

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 mezbi*, 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.

CLASSICAL SCHOLAR AND PHILOSOPHER

Vyacheslav Ivanov and Classical Antiquity

Vasily Rudich

Classical antiquity played a central role in the creative and artistic concerns of Vyacheslav Ivanov. Arguably one of the most prominent authorities in classics in the Russian Silver Age, he was regarded by many, with a mixture of bewilderment and admiration, as the Hellenic spirit incarnate. A voluminous study would be needed to adumbrate all the subtlety and sophistication of his attitudes toward the classical heritage. His thought, frequently based on uncanny insights, is replete with antinomy and paradox, of which he was well aware. "I am not an architect of systems," he rightly asserts in *A Correspondence from Two Corners (Perepiska iz dvukh uglov, 1921* [SS, III, 386].

We cannot expect here to explore all of Ivanov's multifaceted ideas on antiquity; least of all to derive a consistent doctrine from his many views. We shall seek rather to consider the effect that immersion in classical studies had on his spiritual development and to discuss certain characteristics of his thought that may clarify the nature of his "elective affinities" with the classical world.

One initial fact of great significance cannot be overlooked: Ivanov was a man of extraordinary learning, indeed one of the most learned people in the history of Russian culture. His professional training was formidable. Having started his scholarly work as a Roman historian, he joined Theodor Mommsen's famous seminar at the University of Berlin in 1886. The great teacher was pleased with the young and promising foreigner. Ivanov recollects in his poetic diary:

That happy day sarcastic Mommsen
Praised me with a smile.

V tot den' schastlivyj Mommzen edkij
 Menja s ulybkoj pokhvalil. [SS, II, 17]

Ivanov had already learned Greek and Latin in his school years; he developed his knowledge to the point of perfection. There hardly can be any doubt that he was able even to think in both classical languages as naturally as in his native Russian. His own poetry in Greek and Latin, found in *Cor Ardens* and *Tender Mystery*, is ingenious and accomplished.

Ivanov's Latin dissertation *On the Tax-Farming Companies of the Roman People* (*De societatis vectigalium publicorum populi Romani*), completed in 1895 and eventually published fifteen years later, was an effort to elucidate the activities of public tax-farmers throughout Roman republican and imperial history. It was undertaken in accordance with Mommsen's methodology and in the spirit of his *Römisches Staatsrecht*. All the more remarkable is the fact that Ivanov's conclusions ran counter to Mommsen's own theory. The young Russian scholar apparently found flaws in his teacher's concepts. Mommsen firmly believed that the Romans possessed an elaborate public as well as criminal code. Ivanov's investigation, however, did not turn up any system of deliberately designed institutions; rather it revealed a series of *ad hoc* arrangements, contradictory and confusing.

Modern scholarship recognizes that the great German historian was wrong: involuntarily he projected into the distant past the historical experience of nineteenth-century Europe. Ivanov's skepticism was well-founded. In his later studies of Greek religion he would repudiate the positivistic approach with its pretense of objectivity and impartiality: ancient people had a different logic and mentality from ours, and to recreate them according to our own image and likeness means to distort historical truth, though it does not mean that one should abandon the search for universals. But empathy is to be substituted for impartiality as a psychological starting point in a scholarly procedure.

Ivanov's thesis was lavishly praised by Otto Hirschfeld. To Mommsen's credit, the disagreement did not prevent the master from acknowledging great merits in the work of the young chal-

lenger. As Mommsen put it, the dissertation was far above the usual level and was written "diligenter et subtiliter" [SS, II, 20]. Hirschfeld's support and Mommsen's approval opened up before the young classicist the prospect of a brilliant academic career in Germany. But the outcome was unexpected: the young Ivanov chose not to grasp the opportunity. Several reasons for this decision suggest themselves. Throughout his life Ivanov displayed scant concern either for personal fame or public recognition. In his late years he wrote in a poem:

Do not pursue the shadow of fame:
 She is after you, not you after her

Za ten'ju slavy ne gonis',
 Ten' za toboj, ne ty za nej. [SS, III, 599]

He neglected to publish his dissertation when it was finished; however, it is probable that, still in manuscript form, it gave impetus to the early work of Mikhail Rostovtzeff, Ivanov's friend and colleague.

Rostovtzeff's book on Roman publicans, which appeared in 1899, was translated into German;³ it constituted his first step toward celebrity. As for Ivanov's Latin dissertation, its scholarly value was acknowledged by its reprint in Italy in 1971. However, there was a deeper cause than mere indifference to career that motivated Ivanov to turn down the temptation offered by Hirschfeld and Mommsen. While doing research in the British Museum on the historical roots of Roman belief in the universal mission of Rome, he grew more and more disenchanted with Roman history, having fallen in love instead with "the fiancée of his heart," Greek philology. After a year of studying Sanskrit under de Saussure, he arrived in Paris and delivered in 1903 a series of lectures on the religion of Dionysus at the École Supérieure des Sciences Sociales. These lectures enjoyed great success.

In the eyes of his peers Ivanov's achievements were remarkable. No one doubted at the time that he was indeed the leading specialist on Dionysian worship. Thaddeusz Zielinski, himself a formidable authority in classics, commended Ivanov the scholar in 1916 as a

researcher of high merit, meticulous and diligent. In his 1933 Italian essay, published in a special volume of *Il Convegno* dedicated to Ivanov, Zielinski comments upon Ivanov's unique combination of poetic and scholarly genius. His conclusion is: "finally one is left only with amazement"—"*non rimane altro che meravigliarsi.*" An ardent believer in a Slavic Renaissance, Zielinski saw Ivanov as its initiator and central figure—"persona provvidenziale."³ Zielinski's intuition was not mistaken: as a creative temperament, Ivanov undoubtedly harks back to the Renaissance archetype with its intrinsic blend of commitments to past, present and future. He always felt at home in the select company of Poliziano and Petrarch, Winckelmann and Goethe.

We may perhaps discern yet another reason for Ivanov's disinclination to pursue the study of Roman history. For all his tremendous knowledge of things Roman, he could in no way identify himself with the Roman spirit. In contrast to many Russian thinkers, he was indifferent to the imperial ideal, so crucial in Roman experience. If he had any profound concerns related to Roman culture, they were eschatological; hence his interest in Virgil and, indeed, in the emergence of Christianity.

The picture is quite different when we turn to Ivanov's attitude to ancient Greece. He always agreed with Goethe's contention that there is a self-developing form impressed on all things (*geprägte Form, die lebend sich entwickelt*). In this sense we might say that there was an impressed form in Ivanov's own psyche, and that that form was Hellenic. In certain periods of his life he seems to have felt an inner kinship with the Goethe of the Weimar Classicism, the Goethe of serene vision and infinite refinement. In any case, he was fond of quoting another saying of Goethe: "Everyone can be a Hellene in his own way, but everyone ought to be a Hellene." Being a Hellene, then, is a prerequisite in a classicist for genuine comprehension of his subject.

Finally, Ivanov's alienation from purely historical research might be attributed to a particular quality of his thinking, one related to religious and poetical aspects of his world view. His thinking was ultimately metahistorical. In this framework time is a very relative value. The cultural process or phenomenon is perceived not

in terms of creation and destruction, but in terms of memory and oblivion. Historical development is an accumulation of spirituality that must be dealt with *sub specie aeternitatis*. Hence the inevitable shift in Ivanov's commitments from the field of conventional history into *Kulturphilosophie*, and especially the psychology of religion—from now on his life-long scholarly passion.

Ivanov's scholarship on the orgiastic cults is highly original, though the Dionysian problem itself obviously was suggested by his brief though profound encounter with Nietzsche. Yet we can hardly speak of Nietzsche's scholarly influence upon Ivanov. Though a "Philolog" by education, Nietzsche had renounced everything in his intellectual rebellion, including analysis of texts and other specialized philological techniques. Ivanov, to the contrary, was becoming exceedingly professional in his treatment of his subject.

In regard to philosophical influence, Ivanov himself formulated the difference between Nietzsche's attitude and his own in "Nietzsche and Dionysus," his earliest piece on the theme (1904). Nietzsche saw Dionysus as a phenomenon of a primarily psychological and esthetic character, an impersonal element, spontaneous and chaotic. For Ivanov its significance is psychological and religious, and Dionysus himself, first and foremost, is the suffering deity. Ivanov's distinguished scholarly predecessors were Sir James Frazer and Erwin Rohde, though an intellectual impetus to his work can be traced back to the science of mythology as postulated by Karl Otfried Müller and, above all, to the mythopoetic philosophy of Schelling. Frazer and Rohde, however, represented two almost opposite points of departure, and thus crucially influenced increasingly divergent developments in modern scholarship. On the one hand, Frazer and his followers gave birth to the British ritualist school, whose positivistic beliefs and claims of objectivity did not much differ from the cool rationalization of French sociologists as dissimilar as Durkheim and Lévy-Bruhl. Modern structuralism is in this sense their legitimate successor. On the other hand, recognition of religion as reality, both psychological and metaphysical, led to interpretations based on an attempt at spiritual empathy, on an effort to appropriate an ancient or alien religious experience. Walter Friedrich Otto found

in Dionysus his personal god, whom he actually worshipped in accordance with Greek prescription. Soon the Jungian branch of psychoanalysis provided a convenient frame of reference that has been used successfully by professional classicists, notably Karl Kerényi. A considerable degree of Jungian influence has exerted itself upon Mircea Eliade, arguably the most prominent contemporary historian of religion. Long before Jung, however, Ivanov had taken psychological empathy as a prerequisite for his scholarly stand. Though never going to such extremes as Otto, he believed nevertheless that he had experienced, at least once, a true Dionysian ecstasy. This contention is supported by his many scholarly and poetical insights. But his passionate commitment to making the Greek religious experience the inner reality of his consciousness, to living it through, "durchleben," as the Germans would say, never violated even inconsequential rules of a strict scholarly procedure.

As an admiring disciple of Ulrich Wilamowitz-Möllendorf, though at times also his sober critic, Ivanov was an accomplished philologist, whose method is essentially philological, based on the close study of texts. Archaeological or anthropological evidence is rarely used, owing to the as yet rudimentary development of these disciplines. Ivanov's *Wissenschaftlichkeit*, that refined accuracy the Greeks called *akribeia*, is supplemented by his ability to perceive the essence of the cultural process in every tiny detail. Finally, he had a genius for metaphysical interpretation, never arbitrary but carefully meditated and verified upon the material at hand.

Ivanov's *The Hellenic Religion of the Suffering God*, written in 1903-1905, but never published in full because of a series of accidents, is an insightful and provocative work. A brief glance at several of its many propositions may be needed to give an idea of how profound and pioneering his views were.

Ecstasy, according to Ivanov, is the most ancient phenomenon of religious experience, of the transcendence of the human self. Thus the god is preceded by the cult, the cult by the victim, the victim by ecstasy. In this sense Dionysus is the means, not the substance. God, priest, and victim are one and the same, a notion corroborated by modern anthropology. Both constructive and destructive aspects

may be discerned in Dionysianism. The constructive aspect is *orthōs manēnai*, righteous revelry, aimed at experiencing communion with the deity.

Ivanov's second book, *Dionysus and Predionysianism*, published in 1923 in the Caucasian city of Baku and now a bibliographical rarity, is much more specific. It is a masterpiece of sophisticated scientific investigation, replete with brilliant conjectures, some of them later confirmed by archeology. Ivanov illustrates in detail an argument of the preceding book and traces the Dionysian myth and Dionysian features in multiple disguise throughout the great variety of legendary motifs. In the most complex problem of the origin of the Dionysian worship he does not fail to notice the weakness of Rohde's "Thracian theory" (then universally accepted). He questions its validity, finds an Hellenic imprint on the most ancient elements of the Dionysian rites, and comes to the conclusion that "its adoption in the absolute sense of the word should be denied."⁴ This is precisely the view of present-day scholarship. But we should not forget that in the West the idea of an essentially Greek origin of Dionysianism was offered for the first time (and in passing) by Charles Picard in 1930, seven years after Ivanov's monograph.

