a new stage in the formation of man's spiritual nature. Thus the urge toward synthesis has a deep motivation.

The very definition of the subject of the course is a striking example of the tendency to synthesis. Ivanov sets forth three initial conceptions of poetics and of the methods proper to it: 1, historical poetics in the spirit of A. N. Veselovsky, understood as "the genetics and evolution of poetic forms"; 2, poetics as a part of esthetics and, consequently, as a philosophical discipline; 3, canon, that is, a code of norms, obligatory for poetic styles and forms, types and genres.

Not one of these varieties of academic poetics, in and of itself, satisfies the scholar: "Poetics, strictly speaking, does not exist" (2), and meanwhile "poetics is a discipline that is far from being completed" (5). For its transformation into a science, into "systematic knowledge about poetry," further elaboration is needed— first, of historical poetics, so that a theoretical poetics can be built on its foundation: "At the present time poetics, shunning canonicity, is a discipline that passes from the particular to the general, that studies literary monuments in an inductive way from an historical point of view, and strives only in this way to deduce general laws from the object under consideration" (5).

At the same time Ivanov is far from neglecting normative poetics. Relying on a theoretical understanding of the artistic experience of the great poets, he also deduces certain norms for what is "proper" and "improper" in various styles, types, and genres of poetic creation.

The principle of logical transition from an historical to a philosophical poetics is strictly observed by Ivanov throughout the entire course. General categories of esthetics as applied to verbal art, types and genres of poetry, verse meters and poetic tropes are all first considered with regard to the process of their origin and formation. Of the epic we learn how it arose from panegyric and singing at the funeral feasts of heroes; lyric poetry was born of incantations and charms or in the ecstatic states of "choral lyrics," in the syncretic rites of distant antiquity. Each term of poetics is traced to its inventor.

With the same firm consistency, the "genealogy" of poetic forms carries poetry to the moment when it becomes an art, and at the same time brings it within the categories of philosophical esthetics with Plato and Aristotle as its originators—their greatest successors being Lessing, Schiller, and Goethe. Thus, an integral framework for a synthetic poetics is gradually constructed.

At the beginning of the course history predominates; in the middle, esthetic categories in specific application to verbal art take precedence; in the "prosody" section, canonicity, connected with the requirement for unity of style, gains a certain preponderance: "To

whichever type the poem is closest—romantic or classical—the poet must adhere to definite norms in the creation of his work. There can be no artist without law. The harmony of the entire work depends on those norms to which the poet adheres" (89–90).

Let us note in passing that in the prosody section the problem of the strophic organization of verse and the description of a great number of strophic forms occupy a place that might seem disproportionately large. For Ivanov, however, this emphasis has a theoretical basis: he considers the strophe to be the very element of verse that is coterminous with content and form in poetry. The strophe, according to Ivanov, is "the basis of metrical composition . . . the unit of metrical construction," and "simultaneously a finished syntactic and thematic whole" (87).

The isolation of the strophe as the most important factor in verse is due equally to the views of Ivanov the philosopher and to the artistic experience of Ivanov the poet. "All his poetry is a brilliant restoration of all the forms that existed before him. But this peculiarity, for which he has been reproached, flows organically from the essence of his poetry."[6] The striving to reproduce in Russian poetry "all forms" of strophe that ever existed in world poetry emanated from the urge for synthesis and summary, the desire to recreate in modernity all the beauty created through millennia of artistic culture.

The second important feature of Ivanov's course on poetics is the structural role of "recurrent ideas," which go back to his well-known pre-revolutionary articles. These ideas are revealed here in new aspects and become the frame for an integral system of esthetic views. For example, the motif of "Dionysian ascent" (epiphany) to a higher reality, intuitively grasped, and the subsequent "descent" to earth in order to make incarnate (in the image of one's art) what has been grasped.

This conception, already developed in detail in "Boundaries of Art" (*O granitsakh iskusstva,* 1913), serves in the lecture course as a key to the interpretation of many problems, especially those problems concerning the psychology of creation. It is set forth more fully than others in Belkind's article. More important for us is the direct ap-

plication of these ideas to questions of theoretical poetics; this is only touched upon by Belkind.

Perhaps the most difficult question in general esthetics is that of criteria for artistic value in works of art and poetry. The theory of "Dionysian unrest" and "Apollonian shelter" appears in Ivanov's lectures as the key to the examination of this problem as well. He proposes a polysemantic and meaningful solution.

The prime factor determining the artistic value of a work is, in Ivanov's opinion, the weight of the design, which depends entirely on the height of the "ascent" and the force of "Dionysian restlessness." In poetry this "phonic agitation" or "Dionysian storm" is a state of uncontrolled ascent to the highest level accessible to a poet—an introduction to a higher reality. After this, only "descent" is possible.

The poet's main task in the process of "descent" is to hold on as fully as possible to what has been attained: to fix the original design in the images of his art without distorting it through arbitrary personal fantasy or excessive elaboration of the images of lower earthly reality. The brightness and strength of the "Apollonian dream" determine artistic value, especially in poetry; also determinant is the extent to which the moment of "mirroring" imagination corresponds to the design—to the height of the "spiritual impregnation."

For artistic value, those conditions and criteria specific to poetry as a verbal art are no less important: "If form is forcibly superimposed on language the work will not be artistic" (43). As "living material," language will not tolerate force: "language must be in agreement with the form superimposed on it" (43). This condition is connected in turn with the fourth condition for artistic value—perfect poetic technique. With the help of poetic technique one may attain the "consent of the language," so that "the language gladly accepts the form superimposed on it," and as a result "we have the impression of a perfect work" (43).

In this way Ivanov unfolds an entire hierarchy of conditions and criteria for artistic value in poetry, taking into account both spiritual

significance and perfection of skill, both general esthetic requirements and the specifics of verbal art (tenth lecture).

In his course of lectures, Ivanov constantly turns to the opposition between the Dionysian and Apollonian principles. Thus in the lectures about the division of poetry into types and genres he explains that the epic is a predominantly Apollonian art, while lyric poetry is Dionysian. But in lyric poetry, in its turn, there are exclusively Dionysian genres, like the song, and more classical—that is, Apollonian—ones, like the sonnet and certain other strict strophic structures.

The same opposition recurs in the lectures on the "great styles" in world art. The classical style (first developed in ancient art and poetry) is based on Apollonian contemplation and is characterized by a rational clarity and formal fulfillment, by a reliance on visible shapeliness. The romantic style originating in the Middle Ages relies on creative intuition; here the expressive quality of sound predominates over distinctness and clarity of outline, arbitrariness of fantasy over earthly *realia*.

Certain important thoughts on Symbolism flowed from the pre-Revolutionary articles over into "Poetics," having undergone substantial evolution. For example, the view that Symbolism is called on to lead poetry beyond the confines of "art for art's sake" and turn it into a powerful force for transforming life itself, is constantly present in the course, but is nowhere directly formulated. Most likely, this springs from a realization that the hopes and aspirations among the younger Russian Symbolists for a speedy "transformation of life by art"[7] were essentially utopian. On the other hand, Ivanov systematically and convincingly leads his listeners to the notion that poetry, in the perspective of history, must inevitably go beyond the boundaries of "art alone," of pure "service to beauty," of "purposeless purposiveness."

The assertion that poetry is older than art, that it became "only art" after having separated from the syncretism of cult ritual, supports this conclusion. But even at this stage, the highest achievements of poetry could never be reduced to the "purposeless

purposiveness" of pure art, but carried a spiritual and cognitive meaning inseparable from the genuinely beautiful. In this sense "any great art is symbolic" (47), a creative ascent from *realia* to *realiora*: "In the realm of *intuitio* we are confronted by a higher reality. Only truth [*istina*] is beautiful, untruth is not beautiful" (47), Ivanov affirms, citing Novalis at the conclusion of his lecture: "The more real, the more poetic, the more poetic, the more real" (47).

Avoiding excessively direct and categorical judgments, Ivanov carefully observes that Symbolism strove to synthesize the possibilities of both "great styles" of world poetry and to become a new phase, a new epoch of artistic development. This attempt, however, met with failure. "Symbolism, by setting itself against Classicism, does not draw closer to Romanticism," but like the oldest poets of antiquity, strives to convey those meanings that do not submit to precise verbal expression and clear logical consciousness. "The Symbolists," however, "did not know how to create a Symbolic style," and therefore "the stamp of artificiality lies on very many specimens of Symbolist poetry" (83). In summary, then, Symbolism remained a poetry for the few, the first attempt consciously and purposefully to break through to the creation of higher forms of life by means of poetry. "Mysticism is the outstanding feature of Symbolism. The poetry of Symbolism is accessible only to the initiated: this is its weak side, but also its merit" (83).

More than three lectures (the twelfth through the fifteenth) are devoted to dramatic poetry and in particular to the development of Ivanov's pre-Revolutionary ideas on tragedy, its historical fate and its great potential for spiritual influence on the souls of men.

Ivanov's lecturing manner was legendary. Not only his students at Baku[8] but also memoirs of the period refer to his charm. At a meeting of the Religio-Philosophical Society in the early teens he is described as follows:

> His wearily extended hand moved gracefully to his heart, and with this gesture, his facial expression held the audience fascinated. Thus the attention of parishioners in a Roman Catholic Church is focused at the sound of the handbell that marks the moment of taking the symbolic wafer from the hands of the priest. This lecturer was a great magician.[9]

He knew how to affect even listeners to whom the high theoretical level of his discourse remained inaccessible, through the music of his speech and its magnificent solemnity, through the very sound of the word: "A movement, a musical movement carried the whole hall at once, in all its diversity, up a staircase made of magnificent dreams, not expressed in meaning and logic. . . . And along with this experience of mass hypnosis, the solid text of the same speech was taking form under the diligent pencils of the stenographers, genderless in their professionalism, preparing it for a journal where it became a literary model, rhetorically cold and, in its own way, splendid."[10]

Even less than a stenographic transcript, to be sure, can the student synopsis convey the action of "hypnotic" or parapsychological powers on an audience; indispensable to every oustanding orator, these powers served Ivanov for the communication of complex theoretical ideas.

Nevertheless, even the synopsis shows that in his Baku lecture course he renounced his earlier magnificence and solemnity of exposition presumably because of his own irreproachable feeling for the moment. The academic lecture demanded a more disciplined manner. Moreover, an evolution during these years toward greater rigor, naturalness and simplicity also characterizes his lyric poetry, beginning with *Winter Sonnets*. His manner of thinking, both philosophical and poetic, changed because the times had changed. Lofty solemnity and ornamentation of verbal forms were out of date; language now found this magnificence "uncongenial." He marks the beginning of almost every new theme with an unexpected statement to refute commonplaces and the pedantry of the educational tradition. Ivanov considers it useful to undermine them at the outset and only later to examine to what extent and in what sense they might possess a grain of truth.

Let us cite as an example a discussion on the essence of poetry. The definition of poetry is deduced in the first section of the course:

"Poetry is not an art that uses the word as its material, poetry is a natural function of language." The definition is expanded in the second lecture though at the same time Ivanov rejects the very possibility of such a definition. "Poetry is the incessant procreation of language. . . . It is impossible to give a definition of poetry; we can only describe its features. Language in poetry is not a tool and a means as in prose, but a goal."

The further exposition explains the antinomy between a poetry as a "function of language" and a poetry as an "art of the word." It turns out that poetry possesses primordial, eternal essence, which existed long before poetry became an art and personal craftsmanship of the poet, the essence which emerged simultaneously with the language: "Poetry becomes manifest in various forms as an eternal basic element; poetry is a unity, as language is also related to poetry and likewise emerges as a kind of living basic element. Poetry subsists together with language" (5). The main feature common to poetry and language is sound image, which is essential to both language and poetry. Poetry, like language, is a "type of energy," an exercise of will.

Speaking of poetry as an art form, Ivanov suggests that "the poet, insofar as he makes language his goal, surrenders to it his spiritual existence; language requires of him content; language requires logic." Language, furthermore, introduces into poetry the ethical element. And here Ivanov refers to the Neo-Kantian Rickert, who believed in the inherent ethical quality of language exemplified in the act of volition which connects the subject and the predicate. With the help of one of Michelangelo's sonnets (later in Rome, Ivanov made a verse translation of it) he explains that language is not the "material" of poetry just as a slab of marble is not "material" for a sculptor: both the one and the other are "living matter," an element imbued with spirit, which may or may not agree with the artist's intention.

As a result, after all these reservations, he gives a final definition of poetry. "An attempt at defining poetry from the point of view of form: Poetry is speech, consolidated and bound together by the external sound patterns of language, based on sound imagery, as

the latter may be mined from the raw material of language where it is found in organic unity, and poetry is each time a new moment in the discovery of language and its energy" (10).

Dialectical complexity designed to provoke the listeners to think creatively may be found in Ivanov's discussion of tragedy of fate. "The idea of destiny is very rarely encountered in ancient tragedy. The tragedies of Aeschylus are all based on personal freedom; crime is the free act of a free personality" (71). Ivanov argues precisely the reverse of the usual scheme that would see the role of fate in tragedy decrease from the ancient tragedians to Shakespeare, and from Shakespeare to contemporary drama: "In Shakespeare there is a feeling of destiny. We perceive the personality as free on the one hand, and on the other, as causally determined." And in the later evolution of modern drama actual determinism assumes the role of fate in people's destinies: "Recently they have come to think of man in ways that annihilate the very meaning of personality (extreme materialism); the *I* itself goes unacknowledged. . . . But if the *I* is repudiated, if personality is completely repudiated, then personality cannot struggle even with itself and no agonist can exist; thus man becomes the passive object of active principles in the external world—in other words, none of the ingredients necessary to tragedy can be present" (71). Thus, though tragedy as a genre is expiring, the role of fate, paradoxically, has increased.

This kind of procedure trains listeners not to rely on preconceived notions and stimulates a demand for intellectual substantiation of received truths. It encourages students to think actively and conscientiously and shows the need to verify generalizations through the actual inspection of the text.

Nearly all of Ivanov's polemical and provocative discussions point out problems still unresolved, still in need of development and analysis. This course of lectures given sixty years ago is not outdated; it contains not only a succession of valuable innovative ideas but also a whole program for further research into the field of poetics. The course laid out by Ivanov in his Baku lectures could even now constitute a new direction in the development of a theoretical poetics.

Notes

1. M. M. Bakhtin, *Estetika slovesnogo tvorchestva* (Moscow, 1979), p. 374.

2. Ibid., p. 375.

3. N. V. Kotrelev, "Vjacheslav Ivanov—professor Bakinskogo universiteta," in *Trudy po russkoj i slavjanskoj filologii, XI, Literaturovedenie* (Tartu, 1968), pp. 326–39.

4. E. L. Belkind, "Teorija i psikhologija tvorchestva v neopublikovannom kurse lektsii Vjacheslava Ivanova v Bakinskom universitete (1921–1922)," in *Psikhologija protsessov khudozhestvennogo tvorchestva* (Leningrad, 1980), pp. 208–14. In this article, notable for its laconism, informative tone and analytical precision, Belkind, in keeping with the theme of the collection, defines the significance and place of Ivanov's lecture course in the elaboration of problems of the psychology of creative work; in addition, she describes the structure of the course, the lecturer's relationship with his predecessors and contemporaries in the field of theoretical poetics, and points out the significance of these lectures on poetics for understanding the evolution of Ivanov's views. Further references to this article are given in the text in parentheses.

5. Andrey Bely, *Ritm kak dialektika* (Moscow, 1929), p. 29.

6. Bakhtin, *Estetika*, p. 377.

7. There are also transcripts of conversations between Ivanov and one of his favorite students of that period, M. S. Altman, which testify to the deep changes in Ivanov's views and attitudes at this time. See M. S. Altman, "Iz besed s poetom Vjacheslavom Ivanovichem Ivanovym. Batu, 1921," *Trudy po russkoj i slavjanskoj filologii. XI, Literaturovedenie* (Tartu, 1968), pp. 304–25. In Belkind's article, the direction of the deep changes in Ivanov's views and moods is understood somewhat tendentiously: as a rejection of the concept of the role of mystical experience in creativity and a rejection of the "mystical role of symbolism"; as an endeavor to transform the course in poetics into a *practical discipline*; and, finally, as an elucidation of Ivanov's constant problems of the "boundaries of art" and the "incarnation" of the original conception. The author states that these problems now acquired for Ivanov a completely "earthly" character directed toward the practical, for helping beginning poets and critics. (See Belkind, "Teorija i psikhologija tvorchestva," p. 214. Italics mine.) Actually, the rejection of the utopianism of ideas about "art as life-building" was specifically connected with the intensification of historicism in Ivanov's understanding of the role and significance of art and poetry in the historical fate of humanity.

8. Aside from Altman's published transcripts, there are some very interesting reminiscences by other students of Ivanov at Baku: V. A. Manujlov and the late Elena Aleksandrovna Millior. All three memoirists read their reminiscences at a dinner at the Leningrad Writers' House, dedicated to Ivanov in connection with the publication of his poems in the *Maly* series of *Biblioteka poeta* (1976).

9. Olga Forsh, *Voron* (Leningrad, 1934), p. 63.

10. Ibid., p. 61.

V. I. Ivanov's Views on the Sound Fabric of Poetry

Edward Stankiewicz

Like many an outstanding modern poet, Vyacheslav Ivanov combined his work as an artist with that of theoretician and student of poetry. One of the recurrent themes of his theoretical writings is the pivotal problem of the relation between form and content in the production and perception of a work of art and, more specifically, of the role of sound in the structure of verse. Ivanov's ideas on the function of sound in poetic form are of considerable interest because they reflect the absorbing importance which the questions of sound-instrumentation came to occupy in modern poetry and poetic theory, and because, at the same time, they show Ivanov's own approach to these questions—an approach which departs in significant respects from the prevailing theories of the day and, in particular, from the views advanced by the Symbolists and later by the Russian Formalists. Ivanov's philosophical and classical interests, his historical sense and esthetic taste and, above all, his own poetic practice, enabled him to treat the question of the phonetic fabric of verse in a more profound and many-sided way than many of his contemporaries, including some of his Symbolist *confrères* and friends, such as, for example, Andrey Bely.

Unlike Bely, who tackled the questions of meter, sound-symbolism and sound-orchestration in a number of minor and larger theoretical studies (notable in this respect is his theory of glossolalia in "Poem about Sound" [*Poema o zvuke*, 1921/22]),[1] and unlike the Formalists for whom the sound fabric of poetry was of major theoretical concern, Ivanov never produced a work that dealt exclusively with the function and utilization of sounds in poetry. The most

exhaustive treatment of the problem is given in his "About Sound-imagery in Pushkin" (*K probleme zvukoobraza u Pushkina*, 1913) which deals with the role of sound in Pushkin's poetry.[2] Remarks on the significance of sound and sound-texture in poetry are otherwise scattered in various of his theoretical and critical writings. This reserved and individual approach to one of the urgent problems of Symbolist theory stemmed, no doubt, from Ivanov's integral conception of verbal art; to him the question of sound was inseparable from that of the total composition of a poem as well as from its meaningful artistic expression.

Rather than isolate the question of sound as an autonomous and self-serving poetic dimension, Ivanov draws attention to other factors of verse which contribute to the perfecting of verbal art. In his "Thoughts on Symbolism" (*Mysli o simvolizme*, 1912 [*SS*, II, 604–12]), he reminds the reader that poetry has traditionally had a double link with its sister arts, painting and music. The Horatian formula (as reinterpreted) "ut pictura poesis," he writes, has lost none of its validity, inasmuch as one of the functions of poetry is to express and to interpret external reality. The descriptive and mimetic functions of poetry must, at the same time, be complemented by a euphonic quality, which, according to the precepts of the ancients, carries an immediate esthetic appeal and moves the soul of the listener ("non satis est pulchra esse poemata, sed dulcia sunto et quocumque volent animum auditoris agunto"). However, neither the descriptive nor the musical qualities of poetry are sufficient to produce a genuine work of art or true poetic "enchantment." Such a work, he argues, emerges only from the interpretation and transformation of amorphous experience by means of authentic artistic form [*SS*, II, 611].

By advancing his three requirements of genuine poetry, Ivanov departed from one of the cherished tenets of Symbolism which saw in the euphonic saturation of verse one of its principal goals and accomplishments. The one-sided emphasis on external form, and the cult of impressionism, were for him an invention of the radical or "subjective" wing of Symbolism that was initiated by Baudelaire and intensified by his followers. "With this trend of Symbolism,"

he wrote, "our poetry has neither a historical nor ideological affiliation" [*SS*, II, 611]. What is important for genuine or "objective" Symbolism, he continued, is not "the power of sound" (*sila zvuka*) but the "power of resonance" (*moshch' otzvuka*). The concentration on sound for its own sake, or as we would now say, the concentration on the signifier at the expense of the signified, cannot but lead to a fragmentation of the poem, to the reduction of its complexity to its most obviously sensuous aspect, and to the conversion of the poetic activity into a literary technique [*SS*, II, 606]. This, it would seem, straightforward position of Ivanov is, nevertheless, enmeshed in a number of concepts which Ivanov shared with his fellow Symbolists and which had become a commonplace of European esthetic thought.

In order to understand better Ivanov's views on the role of sound in lyrical poetry, it might be useful to consider more closely the significance which the Symbolists accorded to the problem and also the historical antecedents of their ideas.

In his well-known book *Die Struktur der modernen Lyrik* Hugo Friedrich[3] has drawn the main lines of the modernist tradition which have led from Baudelaire to all subsequent attempts at an autotelic, hermetic and difficult art. Like Ivanov, Friedrich, too, sees the beginnings of this tradition in the Symbolist quest for the musicalization of verse which was a part of their more general program to create a new poetic language, a "strange discourse" that would do away with the mimetic and rhetorical tendencies of older literature. This new and pure language was to be achieved by leaving the creation of a poem to the initiative of the words (Mallarmé's "rendre l'initiative aux mots") and by reclaiming from music its essential qualities ("reprendre à la musique leur bien").

The claim that poetry need not have any communicable meaning as long as it is imbued with sonorous, musical qualities became the leading motif of Symbolist poetics. Thus Verlaine required "de la musique avant toute chose." Valéry envied the musician who worked with a pure, ideal instrument "free from practical, changing and soiled language," while Nietzsche declared that "Lied heisst: Worte als Musik." It is clear that such an insistence on the phonetic and palpable aspects of poetry was not without profound consequences for the semantic structure of poetic works. The emphasis on the individual word at the expense of syntax, the call for *étrangeté* and the suggestive image ("où l'Indécis au Précis se joint") favored not only the dissolution of the unity of a poetic work, but also the breakdown of meaning and of everyday language.

The antecedents of this approach may, however, be found in an earlier tradition of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries which posited the question of the sound-fabric of poetry in the context of such broad philosophical and esthetic issues as the mutual relation of the arts, the origin of language, and the role of the cognitive and affective faculties of man. A brief consideration of this tradition should help us recognize the complexity of our problem and the various ideas advanced toward its solution.

The recognition of the phonetic fabric of verse as one of its basic formal elements suggested from the beginning several lines of approach. Among the eighteenth and nineteenth-century theories of poetry we can identify at least three basic variants which have exerted an influence on the subsequent tradition and which are partly reflected in Ivanov's writings.

"Poetry," Lessing wrote in a letter to Nicolai (1769), "must try to raise the arbitrary signs of spoken language to natural signs; that is how it differs from prose and becomes poetry."[4] Such a requirement obviously stemmed from the belief in an original Adamic language which consisted of natural, iconic signs that were able to convey directly the true nature of things. Poetic language was then to aspire to this original condition in order to gain a deeper insight into hidden Reality, an insight that was presumably blurred through the use of ordinary speech. In poetic practice, however, this requirement could only amount to the use of onomatopoeia and semi-onomatopoeic words, for it is in such words that the natural function of the sign is most clearly pronounced.

Another and far more influential approach concerning the phonetic orchestration of verse was connected with the eighteenth-century speculations on the origin of language and the belief in the historical and logical priority of emotion over analytic and discursive thought. Primitive language was, in this opinion, primarily a tool

of emotive expression, and poetry was the refuge and repository of that primitive state of affairs that had otherwise been suppressed by the advance of civilization and the development of man's rational faculties. The recognition of poetry as an art of emotion led then, in turn, to the rejection of the formula "ut pictura poesis," as they understood it, and to the recognition that music, the emotional art *par excellence*, provided the true analogue of poetic expression. "Sight," wrote Herder, "is the coldest of the senses, whereas hearing acts immediately on the soul," and provides the basic source of poetic imagination.[5] Just as primitive language was a language of song and of rhythm, so poetry was expected to perform its true task by exhibiting the musical quality of its forms. "A poem," claimed Ludwig Tieck, "needs neither sense nor content, because emotion is best expressed by sounds and by tones." Novalis, the most theoretical of the Romantic poets, makes the same plea: "Only good-sounding poems, even without any sense and connection" ("Gedichte—bloss wohlklingend, aber auch ohne Sinn und Zusammenhang").[6]

Another variant which exalted the role of phonetic orchestration is that which ascribes to individual sounds the capacity to evoke synesthetic associations or other kinds of sensual impressions. If the former variant leads to the spiritualization of the material aspect of a poem, this variant may be said to reduce its spiritual aspect to a sensual, physiological and ultimately hedonistic dimension. The content of a poem, it was said by some Formalists (Viktor Shklovsky), is merely a pretext for exhibiting its phonetic design. The appeal to synesthesia was, long before Rimbaud (in his sonnet on vowels), expounded by some Romantics (e.g., in the Jena lectures of A. W. Schlegel), whereas the association of sounds with the "dance" of the speech-organs was put forward by Bely in his "Poem about Sound."

This brief survey of the various approaches to the role of sound in poetry should enable us to see more clearly Ivanov's indebtedness to, and departure from, tradition.

As indicated above, Ivanov's fullest exposition of the subject is given in his "About Sound-imagery in Pushkin," a work that is couched in highly metaphoric language and charged with subtle philosophical allusions. But freed from the stylistic and metaphysical

underpinnings (which one would find difficult to paraphrase) the basic arguments of the article seem to amount to the following: Pushkin is a master of poetic form, but at the same time he pursues the classical tendency to treat sound not as a surface phenomenon, but as an internally directed, translucent quality (*klassicheskoe stremlenie ne delat' narochito primetnym prosvechivajushchij, no kak by vnutr' obrashchennyj uzor zvukovoj tkani*).

The exploration of "sound instrumentation" is for Ivanov a poetic "device" only to the extent that it constitutes part of a poetic technique. The true nature of sound lies deeper and derives from a primordial striving for a magically effective verbal expression, an expression which has its roots not merely in euphony, but in the inseparable "consonance" (*sozvuchie*) of all elements of verse. Such a consonance characterized the primitive forms of verse, such as ritual hymns and incantations, which existed before the emergence of the various arts. This consonance is ingrained in the deepest layers of the word and is primary also in the psychological perception of verse. Its significance was underscored by Goethe, for whom the poet was the carrier of eternal melodies ("dem die ewigen Melodien durch die Glieder sich bewegen"), as well as by Pushkin. For the latter, the "awakening of poetry" was a moment of spiritual excitation in which the poet is overwhelmed by a stream of sounds pertaining to the realm of glossolalia and trans-sense language: "he runs wild and stern, full of sounds and confusion" (*bezhit on dikij i surovyj, zvukov i smjatenija poln*). In giving external expression to the initial lyrical impulse—when the soul is embarrassed by lyric agitation (*kogda dusha stesnjaetsja liricheskim volneniem*) the poet tranforms the primary diffuse and unstable rhythmic images (*dinamicheskij ritmo-obraz*, dynamic rhythm-image) into more permanent sound-images (*zvuko-obraz*) which lend sense and organization to fleeting experience. This is the initial stage of the creative act which has yielded the kind of poetry that we find in religious rituals (*obrjadovoe gimnotvorchestvo*) and in the works of the Futurists. Although such a poetry is wordless (*bezslovesnaja zvukorech'*), its phonetic material is drawn from everyday language. This phase of poetic creativity repeats philogenetically the process of primordial word-formation (*slovo-rozhdenija*). Trans-sense

poetry is nevertheless incomplete, for its primary phonetic material remains devoid of image and meaning. Poetic representation is in such poetry subordinate to the play of homophones (including the play with rhymes). This type of poetry which utilizes vague and suggestive images suffused in a stream of sounds was cultivated by the Romantics and the early Symbolists, to whom it represented true poetic "inspiration." For Pushkin, on the other hand, this stage of the creative act was merely a form of "rapture," whereas by "inspiration" he meant a higher, more advanced stage of poetic creativity which required the participation of reason in the "structuring of the parts with relation to the whole." Pushkin was thus a representative of a classical art that tried to find a balance between the initial lyrical impulse and rigid poetic form.

The poems of Pushkin show, furthermore, the importance of sound-images which are endowed with symbolic value. The symbolic value of the sound-images stems from the presence of a central phonetic image which triggers the composition of entire poems and which yields "unity of melos, myth, and logos." The combination of the primitive poetic impulse and the symbolic sound-image is achieved in Pushkin's poetry in one of three ways:

(1) Through the use of onomatopoeia which lends symbolic content to sensual, acoustic impressions. This use is exemplified in Pushkin's "Stikhi sochinennye noch'ju vo vremja bessonnitsy." In this poem the "whispered" palatals *uch, ts, s, chu* alternate with the "quivering" and "fearful" cluster *tr,* with the "melting" *n* and the "fatal and ominous" syllables *ra, ar, re,* and *or.* These sounds suggest by themselves "the trepidation of the sleeping night" (*spjashchej nochi trepetan'e*) and the efforts of human consciousness to cope with the surrounding darkness and chaos.

(2) Through the conjunction of sound and image which has its roots in individual poetic apperception (e.g., the erotic charge of the "damp" syllable *ju* in Lermontov's *Pesnja rybki*: "*O, milyj moj ne utaju, chto ja tebja ljublju kak vol'nuju struju, ljublju kak zhizn' moju*") or from certain sensual associations which pertain to the realm of glossolalia. A case in point (cited by Bely) is the repetition of *r* in Pushkin's *ronjaet les bagrjanyj svoj ubor.* But unlike the Romantics and

the Symbolists, Pushkin valued the word not in and by itself, but rather for the conjunction of sound and meaning. The word in itself and its phonetic overtones are for Pushkin of secondary importance. The same is true of the above-mentioned *Stikhi sochinennye noch'ju* . . . where the interplay of consonants with the "whispering palatals" serves only a subordinate and secondary function.

(3) Pushkin's poetry is basically constructed on a third principle, a principle which draws its resources from everyday language, including the sound-texture of proper names. The name *Marjula* which rhymes with the words *gula* and *Kagula* provided, no doubt, the initial impulse for the composition of *Tsygany.* The syllable *da* is an all-pervasive element in the poem *Zaklinanie.* It appears in the word *sjuda,* which rhymes with the phrases *pravda chto togda, dal'njaja zvezda, bledna, khladna,* and it is foregrounded in the final exclamation *da*!, which affirms the power of faithful love and which is also the pivotal point of the poem. The sound-image of *obval* (in "Obval") is implied in its very form, which suggests the meanings of fall and thunder. The final syllable *al* is anticipated by its variant *ly* (in *valy*), and modified in a whole series of words ending in *ol* (such as *vol, vel, Eol, orel*) and in *ly* (in *orly*). The heavy sequence of *l* sounds is, in turn, relieved by the more "quiet" sounds of *kupets* and *zhilets* which terminate the poem and provide a sense of general relief. Thus it is apparent that Pushkin, like Virgil before him, attains the musical quality of his verse not by onomatopoeia or pseudo-onomatopoeia, but by variations in sound-texture which advance and organize the meaning of a poem. The symbolic value of sounds is most apparent in Pushkin's *Vospominanie.* In this poem the nasal consonants *m* and *n,* which are symbolic of memory (as in the Greek word *mneme*) occur in juxtaposition or in combination with the labials *p, b,* and *bd* (as in *tomitel'nogo bdenija, v bezdejstvii nochnom; tjazhkikh dum izbytok*), and with the spirants *s* and *z* (in such key words as *smert', zmeja* and *mest'*). Particularly characteristic are the lines *zhivej gorjat vo mne zmei serdechnoj ugryzen'ja,* which suggest an intimate link between recollection and remorse. A similar conjunction of these sentiments is suggested by the combination of dentals and spirants in the first chapter of *Eugene Onegin*: *Togo zmeja vospom-*

inanij / Togo raskajan'e gryzet. It should be obvious, Ivanov concludes, that the development of certain poetic ideas is carried and suggested by the combination of appropriate phonetic images.

External form and internal content make an inseparable unity which marks the highest achievement of poetry, inasmuch as poetry strives to reconcile external form with internal content. The true task of poetry is to convert form into content and content into form.

Now, what shall we make of Ivanov's arguments? In the first place we may notice that Ivanov is not so much concerned with the function of sounds in a literary work as with the very process of poetic creativity within which he distinguishes three discrete and ascending stages. This distinction permits him to evaluate poetic works in terms of their completeness and artistic perfection. The first two stages which involve the purely euphonic aspects of poetry, i.e., onomatopoeia and glossolalia, are clearly assigned to a different and lower order, since they are preparatory for the final stage which achieves integration of form and content and which was, according to Ivanov, attained in the works of such classical poets as Virgil and Pushkin. "For Pushkin," he writes, "the question of sound in itself was, in contrast to the Romantics and Symbolists, a matter of secondary concern."[7] Ivanov touches, as if in passing, on the question of glossolalia, which he more or less dismisses on the grounds that it had already been "masterfully" treated in a study by Bely.[8] The existence of a wordless, purely phonetic poetry, is, in fact, recognized, but with the qualification that such a poetry had a religious and magic significance, as we find it in the oldest ritual and religious chants which represent the earliest phases of man's poetic activity. The suggestion that these phases coincide with the early stages of the individual poetic process can be viewed as a bow to tradition which took for granted the coincidence of ontogeny with phylogeny. Ivanov's indebtedness to this tradition is further apparent in his discussion of the symbolic values of sound and sound-combinations. The different sounds of the Russian language, such as palatals and dentals, have, according to him, the power to evoke such emotional and physical states as the horror of the night, feelings of remorse or the trepidation of the heart. In this Ivanov is, of course, strictly in

step with Symbolist doctrines which recognized the symbolic capacity of sounds apart from (and above) the meanings of the words in which they occur, though it is clear that without the envelope of the word the putative symbolic powers of the sound would evaporate into thin air. Far more persuasive are Ivanov's arguments concerning the distribution of sounds in alternating and contrastive patterns, for it is these patterns that carry the overall compositional structure of a poem and which give shape and direction to its artistic content.

But before passing on to Ivanov's views on the relation of meaning and form, we may pause to consider his critique of the Formalist theories of poetic form contained in his article "On the Latest Theoretical Research on the Artistic Word" (*O novejshikh teoreticheskikh iskanijakh v oblasti khudozhestvennogo slova*, 1922).[9] In this article Ivanov discusses specifically the views on sound-instrumentation advanced by such early Formalists as Jakubinsky, Polivanov, Brik and Shklovsky. Ivanov applauds their attempts to define the distinctive properties of poetry in opposition to prose, as well as their effort to found a new, precise and scientific poetics. He treats, however, with suspicion their tendency to consider poetic craft as a set of technical devices and to absolutize the nature of the sound fabric in poetry. Although the Formalists make use of such semi-mystical terms as "trans-sense image" (*zaumnyj obraz*) and "internal sound-speech" (*vnutrennjaja zvukorech'*) they ignore, in fact, the role of the poetic image and poetry's perennial striving for "synthetic expression." Their new positivistic stance and lack of historical perspective cause them to mistake the part for the whole (*pars pro toto*) and to ignore the complexities of verbal art. The importance of form in poetic texts which was so clamorously proclaimed by the Formalists was also, for Ivanov, one of the central problems of poetry, though he gave it a totally different orientation. Form, he concludes (in his essay on Pushkin's sound-imagery), strives forever to become content, and content to become form (*Forma stala soderzhaniem, soderzhanie formoj: takova polnota khudozhestvennogo "voploshchenija"*).[10]

The idea of interdependence of form and content is taken up by Ivanov in a number of studies, most notably in his encyclopedic article "Il simbolismo," in "Thoughts on Symbolism, Thoughts on

Poetry" and in "Forma formans e forma formata." Since the discussion of this problem would take us beyond the topic of this paper, I will limit myself to a few cursory remarks.

Ivanov's conception of the form-content relation may be summarized in the following terms: the question of whether poetry deals with the "how" or the "what" can be decided only in favor of the former. The essence of poetry is, indeed, artistic form, but form not in the sense of ornament and phonetic trappings, but form as the poet's peculiar perception and organization of reality. (It is another matter that, as a transcendental Realist, Ivanov believed that the true poet does not invent his own view of the world, but only discovers what is implicit in objective reality.)

Inasmuch as the poetic vision of reality is construed by means of images that require for their implementation artistic form, the putative opposition between the "inner" and the "outer" is indeed a misleading and illusory phenomenon. Consequently, some authors have come forth ("like some new Polonius") with the proposal to collapse the two aspects of art into one, i.e., either to banish the notion of content or to eliminate the concept of form. Both of these proposals are harmful to the artistic enterprise. The medieval Schoolmen (in particular, St. Thomas Aquinas) came closer to the truth when they declared that beauty is "resplendentia formae super partes materiae proportionatas," that is, "the splendor of form over the well-ordered parts of matter," or the meaningful arrangement of parts into a whole.

Form and content do not overlap, but remain in a relation of perpetual tension that derives from the interplay of the parts and the whole. And since the process of integrating the various parts into a whole is never complete, the proper definition of poetry is *energeia*, or that of open and evolving form (Goethe's "geprägte Form, die lebend sich entwickelt"), rather than that of closed and formally completed artifacts. It is this aspect of living form that determines the vitality of art and its persistent hold on our imagination.

A close reading of Ivanov's poetry will, I think, show that his poetic practice did not essentially differ from his theory. Although Ivanov is a master of form, his efforts were primarily directed toward

the enrichment of the metrical and stanzaic possibilities of Russian verse. Thus he imitated the various types of classical meters, adapted the stanzaic forms of Old French and Provençal poetry, cultivated the terzina and elevated the Russian sonnet to new heights. The exploitation of sound-texture "for its own sake" was to him of secondary and peripheral interest. Thus we find in his poetry none of the "magical" combinations of sounds practiced by the Symbolists (such as Balmont's *Ja vol'nyj veter, ja vechno veju, / Volnuju volny, laskaju ivy*), the breathtaking euphonic experiments of a Tsvetaeva (*Drugie vsej plot'ju po ploti plutajut / Iz ust peresokhshikh-dykhanie glotajut*), or the metrical and linguistic innovations of the Futurists. Like his idol, Pushkin, Ivanov aims at classical compositional form that would harmonize and integrate the meaning of his poems. At the same time, he produced a number of poems in which the phonetic fabric is conspicuously foregrounded. Most typical in this respect are, however, his German *Gastgeschenke* [*SS*, II, 337–40] which he composed for his visitor, the poet and translator Johann von Gunther (in 1908) and which he patently treated as a kind of poetic entertainment.

Notes

1. Andrey Bely, *Glossolalija. Poèma o zvuke* (Berlin, 1922).
2. Vyacheslav Ivanov, "K probleme zvukoobraza u Pushkina" *Moskovskij Pushkinist*, II (Moscow, 1930), 94–105.
3. Hugo Friedrich, *Die Struktur der modernen Lyrik* (Hamburg, 1956).
4. Cited by René Wellek, *A History of Modern Criticism: 1750–1950*, vol. I (New Haven-London, 1955), 164.
5. Johann Gottfried Herder, *Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 4, B. Suphan, ed. (Berlin, 1878), 44.
6. Novalis, "Fragmente und Studien," in his *Schriften*, vol. 2, P. Kluckholn, ed. (Leipzig, 1929), 288.
7. Ivanov, "K probleme . . . ," p. 5.
8. Ibid.
9. See Ivanov, "O novejshikh teoreticheskikh iskanijakh v oblasti khudozhestvennogo slova," in *Nauchnye izvestija* (Moscow, 1922).
10. Ivanov, "K probleme . . . ," p. 9.

"Jazyk": An Analysis of the Poem

Tomas Venclova

Language

To a singer, his native speech is his native soil:
herein lies the unexchangeable treasure of the ancestors,
and the earthly mother of heaven-induced songs
divines according to the whisper of oak groves.

As it was of old, the sacred depth is waiting
for conceptions, and the spirit circles over it . . .
And the strength of the loins, being full, runs in the vine,
the juicy sweetness of verbal clusters.

Glorified, ringing with the reverberation of the spheres
resounding from afar, the element is lit
with the light of intelligent fire.

And the prophetic hymn is their nuptial encounter,
like coal that locked the sun of day into diamond,
the forerunner of spirit-bearing creation.

ЯЗЫК

Родная речь певцу земля родная:
В ней предков неразменный клад лежит,
И нàшептом дубравным ворожит
Внушенных небом песен мать земная.

Как было древле,—глубь заповедная
Зачатий ждет, и дух над ней кружит . . .
И сила недр, полна, в лозе бежит,
Словесных гроздий сладость наливная.

Прославленная, светится, звеня
С отгулом сфер, звучащих издалеча,
Стихия светом умного огня.

И вещий гимн, их свадебная встреча;
Как угль, в алмаз замкнувший солнце дня,—
Творенья духоносного предтеча.