Ivanov's thesis about the cults of the "unnamed Dionysus" which go back "to the epoch of the worship of the empty thrones or altars of the deity invisibly present"⁵ is proved, with few variations, by Kerényi on the basis of archaeological material from Crete. Ivanov's intuition was also correct in relegating the primordial Dionysianism to the pre-Dorian period. Now even the name of Dionysus has been discovered in the process of the decoding of Linear B, though it is still not clear whether it refers to that particular deity. Much more convincing than Martin Nilsson's "Thracian-Phrygian syncretism" is Ivanov's differentiating between "continental" and "insular" cults of Dionysus, which coexisted in "mutual *syzygeia*." This demarcation is very close to Kerényi's theory of the simultaneous movement of Dionysus from the north and from the south. In our view, Ivanov proved beyond doubt Apollo's original existence in Delphi in his Dionysiac and chthonic capacity. This notion runs contrary to Nilsson's much later argument, which persists in pos-

tulating Apollo as the reformer of orgiastic religion. Ivanov's most important and meticulously elaborated argument was never to our knowledge developed by Western scholars. It is his discussion of the cults of the "otherwise named" Dionysus, that is of the pre-Dionysian phenomena that later acquired many and different forms. It is clear that in this respect he was ahead even of the most recent scholarship. Many of these results are due to Ivanov's uncanny scholarly intuition: his predictions of at least two sensational archaeological discoveries are recorded. Combined with his proficient research it produced a creative balance suited ideally to his interests and his task.

The range and the quality of Ivanov's achievements in the history of religion and in the study of religious psychology are astonishing. Through an unfortunate series of accidents his work was never published in any Western European language and thus remained inaccessible to most of his colleagues. There can be hardly any doubt that otherwise he would have acquired an international reputation matching that of Kerenyi or Eliade.

Ivanov's attitude toward antiquity as toward the world of his own habitation is poignantly reflected in his poetry. He was able to discover his own ego not only in a Dionysian bacchant or in the hierophant at Eleusis, but also in a symposiarch and a ploughman, a shepherd and a charioteer, a Homeric warrior or a Pythagorean philosopher. And above all, he was the *vates*, the poet possessed by the sacred madness, the favorite of Apollo and the Muses, the new Arion, Musaeus, and Orpheus. His beloved wife, Lydia Zinovieva-Annibal, was easily transformed into Diotima, the wise priestess and the counselor to Socrates, and he would recognize the Lateran Sophocles in the imposing personality of his friend Zielinski.

Like Socrates, Ivanov was a virtuoso in the art of maieutics, the midwifery of thought, being in every respect "maestro di color che sanno." And he knew well, with Plato, that the Spirit is to be born out of beauty. A teacher of great charismatic power, he exercised a true Hellenic *paideia* upon his students in Baku and Pavia, many of whom believed that their years under Ivanov's guidance were not

only the years of their cultural initiation but also of crucial existential experience.

Vyacheslav Ivanov's perception of the classical heritage had yet another facet that relates to his life-long views on the essence of culture. Introducing the Platonic notion of *anamnesis*, Ivanov defines culture as "the cult of memory." Its ultimate goal is the recognition of primordial recollection—that of the unity of Man and God. Its destructive opposite is oblivion. Culture therefore is not a petrified thesaurus, an object of abstract academic interest. It is an ever-living treasury of sacred values embodied in our hearts and immanent in the being of mankind. Thus it requires a most fervent commitment from the student of the humanities. The classical heritage is not merely part and parcel of this treasury. "There is no culture in Europe," Ivanov contends, "except it be a Hellenic one" [SS, III, 69 ff.]. Everything untouched by the Hellenic element remains barbarian and functions independently as the principle of chaos. This coexistence underlies the dynamics of intellectual and spiritual movements. "The classical antiquity that rises every morning virgin and young anew, like the celestial spouse of supreme Jove," Ivanov writes, "continues to ennoble, refine, and stimulate the mind of posterity, but only insofar as our soul, as Livy puts it, '*fit antiquior*'" [SS, III, 436]. This appeal to shape our souls *antiquior* is the crux of the matter. No step up is possible without a step down. "The higher the foliage the deeper the roots," Ivanov remarks elsewhere [SS, III, 392]. This immense Hellenic spiritual *oikoumene*—from pre-Homeric presentiments to Alexandrian sophistication—was familiar to him in all particulars as a native and beloved abode. It was both means and substance of his poetic and scholarly meditations.

The first poem of his first collection *Pilot Stars* (1903) begins with a classical image:

Last evening Titans soared in darkness

Vchera vo mgle neslis' Titany

[SS, I, 515]

The feeling of immediacy is here remarkable, as if the Titans' flight happened just recently, yesterday or last night. Likewise in his last masterpiece, the posthumous collection entitled *Evening Light* (published in 1962), the final poem pointedly sets a classical ending—an invocation of the Muse. His Muse advises the poet to pay homage to Pallas Athene, who summons him now:

What the Virgin is dreaming of,
Who bows her head upon the spear
We should surmise . . .

O chem zadumalasja Deva,
Glavoj sklonivshis' na kop'e,
Pojdem gadat' . . .

[SS, III, 644]

Here his gaze leaps ahead into the immediate future, steady and hopeful. By juxtaposing these lines one realizes to what extent the classical imagery, reacting backward and forward in time, remains one with his artistic work from beginning to end.

The excellence of his translations from Greek into Russian can be only briefly mentioned here. He published Russian versions of the poems of Pindar and Bacchylides, Alcaeus and Sappho, and almost completed a translation of the whole corpus of Aeschylus, which is still in manuscript. Ivanov displayed perfect mastery over ancient metrics. In his own original verse he reproduced the variety of Greek meter so that in Russian it sounds natural and fluent—from the hexameter and elegiac distich to the difficult Sapphic and Asclepiadic lines. His achievements in this respect may be equaled only by what Friedrich Hölderlin had done in German.

Ivanov wrote voluminously on the theory of drama. Here we can barely touch upon his ideas. He argued at length for the importance of the choric principle, the only means, in his view, of transforming theater into sacred and communal action. Relating the choric principle to the concept of "sobornost'," he was dreaming of a future Russia where sacred and artistic rites would be performed by thousands of orchestras. Along the same lines he experimented with his own two tragedies, *Tantalus* (1905) and *Prometheus* (1919),

which treat one of the most ancient classical motifs, that of *hubris*. The classical plots are elaborated in a very unusual way by exploiting obscure and apocryphal legends in order to reflect in them as many facets as possible of the modern predicament. At the same time both tragedies are mythopoetic compositions that attempt to recreate Greek tragedy in its original sense. Probably the most fascinating aspect of Ivanov's attitudes is his perception of classical antiquity as a universal, never-ending and metaphysical value.

If one may discern in the spontaneous inner movements of any creative personality the tangible coloration of some philosophical strain, in Ivanov's case this coloration would decidedly be Platonic. The Platonizing element in his frame of mind was in harmony both with the fact that he was a poet and at the same time the prophet and theoretician of the Russian Symbolist school. Symbolism, articulated in philosophical language, naturally tends toward Platonism.

We would contend that Ivanov's sympathy lies primarily with Plato himself, rather than with the neo-Platonism of the various sects related to Gnosticism. This does not include, however, patristics, which absorbed many neo-Platonic views, nor the Platonic revival of the Renaissance. The symbol, after all, is a representation of the transcendental, and Ivanov accepts "Plato's dialectical description of Eros" as the definition of Symbolism [SS, II, 606]. Plato is also consistently invoked for final arbitration on different esthetic issues.

In this way the classical heritage acquires for Ivanov the status of a metaphysical existence in the Platonic sense. It represents the ideal spiritual experience of the Hellenes. "The pagan genius," he remarks, "had projected all its best into the transcendent image" [SS, III, 403]. And in this capacity "the best" continues to dwell, beyond time and space, in the "sphere of *Werden*, or coming-to-be," as eternal, immutable and universal. He beautifully echoes Platonic imagery in his essay "Ancient Terror" (1909): "A profound and golden silence embraces the soul, surrendered to self-negation, and in the distant distances images rise before it, preserved in the recollection of the World Soul. For truly, not one iota in the scroll of

her memory is transient, and everything that has passed is happening eternally, and this very day Cleopatra is steering the gilded stern of her galley to flee the watery field of the Actean battle . . ." [SS, III, 100]. It is no wonder, then, that he maintains that the Hellenic soul is immortal [SS, III, 377]. Viewed more pragmatically, this outlook implies that the classical heritage serves as an existential context in which moral, psychological or esthetic challenges can be interpreted and acted upon. We have already stated that Ivanov's poetry is dense with classical imagery. His melopoeia *Man* (written in 1916 and published in 1939) had chosen the mysterious Delphic inscription *ei—thou art*—as the starting point for a complex philosophical argument on the ultimate creed of mankind whose purpose is achieved when the Man acknowledges the God as his Father and Creator saying to him: "Thou art, and this is why I am."

On almost every page of his essays, whether on the dignity of women or on the Russian Revolution, his views might be conveyed in concepts drawn directly from the classical past. It is not only an inexhaustible source of reference, it is the means of cognition of problems of both immediate and ultimate significance. This latter procedure connects lower and higher levels of our existence and that of the cosmos, and it exemplifies Ivanov's famous formula *a realibus ad realiora*: from this reality to the greater one. This impetus finds its ultimate realization in myth and mythopoeia. Ivanov was interested in the great diversity of myths, not necessarily relevant only to the metamorphosis of Dionysus. He interprets the Hellenic myths, often obscure ones, on a universal scale, and this is a natural consequence of his doctrine concerning the nature of the symbol. The myth, contained in the symbol and growing out of it, becomes an objective truth of our being, or, in Ivanov's own words, "the purest form of representational poetry" [SS, II, 554]. And again he quotes Plato: if a poet wishes to be the Poet he has to create myths [SS, I, 713].

Ivanov's personal created myth—the startling child of his declining years—*The Tale of Svetomir the Prince*, fuses and transfigures many ancient motifs into a unique and unexpected whole, again relegated beyond time and space. Philoctetes and Alexander the

Great coexist with the Knights of the Round Table, the imagined Russian dynasts and the apocryphal Prester John. As far as the past and the future are concerned, Ivanov believed that the mythical chronicle of the world comes closer to truth than the actual history we know.

We have already suggested that Ivanov's various meditations on classical culture, his perceptions and intuitions, are intimately interrelated. The result is an organic and harmonious vision which makes no significant distinction among the endeavors of a philosopher, a scholar, or a poet. Poetry, philosophy, scholarship are only manifestations of a spiritual integrity given impetus by deep religious belief.

Vyacheslav Ivanov was a devoted Christian. With Euripides, he might acknowledge the multiplicity of the divine forms: *πολλὰ μορφαὶ τῶν δαιμονίων* [SS, II, 117]. But he knew that polytheism is only the earliest stage of the recognition of God as manifold unity. For Ivanov the Christian religious thinker, the philosophy of history is naturally Christocentric. It is the realization of God's design for Man's salvation. If this is so, every great culture is an aspect of the incarnation of the Word. Classical antiquity is seen as the crucial stage in this gradual involvement of humankind in the process of comprehending God: the pagan truth "is purged and baptized in Eucharistic Jordan" (*V novozavetnom Iordane ochishchena i kreshchena* [SS, III, 632]).

The human soul was being prepared for the coming of Christ. But if the pagans were not given the Messianic Revelation it does not mean that they were dwelling in absolute darkness. Their "day-break dreams" (*rassvetnye sny*) were the Heraclitean Logos, the Eleusinian mysteries, the Orphic hymns. In that and only that sense is Dionysus, with his passions, righteous revelry and palingenesis, called "an ally of the Galilean fishermen." Ivanov's view of paganism is very close to that of the ante-Nicaean apologists, such as Clement of Alexandria and, especially, St. Justin the Martyr, whom he quotes with sympathy and pride: "beautiful things to be found anywhere are Christian and ours"—*ὅσα παρὰ πᾶσι καλῶς εἴρεται ἡμῶν, χριστιανῶν ἐστὶν* [SS, III, 443].

In his Italian letter to Alessandro Pellegrini (1934) Ivanov meditates upon the character of true humanism, a humanism rooted in faith in God. And he emphasizes both its Christian and its Platonic nature. He reminds us that St. Basil the Great and St. Augustine were Platonists, just as a thousand years later the Platonic humanists of the Renaissance were Christians. And once again Ivanov formulates in triumphant Greek the principal thesis of his religious humanism, which projects the unification of Man with God: Man is a unity. Humanism is thus transformed into monanthropism—*μόνος ὁ ἄνθρωπος* [SS, III, 380].

Occasionally, inner conflicts could emerge between his ideas of Christian devotion and what he might take to be excessive passions and pagan temptations. There is a beautiful poem "The Palinode" in his *Evening Light*, in which he asks in bewilderment:

Have I, in fact, O Hellas, stopped loving you?

Uzheli ja tebja, Ellada, razljubil?

And then follows:

I fled, and in the foothills of Egyptian Thebes
I eat the food of silence, locusts and wild honey . . .

I ja bezhal, i em v predgor'jakh Fivaidy
Molchan'ja dikij med i zhestkie akridy . . .

[SS, III, 553]

However, these discords were never profound or serious. Probably the poet himself treated them not without humor and, following his favorite concept, as if they were love quarrels between *animus* and *anima*, happily reconcilable the next moment.

Ivanov's very last poem, a somber sonnet completed a few days before he died, describes Heracles on his funeral pyre and ends with the line:

Death cleaved with her relentless hatchet

Rassekla Smert' sekiroj besposhchadnoj [SS, III, 575]

Aleksis Rannit, who visited Vyacheslav Ivanov not long before that line was written, recalls that, speaking of the future, the poet confessed with a smile that he would be deeply unhappy if in any world to come he could not read, speak, and write Greek.⁶

Notes

1. M. Rostovtsev, *Geschichte des Staatspacht in der römischen Kaiserzeit bis Diokletian* (Leipzig, 1902).
2. Th. Zielinski, "Vyacheslav Ivanov," in *Russkaja literatura XX veka*, ed. S. Vengerov, vol. VIII (Moscow, 1917), p. 113.
3. Th. Zielinski, "Introduzione all'opera di Venceslao Ivanov," *Il Convegno*, nos. 8-12, (1933), p. 243.
4. V. Ivanov, *Dionis i pradiomisijstvo* (Baku, 1923), p. 273.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 279.
6. A. Rannit, "Vyacheslav Ivanov and his *Vespertine Light*," *Russian Literature Triquarterly*, vol. 3 (1973), 287.

The Myth of the Suffering God and the Birth of Greek Tragedy in Ivanov's Dramatic Theory

Fausto Malcovati

Ivanov's passionate essay *The Hellenic Religion of the Suffering God* (Elinskaja religija stradajushchego boga, 1904) provides us with an example of his life-long interest in the ancient Greek spirit, which he felt should serve as a source of inspiration and as a model for the contemporary world. The study of the cult of Dionysus, the suffering god, assumed a central role in Ivanov's esthetic research. His writings on Homer, Pindar, Alcaeus, and Sappho represent an important philological and critical contribution, but the Dionysus essay serves as the foundation for an entire cultural concept. Published in 1904, it is Ivanov's first treatise expressing his hope for a great spiritual renaissance in our century.

Ivanov sees the Dionysus cult as the first seed of the concept of religion in man, the primordial ecstatic experience from which religion later evolved. He writes: "Man is to be distinguished from the other animals because unlike them he is an *animal religiosum* (a state of being that precedes that of the *animal politicum*, πολιτικὸν ζῷον). The germ of religiosity can be detected in the first ecstatic experience of Man. Man is first and foremost an *animal ecstaticum*."

Ecstasy, which forms the very core of the Dionysian religion, is therefore the alpha and omega of the human religious condition. But what is the meaning and origin of this ecstasy in the Greek world? Ivanov observes that the ancient Greeks were unique in their capacity to look the horrors of death in the face without resorting to the consolation of negating human mortality as the Hindus did, or denying the immortality of the Gods as the pre-Roman Italic

people did. Ecstasy, therefore, becomes the only means of accepting the inevitability of death, the only means of tolerating human suffering, the only force capable of relieving the desperate pessimism of man confronted with the disintegration of his own self. Dionysian ecstasy provides the certainty of mystical unity with the figure of the suffering god, at once the priest and the victim. In Dionysian ecstasy the duality of being, in which life and death coexist as two opposing aspects of the universal mystery, is revealed. It implies two spiritual ways, the ascending way (*put' vverkh*) with Dionysus as Helios, and the descending way (*put' vniz*), with Dionysus as Hades.

The Dionysus cult was, in fact, initially a state of mind (*nekotoroe kak*) without any specific content (*opredelennoe chto*). That is why the Dionysian myth had first and foremost an etiological significance, and, like all myths, provided an explanation for an already existing phenomenon. Ecstasy did not, therefore, derive from an image (*predstavlenie*) of the god, but rather the god was the incarnation of an undirected collective ecstasy (*bezpredmetnoe isstuplenie*). In the Dionysian religion, the myth of the suffering god, although very ancient in origin, is still more recent than the god's image, and his image is more recent than the idea of his sanctified and sanctifying suffering (*svjashchennoe i osvjashchajushchee stradanie*). The god is more ancient than his own history, the victim is more ancient than the god, and the ecstatic collectivity is the oldest of all. The victim, the god, and the myth of the god do share, however, one common element which has remained constant from the beginning: the sanctification of sacrifice and of death as a sacrifice, which constitutes the religious embryo of what many centuries later became Greek tragedy.

Primordial Dionysian ecstasy was intimately bound up with cannibalistic rites, which recalled the biblical temptation by the serpent: "Eat, for your eyes will be opened and you will be like gods." In other words: eat god to become god. The cannibalistic aspect gradually disappeared over the centuries with the substitution of symbolic animal victims, but the first participants in the Dionysian mysteries were not acquainted with the use of symbols. For them it was Dionysus himself who was the victim, who was torn apart and devoured by the participants who thereby became like

progressively weakened, tragedy also underwent a profound metamorphosis, and the masculine principle became more and more important. The dyadic principle gradually gave way to more externalized conflicts between persons bound to each other by family ties, characters like Orestes or Medea, caught up in parent-child conflicts, Eteocles and Polynices, or Ismene and Antigone in their sibling rivalries, or Hercules and Deianeira, in their husband-and-wife struggle. The clearest example of the proliferation of what we might term the exteriorized dyad occurs in Aeschylus's *Seven against Thebes*. Two brothers fight and kill each other, and their sisters violently confront each other in the presence of their dead siblings.

We spoke before of the Apollonian principle. The introduction and mixture of this principle into Dionysian rites made possible the development of tragedy as an art form. It is hardly necessary here to repeat Nietzsche's theory of the relationship between the Apollonian and the Dionysian principles in the *Birth of Tragedy*. Ivanov emphasizes the religious element, which in Nietzsche's discussion assumes minor importance. The affirmation of the Apollonian element brought with it a sense of form and harmony, but also the gradual extinction of the pathetic element, the paralysis of Dionysian inner energy, the demagnetization of the tragic nucleus, and, especially, the final disappearance of catharsis. Why did all this happen? It happened because of the developing *principium individuationis*, the ever increasing differentiation between the components of tragedy and their functions. The dithyramb, no longer an expression of the group in chorus, became a particular kind of lyric poetry. The passion and suffering of the hero assumed an autonomous role in the tragic action and drew upon itself the exclusive attention of the public. The group, which once acted as a chorus during the Dionysian rites, was limited to the role of spectator, and was reduced from its original double function, actively theurgic and passively sacrificial, to a single function. As Aristotle says, they became the uninvolved observer (παθῆ/πάσχειν, to experience passively).

There were also changes, in the logistical sense, through the centuries. The action no longer took place in the orchestra, but was transferred to the proscenium. The proscenium was increasingly

above and more isolated from the public, of whom the action was no longer the expression. The stage, separated in this manner from the public, became the magic place that divided the actor, who only acted, from the spectator, who only observed the action.

The real crisis of tragedy, however, was manifested in the changed role of the chorus. . . Once bearer of the conflict between the god and the group, it became a simple organ of accompaniment to the central action, commenting on it. It became extraneous to the tribulations of the hero; it became more and more superfluous and then disappeared completely. Its disappearance signified the definitive twilight of the ecumenical principle in the theater. Religion was no longer a factor in the theater, and with the last remnants of religion, catharsis was eliminated once and for all. The drama was transformed into a sort of mathematical demonstration of a theorem, and the stage into a kind of arena where gladiators of passion performed their struggle. Theater of this kind became progressively less and less necessary to the public, and the dissatisfaction of Ivanov's contemporaries with the two most widespread forms of theater of the time, the realistic (Chekhov) and the illusionistic (Maeterlinck), gave eloquent testimony to the fact. As Ivanov often said in other writings, "we are living in a 'critical epoch,' an epoch of cultural differentiation, of sterile individualism, of the lack of circulation of vital energy." He also, however, thought he saw the first signs of the end of this period and the beginning of the new "organic epoch" of the reintegration of cultural energies, of tendencies toward a spiritual synthesis. The art of the new age would be syncretic (*sobornoe*) and universal. The most direct manifestation of the new tendencies would be the choral drama, the dynamic expression of the new community, in which every participant would become an active molecule in a collective ritual. There would be no more theater in the sense of spectacle (*sozertsanie*), no more *circenses*. No more contemplation, but syncretic creation. "Zu schaffen, nicht zu schauen."

The spectators would once more take up their previous role as participants (*dejateli*), as they did at the inception of the Dionysian religion, and would unite into a common body, the chorus reborn. *This* would be the real sign of the new epoch. The chorus would

function again in a reduced form, integrated into the action, as it does in Aeschylus, and in a wider, unlimited form, as a real symbol of the group. It would enter into the action at moments of greatest pathos and demonstrate the complete liberation of Dionysian energy. The Schiller chorus, in the last movement of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, was the example most often used by Ivanov.

The chorus would be necessary to the public and be completely understood by the public. It would reconquer the stage, breaking down the barriers between stage and auditorium, which is what avant-garde directors attempted at the beginning of the century in some of their famous productions. Meyerhold's staging of *Balagan-chik* at Komissarzhevskaya's theater, and Vakhtangov's staging of *Turandot* come to mind. Ivanov proposed as new forms for the theater the heroic tragedy based on the ancient models and also the medieval mystery plays. These forms would revivify the dyadic principle, reopen the abyss of the human soul when faced by the anguishing dichotomy between life and death, and reconstitute a new ecumenical religion of the suffering god.

In a short article written in 1920, Ivanov once more underscored his idea of the impossibility of this rebirth without the employment of the choral principle. The new organic epoch would arise when the spectator ceased to be identified exclusively with the hero and his destiny, but would become immersed in the group. With his newly found universal consciousness, he would follow the course of the hero as an immanent act in its transcendent significance. The hero would be once more the victim immolated in the name of the group, and *for* the group that gave expression to him.