The poem "Language" (*Jazyk*) was written by Vyacheslav Ivanov in Pavia on February 10, 1927, to commemorate the ninetieth anniversary of Pushkin's death. Originally, the poem bore the title "Poetry" (*Poezija*) and had a New Testament epigraph, "And the Word was made flesh" (*I Slovo plot' byst'*). In publishing the poem ten years later,[1] the poet abandoned the epigraph, or rather transformed a part of it into a title: the new redaction, with its many textual differences from the first, bore the name "The Flesh-Word" (*Slovo-plot'*). The third redaction was included in *Evening Light* (*Svet Vechernij*); its text was adopted as canonic in Ivanov's *Collected Works* as well as in the Soviet anthology of 1976.

Jazyk is essential to Ivanov's work in many senses. During his emigration, up to January 1, 1944, when he began his *Roman Diary* (*Rimskij dnevnik*), the poet had written only twenty-one poems. Like many a Symbolist, he regarded periods of prolonged silence as necessary for a poet, linking them with spiritual sobriety and with the muteness of "apophatic" ecstasy. "The holy language of silence" (*svjatoj bezmolvija jazyk*), hallowed by Ivanov, was more primary and important for him than any, even poetic, language.[2] The rare bursts of poetic speech, breaking this silence, are therefore all the more significant.

It is characteristic that at such moments, poetry, speech, language reflect upon themselves, as it were. The poem may be categorized as autothematic or, to use the term fashionable in recent years, metalinguistic. This is the poet's reflection on his material, on its innumerable possibilities and inescapable limitations, on its multifarious and antinomial nature, on the layers of the past imprinted on language, and on the possible future "as through a glass, darkly," anticipated by the language's very existence.

It is well known that Ivanov developed an original linguistic conception—to my mind, one of the most profound and solid in the history of Russian thought. Conceived as a crossing of the ideas of Humboldt, Schopenhauer and the early Slavophiles, it verges, on the one hand, upon Platonism and the mysticism of the Eastern Church and, on the other, upon such modern phenomena as Jungianism and even structuralism. In complex and indirect ways (through Mikhail Bakhtin in particular), it exerted some influence on present-day semiotics. One can easily find clear parallels to certain loci of the poem *Jazyk* in Ivanov's articles. Let me cite a few among many possible examples:

> Language is the earth; a poetic creation grows out of the earth. It cannot raise its roots into the air. Yet how can we strive onward in the rhythm of time which tosses and tears us, surrender to the call of universal dynamism while remaining "firm in the earth," faithful to the nurturing mother? The task is apparently impossible to fulfill, threatening poetry with ruin. But what is impossible for humans is possible for God, and the miracle may occur: a new knowledge of the Earth on the part of its belated children. If we lovingly press ourselves close to the bosom of our native language, the living verbal soil and our maternal flesh, we shall perhaps suddenly hear in them the pulsation of a new life, the trembling of the infant. This will be the new myth.[3]

> Language in general, according to Wilhelm Humboldt's profound view, is both the "act" and the "active force," the communal [*sobornaja*] milieu being created unceasingly by everyone together and both anticipating and conditioning each creative action in the very cradle of its conception; an antinomial combination of necessity and freedom, of the human and the divine; a creation of national spirit and God's gift to the nation. Language, according to Humboldt, is a gift fallen to the nation's lot as a predetermination of its spiritual being to come.[4]

The following quotation, from a much earlier article, is standard for Russian Symbolism:

> Like an electric spark, the word is possible only in the contact of the opposite poles of a single creativity: the artist and the nation. What otherwise would be the purpose of the isolated *word, this means and symbol of universal one-mindedness?* . . . That cognition is memory, as Plato teaches, is verified through the poet, since, as the organ of national self-awareness, he is at the same time and thereby, the organ of national memory. Through him, the nation recalls its ancient soul and revives its ancient powers dormant for centuries. *Just as true verse is preformed by the element of language,* even so a true poetic image is predetermined by the national psyche. . . . The poet wishes to be solitary and aloof, yet his inner freedom is an inner necessity of return to and partaking of the native element. He invents the new and regains the ancient.[5]

These extratextual parallels are useful to keep in mind; however, they can in no way replace an analysis of the text. The sense and art of the poem are born from a complex intertwining of its phonological, grammatical and semantic themes. Only microanalysis can uncover this intertwining, and even then not entirely, for it occurs, as a rule, at an unconscious level. *Jazyk* not only states Ivanov's rather complicated linguistic conception within the condensed space of fourteen lines: the poem expresses it by its very matter, by the entire *flesh of the word,* by all its symmetry and balance. In so doing, *Jazyk* unites this conception with other philosophical and mythological planes of Ivanov's thought: its symbolism of the universal soul, Dionysianism, ecumenicity [*sobornost'*]. The literary-historical dimension of the poem is also significant, namely, its connection with Pushkin and his poetic tradition.[6] In its internal richness—its modesty of poetic means, rather atypical for Ivanov, and its very small compass notwithstanding—*Jazyk* stands out against the background of Ivanov's other poems, indeed against the background of the entire Russian Symbolist movement. Sergey Averintsev is quite right in reckoning the poem among those works of Ivanov "most alive" for a modern reader.[7]

Jazyk is a sonnet written in iambic pentameter, traditional for this form in Russian poetry; the sonnet is of the strictest type, the

so-called Italian sonnet. Its pattern is *abba abba cdc dcd* (*a* and *d* rhymes are feminine, *b* and *c* masculine). This structure ("closed" quatrains and "open" tercets) is traditionally regarded as the most perfect. Most other characteristics of a strict sonnet are likewise maintained (except one to be discussed below): periods coincide with stanza boundaries; the last word may be regarded as the key to the entire poem. Ivanov's predilection for sonnet form is well known. The three volumes of his collected works contain 222 original sonnets (in approximately 1,000 poems), including two coronas, two unfinished sonnets and one sonnet in German.[8] In most cases, Ivanov's sonnets are written in iambic pentameter and their pattern frequently corresponds to the pattern of *Jazyk*. This form, infinitely variegated in all its strictness, evidently ideally reflected Ivanov's idea of art as ultimate freedom and ultimate obedience.

The form of the poem and its meter *per se* possess "sign" character: which means that it belongs to a certain European and Russian tradition—Pushkinian, to be precise—to a certain "elevated" type of poetic language. On the level of rhythm, the poem is devoid of any glaring individual characteristics: it is emphatically "unnoticeable," ascetic. Its iamb is without caesura; word boundaries after the fourth syllable are observed in seven out of fourteen lines (in the odd lines of the first quatrain, in the inner lines of the second quatrain, in the medial line of the first tercet and in the first two lines of the second tercet). This reflects the general tendency of the Russian poetry of the twentieth century quite well and cannot be considered specific to Ivanov.[9] The symmetry of word boundaries, however, is curious: an obvious analogue of the two outer and the two inner stanzas, supported also at some other levels. The rhythm of the poem is the regular alternating one;[10] stress omissions appear only on the weak feet: either on the second (line 2) or on the fourth (lines 5, 8, 10, 11, 12), or on the second and fourth (lines 3, 9, 14). Twelve out of the seventy possible pattern stresses are omitted (the average number of accented feet is somewhat higher than is characteristic of twentieth-century poetry). The brevity of the text does not allow one to draw any statistical conclusions. However, rhythmical movements, noticeable against the general background of saturation of

the verse with accented feet, may in certain cases be related to the movement of semantic themes.

On levels other than rhythm, symmetry and balance of structural elements are more noticeable. The poet spreads before us language with a wide range of possibilities, in the sphere of sound and in the sphere of sense, and, finally, in the sphere of style (archaisms, folk parlance and the like). Language is not only the philosophical theme of the sonnet, it is, at the same time, its "material theme." Vyacheslav Ivanov is not just *speaking about language*, he is also *displaying language* by turning its various facets; he is not just discoursing, *relating*, he is *showing* as well. The system shines through the text perceived by the reader (hearer), and behind the system of the Russian language, semiotic systems—"languages"—of myth and religion shine through.

The first quatrain is to a great extent built on sonorants: they constitute over a half (36) of the seventy consonant phonemes. The most frequent consonant of the quatrain is *n*, followed by *r* (and *m*). Among the scant plosives, *d* stands out.[11] Here one easily notices a consonantal theme, *n-r-d* (with its various permutations); i.e., the quatrain contains, anagrammatically,[12] the word *narod* ("nation"), which is quite essential to Ivanov's conception of language as an ecumenic principle.[13] The other word which is anagrammatized (not only in the quatrain but in the entire poem) is *rech'* ("speech"). In contrast with the word *narod*, this word actually appears in the text and does so in a very significant position, to wit, as the second word (the first noun and the first subject) of the sonnet; its resonance is heard in many lines (p*réd*kov—d*rév*le—sf*ér*, zvuc*h*ashchikh izdalé*-ch*a—vstr*écha*—tvorén'ja), up to the word p*redtécha* ("forerunner"), which is the final predicate of the poem. Thus the sonnet runs a full cycle; the word *rech'*, throughout the space of the fourteen lines, vibrates in consonance with the last, key word (the first subject, with the last predicate); *predtecha*, as it were, contains *rech'*, both on the sound level and on the syntactic level, as well as on the semantic level.[14]

In the first quatrain, *a* is predominant among accented vowels (eight cases out of seventeen), including the first and the last accented

vowel (rodnája—zemnája). The accented *a*'s frame the quatrain also in another sense: the syntagm *zemlja rodnaja* (end of the first line) mirrors the syntagm *mat' zemnaja* (end of the fourth line).

One should also note the refined consonance of the third and the fourth line. The word *vnushennykh* which begins the fourth line contains phonemes of the three preceding words—*nash*eptom d*u*-bra*vn*ym *v*orozhit. Besides, it is connected with the beginning of the second line (*v nej*), as if forming a budding initial rhyme.

On the grammatical level, the predominance of nouns is striking. Ivanov has been for a long time conventionally characterized as "the poet of the noun";[15] in this connection one speaks of his poetry as static, mosaical, abstract. Almost half (nine) of the twenty lexical units in the first quatrain are nouns (the entire sonnet has seventy-one lexical units, among which thirty are nouns). In addition, Ivanov's nouns are short, often monosyllabic. There are four adjectives in the first quatrain, all of them denominative (the total number of adjectives in the sonnet is thirteen). There are only two finite verbs (the total number of these in the sonnet is seven). However, both the verbs and the adjectives in the first (as well as in the second) quatrain are in a sense emphasized, since they carry rhymes. Ivanov's grammatical preferences are especially distinct in the first line which consists only of nouns (with the zero copula). Note that finite verbs are also absent in the five final lines of the sonnet.

The tense of the first quatrain is *present;* the past tense occurs only in the participle (aside from the subtext). Nominal inflection is represented sufficiently well; however, the nominative, the unmarked case, is by far the commonest. The quatrain consists of one coordinative sentence; syntactic subdivisions coincide with the rhythmic ones; the enjambment occurs only between the third and the fourth line, where the syntax becomes typically Ivanovian, confusing, "Latin" in character. It is difficult to disentangle the "many-storeyed" inversion: should one read the last sentence as "zemnaja mat' vnushennykh nebom pesen vorozhit dubravnym nasheptom" (the earthly mother of heaven-induced songs divines according to the whisper of oak groves) or as "zemnaja mat' vorozhit dubravnym nasheptom vnushennykh nebom pesen" (the earthly mother divines

according to the oak grove whisper of heaven-induced songs); in other words, are the *pesen* governed by the word *mat'* (which is more probable)[16] or by the word *nasheptom?* The poet leaves us in ignorance and, apparently, intentionally so: this is part of his semantic enterprise.

The choice of structural elements, their interplay on different levels, helps create a complex semantic effect. The first quatrain introduces the semantic themes (topoi) of *zemlja* "earth, soil" and *pamjat'* "memory." *Rech'*, "speech" (*jazyk*, "language"), already in the first line is equated with *zemlja;* this metaphoric comparison, reinforced by the strictly symmetrical structure of the line and by the two identical epithets, turns into symbolic sameness. As is well known, in accordance with Ivanov's conception a symbol acquires different meanings and dimensions in different spheres of consciousness (and existence). *Zemlja*/Gaea/Demeter plays a very important role in Ivanov's symbolic system. She may be regarded as flesh—and soul—of the world, its feminine aspect, a dark reflection of the Eternal Virgin who gave birth to Dionysus.[17] In a Christian interpretation *zemlja* may be connected with the Mother of God; in a purely psychological interpretation, with the Jungian category of *anima;*[18] the sonnet "Jazyk" gives us yet another interpretation: in the creative—poetic—sphere, *zemlja* is *stikhija* (element) of the national speech, giving birth to *stikh* ("verse"),[19] already bearing it inside her, as it were. She embodies the moment of necessity, the communal experience and wisdom of the ancestors;[20] on her own, however, without the touch of the creative spirit she is passive and inert. It is precisely the semantics of *inertness* and *immobility* that is emphasized in the first quatrain. The "eternal present" reigns here—all is repeated, static, self-contained. On the plane of expression, this quality is, at least partially, reflected by the choice of tense, the intransitivity of the verbs, the passive construction, the heaping up of nouns in the unmarked nominative case, the difficult opaque syntax. Repetitions deserve special mention. The very first line is built in a mirrorlike fashion and is self-contained: it begins and ends with the word *rodnaja*. The initial position of this word, its feminine gender, as well as its phonetic and etymological connection with

narod ("nation"), *rod* ("kin," "clan," "stock"), *rodina* ("native land"), *rozhdenie* ("birth"), *rodstvo* ("kinship"), make it uncommonly weighty in this context from the semantic standpoint. Ivanov emphasizes this word also by allowing himself to violate—only once in the entire poem—the rule of non-repetition of words in a sonnet. I have already noted certain similar instances (cf. the repetition with the characteristic morphological change and syntactic permutation *pevtsu zemlja rodnaja—pesen mat' zemnaja*). Metrically regular and "verbless" lines—the first and the fourth—also reinforce the effect of self-containment, of stasis, of full symmetry of the quatrain.

In the spatial semantics of the quatrain, the horizontal dimension (symbolically connected with the passive principle) is emphasized. There is a hint, however, of the vertical dimension: specifically, *dub* ("oak") is mentioned, indirectly in the word *dubravnym*. The symbolism of *dub* is multifaceted. First and foremost, this is one of the variants of the *world tree* which unites top and bottom, heaven and earth, light and darkness.[21] Ivanov used this symbol many times, emphasizing its ambivalent nature in every way: thus, in his poem "The Oak of Stone" (*Kamennyj dub*), written a year and a half before the sonnet under consideration, the image of *oak* neutralizes the oppositions *live/dead, spring/winter, birth/death* and some others. In this fashion, *dub* is linked with the complex of Dionysianism, the pivot of Ivanov's metaphysics. On the other hand, in the mythological vegetative code, *oak* as the tree of Zeus (and Cybele) forms the opposite of *vine* as the genuine tree of Dionysus. The contrast *dub/vinograd* (*loza*) ("vine") is crucial to the entire sonnet (*loza* appears in the second quatrain approximately in the same slot as *dub* in the first quatrain). Third, the words of *nashept dubravnyj* ("oak grove whisper") refer to a specific philosophic conception. Human language and sign systems of culture are likened to the *language of nature*. This conception, going back to Schelling and the *ljubomudry*, was dear to Ivanov, as well as to Baratynsky, Tyutchev and Fet; we find tens if not hundreds of examples to that effect in Ivanov's verse, embodied now in somewhat worn-out metaphors, now in bold and original images. And, finally, *dub* and *dubrava* ("oak grove") are living signs of the Pushkinian tradition. They are connected with

the introductory lines of "Ruslan i Ljudmila" (employed in the well-known poem from *Roman Diary* [*Rimskij dnevnik*, 1944]) and with *shirokoshumnyja dubrovy* ("wide-resounding oak groves") from the poem "Poet." Let us recall that the sonnet is dedicated to Pushkin's memory. Thus one word (one morpheme, to be precise) places Ivanov's verse in the broadest context—mythological, religious, philosophical and literary-historical.

The second quatrain is in many respects the opposite of the first. It shows other facets of language and myth. On the phonological level, the proportion of sonorants is decreased dramatically: *m* does not appear at all, whereas *l, n, r* constitute less than one third of all the consonants. There are significantly more plosive non-sonorants (twenty-three occurrences out of sixty-nine). While the first quatrain emphasizes sonority and harmony, the second presents language in its disharmonious aspect. However, the last two lines of the quatrain are based on repetitions of the non-plosive *s, l, v* (the anagram of the lexeme *slovo*, "word"). Front vowels *e, i* are predominant among accented vowels (nine out of eighteen), but the two accented *u*'s (*glub', dukh*) which occur in semantically loaded nouns, monosyllabic and situated in the same (third) foot in the neighboring lines, clearly stand out against that background. Ivanov's gravitation toward initial rhymes (or rhymoids) is noticeable as before; it becomes even stronger: while the second and the fourth line of the first quatrain echoed barely noticeably (*v nej—vn*ushennykh), the initial *kak bylo—i sila* in the second quatrain is striking (cf. the same tendency further: *slovesnykh—proslavlenn*aja—i *v*eshchij, s ot*gul*om—kak *ugl'*). On the grammatical level, one should note the decrease in the proportion of nouns (8 nouns per 23 words) and the increase in the proportion of verbs (4 verbs per 23 words); in addition, the past tense appears alongside the present tense (*bylo*, "it was"). Incidentally, while the first quatrain contains only imperfective verbs, the verb *bylo* (corresponding to the omitted copula in the first line) neutralizes the opposition *perfective/imperfective*. The second quatrain, in contrast to the first, consists of two sentences: the first sentence combines coordination with subordination, whereas the second sentence is an expanded simple sentence with inversions (it is,

however, quite clear and transparent). The enjambment occurs in the beginning of the quatrain, not in its end. Rhythmically, the second quatrain is also, in a sense, the reverse of the first: regular lines are situated in its middle, not along its edges.

The semantic structure of the quatrain is noticeably connected with the choice and interplay of the elements of its expression plane. While passivity, inertness and "the eternal return" correlated with the *topos* of *zemlja* (feminine principle, *anima*) were emphasized in the first quatrain, the second quatrain affirms activity, motion and diversity correlated with the theme of *dukh* (masculine principle, *animus*). One is dealing here not with collective language but with its individual use by the poet; not with immersion into the primal element of the unconscious but with the next level, to wit, wilful individuation. Hence the replacement of the static with the dynamic. As I have said, the number of verbs is increased (two of them—*kruzhit* ["circles"] and *bezhit* ["runs"]—are verbs of motion); there appears an expressive enjambment underscored by a phonological and a morphological link (glub' *za*povednaja *Za*chatij zhdet—[the sacred depth is waiting for conceptions]); the "eternal present" is transformed into genuine time where there is both present and past. Similarly, the horizontal dimension is transformed into the vertical one (*glub'*—dukh *nad* nej—"*depth*—the spirit *over* it"); influence at a distance, inducement, turns into nuptial intimacy; containment, *closure*, into *openness*. As I have already mentioned, *duh* ("oak") is the opposite of *loza* ("vine") in the mythological vegetative code. *Loza* is also a mediator of top and bottom, heaven and earth, cosmos and chaos, life and death; in addition, *loza* entails connotations connected with the cult of Dionysus and, through it, with the Christian symbolism of *sacrifice* (cf. the category of *zhertvennoe iskusstvo* ["sacrificial art"], so important to many Symbolists). *Jazyk prirody* ("language of nature"), one of the themes of the first quatrain, is now shifted to a different plane: poetic language is likened to natural phenomena only metaphorically.

The first tercet again brings many changes. The sound-system of language turns about to show its new side. In the tercet, fricatives

(non-sonorants) are predominant (twenty out of forty-eight consonants). The consonantal theme of the tercet is based on the combinations *sv, zv* placed "diagonally" (*sv*etitsja—*sfer*—*sv*etom, *zv*enja—*zv*uchashchikh; cf. also the reverse diagonal *otgulom*—*um*nogo *og*nja). In this fashion, the poet introduces the semantic themes of *svet* ("light") and *zvuk* ("sound") which were absent or almost absent in the quatrains (there, *zvuk* was predicted by *nashept* ["whisper"]). The accented vowels *a* and *e* are virtually in balance. On the grammatical level, the reflexive and the gerund appear for the first and only time. The tercet is a single simple sentence saturated with inversions. Rhythmically, it is particularly light, compared with the other stanzas: it does not have accentually regular lines, and out of fifteen possible stresses four are omitted.

On the semantic plane the orientation of the tercet differs from that of the quatrains. *Temporal distance* established by the quatrains turns into *spatial distance* (note the resonance of pre*d*kov, *drevle*—sfer, izda*le*cha). The *horizontal* dimension of the first quatrain and the *vertical* dimension of the second quatrain are transfigured into a *spherical* world turned onto itself and linked to the tradition of medieval thought (particularly Dante).[22] Finally, *earth* of the first quatrain and *liquid* of the second quatrain are replaced by *ogon'* ("fire"). The poet, in sifting through the phonetic, grammatical, syntactic and rhythmic possibilities of language, at the same time sifts through fundamental structural elements of Mediterranean (and not only Mediterranean) mythology. The completion of this sorting will be seen in the next tercet.

Language, the main theme and the protagonist of the poem, appears here in a new guise. It is still an element, as before, yet an element transilluminated by the suprapersonal mind, the principle of *umnyj ogon'* ("intelligent fire"). (Cf. *umnaja molitva* ["mindful prayer"] in the tradition of the Orthodox church; note also the phonetic connections of *um*nogo—*ugl'*—*al*maz). *Ogon'* is ambivalent and in a sense "Dionysiac" in any mythology: it neutralizes the opposition *construction/destruction*, as well as *personal/impersonal*. Language turns out to be an echo, *otgul* ("reverberation") of other remote

worlds, of another suprapersonal horizon of meanings; this theme is among those most fundamental to Ivanov (cf. e.g. the well-known poem "The Alpine Horn" [*Al'pijskij rog*] of 1902).

In the traditional theory of the sonnet, the last tercet was always regarded as the key, the synthesizing stanza. Let us discuss some of its characteristics. Here the system of consonants comes into balance for the first time (numbers of consonants of different types being close). Accented syllables show no preference for either back or front vowels. Incidentally, the sonnet as a whole contains almost a complete set of Russian phonemes (and graphemes), which is far from expected in a short poem: in other words, the Russian language is quite fully *displayed* in its phonetic (and graphic) aspect.

On the grammatical level, the "verblessness" of the last tercet is remarkable; it correlates with the "verblessness" of the beginning of the poem. For the first time, a directional accusative appears (aside from it, there are only the nominative and the genitive). The shifting of grammatical genders in the sonnet is rather curious. In the first quatrain, the feminine (*zemlja, mat'*) is predominant; in the second, the masculine is underscored; in the first tercet, they are brought together; and last, the final tercet neutralizes the opposition: it contains the neuter gender (*solntse,* "sun," reminiscent of *nebo,* ["heaven,"] in the first quatrain and *zachatija,* "conceptions," in the second), and the concluding word of the poem—*predtecha,* "forerunner"—is grammatically androgynous.

On the syntactic plane, the tercet is a single sentence whose center is singled out by punctuation; it is singled out rhythmically as well: the inner line of the tercet, in contrast to the two outer ones, is accentually regular. In the middle of this line, "in the center of the center," Ivanov placed the word *almaz* ("diamond") which is a palindromic repetition of the word *zemlja* from the beginning of the sonnet.

The last tercet is highly significant semantically, as expected. It shifts the spatial orientation once again: the spheric world of the preceding tercet turns into a *point.* The diamond containing the sun is a symbol of unity signified by the point in many mystical systems. Space, in its dividing sense, no longer exists.[23] *Earth, liquid* and *fire* are followed by a superseding and a higher element. *Ugl'* ("coal") transformed into diamond is *matter transformed;* in it, firmness of the earth, translucence of liquid and splendor of fire are combined and strengthened; it contains the sun—i.e., Apollo, the mythic other-being of Dionysus.[24]

Svadebnaja vstrecha ("the nuptial encounter") of the creative spirit with the element of language has occurred; the extrapersonal and the personal have been reunited in the suprapersonal; the spirit has transformed *language* into *poetry;* the diamond evoked by the poet is the poem before us, Apollonically complete and Dionysiacally ecstatic, scintillating with its facets of sound and sense, speaking itself and not merely itself. Here Ivanov reveals a new and a final dimension. Language—and poetry—is just a portent, a prototype, a forerunner (*predtecha*) of a future universal ecumenic bond of people; at this stage, where all oppositions and contradictions are neutralized, language will overcome and obliterate itself; however, this universal communion may only be vaguely intuited and attempts to construct it arbitrarily are fraught with serious errors. In the words of a Western thinker, at first sight quite distant from Ivanov, "Whereof one cannot speak thereon must one be silent."

Notes

1. *Sovremennye zapiski,* 65 (1937), 165–66.
2. Cf. O. Deschartes' introduction in *SS,* I, 212–14.
3. *O krizise gumanizma* (1919). *SS,* III, 372.
4. N. V., "Vjacheslav Ivanov o russkom jazyke" (a publication of two fragments), *Grani,* no. 102 (1976), 151.
5. "Poet i chern' " (1904), *SS,* I, 712–14. Italics are mine.
6. It is known that Pushkin as an ideal example of a poet and of a poetic destiny played a prominent part in Ivanov's consciousness from his early childhood. Cf. O. Deschartes in *SS,* I, 8.
7. S. Averintsev, "Vjacheslav Ivanov" in Vjacheslav Ivanov, *Stikhotvorenija i poemy,* Biblioteka poeta, Malaja serija (Leningrad, 1976), p. 23.
8. It is significant that Ivanov's last piece of work is a sonnet (the third poem of the cycle *De profundis amavi* in "Svet vechernij").

9. See M. A. Gasparov, *Sovremennyj russkij stikh* (Moscow, 1974), p. 104.

10. Ibid., p. 105.

11. I join together the respective hard and soft phonemes *n* and *n'*, and the like.

12. See Jean Starobinski, *Les mots sous les mots. Les anagrammes de Ferdinand de Saussure* (Paris, 1971).

13. Cf. also the word *nedr* in the second quatrain.

14. The same can be said about the word *vstrecha*. On the other hand, the consonance of the word *predtecha* and the word *predkov* ("of the ancestors") is important (*future/past*).

15. Cf. Averintsev, "Vjacheslav Ivanov," p. 31.

16. In the 1937 redaction, line 4 was as follows: "The earthly mother of heavenly inspirations."

17. Cf. "O deistvii i deistve" (1919), *SS*, II, 165–66.

18. Cf. "Anima" (1934), *SS*, III, 269–93.

19. The famous connection of *stikhija* and *stikh* in Pasternak's "Tema s variatsijami" probably goes back to Ivanov (see the above quotation from the article "Poet i chern'").

20. Cf. the very modern-sounding definitions of culture as memory and as thesaurus in *Perepiska iz dvukh uglov*, and so forth.

21. See the numerous studies of V. N. Toporov on this topic.

22. The word *sfer* appeared only in the third redaction of the poem. Formerly line 10 read as follows: V lad muzyke, skhodjashchej izdalecha ("In tune with the music descending from afar"); Sozvuch'jam v lad, skhodjashchim izdalecha ("In tune with the consonances descending from afar").

23. Cf. Deschartes in *SS*, I, 159. Let us add that this refers to both *space* and *time*.

24. The absence of the fourth classical element, namely, air, is curious. *Almaz* ("diamond,") is a sort of anti-air, the opposite of air. However, air (voz*dukh*) to a certain extent is present in the word *dukh*onosnogo ("of the spirit-bearing") and is anagrammatically given in the last tercet.

The First Sonnet in Vyacheslav Ivanov's Roman Cycle

Alexis Klimoff

The nine sonnets written by Ivanov after his arrival in Rome from the Soviet Union in 1924 belong to a vast and venerable literary tradition. Practitioners of the art of *admiratio Romae*, that is, of lauding the Eternal City in verse or prose, have included some of the most celebrated poets and writers of the last two millennia—Virgil, Dante, Montaigne, Goethe, Byron, Gogol, and scores of others. As a rule this literature goes far beyond delight at the lavish spectacle that Rome presents to the visitor. The incomparably rich historical and cultural legacy that is everywhere evoked by the physical *realia* of the city made it almost inevitable that Rome should often have been perceived in historiosophic terms, as a symbol of the hopes, the achievements—or the failures—of human civilization itself.[1] Ivanov's *Roman Sonnets* (*Rimskie sonety*) of 1924 follow this pattern.

Vyacheslav Ivanov first set foot in Rome some three decades earlier, having just completed a lengthy course of studies in Roman history under the famous Theodor Mommsen at Berlin University. Some idea of his worshipful attitude toward the city can be gathered from a poetic epistle written soon after his arrival in Rome in 1892: "Having reached my sacred goal, pilgrim that I am, I have attained bliss."[2]

After an initial three-year residence in Rome, Ivanov returned on many occasions in the years before World War I, including an extended stay in 1912–1913. Although he gradually became more and more absorbed in the study of early Greek religious cults, Ivanov retained a deep interest in Roman history. In 1899 he took almost

an entire year from his research on Dionysus to gather data on the religious and historical roots of the belief in the "universal mission" (*vselenskaja missija*) of Rome.[3]

But beyond Ivanov's reverence for the city and its cultural heritage, his Rome was associated with powerful emotions of a different order. It was here, in the summer of 1893, that Ivanov met Lydia Zinovieva-Annibal, the gifted and intense woman who was soon to become his second wife. Ivanov always looked upon this meeting as especially providential: Lydia was to him the awakener and inspirer of his gifts as a poet.

In 1924, long after the death of his beloved Lydia, after the bitter privations of post-revolutionary Moscow had carried away his third wife Vera, after years of increasing isolation as a poet and of growing alienation from the values of the new regime, the return to Rome must have seemed particularly poignant. It was not only a journey to the healing source of culture and tradition, but also a nostalgic trip in time to memories of love and happiness.

The first of the *Roman Sonnets* was written a few days after Ivanov's arrival in Rome in September of 1924. The Italian origin of the poetic format—the sonnet arose in medieval Sicily and was made universally famous by Petrarch—makes it especially appropriate for a greeting to Rome. I quote the text in full:

A faithful pilgrim to the ancient arches, once again,
I greet you like the roof of my own home
With evening "Ave Rome" in my setting hour,
O haven of my wanderings, Eternal Rome.

We yield ancestral Troy up to the flames;
The chariots' axles splinter 'mid the thunder
And fury of the earthly hippodrome:
You, Tsar of Ways, behold how we burn on.

You too have burned and risen from the ashes,
And the retentive, recollecting blue
Of your deep skies did not go blind.

And in the soft caresses of a golden dream,
Your guardian cypress recollects how Troy grew stronger
As Troy lay burned to ashes.

(1) Vnov', arok drevnikh vernyj piligrim,
(2) V moj pozdnij chas vechernim 'Ave Roma'
(3) Privetstvuju kak svod rodnogo doma,
(4) Tebja, skitanij pristan', vechnyj Rim.

(5) My Troju predkov plameni darim;
(6) Drobjatsja osi kolesnits mezh groma
(7) I furij mirovogo ippodroma:
(8) Ty, tsar' putej, gljadish', kak my gorim.

(9) I ty pylal i vosstaval iz pepla,
(10) I pamjatlivaja golubizna
(11) Tvoikh nebes glubokikh ne oslepla.

(12) I pomnit v laske zolotogo sna,
(13) Tvoj vratar' kiparis, kak Troja krepla,
(14) Kogda lezhala Troja sozhzhena.[4]

Originally the sonnet bore the title "Regina Viarum" (Queen of Ways), a Latin phrase which, as Ivanov informs us in a note appended to the poem, used to be an ancient appellation for Rome [*SS*, III, 850]. In the final edition the title was removed and the Latin epithet is reflected in the phrase *tsar' putej* [8]. (The switch in royal gender is caused by a quirk of grammar: *Roma* is feminine in Latin, while *Rim*, the Russian equivalent, is a masculine noun.)

The journey to Rome is seen in the first quatrain as a symbolic homecoming and as the ultimate goal of a pilgrimage: to the "faithful pilgrim" [1], Rome is a sight as welcome as that of his own home [3]; moreover, the city is addressed as the "haven" of his wanderings [4]. The finality of the journey is further emphasized by the references to the persona's "setting hour" and his "evening" salutation [2]. This tone corresponds closely with Ivanov's declaration, on the eve of his departure from the Soviet Union, that he was going to Rome to die.[5] In this solemn context the term "pilgrim" [1] takes on added significance. One of the traditional Christian meta-

phors used in describing human life depicts man as a traveler (*homo viator*) or pilgrim who seeks to reach the ultimate haven of Paradise. The religious associations in Ivanov's sonnet gain further resonance from the reference to "Eternal Rome" [4]: on the symbolic level, the arrival in Rome is compared to the attainment of the kingdom of heaven.

Rome is greeted explicitly with an "Ave Roma" in lines [2–3] and the greeting is made to reverberate throughout the sonnet by means of an unusual device. The canonical rhyme scheme for the first octave of a so-called Italian or Petrarchan sonnet is *abba/abba*. Ivanov's sonnet more than fulfills this requirement: in seven of the eight lines, the rhymed units are either *rim* or *roma*, thus repeating the name of the city in both Russian and Latin. The pattern can be depicted as follows:

[1]	piligRIM	(a)
[2]	ROMA	(b)
[3]	(doma)	(b)
[4]	RIM	(a)
[5]	daRIM	(a)
[6]	gROMA	(b)
[7]	ippodROMA	(b)
[8]	goRIM	(a)

It is useful to recall in this connection Ivanov's theory of the "sound-image" (*zvukoobraz*) in poetry. The poet, Ivanov argues, does not primarily "think in images," as the conventional wisdom would have us believe. In truth, the poet "thinks above all in sounds," and Ivanov supports this contention with numerous references to Pushkin's use of sound symbolism.[6] Assuming that such considerations are relevant to the structure of Ivanov's sonnet, the pattern isolated above suggests that the name of the city is the core or germ around which the sonnet was formed. And this meshes well with W. H. Auden's definition of poetry as a rite which "pays homage by naming."[7] For it is clear that the recurring echoes of the name of Rome are extremely effective in dramatizing the pilgrim's prayerful attitude. Repeated invocation of the object of worship is, after all, the central feature of all liturgical language.

The frame of reference is abruptly widened by the introduction of the Troy theme in the second quatrain. According to legend, Romulus, the founder of Rome, was a direct descendant of Aeneas, a refugee from the flaming ruins of Troy. In fact, as Ivanov informs us in another note, Rome was for this reason sometimes referred to as "New Troy" [*SS*, III, 850]. Ivanov's pilgrim is thus following an established—albeit mythical—pattern, since Rome has been a haven for refugees and exiles before. The use of the pronoun "we" in line [5] emphasizes this community of fate, since the reference is to all refugees, from the pilgrim back to Aeneas. It follows logically that the pilgrim (the "I" or persona) also has an "ancestral Troy" to consign to the flames. Troy, then, is evoked not only as a specific precedent, but also as a metaphor for any destroyed civilization. (The Troy-Russia analogy which emerges here will be considered at a later point.)

As the disasters and conflagrations of history thunder and rage around it, Rome seems to look on majestically [8]; it appears, at this juncture, to be somehow beyond time and history.

But the first tercet brings with it a characteristic twist.[8] Rome has not been outside history after all. It too has suffered destruction [9]. But more important, the city rose anew from its ashes, not once, but many times, as the imperfective aspect of the verb indicates (*vosstaval* [9]). This new theme is accompanied by a distinct phonetic shift. The second quatrain, which stressed destruction, was replete with the sound *r* (*TRoju, pRedkov, daRim, dRobjatsja, gRoma, fuRij, miRovogo, ippodRoma, tsaR', goRim*), while the first tercet has no *r*'s whatever, but is filled with *l* sounds: *pyLaL, vosstavaL, pepLa, pamjatLivaja, goLubizna, gLubokikh, osLepLa*. These contrasting key sounds are at the same time closely related, since both are liquid consonants. In this sense the link between destruction and renewal, central to the meaning of the poem, is prefigured in phonetic terms.

The resurrection of Rome from its ashes can be read as a strictly historical commentary. Rome not only survived its many disasters (destruction by the Gauls in 390 B.C., the great fire of Nero's time,

the several sackings by barbarians, etc.), but acquired new splendor with the centuries and blossomed into the magnificent city of the Popes. However, the motif of regeneration through fire inevitably has other and more fanciful associations, above all the legend of the Phoenix, which was said to gain new life through periodic self-immolation.[9] This myth is substantially reinforced by the seemingly paradoxical ending of the sonnet: Troy grew stronger while Troy lay gutted and destroyed [13–14]. The Troy which gained strength here is of course the *New* Troy, that is, Rome, but from a structural perspective the Phoenix myth applies fully: destruction by fire is followed by regeneration.

It is important to note that the theme of fiery renewal is frequently encountered in Ivanov's earlier writings, usually in the sense of a radical spiritual rebirth. This is a major motif in his *Cor Ardens* collection (1911) and is reflected in the title itself ("The Burning Heart"). Ivanov's fondness for this theme was at times excessive, as for instance in the following lines written on the occasion of the catastrophic defeat of the Russian navy at Tsushima:

> Accept us, sacrificial fire,
> . . . . . .
> A Phoenix will arise! A Phoenix will choose
> The fateful sacrament of fire!
> Be baptized with fire, O Russia! . . .
>
> Primi nas, zhertvennyj koster,
> . . . . . .
> Kto Feniks,—vozletit! Kto Feniks,—izberet
> Ognja svjatynju rokovuju!
> Ognem krestisja, Rus'! . . . [*SS*, II, 252–53]

The tone of liturgical celebration in this tragic context strikes at least one reader as disturbing if not downright perverse. It was precisely this tendency in Ivanov which prompted Ehrenburg's puckish comment:

> Vyacheslav Ivanov loves the traditional Orthodox way of life and the unhurried, harmonious world of the parish. But one should not be deceived on this account. . . . When flames lick at the wooden fence [of the church], Vyacheslav Ivanov will come out not with a pail of water, but with a hymn to the purifying fire.[10]

Ivanov's attachment to this motif may be more easily understood if we note, with Tadeusz Zielinski, that there are important parallels between the concept of rebirth through fire and Ivanov's *idée maîtresse*, the theme of the suffering and resurrected god Dionysus.[11] The analogy between these concepts can be brought into sharp focus by referring to Mircea Eliade's groundbreaking study, *Cosmos and History: The Myth of the Eternal Return*. Eliade argues that when they are reduced to their structural elements, both concepts or myths are subsumed under the larger myth of eternal repetition, common in the ancient world. In both cases death and destruction are followed by resurrection, apparent defeat is transformed into a triumph.[12]

In each case we are dealing with a cyclical view of history. Such a theory, as Eliade stresses, is "unhistorical" in the sense that all real and concrete events are stripped of their autonomous value. They are all seen as mere reflections of an ideal pattern or archetype, as paradigmatic repetitions of a primordial event outside time and history. It is, in Eliade's words, a "supreme attempt . . . towards annulling the irreversibility of time."[13]

A cyclical theory of history is in its way a consoling philosophy. Apart from the promise of ultimate rebirth, the myth of eternal return provides an escape from the distressingly unpredictable sequence of events which is part of an "open-ended" view of history. All events—and all disasters—can be seen as reruns of similar, indeed identical, events in the past. Man need no longer view history as a terrible lurching through regions of the unknown.

Eliade's insights seem to be directly applicable to Ivanov's sonnet, especially in view of Ivanov's explicit conviction that the sonnet is a "philosophical and didactic" genre.[14] The hope and consolation offered to the pilgrim are summed up by the myth of the eternal return. Surrounded by events which are likened to a thunderous chariot race in the hippodrome—a cyclical symbol in itself—the

pilgrim recognizes everywhere a familiar mythic pattern. His arrival in Rome parallels Aeneas's arrival from Troy, the fiery destruction of his homeland repeats Troy's archetypal fall. Rome itself has recovered many times from its disastrous conflagrations. He need not despair; his own "New Troy" will not fail to rise from the ashes of the "Troy of his ancestors." Aeneas's comforting words to his shipmates apply fully to Ivanov's pilgrim:

> Renew your spirit, and lay aside gloomy fear;
> perhaps one day it will be a pleasure to remember
> these trials. Through various mishaps,
> through many crises, we make our way to Latium
> where the Fates portend a peaceful settlement.
> There it is right for Troy to rise. Have courage
> and preserve yourselves for prosperous days.[15]

As he retreats before the terrors of history, Ivanov's wayfarer is offered refuge and consolidation in myth and mythical time. And this is entirely consistent with the belief so frequently expressed by Ivanov that all poetry must attempt to create myth, where myth is defined as a reflection of a higher ("more real") reality. In any case, such a thrust was always a prominent feature of Ivanov's own work. As he noted with pride in 1921: "Not one of my contemporaries, I believe, is inspired by the sense of myth to the degree that I am. That is where my strength lies . . ."[16]

There is another aspect in this attempt to transcend time. The sonnet is most explicit in emphasizing Rome's ability to remember the past. The clear blue sky over Rome is endowed with the attributes of an eye [10–11] which has witnessed and retained in its memory the successive generations of the city [9–10]. Similarly, the cypress outside Rome remembers [12–13] how a mighty New Troy was founded by a handful of survivors from the original Troy [12–14].