Vyacheslav Ivanov and Nietzsche Heinrich Stammler

Gottfried Benn, the German expressionist and post-expressionist poet, remarked in an essay entitled "Nietzsche after Fifty Years":

First, I asked myself what of Nietzsche's work seems to be antiquated today, limited, as it were. And there I should like to say . . . [that] his glorification of all things Greek appears remote nowadays. Statements such as "The Greek—the man who has gone the farthest way ahead," or "The Greek people, the only people of genius in the entire history of the world," or "The Hellenic world—the only possible, the deepest fulfillment of life," or "The Greeks have certainly never been overrated," or "Only the resuscitation of true Hellenism will bring back true culture"—this, his existential attachment to the Greeks does not live within us any more.¹

But it was just this profound involvement with the ancient Greek religion, mythos, and thought which led to the fated encounter of two kindred minds, two souls, if you will—Vyacheslav Ivanov and Friedrich Nietzsche. During his Berlin years, as a student of the famous historian Mommsen and other renowned classical scholars, Ivanov for the first time began to immerse himself in the works of Goethe, but also in Khomyakov and Vladimir Solovyov, and last but not least, in Nietzsche, whose shocking and provocative books had begun to excite literary and intellectual circles shortly after the philosopher's mental collapse in 1889. And when Ivanov moved in 1891 to Paris in order to round out his studies of classical philology and history he also took with him a volume of Nietzsche's writings, especially the essay with the suggestive title *The Birth of*

Tragedy from the Spirit of Music. From this time on he was to find himself under the spell of the thought and visions of this man who had said about himself: "I am a fatality," of the prophet of Dionysus resurrected. Even in later years when it seemed he had emancipated himself from the tremendous impression that the magic of Nietzsche's words had made upon him, when it seemed that he had parted ways with him, he returned, indeed critically and with reservations, but again and again, to the idol of his youth. His was, of course, not a case of mere borrowing, but as James West has pointed out, an initial inspiration and a great stimulation for the further development of his own thoughts and insights.² And he never ceased to acknowledge his debt to the author of the *Birth of Tragedy*. What he immediately understood after reading this celebrated as well as controversial essay was that Nietzsche with his juxtaposition of the two elements, the Dionysian and the Apollonian, had discovered or rediscovered the two motive principles of creative action as well as poetic intuition. He conceived of Nietzsche's demonstration of this duality, organically combined, however, in the great work of art, not in terms of some philosophical or esthetic doctrine, but grasped it as a new way of viewing the world, a new method of perceiving individual as well as universal life, of intimately communicating with the essence of things, a new revelation of the forces of the inner life.³ Not that a mere literary and scholarly "influence" had been assimilated—what had occurred was a true "parousia," the immediate awareness of an explosive, overwhelming, terrifying and at the same time infinitely blissful, liberating presence, the presence of Dionysus. That is why Ivanov himself could say about this encounter that in those years Nietzsche became in an ever more powerful way the ruler of his thoughts. And it may seem a paradox, but a paradox fraught with meaning, that the blasphemous foe of Christianity was to lead him onto the path to Christ, because it was from Nietzsche's words, from the passion of his life, that the great imperative "Transcende te ipsum," so emphatically pronounced by St. Augustine, came to him. Nietzsche had appealed to man to transcend himself in order to raise himself up to a new unprecedented level of fulfilled existence, that of the superman—"man is something

that must overcome"—while Ivanov gave this exhortation another meaning, pursuing the process of overcoming and transcending in search of perfection by looking up to the image of Christ, the suffering God whom he came to feel prefigured in the suffering god of the ancients. But in parting ways with Nietzsche he remained grateful to him to the end and cherished what had united them: the revelatory power of the only religious and esthetic spirit of classical antiquity. The more so as Ivanov, according to an observant remark of Georgy Adamovich, not only was a man of learning but possessed the wonderful, exquisitely rare gift of penetrating and identifying with epochs close to his mind and heart, and especially the world of ancient Hellas.⁴

It must be noted in this context that the moment for this encounter, the *kairos*, was exceptionally propitious. It was the time when Nietzsche's thought began to find a manifold echo in Russia also. Boborykin had brought with him from a trip abroad works such as *Morgenröte*, *Jenseits von Gut und Böse* and *Also sprach Zarathustra*, and soon, in 1892, there appeared in the respectable academic journal *Problems in Philosophy and Psychology* (*Voprosy filosofii i psikhologii*) Preobrazhensky's trail-blazing article "Friedrich Nietzsche. A Critique of the Ethics of Altruism" (*Fridrikh Nitsshe. Kritika morali al'truizma*). It contained a number of skillfully arranged quotations, thus offering the possibility of referring to the words and dicta of the philosopher without having to read his works in the original. But soon translations began to appear also. Nietzsche was in the air. He had an enormous impact on many of the representatives of what we now call the Silver Age of Russian literature and thought. But it appears to me that among the protagonists of this movement only two really understood him, taking from him what they could use and creatively adapt, rejecting what did not fit in their intellectual and artistic orbit: namely, each in his own way, each one very different from the other, Vyacheslav Ivanov and Vasily Rozanov. It was Rozanov who in his book *Among Artists* (*Sredi khudozhnikov*) said: "And what about Nietzsche? We quoted from his *Zarathustra* as if this were a book containing our favorite poetry, a much longed-for fairy tale banishing sleep. Even Pushkin never enjoyed such a time

of enthusiasm for his verse as was the case with Nietzsche during his 'golden days.'"

What made Nietzsche's discovery of the Dionysian and the Apollonian so convincing for Ivanov was the fact that what he found here was not merely a clever esthetic device for the analysis of the creative process, but the encounter with a spiritual reality. For it became clear to him that Nietzsche's entire life was a profound mystical experience in broad, occasionally sublime, outlines, ending tragically in an abrupt collapse. Even Zarathustra was but a mask of Dionysus, whom Nietzsche loved. And you cannot love unless you say to the Beloved: Thou art! Even in later years when he already had greatly modified his views on Nietzsche, had emancipated himself, as it were, from the philosopher's paramount influence, he once again affirmed what he owed him in the article "The Essence of Classical Tragedy" (*O sushchestve tragedii*, 1916), declaring:

Nietzsche did not err when he introduced his book on the birth of tragedy with the promise that our esthetics would significantly be enriched if we were henceforth to distinguish in every work of art two principles opposed one to the other in polarity and yet complementing each other in interaction. He suggested that these principles be named after two Hellenic deities, Dionysus and Apollo, which would give precise expression to this esthetic polarity. . . . This pronouncement can rightly be called a unique discovery. . . . Furthermore, it soon became evident that what we have here is the criterion of all true knowledge: independence from the context in which it originally was conceived, and freedom from the person of its discoverer. Indeed, we can describe, substantiate and evaluate these two principles in ways unlike those of Nietzsche, and to some extent we even must do this. However, we cannot and must not overlook or forget these principles, we cannot deny their validity. For what Nietzsche discovered here was the structural formula for the very character of the work of art—an incontrovertible formula despite all objections to Nietzsche's overall vision of the Hellenic soul. . . . His ideas concerning the pessimistic premises of the cult of Dionysus which is said to have

been devoid of all consolation and hope for immortality, the allegedly Greek view of life as a mere esthetic phenomenon, can all be considered as open to refutation. His esthetic axiom, however, can by no means be shaken by all these critical arguments—the axiom, namely, of the dyadic, Apollonian-Dionysian nature of the arts, especially of lyrical and epic poetry, drama, dance, and music.⁵

At this juncture it would be appropriate to say a few words about how Ivanov developed Nietzsche's vision of Dionysus in his own creative manner, how he arrived at the idea of the prefiguration of the crucified God by the suffering gods and demigods of antiquity, Dionysus, Orpheus, Pentheus, and others, how he deepened and intensified his views by insights gained from the psychology of C. G. Jung—thoughts and reflections which all led him far beyond the originally Nietzschean impetus. Since, however, these topics are treated by others in this volume I shall limit myself to a few remarks about how Ivanov overcame his infatuation with Nietzsche without, however, forgetting how much he was indebted to him. Nietzsche had interpreted the Greek world view in terms of despair which through beauty tends to reconcile itself with life. But Ivanov did not want to persist in somber desperation, seeking consolation and redemption in the Apollonian appearance of the Beautiful. He would not evaluate beauty in merely phenomenal terms as appearance, for he saw in it a constitutive element of a higher reality, a theophany.

Fedor Stepun pointed out that all of Ivanov's philosophic and esthetic reflections are determined, on the one hand, by Christianity and by Hellenic wisdom on the other.⁶ This intense and creative closeness of Ivanov to the wellsprings of classical civilization—a phenomenon absolutely unique in the annals of Russian culture—reveals him as a spiritual kinsman of Goethe, Hölderlin, the Swinburne of *Atalanta in Calydon*, and Nietzsche. Sergey Makovsky, on the other hand, stated that around the turn of the century Ivanov was not yet a Christian. We also hear that in some symbolist circles people were inclined to take offense at what they considered his "neopaganism." Now this suspicion or reproach was certainly directed

to the wrong address. What the cultural historian Egon Friedell says about Nietzsche applies with equal force to his disciple: "This had been the chief problem of his life: Dionysus or the Crucified! It was an abysmal misunderstanding to see neo-paganism in this. It was absolutely un-pagan even to posit the alternative between the Cross and Hellas. For the true pagan is no antichrist, he does not see Christ at all."⁷ Moreover, by grasping the essence of "Dionysianism" not only esthetically and vitalistically, as Nietzsche had done—or so it seemed to Ivanov—but religiously and metaphysically; he was about to take the decisive step in the direction of widening and deepening the Nietzschean vision, and also of overcoming it. For just in those years around 1900 Ivanov was gradually coming to the conviction that not only the Hebrew but also the Hellenic religion (the religion of the sacrificial, tortured and suffering god) is the precursor of Christianity—the Old Testament of the pagans: "And Bacchus's sowing for the Supper of Christ" (*I Vakkha sev dlya vecheri Christa*). It became clear to him that a profound difference prevailed between the mythic conception of Dionysus as revealed by Nietzsche and his own vision of Dionysus as the suffering god. Again, Ivanov through his entire life remained grateful to the author of the *Birth of Tragedy*. Nonetheless he more and more felt the necessity of coming to grips with Nietzsche not only in agreement and assertion but also in critique and denial. For even if we concede that in his youth he was not entirely free from touches of neo-pagan, vitalistic, Dionysiac pantheism, he never accepted that God was dead. He also firmly maintained that the Greeks believed in Dionysus not only in terms of some primordial life force, but in truly religious terms. So Ivanov came to see Nietzsche's, the atheist's, greatest error in not wanting to admit that for the Greek people Dionysus was indeed a god. He reproached the philosopher with having overlooked in the course of his classical studies that the mythos of Dionysus and his cult is part and parcel of the history of religion. According to Ivanov, Nietzsche was interested only in the esthetic and socio-historical consequences of this cult. He was too much dazzled by the purely esthetic aspects of the Dionysus religion, a phenomenon that he considered above all psychological and artistic. And so he fatefully neglected the religious

and metaphysical values of the veneration of Dionysus. Nietzsche, it is true, had an eye for the suffering soul of Dionysiac man, but the tortured face of the suffering god he did not perceive. Nietzsche led Dionysus back into the world. This was his great message, and he pronounced it with authentic prophetic frenzy. But he revealed only one aspect of the resuscitated god; the truly divine features of this deity remained hidden from him.

Another ingredient of the Dionysiac ecstasy which Nietzsche, in Ivanov's opinion, did not sufficiently take into consideration was the loss of the sense of time. For the Dionysian state of mind is characterized by a transition into a realm where time no longer matters, by an immersion in timelessness. Nietzsche, however, had fixed his gaze upon the future, preoccupied with the dizzying possibilities that a future along Nietzschean lines might bring. So he altogether remained in what Ivanov called "the prison of time" (*temnitsa vremyon*).⁸

And there is yet another characteristic trait in Nietzsche's entire attitude of mind which Ivanov did not share. Although Sergey Averintsev has declared that the heavy brew of Nietzschean thought of which Ivanov began to partake in the early nineties turned his head, he nonetheless emphasized that the poet was not inclined to follow his master on the path of radical individualism or, as Georg Brandes called it, "aristocratic radicalism." He read Nietzsche, as Averintsev observes, with the eyes of the Russian intellectual, the *intelligent* for whom thinking in social terms and categories had become something like second nature.⁹

This explains his interest in Schiller and Richard Wagner. For in the poet of the "Hymn to Joy" and the creator of music drama he saw the restorers of true Dionysian dithyrambic poetry and the choric principle. The place of the chorus, the voice of the people, which establishes a true communion between the dramatized mythos on the stage and the spectators united in awe and deep emotion, was taken in Wagner's music drama by the orchestra: "The assembled crowd becomes mystically one with the elemental voice of the symphonic music; and inasmuch as we enter the inner sanctuary of Wagner . . . we become, as it were, the ideal molecules of the orgiastic

life of the orchestra." What he admired in Schiller's poetry as well as his tragedies and dramas is what he called the democratic spirit permeating them. In this, nothing was further from his mind than purely political tendentiousness. Something else was important to him: the pathos of a true communal art embodied in Schiller's poems as well as his plays. "Everywhere Schiller is in the crowd and with the crowd; everywhere he is its herald, its voice. His entire poetry is a constant intercourse of the poet with his people, whether he appears in priestly or in tragic garb, crowned with the wreath or under the mask. From this resulted also the deeply felt need to resurrect the chorus of the classical theater, a need which found its expression in the design for *The Bride of Messina*." And even though Schiller as well as Wagner left much to be desired in the execution of their concept of a Dionysian and demotic poetry and drama, Ivanov yet believed he could discern here the first hopeful steps on the way to a new mythical, religious, communal art which would help mankind to emerge refreshed and rejuvenated from the modern "crisis of individualism."¹⁰