The "retentive" Roman sky and the "unforgetting" cypress are invoked by the poet to bear witness to the ultimate nature of things. Memory is the key to this "more real" dimension of ideal patterns where regeneration always occurs. Here Ivanov is once more following

in the footsteps of the ancient Greeks. For them, memory was not merely a psychological function, but was identified with a vision of the truth, an insight into the original and archetypal realities. The truth, states Plato, is "a recollection of those things which our soul once saw while following God."[17] And since the cyclical nature of history was, to the Greeks, one of these realities, it follows that true memory could only speak of eternal regeneration and hence eternal life. Conversely, forgetting was equated with death; as Eliade has pointed out, Lethe, the river of forgetfulness in Greek mythology, was an indispensable feature of the realm of death. "The dead are those who have lost their memories."[18]

For the Greeks and for Ivanov, then, memory manifests and confirms the faith in eternal renewal. Memory offers refuge from the tyranny of time; in a sense, it even annuls death, as Ivanov proclaimed in an earlier poem:

> He in whom eternal memory lives
> Triumphs eternally over death.
>
> Nad smert'ju vechno torzhestvujet,
> V kom pamjat' vechnaja zhivet. [*SS*, I, 568]

In the first sonnet to Rome, memory is the medium by which the Eternal City testifies to its regenerative powers. It is this aspect of Rome which gives strength to the pilgrim who arrives "in his setting hour" [2]. Through the agony of fire and destruction he passes into ultimate hope in the footsteps of Aeneas.

The hopeful conclusion noted above pertains to Ivanov's pilgrim-persona and his quest for meaning in a world gone mad. There remains, however, an unresolved ambiguity in another sphere. To the extent that the "Old Troy" of the sonnet can be identified with Russia, it is not at all clear what the concluding lines [13–14] imply for the future of the land Ivanov had left behind. In terms of the structural paradigm that operates in the sonnet, there would seem to be room for hope that a new Russia will emerge, Phoenix-like, from the crucible of the revolutionary epoch. Yet by identifying the

"New Troy" specifically and uniquely with Rome, as seems to be the case, Ivanov is sharply reducing the applicability of his paradigm to any other context. Pushed to a logical conclusion, this would imply that the "Old Troy" has been destroyed beyond resurrection and that the only hope for the future lies with Rome. But the poem resists such a conclusion, retaining a residual ambiguity which undoubtedly reflects an unresolved tension within the poet himself.[19]

Notes

1. The ancient period is surveyed in F. G. Moore, "On *Urbs Aeterna* and *Urbs Sacra*," *Trans. of the Amer. Phil. Assoc.*, XXV (1894), 34–60. The history of the evolving poetic image of Rome, with emphasis on the post-Renaissance period, is outlined in Walther Rehm, *Europäische Romdichtung*, 2nd ed. (Munich, 1960). See further: Camillo von Klenze, *The Interpretation of Italy During the Last Two Centuries* (Chicago, 1907); C. P. Brand, *Italy and the English Romantics* (Cambridge, 1957); Erika Schröter, *Beiträge zur Geschichte des russischen Italienerlebnisses* (Bonn, 1960).

2. Vyacheslav Ivanov, "Laeta" [Joy], *SS*, I, 636.

3. "Avtobiograficheskoe pis'mo," *SS*, II, 21.

4. *SS*, III, 578. First appeared in print as a complete citation in I. N. Golenishchev-Kutuzov, "Lirika Vjacheslava Ivanova," *Sovremennye zapiski*, No. 43 (1930), 466–67.

5. "Ja edu umirat' v Rim." Quoted in *SS*, III, 819. Cf. Ivanov's diary entry for December 1, 1924: *SS*, III, 852.

6. Ivanov, "K probleme zvukoobraza u Pushkina," in *Moskovskij pushkinist*, II (1930), 94–105.

7. W. H. Auden, *The Dyer's Hand* (New York, 1962), p. 57.

8. The tercets in a sonnet traditionally introduce a new theme or new perspective. See Johannes R. Becher, "Philosophie des Sonetts oder kleine Sonettlehre," *Sinn und Form*, VIII (1956), No. 3, 343.

9. It is interesting to note that the Phoenix was depicted on Roman coins in the period of the decline of the Empire. See Kenneth J. Pratt, "Rome as Eternal," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, XXVI (1965), No. 1, 30.

10. Ilja Ehrenburg, *Portrety russkikh poetov* (Berlin, 1922), pp. 92–93.

11. Faddej Zelinskij, "Vjacheslav Ivanov," in S. A. Vengerov, ed., *Russkaja literatura XX veka*, 3 vols. (Moscow, 1914–1916), III, 103.

12. *Cosmos and History*, trans. Willard R. Trask (New York, 1959), pp. 87–88, 100–102.

13. *Cosmos and History*, p. 123.

14. "Sonet—strogaja forma, on—ne lirika, on forma didakticheskaja, filosofichnaja." Quoted from an unpublished verbatim transcript of Ivanov's 1920 lectures on poetry in Moscow: *Kruzhok poèzii pod rukovodstvom poèta Vjacheslava Ivanova*, zapis' F. I. Kogan, 1920, p. 13. (Text is in the Roman archive.)

15. *Aeneid*, I, 202–207. I quote the translation by Kevin Guinagh (New York, 1953), p. 9.

16. M. S. Al'tman, "Iz besed s poètom Vjacheslavom Ivanovichem Ivanovym," *Uchenye zapiski Tartuskogo gos. univ.*, vol. 209 (1968), 321.

17. *Phaedrus*, 249c.

18. Mircea Eliade, "Mythologies of Memory and Forgetting," *History of Religions*, II, No. 2 (Winter, 1963), 333.

19. This essay is based on part of my dissertation on Vyacheslav Ivanov (Yale, 1974).

Roman Sonnets

Vyacheslav Ivanov

Translated by Lowry Nelson, Jr.

I

Again, true pilgrim of your vaulted past,
I greet you, as my own ancestral home,
With evening "Ave Roma" at the last,
You, wanderers' retreat, eternal Rome.

The Troy of your forebears we give to fire;
The chariots' axles crack from furious churning
In this hippodrome of the world entire:
Regina Viarum, see how we are burning.

And you went down in flames and rose from embers;
The mindful blueness could not blind the eye
Of space in your unfathomable sky.
Your cypress, standing sentinel, remembers

In the caresses of a dream of gold
How strong was Troy in ashes lying cold.

I

Вновь, арок древних верный пилигрим,
В мой поздний час вечерним 'Ave Roma'
Приветствую как свод родного дома,
Тебя, скитаний пристань, вечный Рим.

Мы Трою предков пламени дарим;
Дробятся оси колесниц меж грома
И фурий мирового ипподрома;
Ты, царь путей, глядишь, как мы горим.

И ты пылал и восставал из пепла,
И памятливая голубизна
Твоих небес глубоких не ослепла.

И помнит в ласке золотого сна,
Твой вратарь кипарис, как Троя сожжена.

II

Holding the reins their steeds untamely shun,
Strong with the dauntless ardor of the sky,
Naked in nakedness olympian,
Forward they strode, brothers, Diòscuri.

Quirites' fellow-warriors, bearing tale
Of victory, who, sagas say, unknown,
Beside Juturna's pool themselves unveil
Divine newcomers to the hub of Rome.

There they remained until the world should pass.
Of these huge youths a double effigy
Stood for millennia an unmoved mass,
And there they stand who stood primordially.

Six hills light up in blue surrounding air
As, from high Quirinal, a star shines fair.

III

Sang Pindar, poet-swan: "Beneath the sun
There's nothing more dear than water." From hills
Incline of aqueducts compels the run
Of water anciently from blessed rills.

It trickles into sarcophágous wells,
Now strikes the sky, a column, and, once shattered,
Far off now laps cool air; untamed, it swells
From marble threshold in the streams it scattered.

The babbling water makes the narrow lane
Come magically alive, and sea-gods leap
Beside it and lead on the dancers' train.
A chisel fused them. Old palazzi sleep,

Deserted, yet hear how waters rejoice,
How gently through the haze resounds their voice.

II

Держа коней строптивых под-уздцы,
Могучи пылом солнечной отбаги
И наготою олимпийской наги,
Вперед ступили братья-близнецы.

Соратники Квиритов и гонцы
С полей победы, у Ютурнской влаги,
Неузнаны, явились (помнят саги)
На стогнах Рима боги-пришлецы.

И в нем остались до скончины мира.
И юношей огромных два кумира
Не сдвинулись тысячелетья с мест.

И там стоят, где стали изначала—
Шести холмам, синеющим окрест,
Светить звездой с вершины Квиринала.

III

Пел Пиндар, лебедь: «Нет под солнцем блага
Воды милей». Бежит по жилам Рима,
Склоненьем акведуков с гор гонима,
Издревле родников счастливых влага.

То плещет звонко в кладязь саркофага;
То бьет в лазурь столбом и вдаль, дробима,
Прохладу зыблет; то, неукротима,
Потоки рушит с мраморного прага.

Ее журчаньем узкий переулок
Волшебно оживлен; и хороводы
Окрест ее ведут морские боги:

Резец собрал их. Сонные чертоги
Пустынно внемлют, как играют воды,
И сладостно во мгле их голос гулок.

IV

Turned to stone by the spell of water-sound
Of streams that run over the edge in swirls,
The ship-like fount Barcaccia lies half-drowned;
To it Campania sends flower-girls.

The great staircase goes stepping over mansions
And patterning the expansive way in twain,
It raises to the sky twin-pointed stanchions
And obelisk above the Piazza of Spain.

I love the sunburnt orange of the walls,
The crowds of people in the age-old square,
The rustling palms when parching noontide falls,
In dark of night an aria sighing there,

And, to the velvet zithers' strumming din,
The chirping of a roving mandolin.

V

Those tangled dolphins on their tails sustain
A mollusc shell agape; Triton stands there,
He blows into a giant snail; no strident strain,
It radiates and pierces the blue air.

How green from moss the daemon god's plicature
Amid hot slabs entreating clouds of pine!
The chisel's ancient dream resembles nature
In frenzied spontaneity of line.

Bernini—ours anew—your playful skill
Makes me rejoice as from Four Fountains' knoll
I wander to the Pincio, memory's hill,
Where Ivanov to Gogol's cell would stroll,

Where Piranesi's fiery needle heightens
Rome's sadness and her masonry of Titans.

IV

Окаменев под чарами журчанья
Бегущих струй за полные края,
Лежит полу-затоплена ладья;
К ней девушек с цветами шлет Кампанья.

И лестница, переступая зданья,
Широкий путь узорами двоя,
Несет в лазурь двух башен острия
И обелиск над Площадью ди-Спанья.

Люблю домов оранжевый загар
И людные меж старых стен теснины
И шорох пальм на ней в полдневный жар;

А ночью темной вздохи каватины
И под аккорды бархатных гитар
Бродячей стрекотанье мандолины.

V

Двустворку на хвостах клубок дельфиний
Разверстой вынес; в ней растет Тритон,
Трубит в улиту; но не зычный тон,
Струя лучом пронзает воздух синий.

Средь зноя плит, зовущих облак пиний,
Как зелен мха на демоне хитон!
С природой схож резца старинный сон
Стихийною причудливостью линий.

Бернини,—снова наш,—твоей игрой
Я веселюсь, от Четырех Фонтанов
Бредя на Пинчьо памятной горой,

Где в келью Гоголя входил Иванов,
Где Пиранези огненной иглой
Пел Рима грусть и зодчество Титанов.

VI

Over their backs they let the turtles slip,
Those humped captives at basin's edge aground,
Within they dive and freely splash and dip,
Forget their fear, crawl torpidly around;

The adolescent boys dance on each head
Of snub-nosed monster. Wondrous pranksters they.
Those goggle-eyed gargoyles beneath their tread
From rounded jaws are spouting powdery spray.

The four of them, on dolphins romping, play.
Now on their shins of bronze, on their bronze backs,
Sparkles the greenly rippling laugh of day,
And in this languor, indolently lax,

I catch an echo of your cheering folly,
Echo, Lorenzo, of your melancholy.

VII

The autumnal pool lies sleeping, gently blown
With beggared purple's tattered majesty,
Asclepius with snake mid moss and stone
Beholds beneath an arch the maple tree.

The azure vault is framed, as if in bronze,
By trappings of a dark resplendent show,
The foliage untouched by deadening bonds
Of frost or glint of any shroud of snow.

The Blessed gaze on us and smile abashed
As they would contemplate a platan tree
That wilts in sunlight. Sound of crystal splashed:
The rippling form flows upward radiantly.

And on the mirrored surface calm, capsize
Asclepius, maple, fountain, and the skies.

VI

Через плечо слагая черепах,
Горбатых пленниц, на́ мель плоской вазы,
Где брызжутся на воле водолазы,
Забыв, неповоротливые, страх,—

Танцуют отроки на головах
Курносых чудищ. Дивны их проказы:
Под их пятой уроды пучеглазы
Из круглой пасти прыщут водный прах.

Их четверо резвятся на дельфинах.
На бронзовых то голенях, то спинах
Лоснится дня зелено-зыбкий смех.

И в этой неге лени и приволий
Твоих ловлю я праздничных утех,
Твоих, Лоренцо, эхо меланхолий.

VII

Спит водоем осенний, окроплен
Багрянцем нищим царственных отрепий.
Средь мхов и скал, муж со змеей, Асклепий,
Под аркою глядит на красный клен.

И синий свод, как бронзой, окаймлен
Убранством сумрачных великолепий
Листвы, на коей не коснели цепи
Мертвящих стуж, ни снежных блеск пелен.

Взирают так, с улыбкою печальной,
Блаженные на нас, как на платан
Увядший солнце. Плещет звон хрустальный:

Струя к лучу стремит зыбучий стан.
И в глади опрокинуты зеркальной
Асклепий, клен, и небо, и фонтан.

VIII

Tidings of mighty waters will be given
In wafting of cool air as roaring mounts.
Walk toward the sound: palazzi will seem driven
Aside, disclosing Trevi, queen of founts.

Cascading silver from façades will spout,
Marine steeds, brightly fierce, will leap aside;
Glad welcome nymphs from grottos will come out
As Neptune greets the maiden of the tide.

How many times, a fugitive from Rome
Against my will, I have beseeched return,
Over my shoulder casting coins in foam.
The vows have come to pass as they were sworn.

This day again, enchanting fount, you bless
The pilgrim you restore to holiness.

IX

Slowly I savor the sun's honeyed glow
Thickening like the valley's farewell chime;
With careless care the spirit is aglow,
All plenitude, whose name is paradigm.

This wedding cup of Day, does it not brim
With honey of resuscitated past?
Did not Eternity, beyond time's rim,
Plight troth with Day and give a ring to last?

Sky's glory, in likeness to the glassy sea,
Sparks molten fusion, casts celestial gleam,
Where sun's disk melts and drowns colossally.
With dazzled fingers groping, the last beam

Felt pine-top and its eye went out. Left there
In liquid gold the blue Dome circles air.

VIII

Весть мощных вод и в веяньи прохлады
Послышится, и в их растущем реве.
Иди на гул: раздвинутся громады,
Сверкнет царица водометов, Треви.

Сребром с палат посыплются каскады;
Морские кони прянут в светлом гневе;
Из скал богини выйдут, гостье рады,
И сам Нептун навстречу Влаге-Деве.

О, сколько раз, беглец невольный Рима,
С молитвой о возврате в час потребный
Я за плечо бросал в тебя монеты!

Свершались договорные обеты:
Счастливого, как днесь, фонтан волшебный,
Ты возвращал святыням пилигрима.

Iё

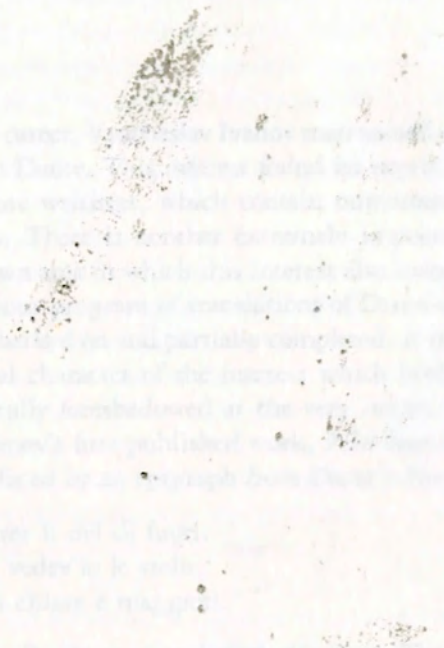
Пью медленно медвяный солнца свет,
Густеющий, как долу звон прощальный;
И светел дух печалью беспечальной,
Весь полнота, какой названья нет.

Не медом ли воскресших полных лет
Он напоен, сей кубок Дня венчальный?
Не Вечность ли свой перстень обручальный
Простерла Дню за гранью зримых мет?

Зеркальному подобна морю слава
Огнистого небесного расплава,
Где тает диск и тонет исполин.

Ослепшими перстами луч ощупал
Верх пинии, и глаз потух. Один,
На золоте круглится синий Купол.

CRITIC



Vyacheslav Ivanov and Dante

Pamela Davidson

Throughout his literary career, Vyacheslav Ivanov maintained a lively and profound interest in Dante. This interest found its expression in Ivanov's poetry and prose writings, which contain numerous references to Dante's works. There is another extremely important although virtually unknown area in which this interest also manifested itself; this is the ambitious program of translations of Dante's major works which Ivanov embarked on and partially completed. It is worth noting that the essential character of the interest which both these areas reflect is symbolically foreshadowed at the very outset of Ivanov's literary career; Ivanov's first published work, *Pilot Stars* (*Kormchie zvezdy,* 1903) is prefaced by an epigraph from Dante's *Purgatorio*:

> Poco potea parer lì del di fuori:
> Ma per quel poco vedev'io le stelle
> Di lor solere e più chiare e maggiori.[1]

This epigraph describes Dante contemplating the stars. The image of the *kormchie zvezdy* or "pilot stars" was chosen by Ivanov as the title of his first book of poetry in order to reflect his central preoccupation with the eternal transcendent truths which rule the universe.[2] It is clear that by taking up and developing the image of the stars introduced in the title within the context of Dante's spiritual experience, Ivanov wishes to emphasize the central importance of Dante's teachings to the spiritual questions with which he is primarily concerned; this is the clue to the source and essential character of Ivanov's interest in Dante throughout his literary career; it is always rooted in Ivanov's own preoccupation with spiritual matters.

In this respect, Ivanov was a typical representative of his age.

Indeed, Ivanov's interest in Dante is one of those fascinating questions which are key issues for the understanding of the intellectual history of an epoch as well as of the spiritual outlook and works of an individual. As is well known, the Symbolist movement arose in Russia at the end of the nineteenth century in response to a tremendous new flowering of interest in spiritual matters. Dante was taken up in this context as a writer whose works offered a vision of the universe as a spiritual entity, and of man's life as a mystical journey. In particular, the younger, more mystically orientated generation of the Symbolists—writers such as Blok, Bely, Ellis, Sergey Solovyov and Vyacheslav Ivanov—turned to the figure of Dante as a model for the understanding and expression of their own spiritual searchings. In the *Vita Nuova* they found an account of the experience of mystical love as the origin of a spiritual journey, and in the *Divina Commedia* they found a record of the mystical journey of the soul towards its final union with the divine essence. In both these works the author's spiritual experience is paralleled by an account of his literary experience as a writer seeking to find adequate expression for his vision in words. Dante's works were thus a particularly rich source for the Symbolist writers, providing them not only with a possible model for their spiritual experience, but also for its literary expression, and ultimately even for an esthetics of symbolism.

Within this general framework, each of the Symbolists naturally invested Dante with the characteristics of his own particular spiritual outlook. In the spiritual development of one of the younger Symbolists, Ellis, one can see a particularly striking example of the way in which the figure of Dante corresponded to the spirit of the age and could be accommodated to fit its various manifestations. Ellis was of a passionate, indeed fanatical nature; his example is an instructive one, because his enthusiasms reflected in an extreme form the typical tendencies of his age and interests of his contemporaries. During a period of just over ten years, from his emergence on the Moscow Symbolist scene in the early 1900s until his disappearance from it towards the middle of the teens, Ellis went through a succession of dramatic metamorphoses; he was in turn a committed Marxist, a Baudelairian Symbolist, a decadent mystic, a fervent disciple

of the anthroposophist Rudolf Steiner, and finally, a dedicated upholder of the Catholic faith. It is extremely characteristic of the spirit of the times that, throughout these various metamorphoses, Ellis should have remained obsessed with the figure of Dante, whom he advanced at each stage of his spiritual development as an exponent of the particular ideology to which he was at the time committed.[3]

It is also clear from Bely's memoirs of Blok that Dante was a figure of central importance in the context of the mystical mood which prevailed at the beginning of the twentieth century. Bely records the questions which he and Blok discussed in their correspondence of 1903, and which were at the time regarded as burning issues of the day by the Symbolists; these questions included the problem of the relation of the teaching of the philosopher Vladimir Solovyov on the nature of "Sophia" or Divine Wisdom to the figure of Beatrice in Dante's works. Bely regarded Dante as a leading authority who had reflected for decades on the very questions which were of such vital importance to the Symbolists; he lamented the fact that many of the Symbolists, instead of turning to Dante for guidance on these questions, were led astray by popular leaders of the day such as Bryusov and Merezhkovsky; they were consequently unable to do justice to the importance of these questions which, like Dante, proved too profound and complex for their young and immature minds.[4]

From Bely's comments we can see exactly where Ivanov's approach to Dante differed substantially from that of the majority of his contemporaries. Although the Symbolists' references to Dante had an important significance in relation to the mood of the times and to the Symbolists' own individual spiritual interests, they were often superficial in terms of the knowledge of Dante's works or ideas which they betrayed. Not all the Symbolists could read Dante in the original, fewer still studied him in any depth. Dante was more often invoked as a source of poetic images than as one of philosophical or religious ideas. Ivanov's approach to Dante, while arising out of the same general context as that of his contemporaries, differed in two major respects: 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; for both these reasons Ivanov can be regarded as exempt from the castigatory remarks to which Bely subjected his contemporaries.

Both of these areas of difference can perhaps be best accounted for by the strong intellectual strain in Ivanov's character. If we turn first to the question of Ivanov's knowledge and understanding of Dante's works, we will see that his academic background played an important role. Although Ivanov is always grouped with the younger generation of the Symbolists because of the mystical orientation which he shared with them, he was in fact many years their senior; before establishing himself as a poet and returning to Russia to take up an active part in the Symbolist movement in 1905, Ivanov had already spent several years conducting research into classical antiquity in Berlin, Paris, Rome, London, and Athens.[5] During these years, Ivanov acquired a solid grounding in classical antiquity and European culture, as well as a conscientious thoroughness and depth of approach characteristic of scholarly work. This academic seriousness is an important element in Ivanov's approach to Dante, which rested on a proper scholarly knowledge of the poet's main works.

In the Manuscript Department of the Lenin Library in Moscow, we find evidence of Ivanov's close scholarly study of the *Divina Commedia*; there is for example a plan of the nine circles of the *Inferno*, and a detailed canto-by-canto summary of the *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso*.[6] These notes and the passages from the *Divina Commedia* which Ivanov has chosen to copy out reveal a particularly strong interest in the *Paradiso* and in the spiritual significance of Dante's light imagery, a theme which finds many echoes in Ivanov's own poetry.

We know that Ivanov lectured on Dante and Petrarch during the first academic year which he spent at the University of Baku from 1920 to 1921.[7] In Ivanov's archive in Moscow, we find the draft of the beginning of a lecture entitled "Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio";[8] in this draft Ivanov places great emphasis on the importance of Dante for world culture as the creator of the Italian

language and of new poetical forms, and describes in detail the historical background to Dante's epoch. We also know that Ivanov introduced an Italian language course for beginners at the University of Baku;[9] one of Ivanov's former students who attended this course, Viktor Andronikovich Manuilov, recalls that Ivanov used the *Vita Nuova* as his basic language teaching text during this course; the students would read aloud and translate from the *Vita Nuova* into Russian, and Ivanov would correct their Italian pronunciation and improve their translation.[10]

Ivanov's scholarly study of Dante was firmly grounded in a close knowledge of Dante's works in the original. Indeed, we can see from Ivanov's unpublished papers that he translated parts of Dante's three major works, the *Vita Nuova*, the *Convivio*, and the *Divina Commedia*. Although none of these translations was in fact ever completed, they are nevertheless extremely important projects and testify to the closeness of Ivanov's knowledge of Dante's works.

In 1910 the publisher M. V. Sabashnikov decided to start a new series entitled *Monuments of World Literature* (*Pamjatniki mirovoj literatury*); the plan for the series shows that Dante was to be represented among its authors.[11] In 1911 Ivanov agreed to translate Aeschylus's tragedies for this series.[12] Two years later, in a business letter to M. V. Sabashnikov, Ivanov mentioned that he would be interested in doing some more translations for the series, and not just in the sphere of classical literature; Ivanov wrote that he would for example be happy to translate at some point the *Purgatorio*, and particularly the *Paradiso*, as well as the *Vita Nuova*.[13] The outcome of this suggestion was a contract which Ivanov signed in Rome on April 21, 1913, committing himself to completing his translations of Aeschylus's tragedies, of poems by Sappho, and of Dante's *Vita Nuova* within the next two years.[14]

Ivanov did not, however, keep to this deadline. Four years later, in an autobiographical letter dated January–February 1917, he wrote that his main current occupation was working on his translations of Aeschylus's tragedies and of Dante's *Vita Nuova* [*SS*, II, 22]. It is not clear whether Ivanov ever succeeded in finishing his translation of the *Vita Nuova*, since only fragments of the translation survive.

In 1914 Ivanov published his translation of almost the whole of the third chapter of the *Vita Nuova* in the Moscow journal *Trudy i dni*. Ivanov's translation forms the first part of his celebrated essay "On the Boundaries of Art" (*O granitsakh iskusstva*, 1913) and is the basis on which Ivanov builds up his theory of the esthetics of religious symbolism [*SS*, II, 627–51]. Apart from this passage, the rest of Ivanov's translation was never published, and survives only in the form of unfinished drafts which are located in the Manuscript Department of the Lenin Library in Moscow.[15] These fragments are drawn from five different chapters of the *Vita Nuova*, and include several versions of three sonnets as well as passages of prose. These are prefaced by an introductory note in which Ivanov attempts to set out his own understanding of the nature of Dante's work. The rough drafts of certain sonnets and passages of prose enable one to see the nature of Ivanov's working methods and, in particular, the meticulousness of his attempts to find the right word in Russian for conveying key concepts of medieval philosophy.

The Sabashnikov publishing house was also responsible for the translation of another major work of Dante's, the *Convivio*. This translation was embarked on by a friend of Ivanov's, the philosopher Vladimir Ern. Unfortunately, Ern had only managed to complete the translation of half of the *Convivio*—its first two books—when his work was interrupted by the outbreak of war in 1914.[16] Ern's death in 1917 prevented the continuation of the work, which was never completed. Ern evidently asked Ivanov to translate the poetry in the *Convivio* for him; we find that the canzona which occurs in the first half of the *Convivio*, "Voi che 'ntendendo il terzo ciel movete," is not in Ern's but in Ivanov's translation; the first line of the translation reads "O vy, chei razum dvizhet sferu tret'ju!" The manuscript of Ern's translation of the first two books of the *Convivio*, together with Ivanov's translation of the first canzona of the *Convivio*, are preserved in the Manuscript Department of the Lenin Library.[17] The translation is a finished version; Ivanov's part of it is highly polished and extremely accurate, preserving the images, archaisms and scholastic intricacies of the original with remarkable success.

Finally we come to the question of Ivanov's translation of the

Divina Commedia. We have seen that M. V. Sabashnikov did not take up Ivanov's suggestion that he should translate the *Purgatorio* or the *Paradiso*. Ivanov did not however abandon the idea, and we find that he returned to it again seven years later. On May 12, 1920, Ivanov wrote an official application to the Society of Lovers of Russian Literature (*Obshchestvo ljubitelej rossijskoj slovesnosti*) requesting the society to provide official support for his intention to go abroad in order to finish translating Aeschylus's tragedies, write a monograph on Aeschylus and translate the *Divina Commedia*.[18]

Two days later Ivanov signed a contract with the publishing house Izdatel'skoe Delo byvshee Brokgauz-Efron, in which he committed himself to producing a translation of the *Divina Commedia* in two versions, poetry and prose, by the end of 1923.[19]

It is clear that Ivanov got down to work on his translation immediately. We know from *A Correspondence from Two Corners* (*Perepiska iz dvukh uglov*, 1921) that Ivanov was translating Dante's *Divina Commedia* while he was staying at a sanatorium near Moscow in June 1920; Ivanov would read out passages of his translation of the *Purgatorio* to his roommate Mikhail Gershenzon, who would check Ivanov's translation against the original text and, if necessary, dispute it.[20]

There is further confirmation of this fact in the notes made by Feyga Kogan on the poetry circle run by Ivanov in Moscow during the summer of 1920. Feyga Kogan records that Ivanov read out some of his recently composed sonnets at a meeting of the poetry circle in June 1920. These sonnets had been written by Ivanov while he was at the sanatorium, and later became part of the cycle entitled "De profundis amavi" [*SS*, III, 574–78]. When Feyga Kogan commented to Ivanov that she sensed a Dantesque influence in one of the sonnets, Ivanov replied that this was not at all surprising since he had always loved Dante and felt a great affinity with him, and was at the present time translating the *Divina Commedia*.[21]

In 1923, in an essay on Dante's fortune in Russia, Ettore Lo Gatto, the pioneer of Slavic studies in Italy who subsequently became a close friend of Ivanov, wrote that Ivanov's translation of the *Purgatorio* was about to be published.[22] When Ivanov left Baku in 1924,

he was accompanied on his journey to Moscow by one of his students, Viktor Andronikovich Manuilov. Manuilov recalls very clearly having seen the manuscript of Ivanov's translation of the *Divina Commedia* on a desk in Moscow before Ivanov's departure for Italy.[23]

We have mentioned a number of indications which, when taken together, do suggest that Ivanov had translated the *Divina Commedia* or, at any rate, a substantial portion of it. However, the fact remains that the whereabouts of this translation is not known, and one cannot therefore say with any certainty how much of the work Ivanov was able to complete. The only fragment of the translation which it has been possible to locate is in the Rome archive and consists of the first canto of the *Purgatorio,* written out in Ivanov's hand in a neat, finished version, with only a few corrections.[24] Like Ivanov's other translations from Dante's works, it is of an extremely high standard.

From these examples we can see that Ivanov's approach to Dante was grounded in a thorough knowledge of Dante's works, based on a combination of the academic study and translation of parts of these works. None of the other Symbolists had a remotely comparable knowledge of Dante's works. However, the fact of Ivanov's greater knowledge and understanding of Dante's works is not in itself sufficient to explain the different quality of Ivanov's approach to Dante from that of the other Symbolists. It is only an outer manifestation of the fundamentally intellectual character of Ivanov's approach to Dante on a deeper level. Ivanov was never simply a poet, he was always at the same time an intellectual. It is perhaps for this reason that he became the acknowledged leader and most important theoretician of the religious Symbolists. Because of his academic background, superior learning, and greater intellectual bent, Ivanov sought to provide a definition of the spiritual outlook and esthetics of symbolism in terms of certain intellectual and philosophical concepts drawn from other currents in literary and spiritual history to which he felt that the phenomenon of symbolism was related. It is in this context that Dante became a figure of such importance in Ivanov's spiritual outlook and esthetics. Dante, like Ivanov, was a writer whose mystical vision rested on a complex intellectual and philosophical basis. This inner affinity between Ivanov and Dante

was noted by a number of Ivanov's contemporaries, including the religious philosopher Sergey Bulgakov; in an essay written in 1915, Bulgakov dwelt at some length on the strong intellectual element in Ivanov's poetry, and compared Ivanov in this respect to Dante, using the term "poet-thinker" (*poet-myslitel'*) of both writers.[25] This inner affinity is one of the most important factors which caused Ivanov to turn to Dante in the context of his own spiritual searchings, and to find in him such a rich source of guidance and inspiration; Dante's works, and the medieval tradition in general, offered a certain structure of intellectual and philosophical concepts for the comprehension and description of a mystical, spiritual reality; Ivanov felt a similar need to express his mystical intuitions intellectually, and drew on the medieval tradition extensively for the understanding and formulation of many of the elements of his own spiritual outlook and esthetics.

Dante was a natural model for Ivanov to turn to for other more obvious reasons. Dante is the chief poet of Italy, of the Middle Ages, and of the Christian tradition. Ivanov regarded Rome as his spiritual fatherland from the time of his first visit to Italy in 1892,[26] and Italy subsequently became his real fatherland when he emigrated in 1924; Ivanov regarded the Middle Ages as a period in history which exemplified the spiritual and poetic ideals to which he aspired;[27] finally, as a spiritual thinker and poet, Ivanov placed himself firmly within the Christian tradition. For all these reasons, it is natural that Ivanov should have turned to Dante. However, it is important to remember that, as in the case of Ellis and the other Symbolists, Ivanov's approach to Dante is an entirely subjective one; it exists only as part of his general spiritual outlook and cannot be understood outside this context.

Ivanov's approach to Dante reflects the problems which are inherent in his own spiritual outlook, namely the problem of the incorporation of the legacy of pagan classical antiquity into the Christian tradition. This problem is a complex one which cannot be easily resolved; there are certain conflicts and incompatibilities at the heart of Ivanov's world view, and these emerge particularly strongly in the case of his approach to Dante. Ivanov's spiritual ideal

was a form of Christian mysticism based on an endlessly self-renewing cyclical experience of sacrifice and ecstasy, death and resurrection, which in Ivanov's view constituted the essence of the cult of Dionysus and the eternal mystical core at the heart of all religious experience. Ivanov regarded the Middle Ages or early Renaissance as the period in history which came closest to his own understanding of the mystical nature of the Dionysian religion, and which provided the most perfect expression of his spiritual ideal.[28] Dante, as the chief representative of the Middle Ages, was naturally regarded by Ivanov as the main exponent of this ideal.

It is true that the Middle Ages did experience a revival of interest in pagan antiquity; it was during the Middle Ages that a permanent place was secured for many Platonic and Aristotelian notions in Latin Christian philosophy. Virgil was regarded as a prophet of Christianity on the basis of his "Messianic" Fourth Eclogue. This partial Christianization of pagan antiquity is reflected in Dante's works; we find that Dante draws on the mythology of classical antiquity as well as on the Bible for illustrations to his arguments; the great philosophers of classical antiquity are placed by Dante in a special Limbo on the periphery of the *Inferno*, and Virgil plays an important role as Dante's guide through Hell and Purgatory. However, within Dante's scheme, there are firmly defined limits to the place which classical antiquity can occupy in the Christian tradition. The philosophers of classical antiquity are in the *Inferno* for all eternity and have no hope of revelation;[29] Virgil may have been a prophet, but he was no participant in the Christian revelation, and could only serve as Dante's guide as far as the Earthly Paradise; after this point natural reason can no longer suffice, and Beatrice, enlightened by divine revelation, must take over.[30]

Ivanov on the other hand sees the Dionysiac religion of classical antiquity as the mystical *core* of Christianity; he therefore sees in Dante—a Christian mystical writer—a carrier of the Dionysiac spirit. Ivanov's desire to synthesize Christianity and the religion of Dionysus leads him to invest Dante with Dionysiac traits. Indeed, Ivanov explicitly declares this to be his intention in "Ad Rosam"

[*SS*, II, 44–50], the opening poem of the last book of *Cor Ardens*, "Rosarium". In this poem, Ivanov makes a plea for the mystical rose of the Middle Ages, which we find in Dante's *Paradiso* to be joined once more to its earthly Hellenic roots.

We can see an example of this tendency in a passage from *The Hellenic Religion of the Suffering God* (*Ellinskaja religija stradajushchego boga*, 1917), in which Ivanov attempts to relate Dante to Dionysus by drawing a direct line from Dionysus, a god who in some of his guises inhabits trees, through Virgil to Dante's description of the souls of the suicides imprisoned in the trees of the dolorous wood in *Inferno* XIII.[31] It is true that Dante based his passage on a similar episode in Virgil's *Aeneid*,[32] but to carry the line back through Virgil from Dante to Dionysus is a clear instance of the distortions to which Ivanov's desire to see Dionysiac elements in Dante can lead. The same association between Dante and Dionysus occurs again in the third part of "To the Poet" (*Poetu*) [*SS*, II, 358–59], the final poem of the second book of *Cor Ardens*. In this poem Ivanov links Dante's wood to Daphne, who was changed into a laurel; Ivanov had mentioned Daphne in the passage discussed above as one of the masks of Dionysus, and he uses the image in this poem together with that of the wood as illustrations of the Dionysiac meeting between life and death, the source from which poetry is born.

There are two poems in Ivanov's 1904 collection of verse, *Transparency* (*Prozrachnost'*), which reflect the same general tendency to give a Dionysiac coloring to Dantesque images. In one of these poems, "Transcende te ipsum" [*SS*, I, 782–83], Ivanov uses the biblical figures of Rachel and Leah as symbols of the contemplative and active ways of life; in following this usage, Ivanov is consciously adopting the interpretation given to the figures of Rachel and Leah which was current in the Middle Ages and which was used by Dante in the *Purgatorio* (XXVII.94–108).[33] Ivanov uses the images of Rachel and Leah in this Dantesque sense in order to illustrate two different ways of achieving the Christian ideal of self-transcendence advanced by St. Augustine. However, it is clear that the ideal described by Ivanov is primarily a mystical, Dionysiac ideal rather than

a purely Christian one, and that the Christian and Dantesque images which Ivanov has used are given a new Dionysiac meaning within this context.

The second poem, "Gli spiriti del viso" [*SS*, I, 785], uses a term taken from Dante's *Vita Nuova* (II, 5; XI, 2; XIV, 5), the "spirits of the eyes," translated into Russian as *dukhi glaz*. However, Ivanov does not use this term of medieval physiology in the sense in which it occurs in Dante's text; he uses it in the context of a vision of the Dionysiac mystical essence of the universe, and we find that the *dukhi glaz* lead up to the final revelation in the last line of the poem "That the world is the face of the suffering God" (*Chto mir—oblich'e strazhdushchego Boga*).

The same tendency can be observed in Ivanov's love poetry. The Dionysian ideal of achieving ecstasy through sacrifice is based on a central experience of erotic love.[34] This was revealed to Ivanov through a profound personal experience, his love for Lydia Dmitrievna Zinovieva-Annibal, whose sudden death in 1907 introduced an element of sacrifice into Ivanov's experience of ecstasy.[35] Dante's *Vita Nuova* was an obvious model for the literary expression of an experience of mystical love involving ecstasy and sacrificial death, and in 1908 Ivanov recorded in his diary that the poet Mikhail Kuzmin had suggested to him that he should write an explanatory text in prose, according to the model of Dante's *Vita Nuova*, linking together the canzonas and sonnets of the fourth book of *Cors Ardens*, "Love and Death" (*Ljubov' i smert'*) dedicated to the memory of Lydia Zinovieva-Annibal [*SS*, II, 772]. Ivanov did not take up the suggestion in this particular form, but he did make extensive use of Dante's *Vita Nuova* and of Petrarch's *Canzoniere* as models for the literary expression of his own spiritual experience. As usual, however, Ivanov infuses Dante with elements of the Dionysiac experience which are alien to Dante; we find that Dante's *Amor* becomes invested with the characteristics of Dionysian eros. We can see an example of this in a poem from the last book of *Cor Ardens*, "Crux Amoris" [*SS*, II, 492–93]. The poem opens with the line "Amor e cor gentil son una cosa"; this is a slightly amended version of the first line of a sonnet from Chapter XX of the *Vita Nuova*. Ivanov continues to

address Dante as a poet to whom the secret of the divine transformation of earthly love and of temporary loss through death was revealed. From the rest of the poem it is clear that the connection between love and death which Ivanov is celebrating in this poem has its deepest roots in the Dionysian cult of death and resurrection, for which the example of Dante's *Vita Nuova* serves only as an illustration.

Ivanov's approach to Dante reflects a typical tendency of the Symbolist age in a highly original and individual form which brings out the complexities of Ivanov's own spiritual outlook. His tremendous interest in Dante as the foremost poet of the Christian tradition conflicted with his attempt to invest Dante with his own Dionysian-inspired mystical version of Christianity.

Notes

1. The quotation from Dante comes from *Purgatorio*, XXVII.88–90. It is given in the form cited by Ivanov on the cover and title page of *Kormchie zvezdy* (St. Petersburg, 1903); see also *SS*, I, 513.

2. Preface to *Kormchie zvezdy* (Carmel, May 1901), Gosudarstvennaya biblioteka SSSR imeni Lenina, Otdel rukopisei (hereafter GBL), *fond* 109. This preface appears in the 1901 proofs of *Kormchie zvezdy* but has not been subsequently published.

3. See Ellis's letters to E. K. Metner, 1907–1914, GBL, *fond* 167, 7–8.

4. Andrei Belyj, "Vospominanija ob Aleksandre Aleksandroviche Bloke," *Zapiski mechtatelej*, 6 (1922), 5–122 (pp. 22–24). Reprinted Letchworth, 1964.

5. Vyacheslav Ivanov, "Avtobiograficheskoe pis'mo S. A. Vengerovu," in *Russkaja literatura XX veka (1890–1910)*, ed. S. A. Vengerov, 3 vols. (Moscow, 1914–1917), III, pp. 81–96. Reprinted in *SS*, II, 5–22.

6. GBL, *fond* 109.

7. N. V. Kotrelev, "Vjach. Ivanov—Professor Bakinskogo Universiteta," *Trudy po russkoj i slavianskoj filologii*, 11, *Literaturovedenie* (1968), 326–339.