The moment has come to recall another author who lent a helping hand to Ivanov in his search for a new elucidation of the true meaning of Hellenic mythology and its symbolic, ontological, and metaphysical significance. This was Johann Jakob Bachofen, the Swiss scholar to whom we owe the discovery, the first full-blown description and presentation of the primeval matriarchate and its traces and reflections in the legends, sagas, and *mythoi* of the ancient Mediterranean world. It is a strange coincidence that around the year 1870 there should have lived and worked together in Basel three outstanding thinkers and scholars: Jacob Burckhardt, Johann Jakob Bachofen, and Friedrich Nietzsche. Burckhardt, whose friendship Nietzsche vainly sought, can for the moment be left out of consideration. And Bachofen, a man shy and retiring in his habits, does not seem to have made a lasting impression on Nietzsche. But his works, which immediately became the object of heated controversy for historians, folklorists, anthropologists, and classical scholars, could not for long remain hidden under a bushel. Ivanov must have made himself familiar with Bachofen's writings soon after the turn

of the century. Reading, for example, his thoughtful essay of 1908 entitled "The Dignity of Woman" (*O dostoinstve zhenshchiny*), one feels at every step reminded of Bachofen, although his name is not mentioned. Woman as the unconscious keeper of some trans-personal mystery of nature, womanhood as close to the soul of Mother Earth, dark and prophetic—these and other epithets pointing to the special cosmic role of woman in the great scheme of things could just as well have been pronounced by Bachofen:

Preserving by means of the mystery of her sex a constant access to the realm of subconscious life, woman is almost universally regarded as gifted above all with those faculties of the soul which are rooted in the subconscious, the powers of instinct and clairvoyance. So down to our own day her sex has preserved in woman, even though weakened now and to lesser degree than in times of old, some special psychic energies—a greater intensity of cosmic feeling, a greater faithfulness to the earth and sensitivity to its truth. . . . So it is not surprising that the farther we go back into antiquity, the more majestic appears before us the image of woman as the soothsayer, the knower of original, primordial mysteries of being . . . the wisdom-filled servant and confidante of two goddesses, the dark Earth and the bright Moon, obedient to their voices within herself, the priestess and enchantress, the first teacher of incantations and prophecies, of verse and divine enthusiasm . . . [SS, III, 40].

And when Ivanov went on to say that the evolution of woman describes a curve descending from the prehistoric apogee of her power which was the matriarchate, down to the stage of her enslavement by man as represented by the solar energies of an Apollo victorious over the nocturnal lunar world of woman, he reproduces in his own inimitably eloquent fashion the design of human development as outlined by Bachofen. Only one year after the publication of his article on the dignity of woman there appeared his grandiose essay entitled "Ancient Terror" (1909), and here he did not hesitate to acknowledge what he owed to Bachofen. He expressly stated:

Recent attempts to deny the existence of an original matriarchal order are of significance only inasmuch as they supply corrective arguments. It is indeed impossible to assert that there existed during a definite period of antiquity a general and widely spread matriarchy: the latter occurs only sporadically. Bachofen's *immortal works*, however, have enriched classical research not only with an hypothesis, but with a well-founded discovery. . . . However that may be, the manslaying cults of Artemis with their amazonic communities and the ritual chastisement of youths, the cult of Dionysus with his maenads, as well as manifold traces of sacrifices of men in other cults of female deities reach far back into the epoch of matriarchy and the great struggle between the sexes.¹¹

In his essay on Ivanov's poetry Averintsev points to the psychological role the encounter with Nietzsche played in the process through which the Russian adept of Nietzschean wisdom was becoming what he was destined to be. The tremendous emotional shakeup provoked by the passionate effusions of the philosopher caused a considerable quickening of his spiritual and intellectual pulses. It set the poet free from a certain mental shyness and psychological constraint. It compelled him no longer to hide himself from his calling behind the shield of purely academic concerns. The study of Bachofen was emotionally reinforced by the fateful meeting with Lydia Zinovieva-Annibal, his second wife, in erotic and spiritual communion with whom he became aware of yet another aspect of the Dionysian world, the prominent position of woman in the cult of the life-giving, sacrificial and suffering god. Not in vain do maenads and bacchantes, overcome by wild enthusiasm and divine madness, adorn and enliven the stateliness of his verse in the volumes *Pilot Stars* (*Kormchie zvezdy*, 1903) and *Cor Ardens* (1911). The poem entitled "The Maenad," introducing *Cor Ardens*, erects a monument to this woman who with her undaunted as well as indomitable soul, her corybantic inspiration, her untamed charm and her unquenchable thirst for ever-renewed revelations of the life-enhancing Dionysian spirit became for him the incarnation of the cosmic-erotic nature of woman. Thus the study of Bachofen and the finding of Lydia Zi-

novieva enriched intellectually as well as emotionally and existentially his conception of the Dionysian image of the world. The elation he may have felt at this new fateful encounter with Dionysus, now closely linked to Eros, may evoke reminiscences of Euripides' *Bacchae*, in which the messenger pleads with King Pentheus to admit Dionysus to the city of Thebes:

Therefore, I counsel thee,
O King, receive this Spirit whoever he be
To Thebes in glory. Greatness manifold
Is all about him—and the tale is told
That this is he who first to man did give
The grief-assuaging vine.—O let him live
For if he die, then Love herself is slain:
And nothing joyous in the world again.¹²

One could say that Ivanov had found his Ariadne, the symbol of womanhood lovingly devoted to Dionysus, the leader of the chorus of all the maenads, dithyrambic dancers, thyiades and bacchantes who played the most important role in the cult of the vintner-god. According to classical mythology, Ariadne is an Aphrodite in human form, and also the image of beauty which, touched by the lover, bestows immortality on life. And yet she has to tread on the path of her own calvary whose inevitable stages are grief and death. And as Walter F. Otto says in his beautiful book *Dionysus: Myth and Cult*, it is an inalienable mark of the Dionysian essence that in the life of those close to the god, life and death, mortality and eternity are blended in a wondrous fashion. For the god himself is, after all, the son of a mortal mother. In the same way as he has to suffer grief and death, so also the women to whom he is tied by the most intimate awe and affection can enter the ultimate realm of his glory only by passing through the deepest woe and suffering.¹³ Thus, through the study of Bachofen on the one hand, through profound personal experience on the other, Ivanov discovered one more dimension of the Dionysian world somewhat neglected by Nietzsche: namely, that this world is above all a world of woman. Women awaken and cherish Dionysus, women accompany him wherever he

goes. Women wait for him, and they are the first who will be overcome by his sacred madness. For this reason, the erotic element as such remains peripheral. Much more significant than the sexual union in this cult is childbearing and nurturing. The Dionysian world is the world of life springing forth and blossoming in all its glory. But it borders directly upon grief, sorrow, and death. It is constructive and yet bears the seeds of destruction within itself. In this sense it is a primeval phenomenon of life. To this world of woman the world of Apollo as the decidedly masculine element is opposed. What prevails here is no longer the profound mystery of the blood and the chthonic powers, but the clarity and wide scope of mind and spirit. The Apollonian world, however, cannot exist without the other, the Dionysian. Therefore it has never refused recognition to it. If one has in mind Ivanov's later elaborations of Dionysianism in terms of the prefiguration of Christianity, should one not pause here to remember the women surrounding Christ, lovingly taking care of him, opening their minds and hearts to his words, visiting his grave, witnessing his resurrection, experiencing the profoundest grief and sorrow, the most sublime joy?

A few critical remarks may be appropriate here. It is evident that in the nineties of the last century Ivanov was confronted with a course of events which led to far-reaching changes in his life and work. He declined flattering offers to join renowned academic institutions. And after a prolonged spell of *Wanderjahre* he decided to spend his life not in the service of organized scholarship, but in the free pursuit of his calling as a poet and writer. Through all these formative years he passed under the tremendous shadow of Nietzsche. But a moment arrived when he was saturated with Nietzsche's thought. He had received from the philosopher everything from which he could profit in the further course of his artistic, intellectual and spiritual development. It was time to assert his own self over against the sonorous voice that threatened to overwhelm his own song. Once again, in order to become what he felt he was destined to be, he had to detach himself from Nietzsche the teacher, while continuing to respect him as the discoverer of a great truth. In the process of emancipation it becomes necessary to subject the positions of the master to critical analysis based on one's own insight and knowledge.

But along this path lurk the dangers of misunderstanding. For every philosopher presents special problems of interpretation, and with Nietzsche these problems are especially crucial. In *Beyond Good and Evil* Nietzsche said: "It has generally become clear to me what every great philosophy up till now has consisted of—namely, the confession of its originator and a species of involuntary and unconscious autobiography." And this applies, of course, with redoubled impact to his own thought. The very richness of Nietzsche's reflections and expression becomes a trap for the incautious or imaginative mind. Perhaps the greatest temptation for the interpreter or critic of Nietzsche is to attempt to "systematize" his thought into a consistent whole. Any such attempt necessarily results in exaggeration or distortion, for there is a fluidity in Nietzsche's thought which does not lend itself to strict categorization. This is not to deny that there are certain organic patterns in his philosophizing. These patterns, however, become visible only upon careful critical comparison of pertinent passages drawn from the entire corpus of Nietzsche's works. Or, as Karl Jaspers said, "the whole is not a concept or a system; it is the passion of the quest for being, together with its constant overcoming through relentless criticism, as it rises to the level of genuine truth."¹⁴

Ivanov preferred only two crucial points which, when criticizing Nietzsche's thought, may be taken into consideration here: Nietzsche's atheism, and his great postulate and preachment of the "Super-Man" (*der Übermensch*). For Nietzsche the assertion that God is dead was not a war-cry of defiance but a personal as well as universal tragedy. He understood the true essence and core of Christianity very well. So at the time he was writing the *Antichrist*, perhaps the most vitriolic of his many declarations of war against Christ and Christianity, he quite dispassionately summed up in *The Twilight of the Idols* what is at the center of Christian doctrine and practice:

Christianity is a view of things consistently thought out and complete. If we break out of it a fundamental idea, the belief in God, we thereby break the whole into pieces: we have no longer anything determinate in our grasp. Christianity presupposes that man does not know, cannot know what is good for him and what is evil; he

believes in God who alone knows. Christian morality is a command, its origin is transcendent, it is beyond all criticism; it solely has truth, if God is truth—it stands or falls with the belief in God.

After the destruction of the Socratic ideal of right reason and after the axiom that God is dead, all doors stood open for the powerful influx of nihilism and the frightening consciousness of total meaninglessness. Here Nietzsche comes very close to Dostoevsky's famous dictum that if there is no God and no immortality everything is permitted. Or, as Erich Heller has said, with God's "being dead" man cannot find any lasting spiritual satisfaction in the pure contemplation of a creation deserted by its creator.¹⁵ If nature and history have lost their meaning, they must be abolished. If the fallen creature has ceased to be redeemable, good and evil have to be transcended by the Super-Man. The Super-Man appears when man has no more meaning. He is the man who endures to live a triumphantly creative life in a world without sense or meaning. That is the ultimate intent of Nietzsche's insistence on the "will to power." For, in Erich Heller's words, "the Super-Man is the creature strong enough to live forever a cursed existence, even to derive from it Dionysian raptures of tragic acceptance."¹⁶ That Nietzsche clothed his visions about the future Super-Man occasionally in biological, Darwinian terms was only the tribute he paid to the scientific jargon of his time. The tragedy was that the soul-rending spiritual and moral torment of Nietzsche's entire life was the result of his inability to believe in God. Out of the totally different structure of his own mind and spirit Ivanov caught only some rare glimpses of this tragedy. But it must be stressed in this context that Ivanov set a great example to his contemporaries as well as to posterity by not giving in to the pervasive temptation of nihilistic indifference, moral flabbiness, and gloom, to which his discussions with Mikhail Gershenzon and his letters to Charles Du Bos and Alessandro Pellegrini bear eloquent testimony.