8. GBL, *fond* 109.

9. See Kotrelev, p. 327.

10. Conversation with Viktor Andronikovich Manuilov, Leningrad, April 30, 1978.

11. M. V. Sabashnikov, "'Vechnye knigi'—pervonachal'nyj proekt serij 'Pamjatniki mirovoj literatury'" (1910), GBL, *fond* 261, 9/105.

12. M. V. Sabashnikov, Letter to V. I. Ivanov, April 6, 1911, GBL, *fond* 109.

13. Letter to M. V. Sabashnikov, January 20, 1913, GBL, *fond* 261, 4/25.

14. Izdatel'stvo M. i S. Sabashnikovykh, "Dogovor s V. I. Ivanovym," April 21, 1913, GBL, *fond* 261, 8/7.

15. GBL, *fond* 109.

16. See V. F. Ern, Letter to A. S. Glinka, July 14 and August 21, 1914, Tsentral'nyj gosudarstvennyj arkhiv literatury i iskusstva, *fond* 142, 1/313.

17. GBL, *fond* 261, 10/10.

18. GBL, *fond* 207, 32/12.

19. V. Ivanov Archive, Rome. I am very grateful to Dmitry Vyacheslavovich Ivanov and to Lydia Vyacheslavovna Ivanova for showing me the material in V. Ivanov's Rome archive.

20. V. Ivanov and M. O. Gershenzon, *Perepiska iz dvukh uglov* (Petrograd, 1921), pp. 14–15. Reprinted in *SS*, III, 383–415.

21. F. I. Kogan, "A record of V. Ivanov's comments at the meetings of the poetry circle which met under Ivanov's direction from February to August 1920, at the Literary Section of the Moscow State Rhetorical Institute," Typescript notes, dated October 12, 1953; Institut mirovoj literatury i iskusstva, fond 55, 1/6.

22. Ettore lo Gatto, *Saggi sulla cultura russa* (Naples, 1923), p. 169.

23. Conversation with V. A. Manuilov, Leningrad, April 30, 1978.

24. V. Ivanov Archive, Rome.

25. Sergej Bulgakov, *Tikhie dumy* (Moscow, 1918), p. 138.

26. In the poem "Laeta" (*SS*, I, 636–40), composed in 1892 after his first visit to Rome, Ivanov wrote, "Rodine veren, ja Rim rodinoj novoju chtu."

27. See for example the section "Antichnyj idealisticheskij kanon i srednevekovyj misticheskij realizm" in Ivanov's essay, "Dve stikhii v sovremennom simvolizme," first published in 1908 (*SS*, II, 535–61).

28. See Vyacheslav Ivanov, "Ellinskaja religija stradajushchego Boga," *Novyj put'*, 2 (1904), 48–78, and "Religija Dionisa," *Voprosy zhizni*, 7 (1905), 122–48.

29. Virgil describes his own situation and that of the other spirits of

Limbo to Dante in the following words: "semo perduti, e sol di tanto offesi / che sanza speme vivemo in disio" (*Inferno*, IV, 41).

30. See Virgil's parting words to Dante in *Purgatorio*, XXVII. 127–42.

31. Vyacheslav Ivanov, "Ellinskaja religija stradajushchego Boga," *Novyj put'*, 9 (1904), 47–70.

32. See *Inferno*, XIII, 48, in which Virgil refers to the fact that the scene of the bleeding twig which Dante has just witnessed was already known to Dante from Virgil's verses (*Aeneid*. III).

33. See Ivanov's note (*SS*, I, 861) to an earlier reference to Rachel and Leah in "Sfinks," a long poem written in Dantesque terzinas and included in *Kormchie zvezdy* (*SS*, I, 643–60).

34. Vyacheslav Ivanov, "Religija Dionisa," *Voprosy zhizni*, 6 (1905), 187.

35. Vyacheslav Ivanov, "Avtobiograficheskoe pis'mo S. A. Vengerovu," *SS*, II, 20.

Translatio Lauri: Ivanov's Translations of Petrarch

Lowry Nelson, Jr.

Переводчику

Будь жаворонок нив и пажитей—Вергилий,
Иль альбатрос Бодлэр, иль соловей Верлэн
Твоей ловитвою,—все в чужеземный плен
Не заманить тебе птиц вольных без усилий,

Мой милый птицелов,—и, верно, без насилий
Не обойдешься ты, поэт, и без измен,
Хотя б ты другом был всех девяти Камен,
И зла ботаником, и пастырем идиллий.

Затем, что стих чужой—что скользкий бог Протей:
Не улучить его охватом ни отвагой.
Ты держишь рыбий хвост, а он текучей влагой

Струится и бежит из немощных сетей.
С Протеем будь Протей, вторь каждой маске—маской!
Милей досужий люд своей забавить сказкой.

To the Translator

Lark Virgil of the fields and meadowlands,
Albatross Baudelaire, or nightingale
Verlaine ensnared? Surely alien hands
Cannot entice free birds without travail,

My dear birdcatcher—even though you may refuse,
As poet, to betray, to force amain,
Or though you be the friend of every Muse
And evil's botanist and idyll's swain—

Because it's not your poem: in slippery jet
God Proteus, despite your pluck and flail,
Can flee by flowing through your feeble net

And leave you holding a mere fish's tail.

Be Proteus to Proteus, set mask to mask!
Or else amusing idlers is your proper task.

(Translated by Lowry Nelson, Jr.—brazenly
by way of epigraph.)

Both Francesco Petrarch and Vyacheslav Ivanov were passionate poets, passionate scholars, and passionate believers. Yet both men disciplined themselves through form, through history, and through religion. The positive tensions generated by their individual modes of conceiving and living their lives were, in both, the source and the means of their poetic expression. Parallels could be drawn between their views of scholarship: in the most general terms, they set out to know the past, to understand it, and to retrieve it in some way for the present. For Petrarch, the past was largely ancient Rome and the barely knowable barbarism that succeeded it. For Ivanov—Hellenist, Latinist, historian, and philosopher—the past was naturally much vaster and the range of reference incalculably greater. Yet both found their alpha and omega and their center in eternal Rome, and both as exiles: Petrarch was born in Arezzo in familial exile from Florence and grew up near the exiled Roman Church in Avignon; Ivanov, born in the "third Rome," Moscow, became for the last twenty-five years of his life, an exile in the first and only Rome. It is tempting to dwell on the differences and the ironies of their destinies, but my purpose here is merely to suggest that a large-scale comparison is not incongruous or unfruitful. What brings them together in history is poetry. Though of vastly disparate provenience in time, place, and culture, they share a skill which each practiced in such a way that I am not shy of calling them both great poets. Here, then, are my precise terms of comparison: we have the unusual case of one great lyric poet translating another great lyric poet, and doing so across a gap of some 570 years. My comments and generalizations leave entirely out of account epic and dramatic and didactic poetry, not to mention epyllia, epistles, and the rest: I am concerned

with lyric poetry and its translation into lyric poetry. Both the greatness of the poets Petrarch and Ivanov and the greatness of the gap of time are thus to me unusual and remarkable.

As the first lyric poet to be translated Petrarch has had an extraordinary impact on the whole enterprise of poetic translation itself. When did it begin? Almost automatically one thinks of Catallus' translation-with-a-difference of Sappho, but can one think of any other lyric instances before the Renaissance? It is one of those obvious questions which no one I know of has before now even asked. Implicit in the question itself is the need to define "translation," as distinct from "version," "imitation," and "re-elaboration,"not to mention matters like form, content, influence, and whatever else enters into this kind of intertextuality. But I arbitrarily invoke, for my present purposes, the rule of rigor, with enough play to make the game interesting. If it be granted that there is such a thing as translation and that it properly aspires to fidelity, the questions that seem central are these: Who does it and how? Who reads it and why? And, What relation does it bear to its original? I would say, simply, that it takes a poet to translate a poem, that the poet-translator must know the language from which he is translating, and that equivalent or reasonably modified formal patterns should be observed. These are of course sticking points, since Ezra Pound's example, for Anglo-American aspirants who all too often take ego-trips on another poet's ticket, usually in a now-dated Modernistic vein, but now and then also in the old fake-antique vein. The question of *how* translators do it may for the moment be deferred or perhaps reverently referred to their several muses. It is an act of craft or art. The first readers are naturally the poet-translators themselves, who must sense an affinity, a challenge, and a peculiar sort of inspiration. Translations of lyrics, though, are usually offered to a readership without a knowledge of the original in its own native idiom. On the most pragmatic level, the translation is supposed to give a feeling (notion-emotion) of what the original is *like*. That is a modest and proper goal. English idiom is here peculiar, and differs from any other language I know: What is it like? is the form of a question we ask on all sorts of occasions. Not *How is it?* But *What is it like?* We are asking for a comparison, a simulacrum, a simile, a metaphor perhaps, or even a symbol. And what could be more challenging to our powers of equivalence and analogy or to our poetic imaginations? In ordinary speech our responses are often trite, but in formal verse translation the tension between fidelity and equivalence is acutely focused. A successful translator should be able to say to the reader, in effect, This is *not* the original, this is not a plain-prose rendering, this is not an imitation or a version or a set of variations, but simply, That is what it's like. Granted then that there is an original poem and a poetic translation of it into another language, my last general question is, What relation do the two texts bear to each other? First, they are both poems and can be read and enjoyed and evaluated quite separately. Their separateness is, for better or worse, one of the staple assumptions of national literary histories. The versions or translations of Petrarch produced by, say, Sir Thomas Wyatt or Joachim du Bellay are sometimes not even acknowledged as such or if they are so acknowledged they are seldom compared with their originals. Such a comparison might seem merely the province of a pedant or a comparatist. That there is something positive about this I would not deny: the translations are correctly, however partially, viewed as poems in their own right.

Currently there is a general linguistic and practical concern with translation within various contexts: comparative syntax and contrastive grammar; construction of computerized translating machines; and official political and diplomatic conventions of equivalence. In the West there has been only sporadic concern with theory of translation as related to practice; some major monuments would be the essays of Friedrich and August Wilhelm Schlegel on Ludwig Tieck's translation of *Don Quixote,* the pronouncements and practice of Ezra Pound, the volumes *The Craft and Context of Translation* (1961) edited by William Arrowsmith and Roger Shattuck and *On Translation* (1966) edited by Reuben Brower, the views of Vladimir Nabokov as elaborated in his multifarious edition of Pushkin's *Evgenij Onegin,* and such a specialized yet theoretically grounded work as Anna Kay France's *Boris Pasternak's Translations of Shakespeare* (1978). Elsewhere, especially in the Soviet Union, unusual attention has been paid to

the theory of literary translation by such notable practitioners as Elfim Etkind and Korney Chukovsky, who not only theorize, but also minutely and interestingly evaluate and often masterfully exemplify. I know of no attempt, however, to consider and evaluate Ivanov's translations of Petrarch. In my own sketch of a theory, I first fix boundaries of definition by setting apart the otherwise estimable enterprises of paraphrase, imitation, re-elaboration, and parody (sacred or profane). Poetic translation, in my view, attempts to transmute into the target language as much of the content and the form of the original as a translator possibly can. His task is literally a kind of re-presentation or, in terms of painting, a copying of the original. The ruling principle is fidelity. The operational principle is equivalence. In translation, as distinct from other forms of intertextuality, a sonnet should be rendered as a sonnet, an ode as an ode, a rimed poem as a rimed poem. The level of language should be matched. But it would be quite unreasonable to demand that in some mechanical way nouns should be rendered as nouns or adjectives as adjectives or verbs as verbs, even within the Indo-European family of languages. Casting a Petrarchan sonnet in a Shakespearean mold seems to me within the bounds of fidelity. Where a poem has marked alliteration, marked assonance may do. For a hendecasyllabic line a pentameter may be more natural. A general pattern of caesura or enjambment may be honored generally. My principles might well be denounced as too binding and prescriptive, yet a free-for-all is not translation: it can go its own way and find another label.

Since I shall make judgments as to success or value, I should be explicit in naming possible, even actual dilemmas. It has been wittily observed that a good poem which is a translation of a poor poem is by that fact a poor translation: it has violated the principle of fidelity. Balmont's brilliant translations of Edgar Allen Poe are, then, failures as much as is Baudelaire's ridiculous "Peace Pipe" extract from H. W. Longfellow's *Song of Hiawatha*. The usual situation is, of course, quite different: the translator aims at approximating an impossible target and may, with luck, come close; he could only succeed under J. L. Borges's dispensation for the utterly unique Louis Ménard. More to the point is the following pedestrian

scheme of permutations: a good translation of a good poem; a poor translation of a good poem; a good translation of a poor poem; a poor translation of a poor poem. Fortunately these extreme and schematic possibilities are narrowed by my insistence that both Petrarch and Ivanov are great poets, not day in and day out perhaps, but the level is high. Ivanov, in his translations, always plays the game of translating Petrarch according to the rules and definitions I have proposed. If he falls short as translator, he does so on his and our terms.

Writing a poem of one's own is a remarkably complex process: it involves language with a history, a tradition of usage, a host of predecessors, an awareness and multiple sorts of self-awareness, a gift of craft, a flash or flashes of inspiration, and hard labor. Poets almost always revise and rework and even recast. Every change reverberates through the whole poem; every change requires adjustment of other elements, or, alternatively, the other elements conspire to force the change. Besides, the result may be more likely poor than good. In translating someone else's poem a writer must necessarily adopt some sort of allegiance or fidelity to an *original* and in doing so he naturally restricts his range of choices. Revising and recasting, which for an "original" poet can be sources of fresh, unexpected inspiration, are for the translator like the feats of a straitjacketed escape artist. He can of course give up approximating the target and settle for a version, an imitation, or a parody—but that becomes a different matter. Yet I would insist that the translator is also a poet with his own linguistic historical repertory. Before examining the nature of Ivanov's translations and versions of Petrarch I shall attempt briefly to characterize the peculiar, native, free-valenced lyrical strain in each one.

Petrarch has, in my view, great limitations as a poet. His range, though spanning life and eternity, is nonetheless rather narrow in its moods and insights. He is a poet of love and conscience, of sensuousness and asceticism, of political passion and spiritual anxiety. Generally he qualifies and mutes his contrasts and outbursts. He is incapable, at one extreme, of solemn grandeur and, at the other extreme, of playful wit or humor. He is never sublime or witty.

Yet he can evoke both pathos and joy. Though he often laments to the point of querulousness, he is at times successful in expressing quietly a moving quiet irony. This irony, this understated plaint or elation is, I think, his greatest gift of expression. He can indeed compose a masterpiece, though there are not 366 masterpieces in his *Canzoniere*. No poet has ever had that luck. Perhaps also no poet has ever so boldly challenged the reader to savor and judge quality as did Petrarch in stringing so many poems into an ambiguous continuity and equality of setting. As inheritor and progenitor of the most durable lyric strain in history, he caught up in his work aspects of Provençal and Siculo-Tuscan poetry and became himself the model and motive for about three succeeding centuries. For the lyric his place is as crucial as Virgil's is for the epic. On the bad side, he unwittingly spawned a school of tyros and poetasters as well as emulators and reactors. That Russian literature had no Renaissance such as in the West was in some ways a blessing as well as a handicap. Ivanov, scholar-poet, could set out on his own to recover in an original way an older past that, unlike the Enlightenment and Romanticism, never really happened in Russia.

Ivanov had, however, the resources of Old Slavonic and the language and example of Derzhavin and Pushkin, as well as the fully ripened fruits of Western European poetry since Dante and Petrarch. (Obviously, for my limited purpose, I leave out any consideration of Ivanov's profound involvement with ancient Greece.) Long before he published in 1915 his translations of 27 sonnets from Petrarch's *Canzoniere*, Ivanov had mastered the sonnet to a degree and in a plenitude far surpassing any previous Russian poet. *Pilot Stars* (*Kormchie zvezdy*, 1903) and *Transparency* (*Prozrachnost'*, 1904)—his first two collections of poetry which in the complete edition occupy 275 ample pages—contain 49 sonnets in various thematic groupings in the midst of other poems of the greatest formal variety. *Cor Ardens* (1911)—more than 300 pages in the complete edition—contains in its vastness all of 98 sonnets, again in groupings. Indeed, Book Four of *Cor Ardens* is called "Life and Death" and has as its epigraph a passage from Petrarch's first canzone on Laura's death: the parallel is thus explicit between Laura and Lydia Dmitrievna Zinovieva-Annibal. All this original sonneteering precedes the translations from Petrarch, and of course does not bring to an end Ivanov's mastery of the sonnet, as witness his greatest examples of that form in *Evening Light* (*Svet Vechevnij*, 1962), his final and posthumous volume of poems. Quite early, it would seem, Ivanov fashioned for himself a range of style that is astonishing in its suppleness and variety. Much of his poetry is difficult for its compression of grammatically linked words and phrases more than for any syntactical participial involution. In other terms, he takes more artistic advantage of prefixes and suffixes than of periodic sentence structure. Yet in his versification he follows, naturally, the established tradition of Russian syllabotonic poetry, strict in observance of line-length and rime-pattern. This is indeed in considerable contrast to Petrarch's native freedom in the use of apocopation, elision, and synalepha. Oftentimes in Petrarch the sense and sound vie with each other for prominence, as in the sonnet of 23 rivers (no. 148) in which their exotic names flow fluvially into each other. Perhaps the two poets are equal in their syntactic prowess, that is, in the difficulty, the *esthetic* difficulty, they often present on first reading. Lexically they are at once equal and different: equal, in the sense that they both draw on various levels of style and use what may be perceived as unusual, exotic, or archaic words; different, in the sense that Petrarch for us is often truly archaic with respect to modern Italian, while Ivanov often uses words and forms that are Slavonic or obsolete or even dialectal. A finer parallel could be drawn between the two poets and their lexicon, but I save that for my examples instead of generalizing here. Ivanov's style is perhaps more learned than Petrarch's, yet its tonal range is broader. Seldom is Petrarch in the *Canzoniere* hieratically solemn, however insistently contrite and weary of the earthly world. He can be serious, intimate, tender, laconically ironic, and quietly joyful. Ivanov, in his original poetry, stretches the range of Petrarch greatly, from the mystical and rhapsodic at one extreme, to the playfully witty at the other. Both took poetry seriously enough to covet in earnest the laurel or the thyrsis. For the Augustinian Petrarch, heir of a Christianized Plato and cultivator of the moral Romans, lyric poetry was eschatologically *vanitas*. For the Hellenic Catholic Ivanov,

heir to Byzantium and cultivator of Mnemosyne and Dionysus, poetry, as nature, was immanently divine and earthly love and its poetic memorials were *realia* empowered to lead to *realiora*. Hence a difference in mission and in cultivation of verse. As child of his time, Petrarch wrote his poems within a figural view of fulfillment of life in the life after death. For Ivanov, symbolist-realist, this earthly life is infused and inanimated with divinity, and this life and the life to come, in their individual embodiment, exist in a fusion for which the term "symbol" was the most potently descriptive. Though different in "manner, person and style" they share enough traits to make their compresence on Ivanov's writing-table congenial and momentous. Both were *vates*.

After so many centuries and between two so diverse tongues, equivalence in key vocabulary becomes a prime criterion for *re*-presentation. So much of Petrarch's lexicon had become trite, especially at the hands of his latter-day heirs, the Romantics: beautiful, dear, sweet, pale, weary; eyes, mouth, hair; love, sorrow, joy, virtue—not to mention the objects of external nature, such as birds, meadows, rivers, sun, stars, and moon. But such signifiers are, of course, the continuing givens of our experience. How to freshen, vary, recast, or adapt them without traducing sense and subject? Petrarch himself faced up to this in often avoiding the Provençalisms and Siculisms of his immediate predecessors. For Ivanov what must have been a besetting preoccupation was to avoid the shop-worn words and formulas of *his* immediate predecessors in their lyrics of love and death, nature and introspection, earthly and celestial forms of common experience—ever new in individuals but ever obsolescing in expression. Nothing like a computer lexicon will do. Love is not love in all cases of *amore* or *ljubov'*. The Christian words in the Vulgate—*caritas* and *dilectio*—became one with pagan Latin *amor*, first in Provençal and then in Italian. But Petrarch inherited both traditions in his poetry and uses *amore* in ways that Ivanov carefully distinguishes by using not only *ljubov'* but also *amur* or *bog* or *bog ljubvi* or on one occasion *kumir* and, on another, omitting translation. That wide-ranging word *dolore*, and its cognates *duolo* and *doglia*, are variously rendered by *bol'* (most commonly) and *skorb'*. I think I detect here

a strong tendency to avoid the nouns *gore*, *pechal'*, and *grust'*, as well as *tomlenie* and *toska* (used once each) and of course *skuka*, as well as their adjectival derivatives. Petrarch's emblematic word *pensero* (modern form, *pensiero*) is rendered either as *dukh* or less commonly as *dumy*. *Smorto* and *impallidire* are inevitably some form of *blednyj*, just as *stanco* is usually *ustalyj*, though once *iznemog*, and once omitted. *Dolce* is almost always forthrightly *sladkij* or (I must say, understandably) either omitted or paraphrased, as in the case where Petrarch contrasts *alcun dolce* with *tanti amari* (57) and Ivanov writes *mëd skupoj* contrasted with *ne sladok pozdnij mëd*. It surely is significant that for *dolce* we seldom find either *milyj* or *nezhnyj* (though in other connections these words do rarely appear). Such instances as these could be multiplied, yet to do so would run the risk of distorting the translator's task, which is of course not simply to render noun by noun and adjective by adjective. What I hope to have shown in this preliminary comparison is that Ivanov has taken some care to break out of conventionalized nineteenth-century equivalencies like those familiar to English-readers in versions of Rossetti and his epigones working in the wake of the great English Romantics.

It should come as no surprise that Ivanov does not equally succeed in all of his 27 translations from Petrarch. In a more ample context it would be a worthy and enlightening enterprise to take up each sonnet in turn and mark their qualities, deficiencies, remodelings, and misses. I feel my own understanding and enjoyment of *both* poets have been greatly enhanced by my private and fairly exhaustive study of these texts. What I propose, within narrower public bounds, is to choose—I trust not tendentiously—a few whole poems and passages for the purpose of showing high achievement, honorable failure, local triumphs, some free variations, and a few clashes of sensibility.

First I consider Ivanov's translation of Sonnet 156, which in the original has a certain sustained rapture and gentle solemnity but which in Russian takes on something like a Rossettian or early Yeatsian, indeed a pre-Raphaelite, portentousness. Petrarch, in this sonnet, celebrates the harmony of his beloved's demeanor on earth that reflected her heavenly origin and destination. Terrestrial nature

was so hushed by the harmonious heavens that not a leaf stirred. The first quatrain goes thus:

> I saw on earth angelic ways and heavenly beauties unique in the world, such that remembering pleases and pains me, for whatever I look upon seems dreams, shadows and vapors [smokes].

> I' vidi in terra angelici costumi
> e celesti bellezze al mondo sole,
> tal che di rimembrar mi giova e dole,
> ché quant'io miro par sogni, ombre e fumi.

Ivanov singles out for his exordium the sense of the word "dole" (which is coupled in the original with its antithesis "giova") and makes from the attributive "angelici" an actual substantivized angel twice mentioned in the first three lines. "Celesti bellezze" is omitted; "dreams" become "a dream"; "shadows" become "a cloud of charms"; and "fumi" or "vapors" are either subsumed by "cloud" or are simply omitted. (One learns by the way what a trial to the poet is the English word "smoke" and its plural.) The classical echo of phrases like "pulvis et umbra" or "umbra, cinis, nihil" is lost in the selective questioning: was it a dream? or a cloud?

> Ja litsezrel nebesnuju pechal',
> Grust' angela v edinstvennom javelen'e.
> To son li byl? No angela mne zhal'.
> Il' oblak char? No sladko umilen'e.

(I beheld heavenly sorrow, an angel's sadness in a singular vision. Was it a dream? But I grieved for the angel. Or a cloud of charms? But sweet was the emotion.)

And the manner continues, as in the second pair of lines in the second quatrain. Petrarch's words are simple and his hyperbole traditional:

> e udi' sospirando dir parole
> che farian gire i monti e stare i fiumi.

(And I heard words spoken sighing that would make mountains move and rivers stay.)

In considerable contrast, Ivanov, with languorous elaboration, adds and ornaments:

> Krotkikh ust molen'e,
> chto val skovat' moglo b i sdvinut' dal',—
> iznemoglo, istajalo v tomlen'e.

(The supplication of her gentle lips, which could fetter the billow and shift distance, grew faint, melted with lassitude.)

Perhaps in an effort to shun triteness and at the same time to fulfill his uncharacteristic scheme of easy, mostly grammatical, rimes, Ivanov chooses to be consistent in his fin-de-siècle and mannered rendition. Petrarch ends his poem with great artistic control, describing the stillness of heaven and earth in which "no leaf on a bough could be *seen* to move." In Ivanov we read:

> i vozdukh byl raznezhen eju—stol',
> chto ni listka v vetviakh ne shelokhnulos'.

Petrarch's breathless silence and immobility suggest, inappropriately, to Ivanov all those Romantic rustlings and murmurings we *hear* with crashing frequency in his immediate and earlier predecessors.

For the reasons I have given, Sonnet 156 in its Russian vesture is a fascinating failure. It is a good example of what many poets of Ivanov's generation, both in Russia and elsewhere in Europe and in America, coped with in their practice and in some splendid instances—Yeats, Pound, Rilke, Blok, and Ivanov—overcame on their way to a less edulcorated new style that we may now call Modernism. It is also a good example of Ivanov's own independence, however wilful, in confronting and transmuting his brother poet. There are notable examples of intriguing failures of fidelity also in a few translations that in effect "out-Petrarch" Petrarch at his most mannered. In one of Petrarch's most imitated sonnets (199) he addresses with

fancy fervor that most metonymically coveted appendage, the female hand:

> O bella man che mi destringi 'l core
> e 'n poco spazio la mia vita chiudi . . .

(O beautiful hand that grips my heart and encloses my life in such little space . . .)

That hand is an artwork on which nature and heaven have lavished every skill. The fingers are orient pearls that, naked, can "enrich" when they are not probing love's wounds. Even the white glove that covers the coveted hand is dear as a token he has snatched; it makes him wish he had also some of her veil. But such is the inconstancy of life that this is theft and he must be deprived. One might irreverently call this a pretty poem and wonder idly about the *other* hand. It is trivial and at the same time a bit solemn, a combination that had enormous and continuous vogue for five or six centuries: let me call it "proto-baroco-rococo." Ivanov cannot resist further prettifying the poem, but to his credit he adds a touch of sly drama and humor of which Petrarch was temperamentally incapable. Reference to the inconstancy of life is simply dropped and supplanted with an airy exclamation "In vain! The brief delight is over: the culprit must return his booty":

> Votshche! Nastal konets uslady kratkoj:
> Vernut' dobychu dolzhen likhodej.

Even this slight poem in its Russian version is a worthy cultural appropriation: it contains and emblematizes with inventive grace a whole long European tradition of coy clever poetry from the Alexandrians to Petrarch and his imitators down to polished album verse of the nineteenth century. Suffice it to cite, along that way, Romeo's words of wonder:

> See how she leans her cheek upon her hand!
> O that I were a glove upon that hand,
> That I might touch that cheek!

But to follow this would conjure up the *blason* and all its precious body-parts.

A considerable achievement of Petrarch in the sonnet was to make its slender and articulated form capable of dramatized passion. His means are often visions, some dialogue, and understatement or Petrarchan irony. Sonnet 336 is an especially interesting example in that the dialogue goes on inside his own mind, in that the vision is presented as a memory and not an outward fiction or allegory, and in that the crushing reality of her death takes the form of the dry, spare, precise citation of its hour and date. In paraphrase the poem goes thus:

> She returns to my mind (whence Lethe cannot banish her) just as I saw her in flower lit up with the rays of her star. I see her as in our first meeting, pure, lovely, solitary, and demure. I cry, "It is she, still alive!" and beg the gift of her sweet speech. Sometimes she answers, sometimes not. As if coming to my senses I tell my mind, "You are deceived; you know that her blessed soul left her body at the first hour on April 6, 1348."

It is something of a stroke of genius to versify the calendar. Ivanov shows in his fine translation that he deeply respects the tone and modality of Petrarch's poem, occasionally heightening and condensing, yet observing essential fidelity. The solemnity of Petrarch's interruptive parenthesis on Lethe in the first quatrain is naturalized in a normal flow of syntax and rendered forceful by the word *neprestannoj*. The sequence of typical adjectives in the second quatrain is summarized creatively:

> dushoju obajannoj
> Lovlju v chertakh zastenchivost' priveta.

(In my captivated mind I catch in her features a shyness in greeting.)

The word "greeting" does not occur in the original, but it is latent in Petrarch's world of the beloved's momentous *saluto-salute*. And she does speak later, most mysteriously, as would a memory: "Talor risponde e talor non fa motto" (at times she answers and at times

says not a word). Ivanov here heightens the necessarily imprecise memory: "Poroj molchit,—poroju . . ." (at times she is silent, at times . . .). The phrase falters movingly. Again, in this first tercet, Ivanov condenses the lightly sententious lines of Petrarch,

> i', come uom ch'erra e poi più dritto estima,
> dico a la mente mia . . .

(I, like one who errs and then reckons more justly, say to my mind . . .),

into a heightening of the mental state from a wandering brought back along the straight and narrow path to a raptness or even intoxication followed by regaining sober consciousness. Ivanov invents the phrase "Serdtsu dorog / Takoj vostorg" and continues:

> A posle, kak ot khmelja
> Ochnuvshijsja, skazhu: "Znaj, obmanula
> Tebja mechta.

"The dream-vision has deceived you" as compared to Petrarch's phrase, "I say to my mind: thou art deceived." The final lines in Petrarch would translate: "You know that in 1348, the sixth day of April, at the first hour, that blessed soul issued from the body":

> Sai che 'n mille trecento quarantotto,
> il dì sesto d'aprile, in l'ora prima,
> del corpo uscìo quell'anima beata.

To put that into another language without sounding like a bureaucrat or anchor-man is a greater achievement than may seem plausible to those who have not had the often hopeless and thankless experience of a poet-translator. Ivanov manages to naturalize that dry direct simplicity, using the customary three rimes in the sestet: dorog / sorok, khmelja / aprelja, and obmanula / usnula. The last sentence reads:

> V tysjacha trista sorok
> Os'mom godu, v chas pervyj, v den' aprelja
> Shestyj—mezh nas blazhennaja usnula.

This is the sort of triumph a translator must keep to himself or share only with those in the know. As a whole this sonnet radiates and resonates authentically and artistically in its Russian glow and echo.

At times, between these two systems of texts, there is something like an antiphonal correspondence from two corners: dissonance that resolves into harmony; a musical "third" that rings true; a coincidence of perfect pitch; or even a cadence that improves. In tone, as I have said, Ivanov's range is wider than Petrarch's: he can be more intensely passionate and truly witty; he can more easily avoid insistent complaint and near bathos. For example, Petrarch's lovely sonnet (190) "Una candida cerva sopra l'erba / verde"—also well known from Wyatt's very free adaptation "Whoso list to hunt, I know where is an hind"—relates the appearance of a golden-horned doe with a necklace inscribed in diamonds and topazes: "Let no one touch me; it pleased Caesar to set me free." After so dazzling a vision and so enigmatic a motto, the poet fell into the water and the doe disappeared:

> Et era 'l sol già volto al mezzo giorno,
> gli occhi miei stanchi di mirar, non sazi,
> quand'io caddi ne l'acqua, et ella sparve.

This is very close to bathos, if I am not mistaken, though the poet's sudden plunge, presumably in full dress, can be of course attenuated by pious commentary. Ivanov in his translation shows great discretion. *His* poet is said to "forget all" in his enchantment and a hint of danger or violence is added in the phrase "Ne ran'!" that follows the canonical "Ne tron' menja!" Besides, the doe is called a "splendid-headed wanderer on magical shores" whose "collar of diamantine words was sparkling on her neck." By such added enhancement Ivanov suffuses a fairytale atmosphere. The fall thus can become delicately mythic as it is circumstantial in the last lines:

> No ne byl syt moj vzor, kogda v rechnye
> Zatony ja upal—i skrylas' lan'.

(But my gaze was not sated when into the river eddies I fell, and the doe vanished.)

Yet on the other hand some fine touches of Petrarch's laconic irony go unacknowledged in the Russian texts of these poems. In Sonnet 285 Petrarch celebrates the tender and solicitous tutelage he receives from his beloved in heaven to keep him on the right path, and he does so with a continuous rhetorical sweep that leads up to the climactic last line:

> E sol quant'ella parla ò pace o tregua.

(And only so long as she speaks do I have peace or truce.)

The word "tregua" (truce) is more than a pleonasm or afterthought; it gently or ironically reminds us that on earth peace is never a permanent state. Ivanov chooses to render "l'alma," which has in Petrarch its religious sense, as both "dukh" and "serdtse," and expands the single Italian line to two:

> I mir mne dan s molitvoj legkokryloj,
> kogda svjataja serdtsu govorit.

(And peace is given me with light-winged prayer when the blessed one speaks to my heart.)

In this otherwise admirable and welcome rendition the most delicate effect is, for whatever reason of craft, lost. Likewise in Sonnet 364, which comes just before the last sonnet and the final canzone directed in prayer to the Virgin, the humble supplication to God in the conclusion undergoes in the Russian version a change in tone. Indeed Ivanov heightens the mood of repentance throughout the poem. Petrarch's final lines are thus:

> Signor che 'n questo carcer m'ài rinchiuso
> tramene salvo da li eterni danni,
> ch' i' conosco 'l mio fallo e non lo scuso.

(Lord who hast enclosed me in this prison, draw me from it safe from eternal ills, for I know my guilt and do not excuse it.)

It is late contrition, end of the whole drama of the *Canzoniere,* for which he tallies his sins and waits in hope for God's absolving grace. In Russian, however, it takes on a rather Dostoevskian tone or, perhaps more accurately, a Davidian tone echoing the Book of Psalms, and thus more Old than New Testament:

> k tebe moj vopl' iz sej temnitsy strastnoj,
> gde ty menja zamknul, i chrez ognì
> vvedi v Svoj raj tropoju bezopasnoj!

(But mark my cry to Thee from this suffering prison where you enclosed me, and through fires lead me to Thy paradise by a safe way.)

Petrarch's tone of utter humility, which cannot of course in any way *demand* God's grace, becomes a cry *de profundis,* with almost a touch of Christopher Marlowe's Doctor Faustus, for safe-conduct through Purgatory to Paradise. Here there is a notable dissonance of tone between the two poems. To put it more positively, these are two poems whose differences are as interesting as their resemblances.

A true chiming of both poets occurs with Sonnet 312, my last example. In a long enumeration of the attractive shows of nature and of mortal life, Petrarch leads up to the sad reality that the beloved has buried them all for him, since she was his light and mirror. The last three lines are movingly measured in the understated irony he found consolatory.

> Noia m'è 'l viver sì gravosa e lunga
> ch' i' chiamo il fine per lo gran desire
> di riveder cui non veder fu 'l meglio.

(For me living is an anguish so burdensome and prolonged that I call out for the end in my great desire to see her again, *not* seeing whom had been best.)

The sense is not easy to render exactly; it is, with its own emotional exactitude, appropriately *uneasy.* (Latin usage, in proverbial and sententious utterances, is the model here.) In his beautiful translation

Ivanov achieves true artistic fidelity and yet retains a measure of creative independence, as exemplified here in his final tercet:

> Zhizn' odnozvuchna. Zrelishche unylo.
> Lish' v smerti vnov' uvizhu to, chego
> Mne luchshe b nikogda ne videt' bylo.

(Life is monotonous. Its pageant is melancholy. Only in death will I see again that which it would have been better for me never to see.)

English idiom allows this slightly uncommon rendering of the tenses. The present in the past is normal in Russian, and gives a fairly close approximation of the original Italian. Petrarch is not saying flatly that it would have been better if he had never seen his beloved at all. He is, in classical idiom, stressing the pain of loss sustained over so many years and the even greater desire to see her, if possible, again and forever. "Noia" suggested to Ivanov not its true archaic meaning of "anguish" but rather its modern meaning of "boredom" or "nuisance." Yet he chose the right word by his lights: "odnozvuchna." The usual modern equivalence, "skuchna," would have perhaps inappropriately evoked shades of Pechorin and Onegin. "Zrelishche unylo," though not exact, is proper in the context of the whole poem. Petrarch's "gran desire" goes unrendered, but it is there implicitly. Most important of all, the sense and tone live viably in the Russian words. When free, as in other places I have not mentioned, Ivanov's version has its own further function as a mediation of traditions. But that is a very complex matter for which neither the present context nor the present writer is adequate.

Ivanov as Russian Petrarchist came far too late to found a lineage. Yet he succeeded in showing once again, in these 27 Russified sonnets from the Tuscan master, how vital his sense of poetic mission was: to retain and renew memory and make Mnemosyne, mother of the Muses, respond to his artful, mediated invocations. The scholar-historian reconstructs and interprets the past, recovering it from dormancy and oblivion and freshening it for new contemplation. The poet or poet-translator weaves himself a pattern from and among

the patterns already in the fabric of memory and so changes and reorders it, however slightly. Both Petrarch and Ivanov as profoundly religious men were, above all, concerned with anagoge, the eschatological way to God; but that way can pass by and through poetry and can be known through presage and memory. For Ivanov, Petrarch's "cult" of the laurel was "revolutionary." It was something of which Petrarch himself was in no way aware. To quote from Ivanov's essay on "Il lauro nella poesia del Petrarca" (1933):

> [In Petrarch's love poetry] for the first time Parnassus is completely separated from religion, for never in the ancient world was it set up in opposition as a sovereign, independent, intellectualist realm, nor had the separatism of art ever been previously so radically asserted. No retraction [such as Petrarch made] could any longer deprive humanism of its charter of freedoms, its privilege of having, on the same footing as any religion, a paradise of its own.

Perhaps there is a touch of mischief in Ivanov's summation: it is a high tribute in the name of poetry and secular learning, but it might well have given Petrarch, so pious and yet so anxious to become *laureatus,* both pang and pleasure and made him burn in ice and freeze in fire. Both poets are now, we trust, in the same true Paradise, beyond all passion and repentance, beyond earthly schism and syncretism. For us, the heirs of their common humanism, it is, I hope, an instructive pleasure to overhear their parnassian colloquy in these sonnets in the paradisiacal region of our own memorial poetic minds.

* * *

Sonnets Cited

156

I' vidi in terra angelici costumi
e celesti bellezze al mondo sole,
tal che di rimembrar mi giova e dole,
ché quant'io miro par sogni, ombre e fumi;

e vidi lagrimar que' duo bei lumi
ch'àn fatto mille volte invidia al sole,
et udi' sospirando dir parole
che farian gire i monti e stare i fiumi.

Amor, senno, valor, pietate e doglia
facean piangendo un più dolce concento
d'ogni altro che nel mondo udir si soglia,

ed era il cielo a l'armonia sì intento,
che non se vedea in ramo mover foglia:
tanta dolcezza avea pien l'aere e'l vento!

199

O bella man che mi destringi 'l core
e 'n poco spazio la mia vita chiudi,
man ov' ogni arte e tutti loro studi
poser natura e 'l ciel per farsi onore;

di cinque perle oriental colore,
e sol ne le mie piaghe acerbi e crudi,
diti schietti soavi, a tempo ignudi,
consente or voi, per arricchirme, Amore.

Candido, leggiadretto e caro guanto,
che copria netto avorio e fresche rose,
chi vide al mondo mai sì dolci spoglie?

Così avess' io del bel velo altrettanto!
O inconstanzia de l' umane cose:
pur questo è furto, e vien ch' i' me ne spoglie.

156

Я лицезрел небесную печаль,
Грусть ангела в единственном явленье.
То сон ли был? Но ангела мне жаль.
Иль облак гар? Но сладко умиленье.

Затмили слезы двух светил хрусталь
Светлейший Солнца. Кротких уст моленье,
Что вал сковать могло б и сдвинуть даль,—
Изнемогло, истаяло в томленье.

Все—добродетель, мудрость, нежность, боль—
В единую гармонию сомкнулось,
Какой земля не слышала дотоль.

И ближе небо, внемля ей, нагнулось;
И воздух был разнежен ею—столь,
Что ни листка в ветвях не шелохнулось.

199

Прекрасная рука! Разжала ты
И держишь сердце на ладони тесной.
Я на тебя гляжу, дивясь небесной
Художнице столь строгой красоты.

Продолговато-вежные персты
Прозрачней перлов Индии чудесной,
Вершители моей судьбины крестной,
Я вижу вас в сиянье наготы.

Я завладел ревнивою перчаткой!
Кто, победитель, лучший взял трофей?
Хвала, Амур! А ныне ты ж украдкой

Фату похить иль облаком развей!..
Вотще! Настал конец услады краткой:
Вернуть добычу должен лиходей.

336

Tornami a mente, anzi v' è dentro, quella
ch' indi per Lete esser non po sbandita,
qual io la vidi in su l' età fiorita
tutta accesa de' raggi di sua stella;

sì nel mio primo occorso onesta e bella
veggiola, in sé raccolta e sì romita,
ch' i' grido: «Ell' è ben dessa, ancor è in vita»,
e 'n don le cheggio sua dolce favella.

Talor risponde e talor non fa motto;
i', come uom ch' erra e poi più dritto estima,
dico a la mente mia: «Tu se' 'ngannata:

sai che 'n mille trecento quarantotto,
il dì sesto d' aprile, in l' ora prima,
del corpo uscìo quell' anima beata».