One last reservation. Did Ivanov perhaps take the content of some of Nietzsche's most alarming, startling and sacrilegious utterances too seriously? Had Nietzsche not himself fallen prey to the nihilism he so penetratingly discerned, diagnosed and described as

the chief signature of our entire age? When he said, "Everything that can be thought out must be a fiction," he also reduced everything he himself had thought to an absurdity. All contents, substances and systems had lost their meaning for him. What remained was the urge to express himself, to formulate dazzlingly, to blind with the splendor of his words, to sparkle and to shine in ever more daring effulgence. Or, as Gottfried Benn said, his way was the way from content to pure verbal gesture, the extinction of substance in favor of expression.¹⁷ At the end of one of his Dionysus dithyrambs he exclaimed:

O that I be banished
from all truth!
Mere jester! Mere poet!

Had this been revealed to Ivanov he would probably not have failed to give assent to Stefan George's beautiful brief poem dedicated to Nietzsche:

And when this stern and tortured voice
Resounds deep in the night and over the bright sea
Like a hymn of praise, they say, regretfully:
She should have sung, not preached, this new soul . . .

Und wenn die strenge und gequälte stimme
Dann wie ein loblied tönt in blaue nacht
Und helle flut—so klagt: sie hätte singen
Nicht reden sollen diese neue seele . . .

Notes

1. Gottfried Benn, *Gesammelte Werke*, 4: *Reden und Vorträge* (Wiesbaden, 1968). See the address entitled "Nietzsche—nach fünfzig Jahren," p. 1049.
2. James West, *Russian Symbolism* (London, 1970), p. 81.
3. See the fundamental biographical introduction by Olga Deschartes in *SS*, I, 30 and 35. Other recent books offering interesting and revealing glimpses of Ivanov's life and personality are Bernhard Schultze, *Russische Denker* (Vienna, 1950), pp. 423 ff., Evgenija Gertsyk, *Vospominaniya* (Paris, 1973),

pp. 37 ff., and Carin Tschöpl, *Viačeslav Ivanov: Dichtung und Dichtungstheorie* (Munich, 1968).

4. Georgij Adamovich, *Odinočestvo i svoboda* (New York, 1955), p. 255.

5. Vyacheslav Ivanov, *Borozdy i mezhi* (St. Petersburg, 1916; reprint 1971). See the essay "O sushchestve tragedii," pp. 235 ff. Cf. the excellent German version prepared by J. Schor in the volume *Wjatscheslaw Iwanow, Das alte Wahre: Essays* (Berlin-Frankfurt, 1950).

6. Fedor Stepun, *Vstrechi* (Munich, 1962). See the article about Vyacheslav Ivanov, p. 144. See also Stepun's profound and penetrating presentation and interpretation of Ivanov's thought world in the standard work *Mystische Wéltschau: Fünf Gestalten des russischen Symbolismus* (Munich, 1964).

7. Egon Friedell, *Kulturgeschichte der Neuzeit* (Munich, n.d.), pp. 1408 ff.

8. Vyacheslav Ivanov, *Po zvezdam* (St. Petersburg, 1909); see the essays "Nitsše i Dionis" and "O Dionise i kul'ture."

9. S. S. Averintsev, "Poezija Vjacheslava Ivanova," in *Voprosy literatury*, 8 (Moscow, 1975), 152.

10. See Ivanov's essays about Schiller and Richard Wagner in the volume *Po zvezdam*.

11. "Ancient Terror," originally published in 1909 in *Po zvezdam*. Here quoted according to the faithful German translation prepared for the journal *Corona* (vol. V, 1934/35) by Nikolai von Bubnoff, and reprinted in the volume *Das alte Wahre*, mentioned above, pp. 63 ff. *Corona* was a high-level literary magazine to which Vyacheslav Ivanov was a frequent contributor in the 1920s and 30s.

12. Euripides, *Bacchae*. Here quoted according to the translation of Gilbert Murray in *The Athenian Drama, vol. III, Euripides* (London, 1906), pp. 769-74.

13. Walter F. Otto, *Dionysos: Mythos und Kultus* (Frankfurt, 1960), pp. 55, 115, and 167.

14. This passage is an almost verbatim quotation from the book by Richard Lowell Howey, entitled *Heidegger and Jaspers on Nietzsche* (The Hague, 1973), pp. 1 and 11.

15. Erich Heller, *The Disinherited Mind: Essays in Modern German Literature and Thought* (New York, 1957), p. 87.

16. Erich Heller, *The Disinherited Mind*. See the essay "The World of Franz Kafka," p. 207.

17. Benn, *Gesammelte Werke*, p. 1053.

Ivanov's Theory of Knowledge: Kant and Neo-Kantianism

James West

Even the most casual reader of Ivanov's essays will take note of a number of passages in which Ivanov remonstrates with Immanuel Kant or the German Neo-Kantian philosophers. The reader who is at all acquainted with German philosophical writing from Kant to Ivanov's day will find that the presence of Kant makes itself felt even between the remonstrations, and indeed is a constant part of the background to Ivanov's theoretical discussions of art. It is not just that Ivanov's esthetic embodies a theory of knowledge, and one which explicitly counters what he sees as the baleful after-effects of Kantian cognitive philosophy on the very self-perception of humankind in the Western world; Ivanov is himself a post-Kantian thinker whose philosophy incorporates directly or indirectly more of the heritage of Kant than is immediately apparent; many of his ideas, while unquestionably a part of his own coherent philosophical scheme, display a tantalizing proximity to those of the sage of Königsberg, once the reader is accustomed to the idiosyncratic language of both philosophers. I have previously compared Ivanov's philosophy of art in some detail to that of the late Neo-Kantian Ernst Cassirer, concluding that the difference between them is slight and rests mainly on Ivanov's faith in the life-transforming powers of poetry that for Cassirer remained in the long run metaphorical.¹ I have also made much of passages from Ivanov's essays that can be construed as an ultimate disavowal of Kant by Ivanov and a disassociation of himself from the contemporary Neo-Kantians.²

I have erred in not giving to the complicated relationship be-

tween Ivanov's esthetic and Kant's the attention it deserves, and this paper is a modest attempt to make amends.

There is an obvious sense in which Ivanov's esthetic must have some affinity with Kant's. It was Kant who raised esthetics from the category of subjects of which a comprehensive philosophy must give some account, and made it into one of the cornerstones of all philosophical inquiry.³ More than this, the grounds on which Kant assigned to esthetics its fundamental role—or to put it another way, the rationale for the *Kritik der Urteilskraft* in his system as a whole—provide a vital background to the exploration of subsequent esthetic theories in their relationship to Kant. Having established *a priori* principles for the faculty of cognition in the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, and for the faculty of desire in the *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft*, and having in his earlier writings on esthetics openly doubted the possibility of finding such principles for judgments of taste or feelings of pleasure or displeasure, Kant came by 1787 (when the second edition of the first *Kritik* was published) to think that with some modification of the same principles, taste and judgment could be subsumed into the critical system. When it was published in 1790, the third *Kritik* was more than a simple extension of Kant's system. Its place in the overall scheme rests rather on its goal of establishing a necessary connection between the faculties of knowledge and desire, or between "understanding" (*Verstand*) and "reason" (*Vernunft*) in the strictly Kantian sense of these terms. The esthetic component was to provide nothing less than "a link binding the two parts of the Philosophy into a whole."⁴ Even more significant for our purposes is the division of the *Kritik der Urteilskraft* into two parts, the second (the *Kritik der teleologischen Urteilskraft*) dealing with human judgment of the purposiveness of nature. For Kant, esthetic pleasure derives essentially from our capacity to place the object of esthetic contemplation in an ordered scheme of nature, to understand its interrelatedness with other phenomena and so achieve a sense of harmony between a teleologically conceived natural world and our own cognitive faculties. I have taken a few liberties here in summarizing Kant's objectives in the third *Kritik* in not strictly Kantian language, but have done so in order to provoke some fairly obvious associations

with the main postulates of Ivanov's esthetic, and so suggest that Ivanov sets out to answer, with few exceptions, the Kantian questions. In other words, his relationship to Kant requires elucidation not so much at the level of agreement or disagreement with specific conclusions or pronouncements, as at the level of the fundamental group of interrelated questions posed by either philosopher, and the *kind* and comprehensiveness of the answers sought to them.

Assuming a familiarity with the basic points of Ivanov's philosophy of art, I will begin with an examination of a number of characteristic statements by him about the interconnectedness of art and cognition as a general proposition, about the legacy of Kant in particular, and occasionally about both.

The collection of extended aphorisms, *Sporady*, included in Ivanov's 1909 collection of essays, *By the Stars* (*Po zvezdam*, 1909) contains a number of concise statements on the cognitive aspect of art. The following is a fairly generally valid summary of Ivanov's position on this question:

Poetry is complete knowledge of man and knowledge of the world through human cognition.

Lyrical poetry, above all, is the mastery of rhythm and number, as the motive and the architectonic principles of the inner life of man, and through mastery of them in the spirit, assimilation to their universal mystery.

It is the task and goal of lyric poetry to be a constructive force, heralding and commanding order. Its supreme law is harmony; it must resolve every discord into an accord.

Epic and drama are concerned with events in the flow of time and the resolution of conflicting wills. For lyric poetry there is one event only—the harmony of the moment, sounding from the strings of the cosmic lyre.⁵

What is most familiar here is, of course, the primacy accorded to poetry, and the suggestion that a certain kind of self-knowledge is a prior key to knowledge of the world outside the self, as well as the declaration that poetry does not merely extol order and harmony, but helps in some positive way to bring them about. We might also

note in passing the hierarchical distinction between forms of verbal art that deal in the human time-span, and poetry which is, as it were, exempt from temporal order.

For Ivanov, as for Vladimir Solovyov, the ordering principle which poetry helps to realize is the will of God, destined to restore matter, through universal art, into its ideal form. The special knowledge of the divine order that is attained by the artist brings about a fusion of the individual will with the divine will and makes the artist a part of this process. A few words from another of the *Sporady* sum it up:

God is an artist; His judgment, I rather think, will be the judgment of an artist, His judging gaze will be that of a master disappointed in his expectations of a lazy or untalented pupil.⁶

In the context of this view of the cognitive function of art, Ivanov repeatedly introduced three further interconnected questions: the isolation of the individual in the modern world, the fragility (but also the importance) of human communication in the necessarily restricted language of verbal discourse, and the problem of freedom and human volition. The thread uniting all these preoccupations is the polarity between absolute and relative, the certainty or otherwise of success in the quest for absolute knowledge of at least one's own existence and that of the divine ordering principle of the universe. The resulting tension in human existence is summed up in *A Correspondence from Two Corners* (*Perpiska iz dvukh uglov*, 1921) in a way that explicitly brings Kant into the argument:

. . . on the fact of our belief in the absolute, which is something other than culture, depends our inner freedom—and this is life itself—or our inward bondage to a culture that has long been godless in principle, for it has confined man (as Kant proclaimed once and for all) within himself.⁷

In the 1916 collection of essays, *Furrows and Boundaries* (*Borozdy i mezhi*), Ivanov elaborated this fundamental reproach directed at modern Western society. The essay "Lev Tolstoy and Culture" (*Lev Tolstoy i kul'tura*) compares Tolstoy to Socrates (both sought moral

bearings in a society spiritually crippled by relativism in philosophy) and provides more interesting material for our eventual comparison of Ivanov with Kant. In both Socrates' Greece and Tolstoy's Europe, Ivanov writes,

It was necessary to rebel against instinct and save knowledge for living at the expense of knowledge of the essence of things. If there was not a more real god to be found outside the natural creative instinct of life . . . then the divinity had to be sought in the normative value of rational consciousness, the capacity for logic had to be deified, and objective moral criteria had to be derived from human self-determination. Morality had to be used to exorcise the chaos of an existence deserted by the gods. It was hunger for real knowledge that made men moralists.⁸