190

Una candida cerva sopra l' erba
verde m' apparve, con duo corna d' oro,
fra due riviere, all' ombra d' un alloro,
levando 'l sole a la stagione acerba.

Era sua vista sì dolce superba
ch' i' lasciai per seguirla ogni lavoro,
come l'avaro che 'n cercar tesoro
con diletto l' affanno disacerba.

«Nessun mi tocchi» al bel collo d' intorno
scritto avea di diamanti e di topazi,
«libera farmi al mio Cesare parve».

Et era 'l sol già volto al mezzo giorno;
gli occhi miei stanchi di mirar, non sazi,
quand'io caddi ne l' acqua, et ella sparve.

336

Я мыслию лелею непрестанной
Ее, чью тень отнять бессильна Лета,
И вижу вновь ее в красе расцвета,
Родной звезды восходом осиянной.

Как в первый день, душою обаянной
Ловлю в чертах застенчивость привета.
«Она жива,—кричу,—как в оны лета!»
И дара слов молю из уст желанной.

Порой молчит,—порою... Сердцу дорог
Такой восторг!.. А после, как от хмеля
Очнувшийся, скажу: «Знай, обманула

Тебя мечта! В тысяча триста сорок
Осьмом году, в час первый, в день апреля
Шестый—меж нас блаженная уснула».

190

Лань белая на зелени лугов,
В час утренний, порою года новой,
Промеж двух рек, под сению лавровой,
Несла, гордясь, убор златых рогов.

Я все забыл, и не стремить шагов
Не мог (скупец, на все труды готовый,
Чтоб клад добыть!)—за ней, пышноголовой
Скиталицей волшебных берегов.

Сверкала вязь алмазных слов на выe:
«Я Кесарем в луга заповедные
Отпущена. Не тронь меня! Не рань!..»

Полдневная встречала Феба грань;
Но не был сыт мой взор, когда в речные
Затоны я упал—и скрылась лань.

285

Né mai pietosa madre al caro figlio
né donna accesa al suo sposo diletto
diè con tanti sospir, con tal sospetto,
in dubbio stato sì fedel consiglio,

come a me quella che 'l mio grave esiglio
mirando dal suo eterno alto ricetto
spesso a me torna co l' usato affetto,
e di doppia pietate ornata il ciglio,

or di madre or d' amante; or teme or arde
d'onesto foco, e nel parlar mi mostra
quel che 'n questo viaggio fugga o segua,

contando i casi de la vita nostra,
pregando ch' a levar l' alma non tarde:
e sol quant'ella parla ò pace o tregua.

364

Tennemi Amor anni ventuno ardendo
lieto nel foco e nel duol pien di speme;
poi che Madonna e 'l mio cor seco inseme
saliro al ciel, dieci altri anni piangendo;

omai son stanco e mia vita reprendo
di tanto error, che di vertute il seme
à quasi spento, e le mie parti estreme,
alto Dio, a te devotamente rendo,

pentito e tristo de' miei sì spesi anni:
che spender si deveano in miglior uso,
in cercar pace ed in fuggir affanni.

Signor che 'n questo carcer m'ài rinchiuso
Tramene salvo da li eterni danni,
ch' i' conosco 'l mio fallo e non lo scuso.

285

Не слышал сын от матери родной,
Ни муж любимый от супруги нежной
С такой заботой, зоркой и прилежной,
Преподанных советов: злой виной

Не омрачать судьбы своей земной,—
Какие, малодушный и мятежный,
Приемлю я от той, что, в белоснежный
Одета свет, витает надо мной

В двойном обличье: матери и милой.
Она трепещет, молит и горит,
К стезе добра влечет и нудит силой,—

И, ей подвигнут, вольный дух парит;
И мир мне дан с молитвой легкокрылой,
Когда святая сердцу говорит.

364

Лет трижды семъ повинен был гореть я,
Амуров раб, ликуя на костре.
Она ушла,—я дух вознес горе.
Продлится ль плач за грань десятилетья?

Страстей меня опутавшую сеть я
Влачить устал. Подумать о добре
Давно пора. Твоей, господь, заре
Я старости вручаю перволетья!

Зачем я жил? На что растратил дни?
Бежал ли я змеи греха ужасной?
Искал ли я Тебя? Но помяни

К Тебе мой вопль из сей темницы страстной,
Где Ты меня замкнул, и чрез огни
Введи в Свой рай тропою безопасной!

312

Né per sereno ciel ir vaghe stelle
né per tranquillo mar legni spalmati
né per campagne cavalieri armati
né per bei boschi allegre fere e snelle,

né d' aspettato ben fresche novelle
né dir d' amore in stili alti ed ornati
né tra chiare fontane e verdi prati
dolce cantare oneste donne e belle,

né altro sarà mai ch' al cor m' aggiunga:
sì seco il seppe quella seppellire
che sola agli occhi miei fu lume e speglio.

Noia m' è 'l viver sì gravosa e lunga
ch' i' chiamo il fine per lo gran desire
di riveder cui non veder fu 'l meglio.

312

Ни ясных звезд блуждающие станы,
Ни полные на взморье паруса,
Ни с пестрым зверем темные леса,
Ни всадники в доспехах средь поляны,

Ни гости, с вестью про чужие страны,
Ни рифм лубовных сладкая краса,
Ни милых жен поющих голоса
Во мгле садов, где шепчутся фонтаны,—

Ничто не тронет сердца моего.
Все погребло с собой мое светило,
Что сердцу было зеркалом всего.

Жизнь однозвучна. Зрелище уныло.
Лишь в смерти вновь увижу то, чего
Мне лучше б никогда не видеть было.

Vyacheslav Ivanov and Russian Poetry of the Eighteenth Century

Ilya Serman

In his review of Vyacheslav Ivanov's article "The Poet and the Mob," Alexander Blok wrote in 1905 that the poet "amazingly" transmuted a long chain of literary influences within himself."[1] This remark ought to be examined, but in the meantime I will venture to offer a first attempt at analyzing one of these "transmutations," that is, how Vyacheslav Ivanov resurrected in his art the forgotten—and therefore new for the twentieth century—achievements of eighteenth-century Russian poetry.

In the history of Russian poetry of the beginning of our century, Vyacheslav Ivanov has the reputation of being a "difficult" poet. Not only the hidebound contemporary journal critics raised on the epigonic verse of the 1880s complained of his incomprehensibility, of his difficulty, but so did Ivanov's colleagues in the new literature, such poets as Bryusov and Blok. Bryusov accompanied his otherwise rather favorable review of Ivanov's verse collection *Pilot Stars* (*Kormchie zvezdy,* 1903) with a characteristic reservation: "This book will be beloved by all who want to take the *trouble* to understand and accept the poetry of Vyacheslav Ivanov."[2] In other words, for Bryusov, Vyacheslav Ivanov is a "difficult" poet, whose comprehension demands mental and emotional effort, demands work, even from a reader of the early twentieth century experienced in reading poetry.

Alexander Blok regretted that Vyacheslav Ivanov, "thanks to certain features of his particular style, presents difficulties of comprehension";[3] while Bely recalled in his memoirs a characteristic episode which reveals that Ivanov well knew how difficult his readers found him. In one of his first visits to Bely's Moscow apartment,

Ivanov gave his host an exam: "He took his book *Transparency,* which had just come out and was lying on my desk, and shook it at me, questioning me as though I were a schoolboy. 'Of course you know what "A pipe of seven separations" means?' What the hell! So help me! And I blurted out hoarsely, 'A pipe with seven apertures.' . . . 'Well, of course! There's nothing hard to understand here!'"[4]

Konstantin Erberg made a note in a similar vein. "I received this book for review from a certain journal. It made a great impression on me because of its high cultural level, its impossible style, and the forceful talent of its author. However, several poems in this book seemed like riddles to me, for I was then inexperienced in reading poetry. Reading *Pilot Stars* with the purpose of publishing a critical review of it, I made . . . a whole series of marginal notes expressing my bewilderment, sometimes indignation, and often delight. But, I didn't write the review after all. . . . About five years later, when I had gotten to know Vyacheslav Ivanov well, I told him about my impressions of this book of his and about my notes, which somehow caught his interest. He asked me to bring him my copy. A short time later he returned the book to me, having written on the first page his poem 'Kak mnogó myslennykh borenij' ('How many mental struggles')."[5]

Vyacheslav Ivanov himself knew that his readers were not always acquainted with the proper nouns and mythical allusions which he introduced into his verse. In the poem "Beauty" it is stated in the third and last stanza:

> Radostno po tsvetonosnoj Gee
> Ja idu, ne vedaja—kuda.
> Ja sluzhu s ulybkoj Adrastee,
> Blagosklonno-devstvenno-chuzhda. [*SS,* I, 517]
>
> (Joyfully I walk about flower-bearing Gaea, not knowing whither.
> With a smile I serve Adrastea, benevolent-virginal-alien.)

Having made a certain effort, that is, having translated the unfamiliar metaphor "flower-bearing Gaea" into the usual image—Earth—a reader is still unable to understand who Adrastea might

be without turning to special reference sources. Bryusov, for example, thought it meant Death.[6]

The author explains the name in a complicated note. "According to the Stoics and Orphics, Adrastea is inescapable, inevitable Fate, world Necessity" [*SS*, I, 859]. Vyacheslav Ivanov felt that he had to instruct and train his readers, cultivating in them the appreciation of conventions and devices new to Russian poetry. The name Adrastea had not entered the sphere of classical allusions with which Russian poetry had been providing its readers for almost two centuries.

The poem "Terpander" [*SS*, I, 575, n. 860] was provided with a note in the form of a complete translation by Vyacheslav Ivanov himself of the Byzantine retelling of a legend from the lost books of Diodorus, previously unknown to Russian readers:

> When the Lacedaemonians were waging internecine wars, there was an oracle that the citizens would return to concord if Terpander of Methymnia would play the cithara to them. And when he played a certain *melos* to them, Terpander, the skillful lyre-player, returned the insurgents to friendship and attunement—tuning a song, as Diodorus relates. And the men turned, embraced one another, wept, and lovingly kissed.

But even this seemed insufficient. And the poet explains that the seven-stringed cithara was considered to have been Terpander's invention, while the "Theban architect" Amphion and "the Horae (Dike, Eunomia and Eirene) are also the patrons of civic harmony." For the line "Cheretom venchannyj khor" ("the reed-crowned chorus") Vyacheslav Ivanov gives a bibliographical reference to a particular German study: "'Cheretom venchannyj': See O. Müller, *Die Dorier*, II, 334."[7] As a matter of fact, *cheret* is a reed (Ukrainian or South Slavic), and it would have been easy to have identified this little-used word.

Another, more complex instance is the poem "Pietà" [*SS*, I, 702]:

> The yearnings of the stars are allowed to glimmer out of the dark depths of the ether: And we—the dust of the earth—are placed so as to contemplate the Separation of the World.
>
> Universal Isis, leader of yearnings, Love! We will come to know you in the ways of your seekings, sorrowing with you,
>
> Seeking with you the incorruptible trace of the God torn to pieces. . . . Oh! The Single Light has been separated into many broken lights!
>
> Oh, sistrum of the worlds, and plectrum of lamentations! All Beauty, One Soul of innumerable breaths—Pietà, Pietà! . . .
>
> For ages he has been lifeless in the bosom of your anguish, oh Dark One on the starry horizon! Oh, Mother of Sorrows!
>
> And I, the shade of sleep, the tribe of the violent Titans, their living ashes, carry the divine seed in my breast—Mother, I am yours!
>
> Hear (and His torments took place here, and He died!) my passionate wail of severance and separation, my mortal moan!
>
> Alkan'jam zvezd iz temnykh nedr èfira
> Dano mertsat':
> Da—prakh zemli—vmestim Razluku Mira
> My sozertsat',—
>
> Vselenskaja Izida, vozhd' alkanij,
> Ljubov'! tebja
> Da poznaem v put'jakh tvoikh iskanij,
> S toboj skorbja,
> Ishcha s toboj rasterzannogo Boga
> Netlennyj sled . . .
> Akh! rasluchen v netsel'nykh svetov mnogo
> Edinyj Svet!
>
> O, sistr mirov, i plektron vozdykhanij!
> Vsja Krasota,
> Odna Dusha beschislennykh dykhanij—
> Pietà, Pietà! . . .
>
> Ot veka On, bezzhiznennyj,—na lone
> Toski tvoej,

O, Temnaja na zvezdnom nebosklone!
O, Mat' Skorbej!

I ja, ten' sna, Titanov bujnykh plemja,
Ikh pepl zhivoj,—
Nesu v grudi bozhestvennoe semja,—
Ja, Mater', tvoj!

Uslysh' (i zdes' Ego svershilis' muki,
I umer On!—)
Moj strastnyj vopl' razryva i razluki,
Moj smertnyj ston! [*SS*, I, 702]

For the line "O, Temnaja na zvezdnom nebosklone" the poet gives the following note: "'Dark' is one of the epithets of Isis. Isis seeks the body of Osiris, who was torn to pieces, just as Dionysus was, and whom the Greeks identified with Dionysus" [*SS*, I, 861]. And he then gives a general commentary for the poem: "Just as the depiction of Isis with Horus in her arms recalls the artistic type of the Madonna and Child, so the Pietà type was anticipated by the ancients in their portrayal of Eos and Cephalus, and of Niobe (Stark, Niobe 203, Taf. V)."[8] This factual and precise commentary explains much that is incomprehensible at first reading.

But there is nothing in the commentary to explain what *sistr mirov* and *plektron vozdykhanij* mean, although this is not the main obstacle to understanding the poem. The main difficulty for the reader is created by the shift from "we" to "I" and the deliberately obscured relationship between the man, the "I" who pronounces the lyrical monologue, and the god who has perished (Osiris), over whom he grieves and sorrows. Thus, in the very text of the poem there arises another category of difficulty which the poet does not explain, hoping to make his reader become accustomed to it. Bryusov approved of the poet's having added a "small commentary" to his book "which would explain the most difficult passages," and felt that "it would not be superfluous to enlarge this commentary."[9]

A note to a poetic text is always a signal, an indication of the particular acuteness of the given literary situation. In Russian literature such notes first appeared in the eighteenth century, at its

beginning, in Kantemir, and at its "end," in Derzhavin. As the first poet of the new Europeanized type, Kantemir had to operate in a time of a complete literary vacuum and a conscious break with the entire pre-Petrine cultural tradition. He had to teach and train his readers, accustom them to the perception of a system of conventions and devices completely new for Russian literature, for which they had no preparation. Kantemir's notes explain the novelty of his poetical system to his readers and at the same time form the literary consciousness of the epoch, creating the literary context obligatory for the new poetry.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century Derzhavin felt very keenly that a change of literary eras was taking place and that he was losing his readers, since, as he wrote bitterly to Merzlyakov, "many people" now, especially the young, did not understand his verse. Derzhavin felt that he was being squeezed out of literature and that the system of poetic meanings which he himself had created was becoming "incomprehensible," that is, was being eliminated from the literary context of the new era.

Very different literary processes were reflected in the work of these two poets in similar ways. We can thus propose here the action of a certain general law, according to which at a particular moment in the evolution of literature a given system of texts falls into the position of having to explain itself, thereby defending its right to participate in the living literature. The poetic text by itself is not perceived by readers as its author had expected. Either the anticipated mode of perception has not yet come into being, or it has already disappeared. The given poetic system finds itself in a dangerous border area between literature and non-literature, between that which is perceived esthetically and that which is either being cast out of the esthetic realm or cannot enter it.[10]

Vyacheslav Ivanov's notes are analogous in function to Kantemir's: they are intended to clear the way for his poems and make it easier for them to penetrate the literary context of the epoch.

But it is not only Vyacheslav Ivanov's own commentary to his poems that recalls the eighteenth century in his poetic legacy. The poem "Terpander" is divided into two parts (emphasized by the

change from iambs to trochees). The second part tells how Terpander's song brought peace and tranquility to the life of Thebes, how it conquered Discord. This part depends stylistically on words which Bryusov calls "outworn," that is, those which have long since fallen out of use and therefore have "all the freshness of novelty." Moreover, what is characteristic of Vyacheslav Ivanov is not the insertion of individual "old" words, but combinations of them, word blocks, so to speak.

> And *coldness pierces* the hearts . . .
> He flings *ringing thunderbolts* . . .
> The *calves are prepared* for the greedy *altar flames.*
> And *fresh garlands* wind among the *amber temples.*
>
> I serdtsa *pronzaet khlad* . . .
> Meshchet *zvonkie peruny* . . .
> Zhadnym *plamenjam altarnym*
> *Ugotovany tel'tsy.*
> I po *kapishcham jantarnym*
> V"jutsja *svezhie ventsy.* [*SS*, I, 576]

The examples given do not contain any insurmountable difficulties of meaning, although it is not altogether clear why *svezhie ventsy* wind among *kapishcha,* but the penultimate quatrain demands a more detailed commentary than that which the poet gives for the names of the Horae (see above):

> And the rejoicing council,
> increasing with the dance of the light-footed Horae;
> in the distance resounds the reed-crowned chorus
> of sportive maids.
>
> I likujushchee veche
> Mnozha pljaskoj legkikh Or,
> Rezvykh dev zvenit daleche
> Cheretom venchannyj khor. [*SS*, I, 576]

What does "mnozha pljaskoj legkikh Or" mean? Neither from the poem's text nor from the notes are we able to obtain a meaningful explanation, although emotionally this is rather expressive.

Characteristic of Vyacheslav Ivanov's poetry in general and for this poem in particular is the introduction of Old Russian words and concepts into the portrayal of ancient (in this case, Greek) life—for example, *peruny* and *veche.* In the Russian literary consciousness these concepts are marked with a specific national and historical meaning. It was extremely daring to recall *peruny* after the poetry of the eighteenth century, or after the historical ballads of Aleksey Konstantinovich Tolstoy to recall the *veche,* which is one of their main conceptual symbols; but it was even more daring to transfer both *peruny* and *veche* to a poetic account of the exploits of Terpander, little known to anyone in Russia. Moreover, while *likujushchee veche* is perfectly understandable, *zvonkie peruny* "sounds" rather strange. Russian poetry of the eighteenth century had initially assimilated the word *perun* in the meaning "thunder." Thus, Lomonosov wrote:

> Terrible thunderbolts are flung by the swinging of powerful Russian arms.
>
> Uzhasnye peruny meshchut
> Razmakhi sil'nykh rosskikh ruk.[11]

And Derzhavin wrote: "That his thunder suddenly falls silent" (*Chto vdrug ego perun molchit*),[12] "And the echo of his thunder has already shaken in the midst of the earth" (*I otzyv ego peruna / Uzh potrjas sredi zemli*).[13] In all these examples there is retained the meaning of *perun* as thunder. But in Vyacheslav Ivanov *peruny* become musical sounds, the accompaniment to dance.

The poem "Oceanides" is curious in that it makes it possible for us to determine precisely where Ivanov got his arsenal of "old words" and archaic forms. Speaking to the "female friends" of Prometheus, the poet says:

> And may it not be you, restless maidens, who resolve the discord of *eternal laws*; and may you not recast the *statute of time* with magnanimous anger.

I pust' ne vam, mjatezhnym devam,
Reshat' razdory *vechnykh prav;*
I pust' velikodushnym gnevom
Ne prelozhit' *vremen ustav . . .* [*SS, I, 526*]

These lines refer directly to Lomonosov, to his "Evening Meditation on the Greatness of God" (1743):

O vy, kotorykh bystryj zrak
Pronzaet knigu *vechnykh prav,*
Kotorym malyj veshchi znak
Javljaet *estestva ustav.*

Oh, you, whose quick sight pierces the book of *eternal laws,* to whom the *statute of nature* appears as a small prophetic sign.

It is not only the rhyme that corresponds here but also the epithet *vechnye,* so that we cannot consider this an accident; moreover, every gymnasium student knew Lomonosov's "Evening Meditation" by heart.

Ivanov also took from Lomonosov the use of the plural form of nouns where they are not found in everyday language: this is a very rare device, found for the most part only in these two authors.

Lomonosov:

Veselyj vzor svoj obrashchaet
I vkrug dovol'stva ischisljaet.[15]

He turns his joyful gaze and enumerates *contentments* all around.

Ikh slave, *bedstvami* obil'noj
Bez brani khishchnoj i nasil'noj
No mozhno razve ustojat'?[16]

To their glory, abundant with *poverties,* without predatory and violent battle, but is it really possible to resist?

Ivanov:

Almaznye grezy
Pomerknuvshikh *slav.*

Diamond dreams of faded *glories.*

No kak solntse drevnee vsekh *utr.* [*SS*, I, 774]

But like the sun more ancient than all *mornings.*

In both cases, the device has the same stylistic purpose—to give an abstract, general, or, more precisely, universal character to the poetic statement.[17]

There are other instances of direct correspondences between Vyacheslav Ivanov's poetic thought and that of eighteenth-century Russian poets. For example, in his recasting of the 103rd Psalm, Lomonosov replaced the biblical metaphor which compares the sky to a *skin* by the image of a tent:

Ty zvezdy rasproster bez scheta
Shatru podobno pred toboj.[18]

You spread out the stars without number like a tent before you.

Derzhavin knew Lomonosov's version when he wrote his own recasting—and took from Lomonosov the tent image not present in the original:

Ty svetom, slavoj, krasotoj
Kak budto rizoj, oblachilsja
I, kak shatrom, ty osenilsja
Nebes lazurnoj vysotoj.[19]

You arrayed yourself with light, glory, and beauty as though with a chasuble, and you shaded yourself with the azure heights of the heavens as though with a tent.

Vyacheslav Ivanov uses the image of the sky-tent in the poem "Morning Star":

Ty odna, v ventse rassveta,
Klonish' vzory, chado sveta,
K nam s *vozdushnogo shatra* [*SS*, I, 524]

You alone, in the crown of dawn, incline your gazes to us, child of light, from the *airy tent*.

And he probably also took the image of Leviathan from Lomonosov:

The silence keenly harks to the distant murmur of the ocean . . .
We are carried on the back of the tamed Leviathan!

Dal'nij ropot okeana
Chutko vnemlet tishina . . .
Nas neset Leviafana
Ukroshchennogo spina! [*SS*, I, 594]

Of course, the examples given are only single instances which enter into a general system of conscious use of the style of the high poetry of the eighteenth century. Here we can also mention complex compound epithets which Tredyakovsky first used in Russian poetry and to which Derzhavin gave full literary value. As Yury Tynyanov noted, compound epithets "were an essential part of the archaizing style: from Lomonosov and Derzhavin they came to the Shishkov group (Shikhmatov, Bobrov)."[20] Here are several examples, characteristic in structure, of Derzhavin's compound epithets: whitely-crimson fingers (*belorumjany persty*),[21] black-fiery glances (*cherno-ognennye vzory* [85]), gold-edged thunderclouds (*kraezlaty tuchi* [86]), silvery-rose steeds (*srebro-rozovye koni* [101]), golden-shining phaeton (*zlatozarnyj faeton* [101]), silvery-scaled ocean (*srebno-cheshuinu okeanu* [122]). Compare several of Vyacheslav Ivanov's compound epithets: sun-splintering star (*solntsedrobjashchaja zvezda*), brightly-inclined (*svetlosklonnym*), grittily-sawing (*skrezhetopil'nye*), fiery-powerful (*ognemoshchnyj*), fiery-resounding day (*ognezvuchnyj den'*), fiery-eyed delirium (*ogneokij bred*), fiery-streamed (*ognestrujnyj*), keenly-leaved (*chutkolistnyj*).

Derzhavin's compound epithets are mainly coloristic. There are some of these in Vyacheslav Ivanov—for example, silvery-smokey hearth (*srebrodymnyj ochag*); but in his verse another category predominates. An epithet such as fiery-resounding (*ognezvuchnyj*), applied to day (*den'*), brings together distant concepts, fire/sound (*ogon', zvuk*), and is explicable only in the context of the poem as a whole.

A compound epithet is a situational device, in contrast to a qualitative (simple) epithet, which can be used over and over in various contexts.

It might be enough to note the above correspondences between Ivanov's poetry and that of the eighteenth century; but another instance of such continuity in his verse can be mentioned, one to which his contemporaries and comrades-in-arms gave particular attention. Bryusov wrote, "The constant use of adjectives as nouns, of prepositions and conjunctions as semantically significant words, the frequent omission of the predicate, the replacement of *kotoryj* by *chto*, and so forth, make reading [Ivanov's poetry] all the more difficult."[22]

The replacement of *kotoryj* by *chto* is a characteristic feature of the poetry of the eighteenth century and to varying degrees is found in both Lomonosov and Derzhavin. For example, from Lomonosov:

He spreads like a tree that grows beside flowing waters.

Kak drevo on rasprostranitsja,
Chto bliz tekushchikh vod rastet.[23]

May the persecutors who seek evil in my soul be ashamed.

Goniteli da postydjatsja,
Chto ishchut zla v dushe moej.[24]

from Derzhavin:

He has already stepped into the glorious footsteps that the ancient orator laid down.

Uzhe vstupil on v slavny sledy,
Chto drevnij vitjaz' prolozhil.[25]

He looks at the opulent rich men, who are idols in gold and silver.

Gljadit na pyshnykh bogachej,
Chto v zlate i srebre kumiry.[26]

and from Vyacheslav Ivanov's verse:

Oh, Fantasy! You are like a miser who, having saved up his pennies, increases them with interest.

O, Fantazija! ty skuptsu podobna,
Chto, lepty skopiv, ikh rastit likhvoju [*SS*, I, 580]

When your soul saw with its eyes in the darkness those images that hover behind bodies.

Kogda tvoj dukh ochami zrel vo t'me
Te obrazy, chto za telami rejut [*SS*, I, 647]

In the general return of the 1880s to the Golden Age of Russian poetry, to the Pushkinian era, Vyacheslav Ivanov took a particular and well-founded position. He declared not Pushkin but Tyutchev to be the ancestor and teacher of the new Russian poets. He noted that in Pushkin's poetry a break or "schism" between the poet and the people had come about. The poet had nothing to say to the people because he was too far removed from popular consciousness, from the popular religious and mythmaking spirit. Tyutchev carried out what was to Ivanov the poet's main mission: "Through him, the people recalls its ancient soul and resurrects the potential that has slumbered in it for centuries. As true verse is determined by the spirit of a language, so the true poetic image is determined by the psyche of a people. . . . The poet . . . depicts the new—and discovers the very old."[27]

But Ivanov understood that Tyutchev was closer to him than Pushkin also because he was oriented toward pre-Pushkinian poetry, toward the poetic language worked out in the odic verse of the eighteenth century. "The discovery of the very old" in the language of poetry is the main idea, the main focus of Vyacheslav Ivanov's theory of poetic language. "In all epochs," he wrote, "when poetry as art blossomed, poetic language was opposed to the conversational and generally accepted language, and both bards and people loved these differences and peculiarities and were proud of them, the bards as their privilege and priestly or kingly attire, and the crowd as a treasure and object of worship of the people."[28] Hence his focus on those eras of the development of the Russian language and Russian poetry which were closest of all to the spirit of long ago, when the "broad, powerful billows of sounds purely Russian in their free and

all-encompassing majesty"[29] were heard. It was Ivanov's conviction that this "is required by our language itself (the only one among the living languages so deeply imprinted by the spirit of ancient languages)."[30]

Faithfulness to the forgotten spirit of a language closest of all in type to that of the ancient languages—what is this but an almost literal repetition of Lomonosov's well-known words from his "Introduction on the Use of Church Books"?

> The exceptional beauty, richness, majesty, and power of the Hellenic language is held in very high regard, as sufficiently witnessed by the amateurs of the philological sciences. . . . One can see clearly if one contemplates the Church books in the Slavonic language to what extent we, thanks to the translations of the Old and New Testaments, the discourses of the Fathers, the hymns of the Damascenes and other composers of canons, see Greek richness in the Slavonic language, and thus we increase the plenitude of the Russian language, which is great enough by its own abundance, and for which it is natural to absorb the Greek language through the intermediary of the Slavonic.[31]

This coincidence in the two writers' concept of the language and its structure helps us to understand the genesis of those features of Ivanov's poetry in which we demonstrated the reflection of the poetry of the eighteenth century. The practical result of Ivanov's view of the poetic language is the conscious archaization of his style. Thus, disputing Belinsky's opinion of the style of Pushkin's *Gypsies*, Ivanov writes:

> The critic is free to prefer the forged and weighty verse of "Poltava" to the harmoniously tender verse of "Gypsies"; but to speak in a haughty manner of "errors of style," about certain peculiarities of literary form whose artistic purpose and intent are incomprehensible to him, is a mistake in esthetic judgment. The verb *rek* which precedes the old gypsy's concluding speech is apparently intended to prepare the listener for something exceptionally trium-

phant and holy; while for Belinsky it simply "connotes heavy bookishness."[32]

The poet himself used this verb readily:

> And from the sky fell a bloody fire, and having descended into it,
> Love spoke . . .
>
> I s neba spal ogon' krovavyj,
> I, v nem soshed, rekla Ljubov' . . . [*SS*, I, 540]

Intentionally or not, Vyacheslav Ivanov chose for himself the position of a "difficult" poet with a "heavy," i.e., strange or even incomprehensible style. Despite the great originality of his position for his time, from the perspective of the by then three-hundred-year-old development of Russian poetry, in matters of poetic language Ivanov belongs to those poets who were set apart from time to time—to the perplexity, and sometimes to the consternation, of the *dominant* current in literature. Fifty years ago, using material from the poetry of the Pushkinian period, Yury Tynyanov demonstrated what a leavening effect the literary activity of those he called "archaists" had on the poetic development of that period, and brilliantly showed that it was in fact they who were the "innovators."[33]

Recent studies have shown that "difficulty" as a value category appeared by the middle of the eighteenth century, and that Tredjakovsky was not alone in this regard. He was followed by Vasily Petrov, Alexander Radishchev and Semyon Bobrov, to name only the most important poets with the reputation of being "difficult." But in discussions of critics and literary historians about the poetry of the post-Pushkinian era one rarely meets the concept of "difficulty." Therefore, one must define more precisely whether the "difficult" poets had a common goal, a common focus.

A comparative analysis shows that Petrov, Tredjakovsky before him, and after him Bobrov and Radishchev were occupied with a like task—testing the "durability" of Russian poetic semantics. They simultaneously tested both the Russian language and the patience of their readers, overloading their style with almost unpronounceable consonances and syntactic cryptograms. The victory of the

school of harmonious precision (Zhukovsky, Batyushkov, Pushkin), a victory that seemed final, materially changed the standard of "difficulty," and writers were threatened with literary ostracism for exceeding it. Thus, for example, the young writers of the early nineteenth century considered Derzhavin's late verse to be "difficult" and "incomprehensible" when under the influence of the Society of Amateurs of the Russian Word he turned to the legacy of Vasily Petrov and wrote with an obscurity no less mannered than that of Tredjakovsky. The following lines were written in 1807:

> Do we not see in Europe the image of Andromeda; in the Russians' martial spirit the glorious traces of Perseus; in the Destroyer the fable of the living Salamander, not sated with blood?
>
> Ne zrim li obraza v Evrope Andromedy,
> Vo Rosse brannyj dukh—Perseja slavny sledy,
> V Gubitele my basn' zhivogo Salamandra,
> Nenasytima krov'ju?[34]

Shevyrev battled valiantly against Pushkinian smoothness and in the era of Pushkin's unmitigated triumph dreamed of the appearance of a new "difficult" poet, a new Derzhavin: "We already have Lomonosov, we had an uneducated Derzhavin; but since his death we have not so much created verse as prepared material for a poet of the future: that is, we have purified the language, divined the secret of its harmony, enriched it with various meters, turns of phrase, sonorous rhymes, in a word, prepared everything for a new genius, a new, educated Derzhavin, who may already be hidden somewhere in Russia."[35]

The most penetrating critics understood or guessed that the "difficulty" and "heaviness" of Vyacheslav Ivanov's poetry revealed or mapped out completely new paths for Russian poetry as a whole. Bryusov promised Ivanov's readers unexpected rewards for the labor which it would be necessary to expend in reading him: "The reader of Vyacheslav Ivanov must approach his poems with a penetrating and sober attitude, scout out, divine their hidden sonority, examine his art, bore into these ruddy, often inhospitable, sometimes fanciful

rocks, knowing that out of them will spurt the silver springs of pure poetry."[36]

There were such readers, and they were rewarded for their efforts. Of course, there were not only readers, but also new poets, for whom Vyacheslav Ivanov was no longer either heavy or difficult. But this does not mean that they followed him obediently. Gumilev, while admiring Ivanov's style, writes of the dangers of his path for others: "The style is the man—but who does not know Vyacheslav Ivanov's style with its solemn archaisms, sharp enjambments, emphatic alliterations, and an arrangement of words which assiduously obscures the general meaning of the sentence. . . . But for others to follow him, lacking his essential qualities, would be a risky, even fatal exploit."[37]

Acmeism's battle against Symbolism was above all a battle against Vyacheslav Ivanov, against his theory and his poetic practice. When the Acmeists announced that in their poetry a Rose had become a living and beautiful flower, not a symbol of something from the Beyond, they meant in part Book Five of *Cor Ardens*, "Rosarium," in which several dozen poems were dedicated to the various forms of the symbolic conceptualization of the Rose, and also the commentary in which were given detailed quotations from Alexander Veselovsky's article "Poetics of the Rose," without which the poems would be largely or completely incomprehensible.[38] But battles and polemics do not preclude assimilation and elaboration of the poety of the repudiated school.

Vyacheslav Ivanov's poetry has not yet been studied from the standpoint of its immediate influence on Acmeism and Futurism. I will not even mention here the subject of Vyacheslav Ivanov and Khlebnikov, a special and important topic.[39] I will only note here that, freed from the burden of erudition and on soil prepared by Vyacheslav Ivanov's verse, there appeared the antiquity of Mandelshtam, with its original elaboration of the Terpander theme. On the other hand, Pasternak, with his animation of nature, with his landscapes that gaze at each other, owes much to such pieces of Vyacheslav Ivanov as "Tramontana," in which the wind says of itself:

I rush down among the olive trees like a brightly-inclined waterfall, carrying blueness to the gulfs, clearing the heavens.

Ja nizvergnus' po olivam
Svetlosklonnym vodopadom,
Sinevu nesja zalivam,
Raschishchaja nebesa. [*SS*, I, 773]

Thus, once again in the history of Russian poetry the path of an archaist showed the way for the innovators.

—Translated by Jean Laves Hellie

Notes

1. Aleksandr Blok, *Sobranie sochinenij* (Moscow-Leningrad, 1962), V, 7.
2. Valery Brjusov, *Dalekie i blizkie* (Moscow, 1912), p. 122. Emphasis added here and elsewhere.
3. Blok, *Sobranie sochinenij*, V, 7.
4. Andrej Bely, *Nachalo veka* (Moscow-Leningrad, 1933), p. 311.
5. Konstantin Erberg [K. A. Sjunnerberg], "Vospominanija," S. S. Grechishkin and A. V. Lavrov, eds., *Ezhegodnik rukopisnogo otdela Pushkinskogo Doma na 1977 god* (Leningrad, 1979), pp. 129—30.
6. Brjusov, *Dalekie*, p. 135.
7. Karl-Otfried Müller (1797–1840), *Die Dorier*, 2 vols. (Breslau, 1844; 1st ed., 1824). Vyacheslav Ivanov counted Müller among those "frontiersmen of science" who paved the way for Nietzsche. According to Ivanov, Müller discovered the "spirit" of the Dionysian people. See Vyacheslav Ivanov, *Po zvezdam* (St. Petersburg, 1909), p. 5.
8. Ivanov's reference is to K. V. Stark, *Niobe und die Niobiden* (Leipzig, 1863).
9. Brjusov, *Dalekie*, p. 123.
10. See I. Serman, *Kantemir i problem literaturnogo konteksta* (in press).
11. M. V. Lomonosov, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenij* (henceforth *PSS*) (Moscow-Leningrad, 1959), VIII, 635.
12. G. R. Derzhavin, *Stikhotvorenija* (Moscow, 1958), p. 95.
13. Ibid., p. 277.

14. Lomonosov, *PSS*, VIII, 121–22.
15. Ibid., p. 222.
16. Ibid., p. 122.
17. See I. Z. Serman, *Poeticheskij stil' Lomonosova* (Moscow-Leningrad, 1965), pp. 179–82.
18. Lomonosov, *PSS*, VIII, 228.
19. G. R. Derzhavin, *Sobranie sochinenij*, ed. Ja. K. Grot (St. Petersburg, 1868), p. 605.
20. Jurij Tynjanov, *Arkhaisty i novatory* (Leningrad, 1929), p. 215.
21. Derzhavin, *Stikhotvorenija*, p. 85. The bracketed numbers in the text refer to pages in this edition.
22. Brjusov, *Dalekie*, p. 123.
23. Lomonosov, *PSS*, VIII, 369. (The 103rd Psalm in the Russian Bible is numbered 104 in the English-language Bible. Translator's note.)
24. Ibid., p. 375.
25. Derzhavin, *Stikhotvorenija*, p. 191.
26. Ibid., p. 6.
27. Ivanov, *Po zvezdam*, pp. 40–41.
28. Ibid., p. 355.
29. Ibid.
30. Ibid.
31. Lomonosov, *PSS*, VII, 587.
32. Ivanov, *Po zvezdam*, pp. 174–75.
33. Tynjanov, *Arkhaisty*, pp. 87–106.
34. Derzhavin, *Stikhotvorenija*, p. 254.
35. S. P. Shevyrev, "Obozrenie russkoj slovesnosti za 1827 god," *Moskovskij vestnik* 7 (1828), p. 66.
36. Brjusov, *Dalekie*, p. 125.
37. N. S. Gumilev, *Pis'ma o russkoj poezii* (Petrograd, 1923).
38. Vyacheslav Ivanov, *Cor Ardens* 2 (St. Petersburg, 1909), p. 207.
39. N. L. Stepanov, *Velemir Khlebnikov, Zhizn' i tvorchestvo* (Moscow-Leningrad, 1975), pp. 13–16, 29, 45–53.

Ivanov and Bely's *Petersburg*

Carol Anschuetz

In a comparative review of Ivanov's *Transparency* (*Prozrachnost'*) and Bely's *Gold in Azure* (*Zoloto v lazuri*), both of which appeared in 1904, Bryusov observed, "The poetry of Bely and the poetry of Ivanov rather exclude than complement each other, and only our 'eclectic' era, which knows how to pray to all the gods, is ready not only to 'accept' both the one and the other, but to recognize both poets as proponents of one and the same literary school."[1] We know from Bely's published memoirs that Ivanov's name reached him by way of Bryusov, who attended Ivanov's lectures on the religion of Dionysus in Paris; and that, although they met briefly in the spring of 1904, when Ivanov visited Moscow on his way to Petersburg, Bely became close enough to Ivanov to reflect his influence only in the autumn of 1905, when Ivanov had established the famous Wednesdays in his Petersburg "Tower." Ivanov was thirty-eight years old when they met, whereas Bely, who confidently pronounced him as "an out-and-out theoretician" (*sploshnoj feoretik*), was only twenty-three. Nevertheless, when Bely dedicated a short prose work of 1904 entitled "The Masque" (*Maska*) to Ivanov as "preacher of Dionysianism" (*propovednik dionisiazma*), Ivanov repaid Bely's tribute with a major theoretical article of 1905 entitled "The Symbolism of Esthetic Principles" (*Simvolika esteticheskikh nachal*). In nearly twenty years of mutual association, Ivanov patronized Bely and his work whereas Bely, always the *enfant terrible*, did not hesitate to attack his patron in return. To wit, he attacked the position of mystical anarchism, which Ivanov declared together with Georgy Chulkov shortly after the revolution of 1905, and what Bely considered the expression of Russian chauvinism in *The Native and the Universal* (*Rodnoe i vselen-*

skoe), a collection of Ivanov's essays published shortly after the revolution of 1917. Both these polemics have been intelligently discussed, the first one by Olga Deschartes in her notes to volume III of Ivanov's works; and the second by Heinrich Stammler in an article of 1974.[2] Until Nikolay Kotrelev, the Soviet scholar, has published his edition of Ivanov's correspondence with Bely, it would be rash to venture beyond their discussion.

The interval between the two polemics is recorded in Bely's published memoirs as the period of closest association between Ivanov and Bely. Whether this is because Bely sided with Ivanov against his former ally Bryusov in *Apollo* (*Apollon*) No. 11 for 1910 is debatable. The two years after 1910 are, however, the period in which Bely wrote the most cogent and powerful of his novels, to which Ivanov gave the title *Petersburg* (*Peterburg*).[3] I do not propose to explain why Bely wrote this novel in 1911 and 1912 rather than in 1905 and 1906 when its action took place. But I do intend to suggest that its cogency, if not its power, derives from a vision of Hellenic culture which Ivanov imparted to the younger poet. Central to this vision is the concept of the poet as the organ by which the people remember their original nature and awaken the mythopoeia latent within it. Thus, insofar as the poet has the gift of memory, he also has the gift of prophecy; the development of his art anticipates the evolution of culture as described in Nietzsche's *Birth of Tragedy.* "He may be either an Apollonian artist in dreams or a Dionysian artist in ecstasies or, finally—as in Greek tragedy—at once an artist in both dreams and ecstasies" (*The Birth of Tragedy,* §2). Bely's "symphonies" reflected Nietzsche's influence two years before Ivanov's name reached him from Paris but, although *Petersburg* also reflects Nietzsche's influence directly, certain facets of the novel become clear only when viewed through the prism of Ivanov's influence. Consequently we shall have to distinguish Ivanov's influence on Bely from Nietzsche's as we move from Ivanov's concept of the poet to the structure of Bely's *Petersburg,* and from Ivanov's essays on Dostoevsky to Bely's image of revolution as tragedy.