This veiled indictment of the consequences of post-Kantian relativism is echoed in the essay "The Religious Work of Vladimir Solovyov" ("Religioznoe delo Vladimira Solov'eva," 1910) in which "the Neo-Kantians" are blamed for the chaos of philosophy of knowledge in our day, and the point is made even more forcefully that "it is impossible to live in accordance with such a theory of knowledge."⁹ In the earlier *Sporady* Ivanov had already likened Kant to Socrates, again in the context of the moral philosophy that results from a relativistic theory of knowledge:

Kant retraces Socrates' steps, juxtaposing moral philosophy to the cognition of objects, and is as misled in this matter as was Socrates by the conviction that virtue springs from knowledge and that goodness is wisdom.¹⁰

It is not altogether clear what Ivanov would have us conclude from this; the rest of the rather long "aphorism," one of several under the heading "On Daring Love" (*O ljubvi derzajushchey*), extols in directly Nietzschean terms the capacity of the human will, all too seldom exercised, to assert with compelling immediacy its independent existence and freedom from the limitation of human cognition. However, the most interesting part of this "aphorism" is a suggestion that Kant offered, or attempted, his own solution to this dilemma,

but failed in exactly the way in which Christ failed for Dostoevsky's inquisitor:

Kant's attempt to free "practical reason" from the fetters of theoretical cognition has to this day borne little fruit. From the very beginning, the vast majority of minds could not follow him, for they, creatures of the day, longed to avoid the fatal parting of the ways, and to save their clear, day-time knowledge in order to build on its achievements. It happened this way, perhaps, because Kant himself bases his practical reason after all on pure reason, and does not take as the exclusive source of practical philosophy the axiom of immediate consciousness: *sum, ergo volo*.¹¹

We shall return in due course to the suggestion implied here that the primacy of the *a priori* principles of the first *Kritik* is the Achilles' heel of Kant's system, but should note at this stage the repeated emphasis on the practical philosophical needs of the human, who craves—and for Ivanov is unquestionably owed—guidance toward higher ends than are intelligible in the language of this world.

The essay "On the Trouble of the World" (*O neprijatii mira*) in the same collection allows us to follow this thread a little further. Here Ivanov describes "Mystical Anarchism" (a movement within Russian Symbolism associated primarily with Georgy Chulkov, and subscribed to by Ivanov strictly on his own terms¹²) as "an attempt to set against *cognition*, which seeks awareness of what exists in the category of necessity, *practical reason*, directed toward the realization of what is morally necessary in the category of freedom. . . ."¹³ Ivanov is at this point supporting the idea of Mystical Anarchism, which he treats as an attempt to realize in practice the Solovyovian ideal of *sobornost*—"the supra-individual assertion of the ultimate freedom." What is most striking here is not only the explicit espousal of practical reason as if it were a cause, but its equally explicit dissociation from cognition; since Ivanov's language is here overtly Kantian, we are probably justified in assuming that he is declaring the primacy of Kantian "understanding" over Kantian "reason" and proposing by implication a correction to Kant's system—a correc-

tion, moreover, that is in the ordering rather than the "categories" of that system.

It is worth observing in passing that Ivanov often made conscious use of a certain amount of Kantian terminology. Even in rather later essays such as "On the Boundaries of Art" (*O granitsakh iskusstva*, 1913) in which Ivanov's own richly metaphorical language for the discussion of the principles of mythopoeic art is quite fully developed, he employs words such as "synthetic" and "transcendental" in a sense that is close to Kant's, and also uses what appear to be calques on key terms from Kant's vocabulary; an example is the word translated as "super-sensible" (following the usual practice in English discussions of Kant) in the Ivanov passage cited below—Ivanov's "sverkhchuvstvennyj" in this context invites equation with Kant's "übersinnlich."

"On the Boundaries of Art" is well known as the essay in which Ivanov developed most fully what might be termed his psychology of creativity, his account of the artist's "ascent" to intuitive awareness of *realiora*, of both the ideal forms of things and their place in the divine scheme, and his agonizing "descent" to the everyday world to fulfill his painful obligation to express in the language of *realia* what he has learned. A short passage will serve both to exemplify this idea and provide a final illustration of Ivanov's categorical allegiance to the phenomenal world:

Thus for the descending artist the highest law is reverence for the lower order of things and obedience to the will of this world, to which he offers the instrument of betrothal with the highest order, and not a scroll inscribed with super-sensible truths. . . . And that knowledge which is to be gleaned from works of genuinely descending art is knowledge of the true will of the world. . . . In this the most important thing is the true determination of relationships, correspondences and congruences between the higher and the lower . . . between what is generally acknowledged as fundamental and essential and what seems only fortuitous—and such a correct determination and accurate choice of observed features of reality for depiction is what we find in works of true art,

because their creators have derived from their penetration into the sphere of higher reality a true synthetic understanding of the reality they depict.¹⁴

It should be apparent by now that even in the most original and characteristic formulations of Ivanov's esthetic there is just below the surface a dialogue with Kant that is distinct from his open objections to the pernicious effects of a climate of relativism in European thought, which he ascribed sometimes to Kant but more often to unspecified post-Kantians and Neo-Kantians. This is not an explicit rebuttal of any particular Kantian proposition so much as a deliberate use of transformed elements of Kant's philosophy that amounts to a tacit reproach that Kant had ultimately missed the key that would after all make of his system a liveable philosophy rather than a mere construct of the human mind, however ingenious.

Let us look at the situation again, from Kant's point of view.

We can indeed find in Kant, particularly in the *Kritik der Urteils kraft*, many of the preoccupations that run through Ivanov's philosophy. Kant's faculty of judgment, even as formulated in the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, is the synthesizing faculty that enables us to make sense of individual phenomena by placing them in an ordered relationship to a universal, i.e., to a concept. Judgment brings to what Kant calls "the manifold of intuition" a form of ordering that is essential if human beings are to communicate with one another. In the *Kritik der Urteils kraft* he goes further and provides an argument for the possibility of a universally communicable mental state, which links the understanding and the imagination with the faculty of reason and esthetic perception with cognitive perception. Kant accords to the artist a special role in this human activity that is in its main points identical to that of Ivanov's artist. Kant's artist possesses qualities that set him aside from his fellows as a "genius." Ivanov follows him in using the word "genius" to distinguish the true artist, and in the first section of *Sporady* (entitled "On Genius" [*O genii*]), he makes, with explicit reference to Kant and Schopenhauer, the same distinction as Kant makes between the products of mere artistic talent which "only multiply our knowledge of what has

already realized itself historically and therefore ceased to exist," and the creations of genius which are "something other than, and greater than, reality."¹⁶ Kant even singled out poetry as the art which plays the greatest role in the task of communicating the super-sensible (*das Übersinnliche*) in terms of man's sensible perceptions.¹⁷ Into his discussion of the artist's role Kant injects the conclusions of his consideration of the purposiveness of nature, making his genius, as Ivanov's later, the agent of a force beyond himself. But for Kant the force is nature, and in a sense the circle of his esthetic is closed when he insists that the talent of the genius for attaining an ordered understanding of the natural world is itself a phenomenon within the sphere of nature,¹⁸ and results only in the illusion of a higher reality. For in Kant's view, the harmony of the artist's ordered perception, though in an objective sense communicable, remains ultimately in the mind of the subject; in Kant's terminology, the faculty of judgment is reflective, and esthetic judgment cannot lead to knowledge, in the strict sense, of the objects of such judgment. Ivanov's wry characterization of the sterility of a world dominated by relativist thought springs sharply to mind when one reads any of the several statements of this limitation in the *Kritik der Urteils kraft*; for example:

Reflective judgment, which has the task of ascending from the particular to the general in nature, needs a principle which it cannot derive from experience, since it must be the basis for the unity of all empirical principles under higher, but still empirical, principles. Reflective judgment can derive such a transcendental principle only from within itself, and not from elsewhere (since it would then become determinative judgment), nor can it prescribe such a principle for nature. . . .¹⁹

The assimilation of the faculty of esthetic judgment into the critical system is in the last resort by analogy. The esthetic faculties are for a number of technical reasons able to operate as if their goal was knowledge, and for Kant the esthetic pleasure consists in the conscious attainment of this state that is one degree short of knowledge; the appreciation of the purposiveness of art in the natural order of

things remains vicarious: "Consciousness of the merely formal purposiveness in the exercise of the subject's cognitive powers . . . is the esthetic pleasure itself. . . ." ²⁰ Modern commentators find this aspect of the *Kritik der Urteilskraft* unsatisfactory since it rests on a somewhat unclear theoretical distinction between "transcendental" and "empirical" faculties that operate in parallel. ²¹ Ivanov comes close to voicing the same objection in the passage of *Sporady* cited earlier, when he disavows Kant's restriction on what is attainable by the genius, and nothing suggests more clearly than this passage the nature of his underlying relationship to Kant, for he makes his point not by contradicting Kant but by following a basically Kantian assertion to a conclusion that Kant could not allow himself:

Kant and Schopenhauer distinguish the empirical from the transcendently knowable. The relationship between them must correspond to the relationship of our empirical world to the potential world. The latter coexists with the former but is wider in its scope. The "genial" is like the seed that it produces. This is why historical reality will never express its age more completely or more accurately than the genial creations of the spirit that arise in the given age, precisely because they express something other than, and more than, reality. ²³

In the context of the "aphorisms" that make up *Sporady* this maneuver may look like unsupported assertion, but in Ivanov's work as a whole this is very far from the case. What enables Ivanov to assert the reality—or hyper-reality—of the artist's intuitions of both the order and the purpose of the universe is the religious faith, simultaneously Christian and Hellenic, the dual legacy of Solovyov and Nietzsche which he developed so rewardingly into an ecstatic positive philosophy of being. The most relevant statement of this philosophy of being is the essay "Thou Art" (*Ty esi*, 1907), which Ivanov begins with an indirect but unmistakable challenge to Kant:

Metaphysics (let us take as just one example the theory of the empirical and the transcendental) and moral philosophy, gnoseology and psychology, the "reflection" of our forefathers and the

phenomena of intellectual and spiritual life that occurred toward the end of the last century in the form of esthetic illusionism, impressionism and, finally, symbolism as a specific sect and school of art, have deprived us not only of the old *cogito, ergo sum*, but even of its separate elements, *cogito* and *sum* (we would find it easier to comprehend *fu, ergo non sum*).

In recent times some unseen plough has furrowed the soul of contemporary man—not in the sense of the diseased condition of his inner forces, but in the sense of the disintegration of that solid, impenetrable, indivisible lump of living energy which in a heroic age of immediate individualism could call itself "I" and "the complete individual." This ploughed field of individual self-awareness is the first condition for the rise of new shoots of religious creativity and perception of the world. ²⁴

Ivanov proceeds to expound, more clearly perhaps than anywhere else, the essence of his theory of knowledge, founded in the synthesis of re-mythologized Christian religion and mythopoeic religious art that is the characteristic of his life's work. For the present purposes, "Thou Art" provides the most intriguing suggestion as to where Ivanov stood in relation not only to Kant, but to the post-Kantian idealists to whom he would appear to owe a great deal, and to many of his fellow Symbolists in Russia.