The structure of Bely's *Petersburg* is based on an analogy between the city of Petersburg and the city of Atlantis described in Plato's late dialogues, the *Timaeus* and the *Critias.* The analogy between Petersburg and Atlantis is Bely's own but the idea of Atlantis is the one proposed by Ivanov in an article of 1909 entitled, "Ancient Terror" (*Drevnij uzhas*) after Bakst's oil canvas, "Terror antiquus."[4] The waters which flooded Atlantis evoke the same profound terror and Dionysian ecstasy that overwhelm man whenever he gazes into what Ivanov, in reference to Nietzsche, calls the "abyss." This bottomless sea is Nietzsche's symbol for the ultimate reality into which the principle of individuality normally veils man's gaze. In *The Birth of Tragedy,* the abyss is personified by Dionysus, god of music, whereas the principle of individuality is personified by Apollo, god of sculpture. Only at brief intervals does the opposition between these two antagonistic gods find mediation in the birth of tragedy. "Ancient Terror" represents the flood of Atlantis as the victory of Dionysus over Apollo, that is, the end of an Apollonian period of history and the onset of a Dionysian one. The story of how the memory of the flood was preserved in Egypt becomes a metaphor for anamnesis, the half-conscious memory of ultimate reality, which men forget, as it were, when they are born into this world. Now, if we keep in mind that Ivanov conceives the poet as the organ by which the people remember their original nature and awaken the mythopoeia latent within it, we shall see that the analogy between Petersburg and Atlantis links Bely's novel with Ivanov's theory of poetic creation.

Nietzsche maintains that, inasmuch as the epics of Homer turn the war of those pre-Hellenic barbarians known as Titans into art, they also mark the victory of Apollo over what he calls the "titanic-barbaric" nature of Dionysus or, in short, the victory of order over chaos. Between the epics of Homer and the tragedies of Aeschylus, however, there elapses a period in which Apollonian order gradually becomes rigidified. Thus, the epics of Homer are merely a prelude to the tragedies of Aeschylus, which, by reintroducing the Homeric myths into poetry, mark the victory of Dionysus over the beautiful but now rigid order of Apollo. It is clearly just this victory of chaos over order that we find in Bely's novel where, in 1905, a Dionysian tide of revolution is about to flood the Apollonian dream city founded by Peter the Great. Nietzsche would have said that, with this tide

of revolution, the age of the Titans would be recovered from Tartarus and once more brought to the light (*The Birth of Tragedy,* §10). Bely makes the age of the Titans into the age of the Mongols, who, in his novel, are recovered from oblivion and once more felt in the Ableukhov blood. The novel captures just that moment in time when the Atlantes of Petersburg, who, like petrified Titans, support the city's architecture, threaten to collapse.[5] When they do collapse, Hellenized Mongols like the Ableukhovs will be swept away in the tide of revolution to make way for un-Hellenized Mongols like the terrorist Lippanchenko. As the victory of Dionysus brings one generation of Mongols to an end, it engenders another: Bely describes what this means for politics with tongue in cheek, but he is serious about what it means for esthetics.

Nikolay Apollonovich turns out to be descended from the Titan Atlas when, in a dream, he remembers that the collective past of his race began with Atlantis. The Titan Kronos (Saturn) appears to him in the guise first of his forefather, the Mongol Ab-lay, and then of his father, who brings him to the discovery that "Saturn's reign has returned" (*Saturnovo tsarstvo vernulos'*). The consequences of his offer to murder his father, the tsarist minister, plunge him into a Dionysian ecstasy in which he finds himself literally "beside himself" (*vne sebja*). If his patronymic Apollonovich characterizes him as a son of Apollo, his Dionysian ecstasy underscores the victory of Dionysus over the theoretical man, Socrates, who is the post-tragic surrogate for Apollo. All this confirms Horst-Jürgen Gerigk's thesis that Bely wrote *Petersburg* with *The Birth of Tragedy* in hand, although, as I understand Professor Gerigk's recent essay in *Nietzsche Studien,* he reads *Petersburg* as a novel about the victory of Socrates over Dionysus and not of Dionysus over Socrates.[6] This is a crucial difference because the victory of Socrates over Dionysus means that art has entered a period of decline whereas the victory of Dionysus over Socrates means that Russia is about to witness the rebirth of tragedy.

Nietzsche devotes the last nine chapters of *The Birth of Tragedy* to the proposal that a rebirth of tragedy is about to take place in Wagner's operas. These operas mark the victory of Dionysus over Socrates just as the tragedies of Aeschylus once marked the victory

of Dionysus over Apollo. Moreover, they reintroduce German myths into poetry just as the tragedies of Aeschylus reintroduced Homeric myths into poetry at the end of the Doric period. "What power was it that freed Prometheus from his vultures and transformed the myth into a vehicle of Dionysian wisdom?" asks Nietzsche. "It is the Heracleian power of music: having reached its highest manifestation in tragedy, it can invest myths with a new and most profound significance" (*The Birth of Tragedy,* §10). This quotation raises the problem of how the power of music at work in Wagner's operas can be said to affect Bely's novel: the solution to that problem is, I believe, to be found in Ivanov's reinterpretation of one particular thesis from *The Birth of Tragedy.* Nietzsche singles out the novel as the art form which most clearly exhibits the reduction of the Apollonian principle to mere logical schematism. In the novel as in the Aesopian fable, poetry functions as an ancilla to philosophy; hence the novel and the fable are, in Nietzsche's opinion, the only art forms comprehensible to a logician like Plato. The novel would thus seem an unlikely cradle for the rebirth of tragedy yet, in the very chapter where Nietzsche treats the novel, he holds out the possibility that the birth of an artistic Socrates may not be altogether a contradiction.

If the birth of an artistic Socrates is not altogether a contradiction, then neither, perhaps, is the birth of a truly poetic novel. It is on this possibility that Ivanov seizes when he comes to write his essays on the Russian novel and on the novels of Dostoevsky in particular. To understand Ivanov's essays on the novels of Dostoevsky one must first, however, understand his lectures on the religion of Dionysus. Like *The Birth of Tragedy,* those lectures put scholarship to the service of mythopoeia but, unlike *The Birth of Tragedy,* they make Dionysus a prefiguration of Christ and the ecstasy which inspires tragedy a prefiguration of Christ's Passion. In "Dostoevsky and the Novel-Tragedy" (*Dostoevskij i roman-tragedija*), the first of his essays on the novels of Dostoevsky, Ivanov sums up the reasons why Western esthetics traditionally classifies the novel as an epic genre; he then goes on to find the "epics" of Dostoevsky uniquely dramatic in both form and content.[7] The conception of Dionysian ecstasy as a prefiguration of Christ's Passion leads him to identify them, in

their deeply Christian spirit, with the Dionysian principle, and thereby to classify them not as Aesopian fables but as epic tragedies. His reinterpretation of Nietzsche's thesis about the novel casts Dostoevsky in the role of a Russian Aeschylus, whose myth of Petersburg Bely's novel might be expected to reintroduce into poetry. This would in turn cast Bely in the role of a Russian Wagner and, in his mind's eye, Bely probably did play such a role, but, whereas Ivanov viewed Dostoevsky as the Russian Aeschylus, Bely viewed him as a Russian Socrates.[8] The difference in their respective views of Dostoevsky explains why Bely parodied Dostoevsky in *Petersburg,* and why Ivanov, in his review of it, wrote that, for Bely, Dostoevsky would forever remain a book with seven seals. Nevertheless, the glorification of Aeschylus in the spirit of *The Birth of Tragedy* and the consequent search for a Russian Wagner are common to both poets. In *Petersburg* and later, again, in *Kotik Letaev,* Bely attempts to do for the novel what, in his tragedies *Tantalus* and *Prometheus,* Ivanov attempts to do for the drama. He attempts to translate Aeschylus into that peculiar idiom of the Russian Symbolists which expresses the iconoclastic philosophy of Nietzsche in terms of the religious philosophy of Solovyov. The fact that Bely's novels, like Ivanov's tragedies, were conceived as parts of trilogies is only further evidence that the conception for all of them originates in Nietzsche's view of Aeschylus.

Ivanov provided Bely with a classical education that brought both Aeschylus and Aeschylus's sources in Homeric myth to life for him. Homer and especially his younger contemporary Hesiod show the genealogy of the gods as a bloody struggle in which barbaric punishments are meted out for barbaric crimes. The Titan Kronos castrates his father Uranos because Uranos has cruelly locked his children by Gaia in her womb. Zeus in turn dethrones and banishes his father Kronos because Kronos devoured his children by Rhea as she gave birth to them. The hero of Aeschylus's tragedy *Prometheus Bound* forewarns Zeus that, unless he relinquish his tyranny over mankind, one of Zeus's own sons will dethrone him just as he dethroned Kronos. Thus the sins of the fathers against the sons continually provoke the sins of the sons against the fathers. History

becomes a vicious circle that one could describe, in a phrase from Nikolay Apollonovich's dream, as "an ancient Mongolian business" (*starodavnee mongol'skoe delo*) or, more loosely translated, "the same old Mongolian affair." The genealogy of the tsars includes Ivan the Terrible and Peter the Great who, as fathers, are roughly analogous to Uranos and Kronos; in Peter's son Alexis and in Alexander I it also includes sons who sought, like Kronos and Zeus, to overthrow the tyranny of their fathers. The prototype of the son who desires his father's death yet does *not* murder him is Dostoevsky's hero, Ivan Karamazov, whose Russian tragedy *Petersburg* works out again in terms of the *Oresteia.*

The hero of the *Oresteia* murdered his mother Clytaemnestra because she murdered his father Agamemnon; but Clytaemnestra murdered Agamemnon because he sacrificed their daughter Iphigeneia to the gods. In fact the whole Trojan War, on which Agamemnon was about to embark when he sacrificed Iphigeneia, can be said to result from Thyestes's curse on the house of his brother Atreus, who murdered Thyestes's children and served them up to him at dinner because Thyestes had seduced Atreus's wife. What is important for *Petersburg* is that the Erinyes, also called Furies, pursue Orestes relentlessly as a matricide even though he murdered Clytaemnestra at Apollo's command. They also pursue Nikolay Apollonovich as a parricide even though he, like Ivan Karamazov, has stopped short of murder. At the end of the *Oresteia,* the Furies are transformed by Athena's justice into Eumenides or, in other words, "Kindly Spirits." At the end of *Petersburg,* the furies of Nikolay Apollonovich's conscience are softened by repentance when he hears the cranes of Ibykus, an allusion to Schiller's ballad by that title. The ballad tells how Furies in the form of cranes fly over the performance of a tragedy at Olympia and thereby provoke the murderers of the poet Ibykus publicly to betray their guilt. In *Petersburg,* however, the cranes are heard not as the voice of the Furies but as the voice of childhood, and thus, in *Petersburg* as in the *Oresteia,* not retribution but reconciliation sounds the final note. If Nikolay Apollonovich is a Prometheus *manqué,* unready to defy Zeus's tyranny, this is partly because he, like Orestes, is a hero inexorably drawn

by his patrimony into a struggle between justice and terror. Ivanov gave his review of *Petersburg* the title "Inspiration by Terror" (*Vdokhnovenie uzhasa*), which evidently refers to Bely's own terror as he gazed into the abyss. In that review Ivanov wrote that Bely originally meant the end of *Petersburg* to be far less conciliatory and benevolent than it is. One is tempted to speculate whether Ivanov himself might not have reminded Bely that the tragedies of Aeschylus put an end to history's vicious circle.

Literary comparisons are fully valid only when, having shown how one writer influenced the other, they also show how those two writers differ, and that is what must here be attempted in a few words. If Ivanov can be said to have provided Bely with a classical education, this does not mean either that Bely read Plato and Aeschylus as Ivanov read them or that he alludes to them directly in *Petersburg* as he does to Russian and German literature. It rather means that Bely's association with Ivanov led him to draw analogies between Hellenic and Russian culture that parallel the analogies between Hellenic and German culture in *The Birth of Tragedy.* The analogies between Hellenic and Russian culture in *Petersburg* confirm that Bely, like Ivanov, was responsive to the young Nietzsche; they also confirm that, unlike Ivanov, he was sympathetic with the mature Nietzsche, whose critique of Judaeo-Christian morals becomes most provocative in *The Antichrist.* Although Dionysus plays a central role in *Petersburg,* Bely does not make him a prototype of Christ for the simple reason that Christ, for Bely, is the so-called "idiot" Jesus, whom Nietzsche believes Dostoevsky would have understood. This anti-Christian Christ Bely equates with Nietzsche's Antichrist, and so it is that we have two Antichrist figures in *Petersburg*: the white domino, whom Sofya Petrovna mistakes for her husband* and the Bronze Horseman, who destroys Dudkin. It is the Bronze Horseman who embodies the Antichrist of the Apocalypse, once described by Nietzsche as "the most wanton of all literary outbursts that vengefulness has on its conscience" (*The Genealogy of Morals,* §16). Both

*Her so-called "idiot" husband rises from the dead after his botched suicide attempt.

these Antichrist figures pursue the main characters of *Petersburg*: the white domino pursues them with the hope of reconciliation, and the Bronze Horseman with the threat of retribution. Reconciliation and retribution are, however, the same two themes of Aeschylus that, as we have seen, Bely derived from Nietzsche by way of Ivanov, and with them Bely attempts, like Aeschylus, to put an end to history's vicious circle.

Even where Ivanov and Bely are both readers of *The Birth of Tragedy,* they read it differently: Ivanov as a treatise on the history of culture, and Bely, with his more positivistic turn of mind, as a treatise on the history of language. Bely maintains that the word is first of all a sound, and that metaphor begins to evolve when that sound evokes a poetic image. The image gives rise to myth, which leads to religion, which leads in turn to philosophy, and there the word ultimately becomes a scientific term without sound or image. But no sooner has metaphor degenerated into mere scientific terminology than it begins its evolution again through the sounds and images of poetry, so that periods of degeneration and regeneration alternate cyclically with one another like the periods in *The Birth of Tragedy.* Apollonian periods tend towards the formalization of myth; Dionysian periods tend towards the destruction of form which precedes mythopoeia. Bely's goal in *Petersburg* is to usher in an era of transition from one cycle to the next, for "such eras," he writes in words that could be Nietzsche's, "are marked by the intrusion of the spirit of music into poetry: the musical force of sound is resurrected by the word."[9] *Petersburg* is not, however, the story of a young man who learns to use words, as the novels of Bely's contemporaries Proust, Joyce and Mann so often were. Nor does it deceive its readers with the sleight-of-hand by which a novel turns out to be written by one of its characters. This is the way Nabokov, a novelist much enamored of Bely, might have written *Petersburg,* but not the way Bely wrote it: *Petersburg,* as Bely wrote it, is an attempt to induce the rebirth of tragedy. It turns the revolution in politics into a metaphor for revolution in esthetics, just as it turns the city of Petersburg into a metaphor for Atlantis, the city of myth. Surely this is why, at the end of the novel, Nikolay Apollonovich leaves

Russia for Egypt, where Plato tells us the memory of the flood was preserved, and where Ivanov would therefore also bid us look for a prophecy of the flood to come. Thus, when Bely chose the art form of the novel to express his own response to Nietzsche, his choice was determined by certain basic tenets of Ivanov's esthetic, which help to fuse *Petersburg* into a cogent whole.

Notes

1. Valerij Brjusov, "Vjacheslav Ivanov. Andrej Belyj," *Dalekie i blizkie* (Moscow, 1912), p. 124.

2. *SS*, III, 724–31. H. Stammler, "Belyj's Conflict with Vjačeslav Ivanov over War and Revolution," *Slavic and East European Journal*, XVIII, No. 3 (1974), 258–70.

3. Ivanov alludes to this fact in his review of *Petersburg*, "Vdokhnovenie uzhasa," *Rodnoe i vselenskoe* (Moscow, 1918), p. 92; and Bely confirms it in his memoir *Nachalo veka* (Moscow, 1933), p. 326. For a thorough discussion of how *Petersburg* was written and published, see L. K. Dolgopolov, "Andrej Belyj v rabote nad 'Peterburgom'," *Russkaja literatura*, No. 1 (1972), pp. 157–67. The first, "Nekrasov" redaction of *Petersburg* was written late in 1911; the "Sirin" redaction in 1912 and 1913. Ivanov tells us that Bely read him the unfinished manuscript of *Petersburg*, presumably in the "Nekrasov" redaction ("Vdokhnovenie uzhasa," p. 92); Olga Deschartes maintains that Bely actually wrote "a significant part" of *Petersburg* in Ivanov's "Tower" (cf. *SS*, III, 729). If we cannot take this on the sole authority of Olga Deschartes, who did not then belong to the Ivanov circle, there is reason to suppose that Bely *might* have written a significant part of *Petersburg* in Ivanov's "Tower," for we have it on his own authority that he and Asya Turgeneva lived there for part of 1912 (cf. Bely, *Nachalo veka*, p. 327).

4. Vjacheslav Ivanov, "Drevnij uzhas. Po povodu kartiny L. Baksta 'Terror antiquus'," *Zolotoe runo*, No. 4 (1909), pp. 56–65; reprint: *Po zvezdam* (St. Petersburg, 1909), pp. 393–424. On Bakst's oil, see André Levinson, *Bakst* (New York, 1922), pp. 107–09, and I. N. Pruzhan, *Lev Samoilovich Bakst* (Leningrad, 1975), pp. 114–18. Levinson approaches "Terror antiquus" in terms of Nietzsche; Pruzhan, and other Soviet critics, in terms of the revolution of 1905.

5. "Atlantes" (in Russian, *atlanty*) is the architectural term for male caryatids; in Russian, it is homonymous with the word for citizens of Atlantis. It is derived, like the word "Atlantis," from the name of the Titan Atlas, brother to Prometheus, who is the central figure in Nietzsche's conception of tragedy. Bely uses it to link the imagery of Petersburg and its founder, Peter the Great, with the imagery of *The Birth of Tragedy*, and thus to make of Peter the Great a Russian Prometheus, whom Pushkin, the Russian Aeschylus, immortalizes in "The Bronze Horseman" (*Mednyj vsadnik*).

6. Horst-Jürgen Gerigk, "Belyjs 'Petersburg' und Nietzsches 'Geburt der Tragödie'," *Nietzsche Studien*, IX (1980), pp. 356–73.

7. Most relevant to *Petersburg* are two essays published by Ivanov while Bely was at work on his novel: "Dostoevskij i roman-tragedija," *Russkaja mysl'* (May 1911), pp. 46–61, and (June 1911), pp. 1–17; reprint: *Borozdy i mezhi* (Moscow, 1916), pp. 3–60; and "L. Tolstoj i kul'tura," I (1911), pp. 167–78; reprint: *Borozdy i mezhi*, pp. 73–93. "Dostoevskij i roman-tragedija" was occasioned by the thirtieth anniversary of Dostoevsky's death; "L. Tolstoj i kul'tura" was occasioned by Tolstoy's death in 1910. The relevance of both essays to Bely's view of Dostoevsky is outlined in footnote 8 below; however, Dostoevsky figures in most of Ivanov's work at this period, the lectures on the religion of Dionysus.

8. Although Ivanov calls Dostoevsky a "Russian Shakespeare" (cf. Ivanov, "Dostoevskij i roman-tragedija," p. 28), he does not actually call him a Russian Aeschylus. His essay follows a Nietzschean thought pattern, which, if taken to its logical conclusion, inevitably leads to the notion of one. Dostoevsky represents to Ivanov a "latter-day Zarathustra" (ibid., p. 8), who tempted Russians to eat of the fruit of the tree of individualism. In section 3 of his essay Ivanov compares the work of Dostoevsky with that of Aeschylus on grounds that it fulfills the tragic potentialities of the nineteenth-century novel just as the work of Aeschylus fulfilled those of Homer's *Iliad*. The notion of Dostoevsky as a Russian Aeschylus becomes fully evident where Ivanov compares Dostoevsky with Tolstoy and Tolstoy with Socrates as follows. "Dostoevsky did not, like Tolstoy, follow the path of Socrates in search of a norm of the good that would concur with true knowledge, but, like the tragedies of Greece, kept faith with the spirit of Dionysus" (ibid., p. 35). The notion of Tolstoy as a Russian Socrates provides the topic of Ivanov's essay, "L. Tolstoj i kul'tura," mentioned in footnote 7 above.

9. Andrej Belyj, "Magija slov," *Simvolizm* (Moscow, 1910), p. 434.

The Literary Criticism of Vyacheslav Ivanov

René Wellek

Victor Terras's discussion of Ivanov's esthetic thought and its sources allows me to assume a knowledge of it and to concentrate on the literary criticism understood as the interpretation and judgment of concrete works of literature. I realize that the critical essays cannot be divorced from his esthetics, his theory of poetry, and ultimately his religious thought which implies also a philosophy of history. Still, it may be of interest to look at these writings from a point of view which may be that of an outsider, of a literary historian and critic who believes in the evidence of the text, in some consensus of common sense in interpretation, in the value of factual information and even in a "common pursuit" of judgment. I may at times appear as an *advocatus diaboli* who, I understand, always precedes the canonization.

Ivanov's literary criticism ranges very widely and uses several distinct styles or manners. There are some sober, expository discussions full of solid information written for an encyclopedia or a handbook: they do not shirk judgment but preserve a tone of detachment and objectivity. The late contributions to the *Enciclopedia italiana Treccani,* dating from 1936, on symbolism and realism, are a case in point. The piece on symbolism provides accurate information on the French school, its antecedents and its spread abroad. It distinguishes between two kinds of symbolism: one Ivanov calls "realistic" (which in his scholastic terminology refers to a transcendent and even supernatural reality) and subjective symbolism. Ivanov traces this distinction to Baudelaire's early sonnet "Les Correspondances," in which the first eight lines evoke the forest of symbols while the

concluding six concern individual psychic complexes and synaesthesias. Ivanov approves of realistic symbolism, of the idea of a signature of things and of the poet as the decipherer of the great alphabet of nature, and he disapproves of subjective symbolism, which he associates with decadence, art for art's sake, extreme individualism, even solipsism, and thus with the breakdown of communication, obscurity, hermeticism. Ivanov had long before praised Verlaine as a "realistic" symbolist and Huysmans at the stage he considered the right symbolist (see *By the Stars* [*Po zvezdam,* 1909]). He sees subjective symbolism in Swinburne and Oscar Wilde and praises the late stage of Ibsen as that of a "realistic" symbolist. I cannot here enter into Ivanov's polemics with his Russian contemporaries: obviously this distinction played a major part in the split of the Symbolist movement.

The article on realism is of less interest: it gives information about the French debate and the association of realism with sociology and positivism. Condemnation emerges only at the end: "Realism," Ivanov says, "as an ideology (a sure sign of its anti-artistic nature) has overstepped the limits of art." Only Maupassant and Verga are praised: they knew how to free themselves from a bad theory.

The long (42 large pages) article on Goethe for *A History of Western Literature,* edited by Batyushkov in 1914, is a well-informed survey of Goethe's life and writings. Ivanov read widely in Goethe, drawing even on recondite corners of his enormous *oeuvre.* He must have studied some of the huge literature on Goethe: once he refers to an article in the *Goethe-Jahrbuch* (p. 145) and to the life of Goethe by Richard Moritz Meyer (1894, p. 148). Ivanov gives short but substantially accurate accounts of Goethe's esthetics and his interest in the natural sciences; he describes *Iphigenie auf Tauris* as a "sermon of eighteenth-century humanism" (p. 129) and *Torquato Tasso* as a masked confession, and alludes to and quotes from *The Roman Elegies* and some of the hymns, either in literal translation or in his own verse translations. If this were all, the piece would be no more than an excellent handbook article. But it bears the stamp of Ivanov's personal views in his emphasis on the classical and late period of Goethe and in his playing-down and sometimes downright ignoring

of the period usually called "Storm and Stress." There is not a word about Herder or Spinoza, and the full account of *Faust* barely mentions the Gretchen tragedy. Ivanov admires Goethe's victory over the Werther mood and his turn to antiquity. Much is made of the trip to Italy, of Winckelmann, German classical scholarship and the friendship with Schiller. Ivanov speaks of Goethe's objectivism, his rejection of what he calls, with Husserl, "psychologism." But the admiration for the classical Goethe is overshadowed by his admiration for the symbolism of his last works. "His poetics," he states at the outset, "appears, in general, to be our poetics of the last years" (p. 114). The interpretation of *Faust* is slanted toward the last scene of the second part: the glorification of the Eternal Feminine. The line, "Alles Vergängliche ist nur ein Gleichnis . . . ," is considered to be written under the influence of Schelling (p. 138) and to anticipate Vladimir Solovyov, the two main sources of Ivanov's own esthetics. Much of the reading of *Faust* seems to me forced, as is the attempt to deny pantheism in Goethe by quoting theistic phraseology in his pronouncements. Still, the article contains many shrewd remarks. Ivanov's view that "Goethe was much more of a historian than he is ordinarily considered" and that "at least, he thought historically" (p. 132) has been elaborated by Friedrich Meinecke in his *Entstehung des Historismus* (1936), and the reflections on Goethe's avoidance of tragedy have been developed in Erich Heller's *Disinherited Mind* (1952). Ivanov's view that the second part of *Faust* and *Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre* are underrated and still speak to our time has been amply vindicated, at least with respect to the second part of *Faust*.

Another group of essays could be called occasional. An article on "Shakespeare and Cervantes" was written in 1916 for the tercentenary of their deaths. (Incidentally, Ivanov repeats the old idea that they died on the same day, April 23. But Shakespeare's death is recorded according to the Julian calendar still in force in England while Spain already used the Gregorian, then ten days ahead.) The essay assumes a conception of history which considers the Renaissance as a decline from the Middle Ages into modern individualism and secularism. Shakespeare—in a way most modern scholars would not

accept—is described as having broken with the tradition and the old faith. His cultural "knapsack" was light: it contained only the Bible, two or three chronicles and Plutarch (see p. 105). But Ivanov grants that Shakespeare felt the mystery of life yet denies that there is true catharsis in his tragedies, as it can be achieved only on the ground of a religious synthesis of the tragic contradictions of life. Shakespeare makes his protagonists (Lear, Hamlet) escape into madness, reducing the power of reason to absurdity. Birnam Wood approaching the castle of Macbeth is used as a symbol for the victory of belief over reason—a far-fetched allegorization which is the main flaw in Ivanov's criticism.

Cervantes is interpreted as exposing the irrational to ridicule. Don Quixote is a loving saint crucified by Reason. But Cervantes himself was saved by his faith in the Church: something of the mystical Spanish soul remained burning in him.

The essay on Schiller written for the centenary of his death in 1905 shows much more sympathy and personal engagement. Ivanov deplores the way Schiller was seen as an abstract idealist who became a classic for the German middle classes and schools and could be called a "Moraltrompeter" by Nietzsche. Ivanov discovers in some of Schiller's lyrics something "mysterious and inward," a "sibylline murmur" which makes him "a priest and a mystagogue" (p. 78). Ivanov quotes poems such as "Sehnsucht" and "Der Pilgrim," whose conclusion, "Und das *Dort* ist niemals *Hier*," Ivanov considers "pure mysticism." He finds Christian symbolism in "Das Berglied": the door, the valley, the four streams and the Queen (who seems to me merely a trite personification of the mountain, possibly *Die Jungfrau*). Besides, argues Ivanov, Schiller anticipated the future choric drama and wrote the dithyramb, the "Hymn to Joy," used in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. Dmitry Karamazov quotes it and "Das eleusische Fest." The essay ends with a reservation: Schiller, in his dithyrambs, says "yes" to the world but it is a "yes" from need and not from plenitude, a distinction drawn from Nietzsche. Schiller called himself a "sentimental" poet and this is also Ivanov's conclusion. In spite of celebrating the gods of Greece, Schiller was a deeply Christian poet, and a poet of community, as he revives the Greek chorus in

The Bride of Messina, and depicts the nation as a totality in the Switzerland of *Wilhelm Tell.* Schiller is thus seen as a precursor of what Ivanov himself hoped for: a new drama as national festivities. The essay hardly pretends to a total view: the main plays and theoretical writings are ignored. Ivanov presses casual metaphors to discover mysticism for which I see no evidence, and ignores Schiller's deep *malaise* and even distrust of life and his willed assertion of freedom. But it would lead too far to defend a different image of Schiller's person and work.

Ivanov admired Byron greatly. In 1909 he translated Byron's last long poem, *The Island,* based on Captain Bligh's story of the mutiny on the *Bounty,* and wrote an introduction on "Byron and the Idea of Anarchy." He argues there that Byron was torn between his pride, his individualistic titanism as in *Childe Harold, Manfred,* and *Cain,* and a passion for the freedom of suppressed nations which led him to support the *carbonari* and finally die for the independence of Greece. *The Island* envisages a utopia which combines anarchy with community. A later essay, "Byronism as an Event in the Life of the Russian Spirit" (1917), argues unconvincingly that Byronism in Russia did not mean pessimism, *Weltschmerz,* but only the revelation of personality. Byron's concept of freedom is quite different from that of the French Revolution, which Ivanov considers to be purely negative. Byron believed in a personal and living God, in "the religious idea of man as the Son of God," a questionable assertion as Byron was rather a deist who doubted personal immortality and condemned all churches.

The most interesting single literary essay is "Gogol's *Inspector General* and the Comedy of Aristophanes" (1925). Ivanov argues that Gogol's play is a radical innovation in the history of comedy. It harks back to the Old Comedy of Greece, to Aristophanes, where a commune acts and speaks, rather than to the New Comedy of Menander and Terence, which is concerned with private affairs. Ivanov sympathizes with Gogol's much later allegorical interpretation of his comedy as a "drama of the soul," though he recognizes that this was an attempt to make it sound innocuous and could not have been his original intention. The town is, however, a collective as in a

morality play. The last speech of the Mayor, addressed to the townspeople and implicitly to the audience, and culminating in his shouting: "What are you laughing at? You are laughing at yourselves!" is seen as a revival of the Aristophanic *parabasis,* as the address of the chorus to the people. The Mayor appears as the voice of the chorus, the town. The impostor Khlestakov is not, Ivanov argues somewhat too ingeniously, an outsider but the protagonist of the place, "the very flesh and bone of the town (though it may be some other just like this one)." Khlestakov, after all, originally had no intention of impersonating the Inspector. The role is forced upon him. Still, Ivanov must recognize that at the end the Mayor turns against his fellow townsmen, but he tries to show that the Mayor is still tied to them. When the Mayor asks the others to throw off their masks ("I see only pig's snouts instead of faces—nothing else!") it becomes clear that the Mayor and the town are one and that the town is one with the laughing spectators.

This is a brilliant essay. I can only doubt whether Gogol's procedure has no antecedents except in Aristophanes. There are mobs with speakers sometimes called Citizen 1 and Citizen 2 in Shakespeare. Most strikingly in Lope de Vega's *Fuenteovejuna* (1618?) the village of this name forms a collective and even under torture answers chorally, "Fuenteovejuna," to the questioners who want to know who killed the commander, who abducted Laurencia. Also in Calderón's *El alcalde di Zalamea* (1636) the village forms a collective supporting the mayor in his defiance of authority. Addresses to the audience are common in *Commedia dell'arte,* and even Molière's *L'Avare* appeals at the end of the play to the audience for the return of his pink box. August von Platen composed Aristophanic comedies, complete with parabases, in German before Gogol's play (1836). I don't know enough of Goldoni and Gozzi or the minor comedy writers Gogol may have read or seen on the stage in Italy to suggest anticipations. Gogol may not have known any of these plays. I only want to argue that Ivanov overstates his case for the novelty of Gogol's communal or choral presentation.

By far the most extensive studies of a single author were, however, Ivanov's writings on Dostoevsky. One must distinguish several

stages. There is a long essay on Dostoevsky dating from 1911; there is a short piece on *The Possessed* dating from 1914: both were published in the collection *Furrows and Boundaries* (*Borozdy i mezhi*) in 1916. There is an essay "The Face and Masks of Russia" (*Lik i lichiny Rossii*), mainly on *The Brothers Karamazov,* written in 1916, published in the collection *Matters Native and Universal* (*Rodnoe i vselenskoe*) in 1917; and there is finally a German book, *Dostojewskij. Tragödie-Mythos-Mystik* (1932), which was translated as *Freedom and the Tragic Life* into English in 1952. I am told that the Russian original of the German book has been lost. It would be an interesting task far exceeding my purpose to compare the different versions: to see what Ivanov eliminated in the final book, what he added and what he changed.

One must see Ivanov's essays as part of the trend to interpret Dostoevsky in religious terms, in contrast to the rival view which sees him mainly as a depth psychologist, an existentialist, and a social historian. It began with Vladimir Solovyov's three speeches in 1883, in which he hailed Dostoevsky as a "prophet of God," a "mystical seer." V. V. Rozanov then examined "The Legend of the Grand Inquisitor" (in 1890) almost as sacred text. Dmitri Merezhkovsky's *Tolstoy and Dostoevsky* (1901) then drew the famous contrast between Tolstoy, "the seer of the flesh," and Dostoevsky, "the seer of the spirit." Merezhkovsky argued that Dostoevsky is not a realist but a symbolist. Leo Shestov juxtaposed *Dostoevsky and Nietzsche* (1903), the pessimistic visionary of catastrophe and decay to the optimistic prophet of the superman. Ivanov belongs to this group: he shares their view of the transcendent importance and ultimate truth of Dostoevsky's doctrines consonant with Russian Orthodoxy, but he differs from them by focusing on the figures and actions in the novels rather than on some abstract doctrines extracted from them. He conceived of the four great novels (*Crime and Punishment, The Idiot, The Possessed* and *The Brothers Karamazov,* hardly referring to other works) as myths on the analogy of the plots of Greek tragedy. Thus *Crime and Punishment* is interpreted as showing the rebellion of human pride and presumption (*hubris*) against the holy laws of Mother Earth, the fatal derangement of the senses of the culprit (his

até), the anger of the earth at the bloodshed, the ritual purgation of the murderer chased by the inner Fury, kissing the earth in front of the assembled people, and finally the recognition of the right way through suffering—*padeimados* (German ed. 1932, pp. 64–65). The book is reduced to the bare outlines of a myth. The model of Gilbert Murray's scheme and the work of the other "Cambridge anthropologists" is obvious, not to speak of the inspiration of Nietzsche's *Birth of Tragedy* (1871).

The early 1911 essay had not gone that far. There Dostoevsky's innovations are rehearsed, the history of the novel is sketched, Dostoevsky's immediate antecedents—Rousseau, Schiller, Balzac, Dickens, George Sand, E. T. A. Hoffmann, and Gogol—are briefly considered. Gogol could have influenced Dostoevsky only in the period of *Poor People,* as he is the polar opposite of Dostoevsky: Ivanov states that his characters have no soul while Dostoevsky's are nothing but soul. Then Ivanov makes the proposal that a Dostoevsky novel should be called a "novel-tragedy," the kind of hyphenation common in Russian. It has been widely accepted, though it says no more than the old "tragic" novel, contrasted with the commonly used "comic" novel. Ivanov considers the *Iliad* a tragedy in epic form and argues that Dostoevsky simply reintroduced tragedy into the epic. *Catharsis,* Ivanov explains, had a purely religious meaning in Greek tragedy. Aristotle made it psychological; Dostoevsky returned it to its religious meaning. He wants us to become different beings. Later, Ivanov expounds the difference between idealism which leads to solipsism and his kind of realism which assumes the existence of other selves. Ivanov gives it a Latin version "Es, ergo sum," parodying Descartes, and he assumes that it contains a postulate of God and Christ. The source is in Schopenhauer's citation of the Sanskrit *Tat tvam asi* ("I am you"). (See also Ivanov's poems and the section *Ty esi* in *Chelovek* [*SS,* IV, 207] and an article [*SS,* III, 262, cf. 745], published in 1907.) Schopenhauer, of course, would not have drawn the theistic consequences from the identification of "I" and "thou." At least Ivanov returns to something strictly literary, distinguishing three planes in Dostoevsky's novels: the fabulistic, the psychological, and the metaphysical (the decision for or against God). Men have an

"empirical" and a "metaphysical" character. The four brothers Karamazov are characterized in these terms. Smerdyakov has no metaphysical character at all, Ivan knows God but cannot accept him, Dmitry is divided. For a time he wished his father's death, but then returned to God: not speaking but singing his hallelujah, his "yes" and "amen" to the Creator of the world. The injustice of his sentence becomes an instrument of divine justice. Alyosha has a metaphysical character, he is a saint. Ivanov then distingishes between different kinds of guilt, first in Greek tragedy and then analogously in Dostoevsky. Guilt is either the will of Fate or is due to the hero's wrong preference for one god only, and finally it is the guilt of existence, of merely appearing on earth. The first idea of fate appears in Dostoevsky as the irrevocable choice between God and the Devil: the struggle between these two kinds of men as it is depicted in *The Possessed*. The preference for one God, that is, an exclusive passion which leads to guilt, is rare in Dostoevsky: the Raw Youth, Rogozhin and Dmitry qualify. The third guilt, the mere fact of incarnation is Myshkin's. He comes into the world as a stranger, a guest, and does not understand and forgive the world.

All the emphasis in Ivanov's interpretation falls on the purification, the redemption, so much so that the crime of Raskolnikov is treated as a temporary aberration. Raskolnikov has an inborn knowledge of the sacred realities of being. He killed the pawnbroker to prove idealism but discovered it to be false, and resurrects his soul by love and contact with Mother Earth, "the vision of primitive pure days" when the nomads roamed the steppes of Asia. The earth is in Dostoevsky the symbol of communion. Not that Dostoevsky has much concern for nature, Ivanov admits: there are the steppes in the Epilogue of *Crime and Punishment*, there is Alyosha seeing the starry sky, there is the little star and the "tender emerald sea" in the *Dream of a Ridiculous Man* and there is the dark rustling park in which Shatov is killed. That is all. But Marya Timofeevna, the Cripple, whose soul has the "substantiality of mystical depths," proclaims that "God and Nature are one," that "the Mother of God is the great Mother Earth," that "our tears should water the earth." In Ivanov's interpretation the Cripple reflects the soul of the Great

Mother Damp Earth, waiting for the sunny Bridegroom, the Russian *hypostasis*, the soul of the Russian earth. To Ivanov she expresses the mystical psychology of the Russian national element which is love, longing, faith and hope, and not the battlefield of history. The Cripple looks for the face of Christ in all humanity.

These sixty pages are an impressive statement of the parallelism between Greek tragedy and Dostoevsky's novels and their underlying myths. The account of Dostoevsky's innovations, of his historical position and antecedents is generally accurate. Also the motifs of tragic guilt are well distinguished, though I think that Ivanov overemphasizes the Epilogue of *Crime and Punishment*, making Raskolnikov's murder a mere episode in a story of redemption, and that he inflates Marya Timofeevna to a mythic figure of Mother-Earth which is at the same time the Mother of God.

The long essay dating from 1911 was supplemented in 1914 by an article on *The Possessed*. In *The Possessed* Dostoevsky conceives of the nation as a person, a unity which has two principles: the feminine and the masculine. The first is represented by the Mother Earth, the World Soul; the second, the masculine, by the hierarchy of heavenly powers, by allegiance either to God or to Satan. In *The Possessed* the masculine element chose to close itself against God and Christ while the feminine element, the Soul-Earth, sighs and waits for the Bridegroom but discovers that he is a Pretender and curses him. The Eternal Feminine suffers under the demons. Even the Mother of God is insulted in the symbolic episode of the live mouse in the icon, though the demons cannot reach her fully. When the burned house is searched after the murder of the Cripple, the silver setting of the icon of the Virgin Mary has not been touched. Ivanov draws an elaborate parallel to Goethe's *Faust*. The Cripple takes the place of Gretchen. Stavrogin is a negative Faust, negative because he has ceased to love and strive. The role of Mephisto is taken by Pyotr Verkhovensky. The terror of the Cripple at the sudden appearance of Stavrogin in her room is anticipated by the scene with Gretchen in the jail. The Cripple's ravings about a child are almost the same as the hallucinations of Gretchen. The Cripple's song is the song of the Russian soul like Gretchen's song of the "King of

Thule" and his goblet. The Cripple is a medium of the Mother-Earth, the Soul of the Russian Earth. She is Stavrogin's legal wife though she remains a virgin. "The Prince of this World" thus lords it over the Soul of the World but cannot really touch her—just like the sixth husband of the Woman of Samaria in the Gospel of St. John. The Cripple knows that she is guilty before the other Prince, the Prince of Glory. Her lameness signifies her secret guilt, the guilt of original incompleteness, of opposition to the Bridegroom who abandons her as Eros abandons Psyche for her sin. The Cripple curses Stavrogin, as the Pretender, the false Dmitry, the ally of Satan. Stavrogin was, after all, disloyal to Satan, betrayed the revolution and returned to his mountain retreat. Still, he had ruled the herd of the demons. Two of them separated from the crowd: Kirillov and Shatov. Ivanov explains them well: Kirillov loves Christ, but wants to become God and commits suicide. Shatov wavers as his name suggests. He had a false relation to Christ: he did not know the Father through him. He thought that the Russian Christ was the nation itself: he elevated the nation to divinity. Shatov believed in the soul of the Earth: he is thus kindred to Marya Timofeevna, a guardian of the Female Soul in its sin and humiliation. Shatov is torn to pieces (hardly literally—Peter kills him with a shot from his pistol) by the demons because he did not give himself to them unreservedly. Dostoevsky in this novel raises the question whether Russia can become holy Russia. He began to dream of the mysterious mission of the elder Zosima, one of the "pure and elect," a forerunner of a "new kind of people and a new life."

The article makes many true observations and characterizes some of the main figures well. But it suffers from inflation of the role of the Cripple and of her worship of Mother-Earth. Dostoevsky himself could never have agreed with her saying: "God and Nature are one." The parallel with *Faust* limps badly. To say that Stavrogin is a negative Faust without love and striving means that he is no Faust. The crowded, even overcrowded novel becomes unfocused, distorted by the emphasis on the Mother-Earth motif.

The 1932 book reprints with many cuts, small additions and changes the two essays just discussed and uses the 1916 essay on

The Brothers Karamzov. The passages on literary history are dropped, the tone has become more ecstatic. Sometimes details are added which seem to be based on only vague memories of the texts. Thus, as the parallel between Marya Timofeevna and Gretchen is reproduced, we are told that "similarly Gretchen turns, in her song, from the old King of the farthest West, of *Ultima Thule,* and from his sun-goblet, to the distant beloved, and touchingly adjures him to keep faith—by returning as a new sun" (p. 61). The 1914 essay contains no such statement. There is nothing in *Faust* to suggest it: Gretchen sings the song in which there is no word of a sun or a new sun (only of gold) before she sees the casket of jewels Mephisto had left in her bedroom. She has just been accosted by Faust in the street and merely wonders who he may be. He is not distant, nor does she adjure him to keep faith, as he had not and could not yet have pledged it.

This strange loss of contact with a text becomes obtrusively obvious in the new parts. Some comments lifted from the 1916 essay on the *Brothers* are still defensible. Ivanov distinguishes between two kinds of devils: Lucifer and Ahriman (Dostoevsky never uses the second, Zoroastrian term). Luciferian figures are full of pride, rebels against God; the captives of Ahriman are simply evil: Svidrigailov imagining eternity as a bathhouse full of spiders, Fyodor Karamazov with his grudge against God. Also Dmitry has nothing of Lucifer in him. Ivan is a vassal of Lucifer but Ahriman's darkness thickens around his Luciferian light and brings forth Smerdyakov and the shabby devil. Much is made of Alyosha ruling the community of boys and of Ilyusha and his transformation by death. The brotherhood of the boys foreshadows the coming hagiocracy, the government of the saints, the reign of Christ forming invisibly in this world. In 1916 Ivanov apparently believed that the triumph of Christ is fatefully ordained and that Dostoevsky is the great prophet of his victory.

But the interpretation of the novels shows an increased forcing of the allegory. The view that Dostoevsky's works all deal "with man's revolt against Mother Earth" makes Ivanov say that the money-lender killed by Raskolnikov is "the female avenger," "the emissary of Mother Earth" (p. 76). Both Raskolnikov and Hermann

in Pushkin's *Queen of Spades* are guilty of killing the Fate, and must suffer her posthumous revenge. The old countess is identified with the money-lender and both are, somehow, Earth goddesses. Poor Sonya is considered a "great sinner" as she takes upon herself "not only suffering but also the curse of another's deed, by making it her own" (p. 82). Raskolnikov is a scapegoat who has consented to carry out "the will of the many which is directed toward the elimination of the repulsive old woman" (p. 84). Surely there is no hint that the loner Raskolnikov is the instrument of a collective will, nor can I see the old money-lender as an "emissary of Mother Earth" (she seems particularly far removed from it) or see the sin of Sonya in knowing Raskolnikov's guilt and sharing his Siberian exile.

The Idiot is even more completely allegorized in defiance of the text. Myshkin, we are told, "is, above all, the type of a spirituality that descends, that seeks the Earth: rather a spirit that assumes flesh than a man who rises to the spiritual. All his glory lies behind him in the past . . ." (p. 90). Ivanov ignores the description of "the complete breakdown of his mental faculties," his imbecility, the visit of Mrs. Yepanchin, who "wept bitterly when she saw the prince in his sick and humiliating condition." In Ivanov's reading, Myshkin longs for incarnation. Aglaya wants to "enfold him in her primitive darkness," an odd characterization to apply to that beautiful girl with nihilistic sympathies whom Ivanov calls "festively resplendent" on the very same page (p. 98). Myshkin's pity for Nastasya proves, however, stronger than his love for Aglaya. But the famous last scene—Rogozhin and Myshkin keeping vigil at the bed of the dead Nastasya—is completely misread. Ivanov tells us that "Myshkin, knowing nothing of the bloody deed that has been wrought, stations himself at the murderer's bidding beside the virginal-nuptial bed, close by his murdered bride, who is hidden by a curtain, while Parfyon (Rogozhin) lies on the other side" (p. 104). But from the text it is perfectly obvious that Myshkin not only suspects but knows that Rogozhin killed Nastasya. He asks Rogozhin: "Was it you?" and Rogozhin answers, "Yes, me." Shortly afterward they both speak of the smell of the corpse. Myshkin asks: "What did you kill her with? The knife? The same one?" and Rogozhin obliges with the

information that "the knife went in three or four inches—just under the left breast—and no more than half a tablespoon of blood came out under the nightshirt."

One has to conclude that Ivanov is expounding a book which he would have wanted Dostoevsky to have written, rather than the one he actually wrote. We can imagine the scheme: the Christ-like man who descends from the upper world to seek incarnation through Love, but fails and is received back into Heaven. Yet it seems to me a proof of Dostoevsky's honesty and artistry that he wrote a very different book, where Nastasya's corpse is to smell "by tomorrow morning," where Rogozhin put four uncorked bottles of disinfectant next to it, where a fly, awakened from its sleep, starts buzzing, and where Myshkin is returned to Switzerland in a state of complete imbecility, and Aglaya marries a fake Polish count and is converted *terribile dictu* to Roman Catholicism.

The interpretation of *The Idiot* shows the dangers of arbitrary allegorizing which has damaged criticism not only of Dostoevsky but of almost any author, ancient and modern, one can think of. It is a prime example of how a mistaken interpretation can be refuted by appeal to a text which is unambiguous on all essential points at issue. In their later stages Ivanov's readings of Dostoevsky are misreadings explainable and excusable by his religious preoccupations, but misreadings nevertheless. It is a recent superstition that misreadings cannot be corrected. Ivanov's case demonstrates the truth of the old wisdom that there is a difference between correct and incorrect reading, however difficult it may be to decide on it in some cases.

Tolstoy must appear to Ivanov as the antipode of Dostoevsky. In an article, "Tolstoy and Culture" (*Tolstoj i kul'tura*) published in 1912 in *Logos*, the Russian and German philosophical periodical where in the same volume Georg Simmel, Heinrich Rickert, Georg von Lukács (still "von" at that time) and others published substantial essays. Ivanov, after a tribute to the flight and death of Tolstoy, describes him as a "terrible simplifier" who found only words of prohibition: don't drink, don't smoke, reject sensuality, don't swear, don't fight wars and do not resist evil. Tolstoy, Ivanov states, had

an *odium generationis,* a hatred for the origin of forms, a deeply anchored rejection of Dionysus, or rather of his world. The pathos of the artist Tolstoy is a pathos of unmasking and accusation, an antinomian and hence totally anti-artistic pathos. Tolstoy's religion is supposed to be similar to Buddhism, but he thought of it as essential Christianity. Yet if Christianity means what Ivanov considers it—a belief in God's descent into the world, the will to restore and justify the earth in God, a belief in the resurrection of the body, and in the mystic marriage of the heavenly Bridegroom with his earthly Bride—then Tolstoy's worldview is immeasurably remote from Christianity and the Christian Church. His views imply also the abandonment of a belief in the superempirical reality of the national existence. Tolstoy, in short, is a Westerner though he does not want Russia to fuse with Western Europe. Rather, with him the genius of the nation extends its hand to America. In Tolstoy's doctrines there are traits of Anglo-Saxon sermonizing. Tolstoy is not an expression of the Russian national soul but a product of Russian cosmopolitan education, of the highest strata of society and not of its national depths. Tolstoy is a phenomenon of "culture," understood, I assume, as the opposite of nature and nation. Tolstoy's situation and outlook are similar to those of Socrates, interpreted in terms of Nietzsche's denunciation of him as a rationalist who identifies religion with morality and denies the creative and instinctive depths of life. Tolstoy shares his illusion—denying heredity, the influence of environment and education—that if we once understand what is the Good, we shall act as a morally consistent personality. Ivanov distinguishes between three types of attitudes toward culture: the relativistic, the ascetic, and the symbolistic. The first abandons the religious foundation of culture and conceives it as a system of relative values. The second (which is Tolstoy's) emphasizes the moral basis of cultural production and subjects it to a moral utilitarianism. It is based on a deep distrust of nature. The third type, the symbolistic, seems to Ivanov the only correct and sane one. It asks us to change culture into a symbology of spiritual values corresponding to the hierarchies of the divine world and to justify all human doings and creations by their symbolic relations to the Absolute; in other words, it defines its task as a transfiguration of all culture and with it of all nature into a mystic Church. Tolstoy was never a symbolist. In Ivanov's essay, *War and Peace* is not mentioned, *Anna Karenina* is only alluded to as leading up to *The Kreutzer Sonata.* It is hardly *literary* criticism.

We see the norm with which Ivanov judges Tolstoy and all other writers: it is religious in the specific sense of a belief in a system of doctrines and salvation history. This is why Dostoevsky is for him the central writer. Ivanov managed in his own mind to reconcile this norm with an admiration for Greek tragedy, which outlined, he assumed, the same basic myth of salvation. Extravagantly, Ivanov assimilates Dostoevsky, rooted in Eastern Orthodoxy, to ancient Greek exuberance.. "The Muse of Dostoevsky," Ivanov states fancifully, "resembles a Dionysiac Maenad, the daughter of Darkness, the hunting dog of the Goddess of Night, the innately learned Fury, with a torch in one hand and a scourge in the other." Ivanov had to devalue writers like Shakespeare or Cervantes who did not conform to this norm, and he can praise poets like Goethe, Schiller, and Byron for glimpses of the higher world. The criticism even of plots or figures is thus always a criticism of ideas, or rather of religious attitudes and beliefs. No doubt Ivanov felt that this was his highest obligation.

Mandelshtam's "Silentium": A Poet's Response to Ivanov

John E. Malmstad

In a 1913 essay, "On the Addressee" (*O sobesednike*), Osip Mandelshtam reproached the Symbolists for never troubling to ask themselves whom they were addressing. Mandelshtam himself was always conscious of his "addressee" and made his verse a kind of constant dialogue ("*Net liriki bez dialoga*") with contemporaries, figures from the past, and, ideally, the readers he would find in the future.[1] Over the last few decades much work has been done to elucidate this complex of "addressees," yet much remains unclear in our efforts to acquire, as it were, Mandelshtam's culture and thus the ability to "read" the texture of his art. No area has been more unjustly neglected than his relationship with Symbolists such as Sologub and particularly with Vyacheslav Ivanov, who, along with Annensky and Tyutchev, "exerted a strong influence" on him, in the words of one of the leading authorities on his work.[2]

Akhmatova asserted that "by 1911 Mandelshtam had no reverence at all for Vyacheslav Ivanov."[3] There is much evidence to the contrary which suggests that she and the poet's widow (in her memoirs) let literary and personal animosities get the better of the facts. We know from Sergey Kablukov's diary, for example, that Mandelshtam made several visits to Ivanov (two as late as 1916), and that Ivanov's "recognition" (*priznanie*) of the second edition of *Stone* (*Kamen'*) meant a great deal to him, as did Ivanov's efforts on his behalf with publishers.[4] His letters to Ivanov reveal deep admiration for the older man, as well as the care and attention with which he read and absorbed Ivanov's verse and critical writings. We also know that Mandelshtam twice inscribed copies of the first edition of *Stone* to

Ivanov in 1913, after the young poets of the "Tsekh poetov" had publicly announced their allegiance to Acmeism. The two dedications show no lessening of his feelings for Ivanov: "To Vyacheslav Ivanov with joyous admiration. The author. May 13, 1913." "To Vyacheslav Ivanovich Ivanov with profound gratitude and real love. The author. October 2, 1913. Petersburg."[5] Studies by Kiril Taranovsky and G. A. Levinton have proven the presence of "enciphered" lines from Ivanov in poems of 1919–1920 (and, no doubt, later ones as well), which make clear that after 1911 Mandelshtam read *Cor Ardens* (1911), *Tender Mystery* (*Nezhnaja tajna*, 1912), and the translations of *Alcaeus and Sappho* (*Alkej i Safo*, 1914).[6] The poet and his wife also stopped to see Ivanov in 1921 on their way through Baku.

In the last letter we have from Mandelshtam to Ivanov (No. 10, August 21/September 3, 1911), the young poet "rushed" to relate a piece of news which he believed would excite Ivanov as much as it had him: the possibility that new poems by Tyutchev had been discovered.[7] Ivanov's articles attest to his love for his nineteenth-century predecessor. Tyutchev's considerable influence on his verse, evident in allusions and intonational patterns, for example, has yet to receive critical attention. The impact of Tyutchev on Mandelshtam, on the other hand, has been much studied. Several articles have been devoted to a specific instance of it, the 1910 poem "Silentium." Yet the exclusive concern with Tyutchev has in the case of this particular poem obscured the no less profound influence of Ivanov. It is on this poem that I want to focus, first by establishing (and expanding) the context in which it should be read and then, to borrow the terminology of Taranovsky, by indicating a specific subtext for it.

Let me quickly summarize previous comment on Mandelshtam's poem. Kiril Taranovsky has called it a "poetic polemic with Tyutchev."[8] Jan Meijer has gone further, stating that the poem "is both a case of quoting of and polemics with Tyutchev and thereby with symbolism," and Ryszard Przybylski even further: "Mandelshtam's poem is an Acmeist reply [sic—in 1910 there was, of course, no Acmeism] to Tyutchev's famous 'Silentium!' At the same time it polemicizes with the Symbolist perception of the Tyutchev tradi-

tion."[9] Nikolaj Khardzhiev, in his notes for the *Biblioteka poeta* edition of Mandelshtam, writes: "The poem recalls Tyutchev's 'Silentium!,'" but is even more connected with the poetic declarations of the Symbolists, in particular with Verlaine's 'Art poétique' ('De la musique avant toute chose . . .')."[10] Khardzhiev, one notes, mentions unspecified "Symbolist declarations," but, following Gumilev, focuses on French, not Russian antecedents.[11] Przybylski does refer to Ivanov in his article, but only in a general (and highly tendentious) discussion on Mandelshtam and Symbolist notions of music.

If the poem is a polemic with the Symbolist view of Tyutchev, then why was it written in 1910 and not later, when the younger generation was openly stating its differences with Symbolism? And why does the poem take the form of a myth, the first in Mandelshtam's *oeuvre?* The poem has elements in common with earlier Mandelshtam texts, and the theme of silence is central in this period of Mandelshtam's art.[12] However, the key words *slovo* (word) and *muzyka* (music) appear together in this poem for the first time, and much of its other vocabulary, including the colors, appears nowhere else in Mandelshtam. One should also add that while a close reader might have detected the presence of Tyutchev in the poem's oppositions (*zvuchanie-tishina* [sound-silence], *dvizhenie-pokoj* [movement-stasis], or *more-muzyka, zvuchanie* [the sea-music, sound], as for example in "There is melody in the waves of the sea" [*Pevuchest' est' v morskikh volnakh*]), the poem did not acquire the title "Silentium," the feature which most vividly betokens a connection with Tyutchev, until its publication in the first edition of *Stone* in 1913. It was therefore far more ambivalent, even cautious, in its first appearance in print, and direct connections with "Silentium!" were far more tenuous. This fact is quite appropriate, given that it is, in my view, primarily a response not to Tyutchev or Verlaine, but to Ivanov, whom Mandelshtam in 1910 still revered, yet from whom he was beginning to distance himself as he developed his own poetic method. It is not a polemic but the beginning of a serious dialogue with Ivanov which would become polemical only in later essays.

On March 17, 1910, Ivanov gave a lecture entitled "On New Literary Groupings" (*O novykh literaturnykh gruppirovkakh*) at a meeting of the Moscow Society for Free Esthetics (*Obshchestvo svobodnoj estetiki*). He read an expanded version in Petersburg on March 26 at a meeting of the so-called Academy (*Akademija*), i.e., the Society of Adherents of the Artistic Word (*Obshchestvo revnitelej khudozhestvennogo slova*), in the editorial offices of the new journal *Apollon*.[13] We do not know whether Mandelshtam was present on either occasion, although he regularly attended the Petersburg gatherings of the Academy. But he could not have been unaware that these two meetings had taken place. Ivanov himself wrote to Blok on March 25 that his talk "on the contemporary state of symbolism and whether symbolism still exists" had caused a "sensation" in "our circles" in Moscow.[14] On April 13, Anna Mintslova reported to Bely from Petersburg that the "Academy" reading had provoked a similar reaction there (*vyzvalo bol'shoj povorot i volnenie*).[15] Mandelshtam paid close attention to what was happening in Petersburg literary circles, and must have heard of the lecture, even if he did not attend it. It is simply inconceivable that he did not *read* the lecture when it appeared, in a radically reworked form, as a programmatic article under the title "The Testaments of Symbolism" (*Zavety simvolizma*) in the eighth issue (May-June) of *Apollon,* together with Blok's equally well-known reply "On the Present State of Russian Symbolism" (*O sovremennom sostojanii russkogo simvolizma*). The next issue (No. 9, July-August) contained Bryusov's reply to both Ivanov and Blok; and it was in this very issue that Mandelshtam made his debut as a poet. Among his five poems published there was the one we now know as "Silentium." In fact, this was yet another response (albeit a poetic one) to Ivanov's article, but was overlooked in the noisy polemics which followed the appearance of the articles by Ivanov and Blok.[16]

Mandelshtam's poem responds primarily to the first two sections of Ivanov's article and it is to them that I will confine my discussion. Ivanov opens by citing Tyutchev's famous "A thought that is uttered is a lie" (*Mysl' izrechennaja est' lozh'*).[17] He then sets forth a reading of "Silentium!" and several other Tyutchev lyrics in much the same way as he had in 1904 in the essay "The Poet and the Mob" (*Poet i chern'*), included in *By the Stars* (*Po zvezdam*). In

both contexts Ivanov emphasizes the gulf between the "spiritual growth of the personality" (*dukhovnyj rost lichnosti*) and the "external means" of communication. The word is no longer "equally matched" with the more developed internal world of the poet; language has lagged behind spiritual growth. Thus, attempts to express the internal world must result in a "lie." Yet the creator must express himself, and therefore has recourse either to indirect communication (*priobshchenie*, a word with sacramental overtones), which disappoints his audience, or fails to resist the temptation of "direct communication" (*soobshchenie*), which gives the audience only the "lie." Ivanov refuses to accept defeat and sees hope in the "purely symbolic or mythological energy" of a special poetic language which alone can "restore the truth of the expressed thought" now, as it once did in a Golden Age when poets were priests.

"In the poetry of Tyutchev," Ivanov continues in the opening of the second section, Russian Symbolism first recognized the "need for a new poetic language." But Tyutchev, and Ivanov's fellow Symbolists, are at present locked in a dualism of consciousness and art, or in "antithesis," as he put it in the actual speech. Ivanov cites the famous "Oh my prophetic soul!" (*O, veshchaja dusha moja!*) as Tyutchev's expression of his divided consciousness, and views art (*tvorchestvo*) as equally split between the external world of Day, which envelops us in the "full brightness" of its "manifestations" (*projavlenija*), and a mysterious but terrifying world of Night. But this symbolic dualism of day and night, of a world of "perceptible 'manifestations'" (*chuvstvennye projavlenija*) and a world of "supersensible revelations" (*sverkhchuvstvennye otkrovenija*) only *seems* to be irreparably divided: "They are both together in poetry. Now we call them Apollo and Dionysus, we know their non-fusion (*neslijannost'*) and indivisibility, and sense in every true work of art their realized two-in-oneness (*dvuedinstvo*)." Tyutchev's divided soul experienced the pull of Dionysus, that craving to merge with the infinite (*I s bespredel'nym zhazhdet slit'sja*), more powerfully than the pull of Apollo. Therefore, to "preserve his individuality," to curb this craving, the "artist turns to the clear forms of diurnal existence," to those "patterns" (or "designs"—*uzory*, a favorite word in early Mandelshtam) of that veil

(Tyutchev's *pokrov*) which the gods have thrown over the "'nameless abyss,' i.e., that which does not find its name in the language of diurnal consciousness and external experience." Fearing absorption by Chaos (Dionysus), the artist turns to Cosmos (Apollo), external forms and instruments of expression—words. And yet, Ivanov continues, "the most precious moment in experience and the most prophetic in creation is the immersion in that contemplative ecstasy, when 'there is no boundary' between us and the 'naked abyss' yawning—in Silence.

> There is a certain hour of worldwide silence
> And in that hour of vision and marvels
> The living chariot of the universe
> Openly rolls through the sanctuary of the heavens.
>
> Est' nekij chas vsemirnogo molchan'ja,
> I v onyj chas javlenij i chudes
> Zhivaja kolesnitsa mirozdan'ja
> Otkryto katitsja v svjatilishche nebes."

Ivanov had himself undergone the experience Tyutchev had expressed in his "A Vision" (*Videnie*). And he knew the temptation of "ineffable silence" (*neizrechennoe molchanie*), as he put it in his poem "Silence" (*Molchanie*—"*V tajnik bogatoj tishiny . . .*," 1904–1907) in *Cor Ardens*. Nature, although itself without voice, could communicate with man. The artist-creator cannot communicate in this way and must break the Silence, that state of noumenal openness when the *realiora* are fully revealed and when "that art which we call Symbolic becomes possible." Poetry must give both the "external, phenomenal and the internal, noumenal" ("Macrocosm and Microcosm. 'As above, so below.'"), and its means of giving full and truthful expression to that for which there are "no words"—the *realia* and *realiora*—is the "word-symbol" (*slovo-simvol*) in its fullest form, Myth. As Ivanov had earlier written in "Premonitions and Portents" (*Predchuvstvija i predvestija*, 1906),

> In the sphere of symbolic art, the symbol reveals itself naturally as the potential and the embryo of myth. The organic course of

development turns symbolism into mythmaking. . . . The symbol is supra-individual by its very nature, and that is why it has the power to transmute the most intimate silence of the individual mystical soul into an organ of universal collective thought (*edinomyslie*) and collective feeling (*edinochuvstvie*) in a way similar to the word and more powerfully than the ordinary word.

It is not hard to see that Mandelshtam's "Silentium" has far more in common with the imagery of Ivanov's article, his notion of Silence, and his general view of Tyutchev, than with the Tyutchev poem "Silentium!" itself. Apollo and Dionysus, Cosmos and Chaos, "formative" and "visionary" certainly underlie Mandelshtam's opposition of Word and Music; and the poem takes place in that moment (*svetel den'*) when the artist turns, as Ivanov puts it, to the "clear forms of diurnal existence," i.e., words, in the face of the "dremljushchij mir" out there. One also recalls Ivanov's expression "ocharovanie *garmonii*" and his citation of Tyutchev's "V sej *zhivotvornyj okean*" near the end of the second section of the article. Mandelshtam's *svjaz'* might also be seen in Ivanov's discussion of the essential syncretic unity which marked the Golden Age before that division which has marked consciousness and art up to this present fateful moment when it may be overcome. Even the poem's multiple inversions are reminiscent of Ivanov's poetic style.

The second stanza of the poem has colors that never again appear in Mandelshtam: "And the pale lilac of the foam / In the cloudy azure vessel" (*I peny blednaja siren' / V mutno-lazorevom sosude*; *cherno-lazurevom* [dark azure] in the later revised version). They may have been suggested by Blok's response to Ivanov. In "On the Present State of Russian Symbolism" Blok writes of the "purple-lilac" (*purpurno-lilovyj*) color of the ecstatic moment of inspiration, the "purple of the lilac worlds" (*purpur lilovykh mirov*), and the world's opposing "blue-lilac" (*sine-lilovyj*) shade. These colors, Blok notes, have been best captured in Vrubel, who is also mentioned by Ivanov: "Peace to your . . . shade, *madman* Vrubel" (*Mir tvoej . . . teni, bezumets Vrubel'*).[19] We should also note the following from Ivanov's earlier essay "Premonitions and Portents":

and in *music* itself the plastic *form* of a *radiantly* outlined melody suddenly arises from the *harmonious waves* and stands like an Apollonian vision above the *dark purple* depths of the orgiastic *swells*.

i v samoj *muzyke* vnezapno voznikaet iz *garmonicheskikh voln* plasticheskaja *forma solnechno*—ocherchennoj melodii i stoit apollinijskim videniem nad *temno-purpurnymi* glubinami orgijnykh *zybej*.[20]

But we should not, I think, force comparisons of individual elements. Mandelshtam's is a poetic response, not a point-by-point commentary on the Ivanov, which—and this is the poem's most distinctive feature—follows Ivanov in taking the form of *mythic* expression. It does so not so much to polemicize with Ivanov's view of symbolic art, but to express a longing for a pre-historic existence when there was no duality to overcome, no opposition of Music and Word, no Chaos or Cosmos, no myth itself (for if Aphrodite is not born, there can be no myth of the goddess), but an immense tranquil ocean, a crystalline "note" (*nota*), a "primordial muteness" (*pervonachal'naja nemota*) (note the two feminine *singulars* in rhyme position), the "indestructible bond of everything living" (*nenarushaemaja svjaz' vsego zhivogo*) which "birth" will only disrupt. There existed then no "two-in-oneness" (*dvuedinstvo*), but only the "oneness" (*edinstvo*) of Beauty or Love—also two central concepts in Ivanov.[21]

Ivanov's reading of Tyutchev's "Silentium!" challenges those of the first generation of Symbolists who used the poem to argue the impossibility of communication and art. Ivanov disagreed with this view all his life. In 1904, he had observed ironically that "Our most recent poets do not weary of celebrating silence" ("The Poet and the Mob").[22] And as late as 1938 he returned to the matter in his "Thoughts on Poetry" (*Mysli o poezii*), where he remarked in a humorous aside that Tyutchev "had, fortunately, forgotten his vow of silence" [*SS*, III, 663]. Ivanov reads Tyutchev's *molchanie* in another way, and argues not only the possibility, but the necessity of art. Here Mandelshtam in part follows Ivanov: there is nothing in his poem which can be read as suggesting the impossibility of communication or art. But Mandelshtam departs from Ivanov in his

desire to reach a *pervonachal'naja nemota*, to surrender to that "merging" which Ivanov, following Tyutchev, had called the "thirst for merging" (*zhazhda slijanija*), the "striving to blend with the sleeping world" (*stremlenie . . . smesheniju s dremljushchim mirom*), that state of contemplative ecstasy which Ivanov called Silence.[23] Even more fundamentally Mandelshtam departs from Ivanov in his call (*Ostan'sja!*) for that state in which art itself is unnecessary, since all things are One. The poet's awareness that such a state is impossible is the source of the poem's tension ("not yet, but . . ."—"*eshche ne, no . . .*") and anxiety, in marked contrast to Ivanov's feeling of confidence. In its nostalgia for a past when there existed the "indestructible bond of everything living" (*nenarushaemaja svjaz' vsego zhivogo*), the poem seems implicitly to question the possibility of the *recreation* of that state which is called for in the conclusion of Ivanov's article: "The integral world-outlook of the poet will discover it [a "living bond"—*zhivaja svjaz'*] within himself, integral and unified. The poet will find religion within himself if he finds within himself the bond."[24]

As Taranovsky has written, the music of "Silentium" is "not our human music, but rather metaphysical music: the spontaneous language of being. In this poem Mandelshtam is still a symbolist."[25] (The "word," one should also add, is the *logos*, not ordinary speech.) None of the Symbolists wrote more eloquently of this Music than did Bely or Ivanov. Mandelshtam would have been well aware of Ivanov's many statements about it not only in the 1910 article ("lyric poetry . . . like music, is a motive art" [*lirika . . . podobno muzyke—iskusstvo dvigatel'noe*; *SS*, II, 600]), but in such articles in *By the Stars* as "Two Elements in Contemporary Symbolism" (*Dve stikhii v sovremennom simvolizme*), where Ivanov discusses Verlaine's "De la musique avant toute chose," and, most notably, in "Premonitions and Portents."[26] In that essay, where both *molchanie* and *muzyka* are discussed in the space of two pages, Ivanov writes:

> In every work of art, even the plastic arts, there is a hidden music. . . . the very soul of art is musical . . . aspiration for the ineffable [*neizrechennoe*—a Tyutchev allusion, of course] which constitutes the soul and life of esthetic enjoyment: and this volition, this transport is music [*SS*, II, 92—93].

And in the same essay we also find: ". . . for from the Dionysian sea of orgiastic agitation arises the Apollonian vision of myth" [*SS*, II, 99].

But in none of these articles, nor in "The Testaments of Symbolism," is Aphrodite connected in any way with Music; nor is she in any version of the myth known in the ancient world. Of course, she is the goddess of Beauty. In the conclusion to "The Symbolism of Esthetic Principles" (*Simvolika esteticheskikh nachal*, 1905), Ivanov had written:

> In the image of Aphrodite "born from foam" ancient acumen combined all three principles of the beautiful. From foaming chaos arises . . . the goddess.—"Aphrogeneia," "Anadyomene." . . . she ascends—and already embraces the heavens—"Urania," "Asteria."[27]

Three paragraphs earlier, he speaks of "the most potent of the arts—Music" (*mogushchestvennejshee iz iskusstv—Muzyka*), and writes of its Siren-like call to us to merge ourselves in Chaos, the realm of the "bisexual, masculofeminine Dionysus" (*dvupolyj, muzhezhenskij Dionis*), of Night, to which he opposes the sunny realm of Cosmos with the male Apollo and the female Aphrodite, from which we rise to Beauty. Ivanov also writes there of the realm of Chaos: "Only the *white foam* covers the avid tumbling of the waters" (*Belaja kipen'* odna pokryvaet zhadnoe rushen'e vod [*SS*, I, 829]—compare the *peny blednaja siren'* in Mandelshtam).

However, Ivanov had in fact made a specific connection between Aphrodite and Music in the first part of the poem "Music" (Muzyka). There the birth of Music is imaged in terms of the myth of Aphrodite (note too the color gold, traditionally associated with the goddess):

Music
Music's Voice

My father is
That hungering god who desired to bear

The color-woven destiny of blind incarnations,
A much-suffered, suffering fate.
And he drenches, and *being's vessel foams*
And, uncontained, golden rims pour
Inexhaustibly seething Will.
But like a gilded cloud
Am I born from the foam spilt in thunderclaps
And I soar, and bear
The muffled storm of inescapable blazings,
And I sob in the wilds of upper air.

Muzyka
Golos Muzyki

Moj otets—
Onyj alchushchij bog, chto nesti voskhotel
Voploshchenij slepykh tsvetno-tkanyj udel,
Mnogostradnuju, strastnuju dolju.
I poit on, i *penit sosud bytija,*
I lijut, ne vmestiv, zolotye kraja
Neischerpno-kipjashchuju volju.
No, kak oblak zlatoj,
Ja razhdajus' iz peny, v gromakh prolitòj
I nesus', i nesu
Neizbytykh pylanij glukhuju grozu,
I rydaju v pustynjakh èfira . . .[28]

In a letter of August 13/26, 1909, Mandelshtam had asked Ivanov to send him a copy of *Pilot Stars* (*Kormchie zvezdy*), where "Muzyka" appeared in the cycle "To Dionysus" (*Dionisu*).[29] We do not know how Ivanov responded, but we may be sure that Mandelshtam, on his return to Russia from Switzerland, read the volume, and that "Muzyka" provided the specific subtext for his own response to Ivanov in 1910. (Note specifically "*penit sosud bytija,*" as well as "*Ja razhdajus' iz peny*"; for Aphrodite is derived from the Greek *aphros,* foam; and "Aphrogeneia" means "born of foam" [*penorozhdennaja*], and "Anadyomene" means "appearing on the surface of the sea," [*pojavivshajasja na poverkhnosti morja*]).[30] The conclusion of the beautiful "Italian Sonnet," "The Sistine Chapel" (Sikstinskaja kapella), in *Pilot Stars* may also have echoed in Mandelshtam's mind: *I khram ispoln' gromov i reva— / Javlennoj* muzyki koleblemyj sosud.[31]

Seen in the context of the "Symbolist Debate" and of Ivanov's poetry, Mandelshtam's poem takes on new resonance. His "dialogue" with Ivanov did not end there. Two years later, in 1912, he would again allude to Ivanov's programmatic article (and his own response) in the poem which begins "We cannot endure *silence full of tension . . .*" (My *naprjazhennogo molchan'ja* ne vynosim . . .).[32] In 1913, in "The Morning of Acmeism" (*Utro akmeizma*), Mandelshtam would make his declaration of poetic independence, and it is natural that he would there allude specifically only to the one Symbolist who had had the greatest impact on his early art by writing "Acmeism makes it [the law of identity] its slogan and proposes it instead of the dubious *a realibus ad realiora.*"[33] Yet in the later essay "On the Nature of the Word" (*O prirode slova*), he could assert:

> The *tastes,* not the *ideas,* of the Acmeists turned out to be fatal for Symbolism. The ideas turned out to be, in part, copied from the Symbolists, and Vyacheslav Ivanov himself assisted greatly in the formulation of Acmeist theory.[34]

In the 1920s he included Ivanov among those Russian poets who were "not only for yesterday or today, but for all time."[35] And in another essay, "Storm and Stress" (*Burja i natisk*), published in 1923, he wrote:

> The complex Byzantine-Hellenic world of Vyacheslav Ivanov fares somewhat better. Being essentially the very same kind of pioneer and colonizer as all the other Symbolists, he did not, however, look at Byzantium and Hellas as foreign lands destined for conquest, but rightly saw in them the cultural springs of Russian poetry. But, owing to the lack of a sense of proportion, something characteristic of all the Symbolists, he overburdened his poetry to an incredible degree with Byzantine-Hellenic images and myths, which depreciated it considerably.[36]

Only two pages later, however, Mandelshtam added (and the remarks

show that the roots of Mandelshtam's own "Hellenism" lie in part in Ivanov):

> Vyacheslav Ivanov is more national (*naroden*) and more accessible in the future than all the other Russian Symbolists. A significant portion of the fascination of his solemnity relates to our philological ignorance. In no other Symbolist poet does the noise of the lexicon, the mighty rumble of the bell of national speech, swelling up and waiting its turn, sound so distinctly as in Vyacheslav Ivanov. His sense of the past as the future makes him akin to Khlebnikov. Ivanov's archaism stems not from his choice of themes, but from his incapacity for relative thinking, that is, for the comparison of different periods of time. The Hellenic poems of Vyacheslav Ivanov are written not after and not at the same time as Greek poems, but before them, because never for a moment does he forget himself as he speaks in his barbarian native idiom.[37]

Obviously Mandelshtam's view of Ivanov and his legacy was as complex (and inconsistent) as many other of his statements.

These remarks can only suggest that Ivanov served as something more than merely the "filter" for Mandelshtam's "Hellenism," a topic which in itself deserves study. By ignoring Ivanov, as has been the case for too long, we impoverish Russian verse. By ignoring his impact on other poets of his time we seriously distort the history of Russian verse. The time is long overdue to take the right measure of both.

Notes

1. Osip Mandelshtam, *Sobranie sochinenij,* II (Washington, D.C., 1971), 239. Hereafter references will be to the volume and page number of this four-volume edition.

2. N. I. Khardzhiev in the notes to O. Mandelshtam, *Stikhotvorenija* (Biblioteka poeta, 1973), pp. 254–55.

3. Anna Akhmatova, "Mandelshtam (Listki iz dnevnika)," *Sochinenija,* 2 (Washington, D.C., 1968), p. 169.

4. "Mandelshtam v zapisjakh dnevnika S. P. Kablukova," ed. and introd. A. A. Morozov, *Vestnik R. Kh. D.,* 129 (III-1979), 151–52.

5. Cited in A. A. Morozov's publication of "Pis'ma O. E. Mandelshtama k V. I. Ivanovu," *Zapiski otdela rukopisej GBL,* 34 (1973), 261.

6. Kiril Taranovsky, *Essays on Mandelshtam* (Cambridge, Mass., 1976), p. 83. For Levinton see *Russian Literature,* V, 2–3 (1977).

7. See "Pis'ma . . . ," pp. 273–74.

8. Taranovsky, *Mandelshtam,* p. 122. E. Toddes, in his exhaustive "Mandelshtam i Tjutchev" (*International Journal of Slavic Linguistics and Poetics,* 17 [1974], 59–85), must consider the connection between the two poems so obvious and, perhaps, "over-commented" that he does not even mention them.

9. Jan Meijer, "The Early Mandelshtam and Symbolism," *Russian Literature* VII, 5 (1979), 529. Ryszard Przybylski, "Osip Mandelshtam i muzyka," *Russian Literature,* 2 (1972), 111. Przybylski's hostility to the Symbolists here and in other articles has blinded him to their impact on Mandelshtam. Przybylski insists on seeing him at war with them in all respects.

10. Mandelshtam (Biblioteka poeta), p. 256.

11. In his review of the second edition of *Stone* in *Apollon,* 1 (1916), Gumilev called "Silentium" a "bold completion" (*smeloe dogovarivanie*) of Verlaine's "Art poétique," (*Sobranie sochinenij* IV (Washington, 1968), 363.

12. See poems like Nos. 457d, 457e, 457o, 457p, 457v in Mandelshtam II (1971). Mandelshtam sent all these poems to Ivanov in his letters.

13. Blok registered a detailed summary of the Petersburg version in his notebook (knizhka tridtsataja, 26 marta); see *Zapisnye knizhki 1901–1920* (Moscow, 1965), pp. 167–69.

14. "Iz perepiski Aleksandra Bloka s Vyach. Ivanovym," publikatsija N. V. Kotreleva, *Izvestija Akademii nauk, serija literatury i jazyka,* vol. 41, 2 (Moscow, 1982), p. 170.

15. *Literaturnoe nasledstvo (Aleksandr Blok. Novye materialy i issledovanija)* 92, book 3 (Moscow, 1982), 365.

16. Kablukov noted in his Diary on August 18, 1910: "Iz napechatannykh v 'Apollone' luchshee; 'Ona eshche ne rodilas' . . .'" (*Vestnik,* 129, 135). In the same diary entry he mentioned that he had met Mandelshtam in July at Hangö (Finnish Hanko), near Helsinki, where both were vacationing, and that they had discussed Ivanov. Mandelshtam had read Ivanov's and his own poems aloud to him.

17. All citations from "The Testaments of Symbolism" will be from the

text published in volume II of the Brussels *Sobranie sochinenij* (1974), 589–603. The article was republished in *Borozdy i mezhi* (1916) after its appearance in *Apollon* in 1910.

18. *SS*, II, 90. The essay was first published in *Zolotoe runo* 5–6, (1906), and republished in *Po zvezdam*.

19. Blok, *Sobranie sochinenij v 8-i tomakh*, V (Moscow, 1962), 428; *SS* II, 599. My italics.

20. *SS*, II, 92. My italics. The colors of Ivanov's "Bogini" (*Kormchie zvezdy*, *SS*, I, 587), in which "penorozhdennaja Kifera" appears, could also be noted (l. 3: "I gonit zvonko jakhont sinij"; ll. 5–6: "Tkan' Oread—lazurnyj dym / Okutal krjakh lilovo-seryj"), especially line ten: "Nad sinevoj neizrechennoj." Note too lines 3–4 of "Uvlechenie" (*Kormchie zvezdy*, *SS*, I, 610): "Lazurnye valy, gorja, preobrazhalis' / I rizu purpura prozrachnogo vlekli," and lines 5–6 of "Poety dukha" (*Prozrachnost'*, *SS*, I, 737): "My—vspleski rdjanoj peny / Nad blednost'ju morej."

21. The grammatical referent for *ona* in the poem's first line is highly ambivalent when first encountered and could refer to *Krasota* (Beauty) or *Ljubov'* (Love) or both, both of which Aphrodite represents.

22. *SS*, I, 712. See also his later letters in *Perepiska iz dvukh uglov* (1921).

23. *SS*, II, 591. The conclusion of Ivanov's poem "Molchanie" (which begins "Vsja gorit—i bezmolvstvuet roza . . .") offers suggestive parallels with Mandelshtam's poem: "Poljubi [an imperative] *soprirodnuju* s neju [rozoj], / *Serdtse solntse*, svoju *nemotu* (*SS*, II, 508). I cannot say, however, whether Mandelshtam knew the poem or not. It was included in *Cor Ardens*, and the editors of the collected works give no indication whether or not it was published before 1911. Mandelshtam could certainly have known the other "Molchanie" ("V tajnik . . .") of *Cor Ardens*, as it had appeared in the fifth issue of *Pereval* in 1907 (not 1904, as the note to the poem on p. 704 of *SS*, II states). Mandelshtam's locution "Da obretut usta moi" alludes directly, however, to a much earlier text, Pushkin's *Evgenij Onegin*, One, 49, ll. 13–14: "S nej [Venetsianskoju mladoj] obretut usta moi / Jazyk Petrarki i ljubvi."

24. *SS*, II, 601–602. Victor Terras described "Silentium" as "the poet's nostalgia for primordial unity with the cosmos" expressed in his theme of the "reversed flow of time" in "The Time Philosophy of Osip Mandelstam," *The Slavonic and East European Review*, XLVII, 109 (1969), 351.

25. Taranovsky, *Mandelshtam*, p. 122.

26. Mandelshtam had enthusiastically greeted the publication of *Po zvezdam* in 1909. His letter to Ivanov of August 13/26, 1909, shows that he had read the volume carefully (see "Pis'ma," pp. 262–63).

27. *SS*, I, 830. First published under that title in *Po zvezdam*; in *Vesy*, 5, 1905, the article was entitled "O Niskhozhdenii." In Tyutchev's early poem "Uranija" Urania is represented not so much as the muse of astronomy as the incarnation of Beauty and thereby linked with Aphrodite (ll. 22–25: ". . . Kak luna iz-za oblak, vstaet / *Uranii* ostrov iz srebrjanoj peny; / Razlilsja vokrug nemertsajushchij svet, / Bogin' ulybkoju rozhdennyj . . ."), but not with Music.

28. *SS*, I, 542. My italics. The poem is among the first in the collection *Kormchie zvezdy*.

29. "If you have an extra, a completely extra copy of *Kormchie Zvezdy*, could it not by some means or other make its way into my careful hands? . . ."—"Pis'ma," p. 263.

30. See the entry "*Afrodita*" by A. F. Losev in *Mify narodov mira* 1 (1980), p. 132.

31. *SS*, I, 622. My italics. The image of the sea in a *sosud* also appears in the poem "Kassandre" (III, 2) in *Prozrachnost'* (1904): "A More zhdet v nedvizhimom sosude" (*SS*, I, 790).

32. The poem was included in the third edition of *Stone*, but first published in *Giperborej* 9–10 (1913). All editions of *Stone* contain the "architectural" poems "Notre Dame" and "Aija-Sofija," both from 1912. The imagery of "Notre Dame" obviously prefigures the architectural metaphors in which Mandelshtam set out an Acmeist esthetic in "The Morning of Acmeism" (1913). "Aija-Sofija" salutes another great monument of sacred architecture. It stands in sharp contrast to the Paris cathedral both in terms of architectural style and faith. The Gothic and Latin Notre Dame *overcomes* chaos in the thrust of its spire and multiple tensions. The Byzantine and Greek Hagia Sophia *harmonizes* chaos, and in the image of its great cupola sailing through the world like a ship Mandelshtam finds the very symbol of *sobornost'* (a central concept in Ivanov as well as Orthodoxy). As such, despite its "Acmeist precision," I would argue (although I cannot prove) that the poem "Aija-Sofija" represents a kind of salute to Ivanov as well as to the building. There is a distant textual parallel to Mandelshtam's "Aija-Sofija" in Ivanov's lines "Eony dolgie, svetilo, ty plyvesh'; / Ty moj letuchij vek, kak den', perezhivesh'" from the poem "Pokornost'," II, 1–2, in *Kormchie zvezdy* (*SS*, I, 523). But I think more of the terms in which Mandelshtam expressed his admiration for the collection *Po zvezdam* in the letter to Ivanov of August 13/26, 1909, which emphasizes its harmony and *kruglost'*: "When a person steps under the vaults of Notre Dame does he really ponder the truth of Catholicism, and does he not become a Catholic simply by virtue of being under those vaults? Your book

is excellent because of the beauty of its great architectural creations and astronomical systems. . . . Only it seemed to me that the book is too—how to say it?—too circular, without angles. . . . And only the breathing of the Cosmos fans your book, imparting to it a charm it shares with *Zarathustra*—compensating for the astronomical circularity of your system. . . ."—"Pis'ma," pp. 262–63. By 1912 Mandelshtam had begun to derive from his sense of the "otherness" of Ivanov's view of art a corresponding sense of his own identity. What better way to assert it than to close the first edition of *Stone* with these two poems?

33. Mandelshtam, II, 324. When the article was published in 1919, Mandelshtam included a specific footnote: "A formula of Symbolism given by Vyacheslav Ivanov. See 'Thoughts on Symbolism' in the volume *Borozdy i mezhi.*"

34. Mandelshtam, II, 257. My italics. In the same essay Mandelshtam cited Tyutchev's "Silentium!" and his remark that "Skorost' razvitija jazyka nesoizmerima s razvitiem samoj zhizni" is close to Ivanov's "nesootvetstvie mezhdu dukhovnym rostom lichnosti i vneshnimi sredstvami obshchenija" in "Thoughts on Symbolism."

35. "Vypad," Mandelshtam, II, 228.

36. Mandelshtam, II, 341.

37. Mandelshtam, II, 343.

Vyacheslav Ivanov's Reflective Comprehension of Art: The Poet and Thinker as Critic of Somov, Bakst, and Čiurlionis

Aleksis Rannit†

Vyacheslav Ivanov was neither an art critic in the modern sense nor an impressionistic writer-on-art of Rilke's, Hofmannstal's or Pater's type. He was many things: a classical philologist, a specialist in the history of ideas, a thinker interested in the philosophic side of mysticism, an exuberant language-maker, an inventor in metrics, an Alexandrian lyrical poet, and a pan-European *poeta doctus* whom Vladimir Markov has termed the only Russian man of letters able to converse at his ease with Dante and Goethe.[1] Ivanov, however, was neither an art historian like Wölfflin (with his pioneering studies of stylistic change in art) nor a regular reviewer of art exhibitions as was Baudelaire. As a thinker primarily interested in theories of the ultimate nature of things, he seldom wrote about the visual arts, only occasionally exploring the region of purely esthetic knowledge. We have from his pen only three essays on the subject: "The Spear of Athena" (*Kop'e Afiny,* 1904), on the problems of art in general; "Ancient Terror" (*Drevnij uzhas,* 1909), on a specific painting, "Terror Antiquus," by the decorative, calligraphic Russian artist Lev (Léon) Bakst (1866–1924); and a third, a panoramic philosophical and analytical article on the enigmatic Lithuanian painter Mikalojus Konstantinas Čiurlionis (1875–1911), one who was the first to apply several levels of musical time and purely musical rhythms, meters, and structures to painting. The essay "On Joyous Handicraft and Wise Rejoicing" (*O veselom remesle i umnom veselii,* 1907) deals primarily with literature. Nonetheless, we may cite two short fragments

of this treatise in which Ivanov spoke his mind about the purpose of art. The essay opens with a long and labyrinthine sentence:

> Argument about the purpose of art—whether it justifies itself in its own terms as "art for art's sake" or needs the further justification of life as "art for life's sake," an argument advanced as conclusive, but for all that, never decided in the depths of our souls—such an argument never entered men's minds during those times (happy times for art) when creative genius, one way or another, was the joint creativity of the artist as tradesman and of his customers—whether those customers served as authorized representatives of the public (for example, the magistrates of the ancient republics or the archbishops of the medieval church), or, like the Medici, arbitrarily expressed the tastes and demands of the times; whether they were innovators who rose out of the crowd but were still of the crowd in spirit, or, like Louis XIV, were masters of the crowd who, while not losing their connection with it even in their domination of it, ensured themselves of the crowd's imitative submission.[2]

Later in the same essay, as he contemplates art and artists of all kinds, Ivanov is ethical earnestness itself; he writes specifically of poets, but certainly could be speaking of the practitioners of the plastic arts as well:

> Every kind of "playing at genius" ("genialisches Treiben") and Romanticism is but the haughty idle wandering of arty Bohemia constrained to work not otherwise than for storage and for emergency: all this Bohemia immediately elevates into a principle and in its own presumptuous jargon terms "art for art's sake." If, however, some people finally begin to listen to these "holiday revellers," "priests of the one and only beautiful," the artists view this attention they have aroused as a perfect surrogate for paid commissions, regard "the epoch" or "life itself" as their customers, and willingly agree to "create" for the vague promise of future glory as leaders and liberators of humanity. Thus they turn out to be not averse even to the formula "art for life's sake" as long as they are allowed to consider as life their dreams about life and to imagine themselves its organizers or even outright creators. In this way, Byron overthrows tyrants and Heine liberates Germany.
>
> Artists are particularly inclined to subscribe to the "art for life's sake" pact on condition that life is understood as something very broad and cosmic, and not fully intelligible . . . [*SS*, III, 63]

In addition to these essays Ivanov composed poems to and about artists and single works of art. Konstantin Somov (1869–1939), an influential member of the World of Art group, was one of the few Russian artists with whom Ivanov became associated. Their meeting took place in 1905 through Lydia Zinovieva-Annibal, a friend of Somov. The artist actively participated in the poet's famous Wednesdays in St. Petersburg, and Ivanov celebrated him in a special poem called "Terzine to Somov" (*Tertsiny k Somovu*, 1906). It is a poem of considerable energy composed of eleven iambic tercets, wrought in the manner of modernist stylization and rhythmically enriched by the use of enjambments. Its intricate harmony is achieved by Ivanov's mastery of form, producing a structure at once massive and subtle. The poem includes reminiscences of Somov's well-known painting "Isle of Love" (*Ostrov ljubvi*), now in the Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow, and of Lermontov's "Meditation" (*Duma*), of Calderón and of *Ecclesiastes;* it may also refer to Byron's *The Island,* translated into Russian by Ivanov, and to Watteau's *Embarkment for Cythera* and Baudelaire's "A Voyage to Cythera." To understand the poem, one needs to be acquainted with the middle period of the artist's work, when he changed his early realist style to a poetic, sentimental manner full of *passéism* and retrospectivism, achieving both an expression of nostalgia for the eighteenth century and a delicate ridicule, even satire, of the etiquette and vanity of those times. Exaggerating, the Symbolist poet and critic Andrey Bely called the subject of these paintings "comic terror." Bely, one of the very few early critics who understood Ivanov's style and philosophy, likewise called him "the most refined of Russian poets," and recognized "Terzine to Somov" as one of the ten best poems of *Cor Ardens*.[3]

Somov's art, the art of self-conscious illusion, was rich in mellowness; everything pointed to a consummate perfection of technique. Ivanov might well appreciate the worldly enchantment of Somov's subjects, the courtly beauty of his colors, the exquisiteness of minor forms, the Beardsleyan capriciousness of the graphic line. Looking at Somov's pictures, he also understood that as Somov presented it, life is an entrancing game with a strange beginning, then a long mystery of inspiration and divination, and at last a disconsolate, gloomy end. Ivanov, I believe, at least hinted his own regret that Somov had willfully deserted the strong world of his pure, painterly landscapes (the artist was especially fond of the landscapes of northern Estonia and of the area surrounding St. Petersburg) and could probably no longer liberate himself from the illusion-making of art and return to those fresh forests and untilled meadowlands that had been his first love. Ivanov's poem, written in 1906 and published in *Cor Ardens* in 1911, is a philosophical and psychological essay in itself, and must be read in its entirety.

Terzine to Somov

Ah Somov, magus! Why with such malicious pleasure
Are you hastening to degrade your magic dream
And make a mockery of your own proper treasure?

And conjuring a wayward beauty all your own
From your forefathers' graves with such inconstancy,
Why rush to show the naked and the overblown

In what you clothed yourself with dainty finery?
Is it from envy of those shades in olden times
Who knew happiness under powdered prudery?

Your avid spirit is tormented by a yearning
For those "Amorous Isles" to which, as years ago
They auctioned off that creaky world, there's no returning.

The Graces are no more, nor delicate debauch
Nor rendezvous nor those adventurous exploits
In which their childish lives were so profusely rich . . .

Nor primly proper gardens nor their sportive flurry,
And we, encumbered by cognition and by doubt,
Are old in youth, so life for us is toil and hurry . . .

When will your genius then from this captivity
Break loose to freedom, to the meadows and cool woods
Where you may catch the changeable proclivity

Of heavens with their fleeting clouds, their rainbow spectrum.
Or you may paint the vivid shades of sumptuous evenings.
And secretly some sort of demon feeds your tedium

At your festivities of lavish idleness,
And in your ear it whispers this: "All life is play.
And all things change in primal variableness

Of lovely vanity. To everything give way!
And all is dream and shade in dream. All smiles and talk,
All patterns and all colors (now, as yesterday)

Flow past, each pestering in turn—and far away
They falsely beckon. Over all an empty sky.
Life plays with dolls. Such playing is not worth one's breath.

And from behind a hundred masks is smiling . . . Death."[4]

The other poem in *Cor Ardens* on a Somovian subject is "Fireworks" *Feerverki*) inspired by Somov's painting and pen drawings of the same title, produced between 1904 and 1908 [*SS*, II, 312]. It is not lacking in imagination, but nonetheless is reflective in only a simple way, and we must return to the previous, much more profound poem, "Terzine to Somov" to ask ourselves why Ivanov was so taken with Somov. Was the source of enthusiasm the friendship between Somov and Lydia Zinovieva-Annibal, or the portrait of Ivanov—a drawing of precision and lightness—made by the artist in the same year the poem was written? Was it the philosophy of joyous playfulness which, strangely enough, was not foreign to Ivanov? Later in 1922, it will be recalled, Ivanov even wrote the text for Mikhail Popov's operetta "Love—A Mirage" (*Ljubov—mirazh*), an enterprise that led him to give considerable attention to artists really quite alien to his

taste. The poet and the artist were acquainted for a decade or so. It is difficult for us today to understand why Ivanov asked Somov in 1911 to design the cover of his important book of poems *Cor Ardens*. This conspicuously embellished and superficial cover design, composed in the style of the so-called *belle époque*, illustrates only one segment of Ivanov's work of that period, namely the decorative aspect. It is true that *Cor Ardens* has elements of ornateness (or, as Olga Deschartes said so beautifully, it is "reminiscent of a Byzantine gown"),[5] yet Ivanov's poetry is not based on ornament for ornament's sake; in his case, the romantic and intellectual synthesis of heart and head does not break down, as happens in Victorian poetry. The decorative romanticism of the Victorians and of some Symbolists is actually an impossibility in Ivanov's case, because even his richest verbal orchestration is deeply saturated with inductive and deductive thought. As with Plato, one of Ivanov's dominant motifs is a persistent faith in the faculties of mind. He had a clear feeling for the relation between the senses and the intellect, the active and the contemplative powers. This is the first of two essential differences between Ivanov and his fellow Symbolists in Russia, Balmont, Bely, and Blok, or, for that matter, between Ivanov and the Austrian poet Rainer Maria Rilke (the Rilke of the early verses). The second difference is that these poets sometimes apply ornament as a purely sentimental and mannerist, decorative, euphonic device, which occasionally leads to a divorce of being from becoming and to a certain hypnotic *melomania*, especially in Balmont and in Blok. The music in Ivanov, however, is always functional. In this he may be compared with, for example, the German Symbolist poet Stefan George, whom he calls the "great master" or with Osip Mandelshtam who for some years was Ivanov's follower and admirer. A balanced ornamental, spatial form is present in Ivanov's metrically linear verse, but it is an ornamental form of depth, not of the surface.

Bearing all this in mind it is difficult to comprehend Ivanov's deep interest in Somov's art, not because Somov was an amateur—on the contrary, he was a master, especially as a draughtsman—but because Somov's rococo kind of artificiality, his inner skepticism, his indecisive hovering between various meanings and dimensions,

did not correspond at all to the core of Ivanov's regulative principles of significant art. Ivanov expressed his own ideas on art in his combative essay "The Spear of Athena," a title possibly suggesting that the war-goddess Athena (who, we must not forget, was also a patroness of the arts and crafts) guided her hero Diomedes' spear into Ares' flank.[6] Was she now guiding Ivanov's own spear against unimportant art, in favor of art resplendent and universal in its meaning? Ivanov's mention of Mozart and Velázquez in this essay as men of intimate, limited appeal stuns us now. Velázquez, notwithstanding the so-called "impressionistic" caprices of his palette, has nobility and dignity, and appears full of serene human truth. He was also a religious painter. However, let us listen respectfully to Ivanov, the subjective critic and objective idealist who expressed his credo and formula clearly and forcefully:

> Intimate art is the art most important from the point of view of artistic *techné*. It is primarily "art for art's sake." It singles out the artist and cultivates the virtuoso. It makes demands of refinement and taste. Insights and discoveries of a purely esthetic order are accomplished in its closed circle. In it a painter is for the first time only a painter—like Velázquez; a musician is only a musician—like Mozart. It is centripetal, passive with relation to the general goals of the cultural-historical trend; finally, it is analytic in method, in contrast to high art, which is in essence synthetic. To the extent that one can think in static types of abstraction, intimate art (as, for example, the aristocratic art of the eighteenth century) can achieve that unity of style which constitutes a primary characteristic of high art, and affect indefinitely wide circles with it; only thus do we have the right to speak of the style of the eighteenth century at all.
>
> Art of the cloister, on the other hand, is centrifugal in its deepest strivings, active, and again, synthetic. If intimate art draws around itself a wizard's circle, art of the cloister desires to seize the magic wand. Its reticence is the forced reticence of self-defense and concentration; the creative monad of new fermentation defends itself with impenetrable armor, as if to draw into its own

shell, and thus accumulate in itself its own explosive energy. It is the catacomb creativity of "the hermits of the spirit."

Intimate art is art of pure unalloyed contemplation; art of the cloister is art of metaphysical desire. Intimate art contemplates the outer and private, art of the cloister, the inner and general. The first is celebration of personality and its rule; in the second, as in universal art, the suprapersonal triumphs again.[7]

Ivanov was not interested in Somov alone, of course, but perhaps the only other artists about whom he wrote with such intimacy and fondness were Nicolas Poussin and Claude Lorrain, the subjects of the poem "Two Artists" (*Dva khudozhnika*) in the collection *Pilot Stars* (*Kormchie zvezdy,* 1903).[8] Is there not a certain superficial similarity between these artists—and especially between the work of Lorrain, the prince of landscape painters, the communicator of a sense of enchantment and repose—and some of the diaphanous Arcadian pictures by Somov? Above the title "Two Artists," Ivanov put another, Greek title "Epimetron," which may puzzle us. Was he striving for esthetic distance from this "unassuming" idyllic world of French artists? Or does "Epimetron" mean "Beyond measure," or simply "Enclosure" or "Conclusion," in a positive sense? The question is important since all artists mentioned in Ivanov's poems, except these two and Somov, seem to have dealt with questions of the cognition or mystery of being.[9]

Only seven specific paintings and one sculpture are subjects of individual poems, poems which are translations of Ivanov's esthetic and philosophic experience. These poems are: "La stanza della disputa" [*SS,* I, 621] on Raphael's painting of the same name, "The Last Supper of Leonardo" (*Vecherja Leonardo, SS,* I, 615), "Botticelli's Magnificat" [*SS,* I, 616], "Hermit of the Spirit: to a Picture by Redon" (*Pustynnik dukha: k kartine O. Redona, SS,* I, 783), and "Il Gigante" [*SS,* I, 615], whose epithet is taken from the popular name for Michelangelo's *David.* One of his finest poems, written in the elegiac distich, a metrical scheme in which Ivanov the poet as well as Ivanov the translator has, in my opinion, no equal in Russian poetry, is entitled "Narcissus: Pompeian Bronze" (*Nartsis: Pompeiskaja bronza, SS,* I, 744). Finally, there is a celebration of one of the temples of Paestum, "Temple of Paestum" (*Pestumskij khram, SS,* I, 583). Actually, all of Ivanov's poetry is laudation, since he is essentially a hymnodist. From the very first poem after the dedicatory poem in his first collection *Pilot Stars* to the end of *Evening Light* (*Svet vechernij*), his last collection, the poet was a praiser, a commender, a solemnizer. In that first poem, "Beauty" (*Krasota*), the memorable opening lines demonstrate Ivanov the writer as the possessor of the "third eye," the visionary eye of an artist as well as of a musician:

Divine distances, I see you—
the ever bluer crystal of the hills of Umbria, . . .

Vizhu vas, bozhestvennye dali,
Umbriskikh gor sinejushchij kristall, . . .[10]

In this poem he proclaims that his countenance is a meek, gentle ray of sacramental "Yes," "Yes" being written with a capital letter (. . . krotkij luch tainstvennogo Da.) In Ivanov's case it must be a sacramental and not simply a "hidden" *Yes.* Modernistic poetry, that of the Eliot era, is poetry of the wastelands, poetry in which either for sincere or snobbish reasons not "Yes" but "No" (again with a capital letter), the great "Nothingness," is elaborately eulogized, acclaimed, and extolled. In all his poems, poems about art and life or even about death, Ivanov remains a metaphysical optimist. I cannot at this moment think of a modern poet-philosopher who could stand in deeply-felt cheerfulness and reliance as Ivanov's companion, except the modern master Jorge Guillén, that permanent poet of the Spanish tongue.

There are many reminiscences of art and artists in Ivanov's poetry and prose. We meet, among others, the Russian classicist painter Alexander Ivanov and the Symbolist Mikhail Vrubel. We encounter Phidias, Memling, and among the Italians Piranesi, Bernini, Taddeo Landini, Luca Signorelli, Titian, and Giorgione. Giorgione's *The Tempest,* the subject of the second poem of the cycle "At an Exhibition of Paintings of the Old Masters" (*Na vystavke kartin starinnykh masterov*) in Ivanov's *Evening Light* [*SS,* III, 642] was,

according to Dmitry Ivanov, one of the poet's most beloved paintings. It is not surprising that Giorgione, the master of grace and sensuality, would inspire Ivanov; it is, however, unexpected that Ivanov would love a work which has no precise religious or mythological subject. But then it seems that the Ivanov of the late years was a different poet-critic, one who was able to enjoy fully Giorgione the pure artist and innovator for whom *The Tempest*, *Sleeping Venus*, and *Three Philosophers* were simply pretexts for indulging the painterly imagination. Giorgione's lack of, or indifference to, subject matter was, of course, in great contrast to the earlier, literary traditions of Italian painting.

In one of his prose pieces Ivanov even mentioned Picasso, in whom (as in Pirandello) he saw an analytical dissector *forma formans—forma zizhdushchaja*, the forming or building form, or form as the creator [*SS*, III, 678–89]. There are poems by Ivanov to artists either unknown to us or imaginary, pieces like "Artist" (*Khudozhnik*, *SS*, II, 380) and "Le nu dans l'art" [*SS*, I, 631].

Finally there are the well-composed, although somewhat heavy, translations from Baudelaire (heavy because the Russian tongue lacks the feathered lightness of the French language). In his rendering of Baudelaire's famous poem "Les phares" (*Majaki*, Beacons), Ivanov skillfully created epigrammatic Russian variants of the French poet's characterizations of Rubens, Rembrandt, Michelangelo, Puget, Watteau, Goya, and Delacroix. Ivanov's translation of "Les phares" is one of the finest examples of this kind of sovereign, ingenious, visionary rendering. Let us quote first the French original of the poem's second stanza, then the musical, almost scientifically exact German version by Stefan George, and finally the rich, space-creating lines of Vyacheslav Ivanov.

Léonard de Vinci, miroir profond et sombre
Où des anges charmants, avec un doux souris
Tout chargé de mystère, apparaissent à l'ombre
Des glaciers et des pins qui ferment leur pays;[11]

Leonardo da Vinci ein spiegel tief und dunkel
Wo reizende engel mit ihrem süss-lächelnden mund

Und voll von geheimnis erscheinen im abendgefunkel
Der gletscher und fichten des heimatlands hintergrund.[12]

O Vinchi,—zerkalo, v ch'em omute bezdonnom
Mertsajut angely, ulybchivo-nezhny,
Luchom bezglasnykh tajn, v zatvore, ograzhdennom
Zubtsami gornykh l'dov i sumrachnoj sosny! [*SS*, II, 344]

In addition to Baudelaire, Ivanov presents a version of Michelangelo's poem "Non ha l'ottimo artista . . . ," a sonnet dealing with the art of sculpting. Again, Italian is lighter than the rigorous Russian; once more Ivanov enters with absolute sympathy into the spirit of Michelangelo's literary work, but again he secures for himself the freedom of interpretation and enlargement of poetic substance.

Ivanov's artistic imagination is manifested not only in poems dealing with fine arts, but is also present either as visual or metaphorical signification in many other poems and essays. He recognizes the intimate tie between image and expression. Like Goethe, for example, Ivanov is concerned with his own broad observations, convictions, and visions, but his belief is partly also Winckelmann's belief that the standards of antiquity and the Renaissance should govern the creation of art in the twentieth century. Winckelmann's rationalism, however, is not reflected in Ivanov's writings about art. Ivanov simply was not interested in esthetic generalizations, yet however image-possessed a Dionysian artist-thinker he appears to our superficial eyes, we must not forget that in his poems he was a master of *closed* form, of "significant form," as Clive Bell denoted it, speaking of Giotto and Cézanne.[13] His poetry is classical, Apollonian in structure, although not always in content. Ivanov's poetic art is essentially humanistic, orderly, well-proportioned, and symmetrical, with lucidly defined verse schemes and sensitive refinements of rhythm. As a classicist, Ivanov made some exceptionally strong formalist statements. At the end of his poem "Le nu dans l'art," mentioned above, Ivanov demands that the artist's talent approach the eternal Forms. I would here refer especially to the poet-philosopher-critic's categorical maxim from his 1913 essay "On the

Frontiers of Art" (*O granitsakh iskusstva*): "The artist's concern lies not in the transmission of new revelations but in the revelation of new forms" (*Delo khudozhnika—ne v soobshchenii novykh otkrovenij, no v otkrovenii novykh form* [*SS*, II, 641]). One of his finest poems dealing with the esthetic question of form and content, "Entelechy" (which may be translated as "quest for fulfillment" or "towards the finality of essence and perfection"), asks how it would be possible to unite eternity and beauty:

Entelechy

From my brimming vessel make me not, O Muse, pour forth libation!
Thought in its abundance fills every edge of measured Form.
Beauty is at one with Measure; but Thought strives toward Eternity:
You, though, demand I fit Eternity in Beauty's bounds!

Vlagu ne daj mne prolit' chrez kraj preispolnennyj, Muza!
Polnit obil'naja Mysl' Formy razmerennoj gran'.
S Meroj druzhna Krasota; no Mysl' presleduet Vechnost':
Ty zhe vmestit' mne velish' Vechnost' v predel Krasoty![14]

Wider considerations of problems in art emerged as Ivanov intimately associated himself with contemporary artists, writing contemplative longer essays on them. Here, meditating on a work of Bakst or on the whole work of Čiurlionis, his writing moved to a higher literary and philosophical plane and produced significant historical-philosophical, and, in part, esthetic criticism. Through identification with the artist, especially with Čiurlionis, Ivanov became his champion and interpreter. In Čiurlionis's case it is Ivanov's philosophy of substantial things that stands as a *via media* between a philosophy of cosmic feeling and a philosophy of mind.

A faithful Hellenophile, Ivanov could well agree with H. D. (Hilda Doolittle) who in her prosework entitled *Palimpsest* declared: "Roman laurel—there was no such thing—laurel was always Greek."[15] Ivanov loved the city of Rome; in 1926 he became a

Roman Catholic, but from his youth to the very end of his life Greek culture was the only great culture worth affectionate admiration, study, and continuous meditation;[16] and when the artist Lev Bakst exhibited his large canvas "Terror Antiquus," painted on an imaginary subject of Greek antiquity, in the St. Petersburg Salon of 1908, it was probably difficult for Ivanov not to react to it. Bakst is best known as a theatrical designer, especially during his Diaghilev period. His imaginative sets and costume designs with their effective blending of colors were delightfully sophisticated and extremely artful. He was a sensual master-servant of the light muse. In "Terror Antiquus," however, he decided to leave the world of levity and gaiety and produce a work of earnestness and gravity, even more, to attempt to create Symbolist art. The painting presents a bird's-eye view of a seascape panorama and a terrifying deluge, illuminated by flashes of lightning. The raging waters are swallowing ships, fortresses, temples, people. High above this spectacle is elevated an archaic sculpture of the goddess Aphrodite, painted after an Athenian koré in the Acropolis museum. Beautiful in a masculine way, cool-headed, imperturbably self-possessed, with a frozen smile, she holds in her hand, pressed against her breast, a blue bird, perhaps a dove since the dove was sacred to Aphrodite. (We may recall the dove used for the lustration of the temple of Pandemus, mentioned in the *Inscriptiones Graecae*.)

The artist gave no explanation of this philosophical painting, and critics have tried to explain its message in many ways. One of the most popular explanations, given by many critics, was that the painting represented the destruction of Atlantis; another was that the inert, adamantine Aphrodite, who is disregarding the elemental rage of waters behind her, is the personification of art itself, standing above time and space, possibly in the sense of Théophile Gautier's famous lines:

Everything passes.—Only strong art
survives in eternity . . .

Tout passe.—L'art robuste
seul a l'éternité . . .[17]

Ivanov would not have been satisfied with such a simple interpretation. Also, for him this Bakst painting was the perfect means to force on the work and on the reader a vehement demonstration of his own suppositions and convictions. What happens is that by the end of his fascinating essay, Ivanov has created his own painting, a different "Terror Antiquus."

Ivanov begins his article "Ancient Terror" by surveying the wide panorama of Greek spiritual reality—philosophical, psychological, and mythological. One of Ivanov's principal motifs throughout his life was the reality of memory, and here again he sang praises to its creative power. In general, he saw in the painting three immanent ideas: the terror of cosmic catastrophe, faith as *terror fati,* and the immortality (as well as the socio-psychic *terribilità*) of woman, the destroyer. Ivanov was little concerned with the esthetic qualities or deficiencies of Bakst's work. Because of its symmetry (notwithstanding a slight shift of compositional axis) and of its clearly defined classicizing tendencies, he characterized the painting simply as Apollonian. One may regret that he did not criticize it as overly premeditated and rhetorical, made according to rule, too susceptible to artificial pathos, and thus lacking the immediacy and lyrical manifestation necessary to becoming a living work of art. Bakst's pretense was, of course, to create a great painting full of *dignitas* and *auctoritas,* but he failed because he adopted a rationalist attitude and because the content of the painting became stronger than the form. The demonstrative title, too, adds to the failure; viewers of the picture are not terrified by it, but, rather, are disappointed by its lifelessness. He himself understood his labor to have been in vain. In a letter written to his wife in the summer of 1908, Bakst confesses: "I did not wish to achieve what has happened to the picture. Perhaps next time I will be able to express fully what I have striven for." But as has been already said, these problems did not prevent Ivanov from using "Terror Antiquus" for his self-contemplative thoughts. Towards the end of the essay he came to the following conclusion:

> We may gauge in what grandiose and monstrous forms the dominion of women and the mother goddess had become established by the energy of the male reaction against women's despotism and their extermination of men, energy still vivid in the memory of the *Oresteia*'s author. As Aeschylus portrays it, the essence of Orestes' spiritual struggle is summed up in the choice between mother and father. Sons took the side of their murdered fathers and unsheathed their swords against their mothers; the new priest, affirming the patriarchal beginnings and the cult of ancestor-heroes, glorified them for this. This was the reaction of structure and order against the orgiastic, of the solar religion against the lunar. The sun, the oak, and the snake were the movement's symbols. A Priest of the Sun, Orpheus, fell, sacrificed by women, and, torn to pieces, was likened by them to Dionysus. Druids raised the golden bough of mistletoe, a plant sacred to the Sun and a climber on oak branches.[18]

At the very end of his speculative venture, and again without direct relation to the painting, Ivanov rather unconvincingly assures the reader that only in Christianity does the conflict between the masculine and feminine principles disappear.

Five years after the appearance of "Ancient Terror," Ivanov published in *Apollon* his essay "Čiurlionis and the Problem of Synthesis of the Arts" (by "the arts" he meant painting and music). This essay marks the climax of Ivanov's creative imagination as an art viewer; it is both a masterpiece in the philosophy and criticism of art and a masterpiece of elevated prose style or perhaps poetry—because of its rhythmical tension and nobility.[19]

This magnificent essay is constructed on a balance between the general and the specific, the latter serving as illustration to the former. It has the freshness and spontaneity that the conjunction of Ivanov and Čiurlionis would lead one to expect. Ivanov felt a definite affinity with Čiurlionis, an artist also concerned with spirituality and with art as revelation. Since 1914 when the article was published, many books, articles, and studies on Čiurlionis have appeared in diverse languages. Among the best are those written by such remarkable Lithuanian critics as Vytautas Bičiūnas, Mykalojus Vo-

robjovas, and Vytautas Landsbergis. Ivanov's essay nonetheless occupies an honored place in Čiurlionis criticism. His thoughts on Čiurlionis combine remarkable breadth of vision with the ardor of the mature thinker. In the first paragraph, which reads like a terse formula, Ivanov attempts a description and definition of Čiurlionis's art. The definition is still valid because the critic understood the kind of abstraction and abstractionism Čiurlionis was seeking, a transcendental unity of large and small pure forms.

> The visionary art of Čiurlionis approaches clairvoyance. His spirituality is most winning and convincing when the artist engages himself in making painting supernatural, that is, when he yields to his gift of double-vision. Thanks to this double-vision, the forms through which he expresses the real world approach a simplicity of design that becomes translucent. Reduced to its basic qualities this world retains only the geometric and rhythmic principles of its essence. Space itself is nearly conquered by the transparency of forms which do not exclude but rather absorb the neighboring forms. This geometrical transparency seems to be an attempt to approach the possibilities of visual signalization of such a nature that the three dimensions we have at our disposal become insufficient. . . .[20]

Ivanov is nonetheless critical of Čiurlionis's idea of attempting to unite painting with music and space with time. The problem is an old one. Philosophers and mathematicians have long looked for a unified notion of space-time, for the spatio-temporal structure of the universe, and for a concept of time as the fourth dimension. In a naive manner, modern artists like Delacroix, Redon, and Whistler spoke about a possible union of painting with music. The difference between them and Čiurlionis was that the Lithuanian painter was an educated musician who applied the principles of musical composition to his paintings as major structural ideas. Rhythm and meter exist in music on different levels simultaneously, and to suggest the succession of these levels, Čiurlionis sometimes used four different perspectives in one single painting, bringing about tension and the implication of *movement*.[21] The musicologist Vytautas Landsbergis has dealt seriously with these problems in his book *Sonnet of the Spring* (*Pavasario sonata*) published in 1965.[22] Ivanov was unaware of Čiurlionis's musicological conceptions, since at that time nobody had analyzed Čiurlionis's art with the help of musical structure, musical texture, or melodic, rhythmic, harmonic, and tonal relationships. Nonetheless, he states that Čiurlionis's method of reworking in painting the elements of visual contemplation according to principles taken from music was indeed a new method. Ivanov writes:

> Music and painting are not only opposite to each other but are also incompatible. Čiurlionis avoided the danger of poorly combining and depriving these two branches of art of their characteristics but he did face the aesthetic antinomy. He had to contemplate time and space as an inseparable unity, since antinomies are the gates to knowledge—the artist becomes the seer. In art he again limits himself to suggesting such a contemplation—he forces us to find ourselves in space which absorbs time and motion—in space which is a pure stratum of vibrating forms.[23]

Ivanov argues, mistakenly, that Čiurlionis's experiment with the synthesis of painting and music was not adequately thought out, that it was not based on a theoretical search, and for that reason is only metaphysically convincing, developing not *in artibus* but *inter artes*. Čiurlionis's art is a miracle, however, and in such art, naiveté can be united with analytical knowledge, and originality as a form of naiveté can be combined with technical perfection. What Čiurlionis contributed to the art of painting was an unearthly, ethereal, half-mystical, religious conception of elegance and grace, a kind of beauty which Edgar Allan Poe called "supernal beauty," and, touched by the same kind of beauty, Ivanov—who termed Čiurlionis a genius-inspired artist[24]—was Čiurlionis's perfect philosophical interpreter, one endowed with deep critical understanding. In this essay his reasoning powers are applied to logical perfection, allied with deep imaginative intuition. Ivanov saw Čiurlionis's work as a hymn-like affirmation of being, and this, too, was Ivanov's own poetic and human attitude. Čiurlionis's and Ivanov's natures were

so contemplative, and, in a way, so centered upon reflection, that they perhaps never gave full utterance to their own individuality. This was unquestionably true of Čiurlionis. The cumulative richness and full-sounding depth of Ivanov's language harmonizes intimately with the sonority and monumentality of Čiurlionis's paintings. Čiurlionis achieved this monumentality, this grandeur of conception and space, even in the smallest of his compositions, as did Ivanov even in the shortest of his poems.

In the presence of Čiurlionis's paintings, Ivanov follows a scale of progressive appreciation and empathy, until he reaches the extreme point of abstract as well as sensuous philosophic certainty. He says that "the synthesis of the arts could exist only in a liturgical sense," and continues:

> What remains is to reach the final conclusion. The attempt to synthesize the different branches of art that we observe in the work of Čiurlionis derives from the attempt to transform the various arts into useful means for achieving goals outside the limits of these same arts. During this process the specific nature of each of the arts is violated and the artist's relationship with them loses its integrity and, therefore, these efforts cannot be considered as legitimate.[25]

Yet only a year after Čiurlionis's death, in the foreword to the first Futurist exhibition in Paris, the so-called *linea-forza*, or line-force, was proclaimed as the time element of space.[26] Eight years later, in 1920, Naum Gabo (an admirer of Čiurlionis) and Gabo's brother Antonin Pevsner presented the following new concepts of form:

> In order to interpret reality, art must be based upon two fundamental elements: space *and* time. Volume is not the only concept of space. Kinetic and dynamic elements must be used to express the true nature of time.

Since then, in countless attempts, the two apparently contradictory states—the dream of movement (music, in Čiurlionis's sense) and extensional reality (space)—have merged, according to modernist

critics, into a reality of time and space, though some conventional critics still may not agree with this belief or may dislike, for example, even the idea of mobile sculpture.

But none of this can change the philosophical, critical, and literary value of Ivanov's Čiurlionis essay. This interpretative analysis by Ivanov, the experimental traditionalist, is conclusive in its purity of logic and vision because there is in it a spiritual craving in the mood of Čiurlionis, an ideal in Ivanov himself, that found fulfillment here. This massive, intellectually powerful, lyrically melodious essay actually creates a panorama worthy of Čiurlionis's cosmogenic vistas. Ivanov not only established new perspectives for the understanding of Čiurlionis's philosophy of art, but also elevated it to lofty significance. With Čiurlionis in mind, Ivanov recalls Goethe's words: "Everyone would like to disappear individually in order to find himself in infinity."[27] This is exactly what happened to Ivanov the critic. Is not this mythical and mystical union with the artist the best and the highest that a critic could ever achieve?

Notes

1. Vladimir Markov, ed., *Modern Russian Poetry* (London, 1966), p. lviii.
2. *SS*, III, 62. Passage translated by Paula Radzynski and Brian Carter.
3. Andrej Belyj, *Poezija slova* (Petrograd, 1922), pp. 78, 91.
4. *SS*, II, 325–26. Translated by Lowry Nelson, Jr.
5. Olga Deschartes, "Ivanov, Vyacheslav Ivanovich," in *Encyclopedia of World Literature in the 20th Century*, 2 vols. (New York, 1969).
6. Homer, *Iliad* 5: 856.
7. *SS*, I, 729. Translated by Paula Radzynski and Brian Carter.
8. *SS*, I, 632–33.
9. The recent Soviet edition of Ivanov—*Stikhotvorenija i poemy*, ed. R. E. Pomirchij (Leningrad, 1976)—errs when it removes this ambiguity by making this simply the last poem in a cycle.
10. *SS*, I, 517. Translated by H. W. Tjalsma.
11. Charles Baudelaire, *Oeuvres complètes* (Paris, 1961), p. 13.
12. Stefan George, *Werke*, II (Munich, 1958), 241.

13. Clive Bell, *Art* (London, 1928), pp. 8 ff.

14. *SS*, I, 640. Translated by Lowry Nelson, Jr.

15. H. D., *Palimpsest* (Carbondale, Ill., 1968), p. 38.

16. See my essay "Viacheslav Ivanov and his *Vespertine Light:* Notes from my Critical Diary of 1966," *Russian Literature Triquarterly,* 4 (1972), 285–87.

17. *Oxford Book of French Verse,* ed. St. John Lucas (Oxford, 1923), p. 421.

18. *SS*, III, 105. Translated by Paula Radzynski and Brian Carter.

19. *SS*, III, 147–70. Reprinted in the book of essays *Borozdy i mezhi,* introd. J. D. West (Letchworth, 1971), it was unfortunately spoiled by the addition of a publicistic post-scriptum which destroyed the article's perfect composition.

20. *SS*, III, 149. Translated by Tatiana Fedorow. For her translation of the complete essay, see: *Lituanus* 7, no. 2 (June 1961), 45–57.

21. For further commentary on this question, see my study, *Mikalojus Konstantinas Čiurlionis: Lithuanian Missionary Painter* (Chicago, 1984).

22. Vytautas Landsbergis, *Pavasario sonata* (Vilnius, 1965). There is also a reworked variant in Russian: *Sonata vesny* (Vilnius, 1969).

23. *SS*, III, 152–53. Translated by Tatiana Fedorow. Translation from *Lituanus* 7, no. 2 (June 1961), 47.

24. *SS*, III, 160. Also *Lituanus* 7, no. 2, p. 52.

25. *SS*, III, 160. Also *Lituanus* 7, no. 2, p. 56.

26. Umberto Boccioni, Carlo Carrà, Luigi Russolo, Giacomo Balla, and Gino Severini, "The Exhibitors to the Public: 1912," in *Futurist Manifestos,* ed. and introd. Umbro Apollonio (New York, 1973), p. 18.

27. *SS*, III, 158. Also *Lituanus* 7, no. 2, p. 52.

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