Kant was not, of course, a godless man, and Ivanov probably did not mean to suggest this in the obvious sense when he made the observation cited above that the formal strictures of Kant's philosophy had reaffirmed in its godlessness a godless culture. It should not be forgotten that Kant had a particular and rather circumscribing mission behind his monumental life's work: not necessarily to demolish any one of the prevailing metaphysical theories of his day or to undermine metaphysics as such, but to establish the rigorous critical foundation for metaphysics in general that was so conspicuously lacking in the various philosophies in question. This emphasis prescribed certain limits for Kant's treatment of metaphysics in his system, but these limits by no means imply that he would have closed the door on further metaphysical speculation. Indeed, it has

been noted that there is a paradoxical continuity between Kant and the German idealist philosophers of the nineteenth century, who in reasserting in various ways the knowability of ideal forms were extending Kant rather than reverting to pre-Kantian dogmatic metaphysics. In particular, the characteristically idealist notion of philosophy and art as the forms of self-knowledge of the Absolute easily betrays its Kantian lineage.²⁵ But perhaps the most telling effect of Kant on subsequent German idealist philosophy, where we are concerned, is the caution he seems to have inspired in the admission of the question of faith into philosophical inquiry. Indeed, in the view of at least one intellectual historian,

. . . we find a marked tendency to substitute metaphysics for faith and to rationalize the revealed mysteries of Christianity, bringing them within the scope of the speculative reason. To use a modern term, we find a tendency to demythologize Christian dogmas, turning them in the process into a speculative philosophy.²⁶

The direction that German idealist philosophy took after Kant was a product of the vulgarization of Kant in a number of ways which constitute the very ills that Ivanov decried at the beginning of our own century. His fundamental reproach that Kant could not take the final step back into the world of human psychological and spiritual necessities still stands, provided we acknowledge that Kant had a more circumscribed goal, that despite the comprehensiveness of his critical system he did not even seek the key that Ivanov sought, and that Ivanov in some crucial instances did not so much repudiate Kant as extend his system. It is the post-Kantians, despite Ivanov's obvious partial debt to at least some of them, who are the real target of his pained reproaches; himself a post-Kantian, Ivanov differs from them in being able to use or take issue with Kant without vulgarizing him, as Ivanov in his turn was vulgarized by some of his symbolist contemporaries in Russia.

Notes

1. James West, *Russian Symbolism* (London, 1970), pp. 93-106.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 59.
3. See for example D. W. Crawford, *Kant's Aesthetic Theory* (Madison, 1974), p. 4, and J. Margolis, *Philosophy Looks at the Arts* (New York, 1962), which Crawford quotes.
4. Title of the third section of Kant's introduction to the *Kritik der Urteilskraft* (hereafter KU), p. 29 in the Reclam (Stuttgart, 1963) text, to which all subsequent page numbers will refer.
5. Vyacheslav Ivanov, *Po zvezdam* (St. Petersburg, 1906; hereafter PZ), p. 350.
6. PZ, p. 344.
7. M. O. Gershenzon and V. Ivanov, *Perepiska iz dvukh uglov* (Moscow-Berlin, 1921), p. 23.
8. V. Ivanov, "Lev Tolstoy i kul'tura," in *Borozdy i mezhi* (Moscow, 1916; hereafter BM), p. 85.
9. BM, pp. 109-110.
10. PZ, p. 375.
11. PZ, p. 374.
12. It would be a mistake to identify Ivanov too closely with Mystical Anarchism, even though the article in question served as the introduction to the volume published by Chulkov to inaugurate the movement. Ivanov felt obliged on several occasions to write to the editors of periodicals stating his limited involvement with the movement, strictly on his own terms.
13. PZ, p. 120.
14. BM, p. 216.
15. KU, Einleitung VII and Section 9, pp. 48-53 and 89-93.
16. PZ, p. 339.
17. KU, Section 49, pp. 245-54.
18. KU, Section 46, p. 235.
19. KU, Einleitung IV, pp. 34-35.
20. KU, Section 12, p. 98.
21. Crawford, *Kant's Aesthetic Theory*, pp. 88-89.
22. PZ, p. 339.
23. PZ, p. 339.
24. PZ, p. 426.
25. See Frederick Copleston, *A History of Philosophy*, Vol. 7, Part I (New York, 1965), pp. 15 ff., for a succinct discussion of this.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 28.

Vyacheslav Ivanov's Esthetic Thought: Context and Antecedents

Victor Terras

In no other Symbolist are the antinomies of Russian Symbolism as poignant as in Ivanov. Symbolism meant a return of Russian literature to the intellectual concerns of the West. Nobody shared these concerns more strongly than Ivanov. Yet his Russianness was also stronger than that of any of his confrères.¹ Symbolism was more "learned" than any other literary movement in Russia. Ivanov was the most learned of the Symbolists. Yet Symbolism was also actively involved in Russian public life. Nothing was farther from Ivanov's thought than *l'art pour l'art* or literary escapism.

Russian Symbolism had some Alexandrian traits. Nowhere are they stronger than in Ivanov. Yet it was also Ivanov who most passionately believed in a literature for and of the people and in literature's role in creating a new integrated society.

Ivanov, who always condemned decadence, French or Russian,² was not quite free of some decadent traits of his own. Russian Symbolism was a modernist movement, yet it was also a return to Hellenism.³ Ivanov was fully abreast of the most recent developments in modern thought and in modern art, yet he gravitated toward a Neoplatonic world-view.

I

The focal quality of Ivanov's philosophy of art is a basic idealist monism, dialectically realized. Ivanov perceives all art forms as a continuum, polarized in a dynamic and a static pole (music and architecture being the extreme forms). In this he follows the German

idealist tradition of Schelling and Hegel, which also prevails in the entire Belinskian tradition of Russian criticism.

Ivanov's esthetic is "organic" in every sense of that term. To him, "it is obvious that a symbolist-artisan is unthinkable, likewise a symbolist-esthete."⁴ Russian Symbolists in general join Ivanov in this attitude, though some formalist and hedonist opinions may be found among the "decadents." Art, like religion, is to Ivanov a necessary function of life; it is an organic part of the human and of the national spirit. The work of art is a living function of its creator's spirit, and hence an integral whole. In Ivanov, these familiar positions of organicist esthetics assume a strong Schellingian (= Neoplatonic) coloration. The Plotinian *endon eidos* (Ivanov uses the term *forma formans* = *forma ante rem*; where *forma formata* is the finished work) is accepted not only as a metaphysical, but also as a psychological reality. Symbolist esthetics overlaps with the formalism of Futurist esthetics on this score. When Ivanov revives Plotinus's notion that the sculpture is already given in a block of marble and is merely freed from it by the artist,⁵ he endorses the Futurists' position that the artist's point of departure should be his material, rather than anything extraneous to it.

Ivanov also emphasizes other peculiarly Neoplatonic traits of organic esthetics: the belief in poetry as a source of intuitive knowledge and the notion that the poet is a bearer of the "inner word, an organ of the World Soul."⁶ While the organicist tradition, from Belinsky to Socialist Realism, credits the poet with cognitive powers, it generally does not elevate him to the rank of a mystic seer, as Ivanov certainly does. In this respect, Ivanov is entirely with Novalis, to whom he is linked by many bonds.⁷

It is in the organic tradition, though clearest in its German romantic version, that art be defined as inherently symbolic, revealing of a higher reality. Ivanov's *realiora* is the pivot of his monistic esthetics. His emphasis on the mythopoeic function of art likewise takes us directly to German romanticism, and to Schelling in particular.⁸

Ivanov's thought patterns are those of the dialectics of German idealism, rather than those of modern social science. The creative

process as well as the interaction between art and society, and thus the progress of history, are seen in terms of a sublation of phenomena into their opposites.⁹ A significant detail is Ivanov's understanding of creation as a dialectic fusion of freedom and necessity, one of the key features of Schellingian esthetics.¹⁰ Other aspects of Ivanov's dialectics are likewise familiar from the tradition of organic esthetics. The identity of "content" and "form" is one of these.¹¹ The dialectics of the individual and the universal is another. Somewhat surprisingly, in the context of Russian modernism,¹² Ivanov's emphasis is decidedly upon combating the *principium individuationis* in its various forms (Titanism, solipsism, man-godhood, subjectivism) and restoring the principle of a universal community (*vselenskaja obshchina*) whose artistic expression is choral action (*khorovoe dejstvo*). The conflict of subjective (individual) and objective (communal) truth has Ivanov on the side of the latter. Here as elsewhere we find him on the side of objective idealism (Schelling, Hegel, Solovyov), rather than with the subjective idealism of Kant.¹³ Ivanov's downgrading of the individual (or psychological) "I" is not at the expense of any specific collective body (nation, class, etc.), but of a timeless and superpersonal "I," much as in Schelling and Hegel. Ivanov's conception of any temporal identity as a succession of "doubles" of a higher Self has a correspondence in Plotinus's procession of hypostases.¹⁴

In human experience pure white light is an unrealized ideal. Yet a fascination with the colors of the spectrum without a striving for such purity is dangerous, Ivanov feels.¹⁵ This metaphor was also a favorite of Apollon Grigoriev's and of the German romantics.

Yet another dialectic important for Ivanov is that of the Word and the Ineffable, which Ivanov recognizes as the subject of Tyutchev's "Silentium!" Unlike Tyutchev, Ivanov has confidence in the power of the word. He believes in that "peculiar intuition and energy of the word, sensed immediately by the poet as a secret code of the ineffable, which gathers into its sounds many an echo of native subterranean springs and serves . . . both as letter of external and hieroglyph of inner experience."¹⁶ Interestingly, this conception, while clearly Neoplatonic, is not very far removed from certain ideas of Ivanov's Futurist contemporaries (*zaum'*, *samovitoe slovo*, and such).

The conception of the work of art as a synthesis of the ideal and the real, familiar from German idealist esthetics, appears in Ivanov as well. While he rejects any excesses of *mimesis* ("naturalism," for example), he is even more intent upon asserting the need for realism in art. In fact, he uses the term "idealist art" in a somewhat pejorative meaning.¹⁷ He perceives "idealist symbolism" as a sort of "illusionism," where symbols are a means of infecting an audience with a certain subjective experience, while "realist" symbols are catalysts of objective truth. Here Ivanov means "realism" and "realist" in the ordinary sense of these words, i.e., in terms of the mimetic principle and without any mystic implications of a "higher" reality.¹⁸ Ivanov's main apprehension relates to the artist who, in his pursuit of the ideal, will succumb to the temptation of subjective creation—a thought we know well from Solovyov and Blok.¹⁹

Ivanov's conception of realism is independent of historical labels. In a magnificent passage of "Two Elements in Contemporary Symbolism" (*Dve stikbii v sovremennom simbolizme*, 1908), he identifies Shakespeare and the "romantics" Hoffmann and Balzac as "realists," while defining classicism as "idealist."²⁰

The most peculiarly Ivanovian esthetic category is that of the Dionysian/Apollonian, which he applies to the creative process, to the typology of art, and to historical analysis.²¹ It is here that Ivanov's debt to Nietzsche is greatest. While the anthropological universality of the Dionysian principle had been clearly stated as early as in Schelling's *Mythology*, its esthetic meaning is specifically Nietzschean. The specific esthetic qualities which Ivanov associates with the Dionysian/Apollonian are also taken from Nietzsche, whose thoughts Ivanov uses creatively, however. Such are the Dionysian dyad as against the Apollonian monad, the female versus the male principle, hunger versus plenitude, and, first and foremost, ascent versus descent.

II

Ivanov's ontology as well as his esthetics is dynamic. Art is conceived as a form of energy, and so is the Word.²² Ontological

distinctions are seen in terms of a hierarchy which is essentially one of power or intensity. In this, as in so many things, Ivanov follows Schelling. His distinction of Being versus Existence is likewise found in Schelling. Nonbeing is perceived as existentially concrete: it can be artistically expressed.²³ Ivanov's hierarchy of Being has several stations, as does that of the Word.²⁴ Art has various levels below the highest, the theurgic. Thus, so-called "pure art" creates idols which are alive but are not themselves life-creating. Their magic is inferior to the mystic visions of the highest art.²⁵ Contemporary Symbolism on its highest level is seen as a return to the Orphic visions of primitive humanity.²⁶ Certainly the cosmic quality which one so often finds in Ivanov's poetry is also an element of his philosophy of art.

Ivanov considered himself a Christian poet and a Christian thinker. His attempts to wed Christianity to Dionysianism are not unprecedented. Even Schelling had seen the myth of a suffering, slain, and resurrected god as a human universal and Ivanov was of course familiar with Erwin Rohde's treatment of this idea.

As characteristic of Ivanov's esthetics as the Dionysian/Apollonian dichotomy itself are its various manifestations. Dionysus is the god of descent, Apollo the god of ascent. Apollo stands for the monad, Dionysus for the dyad. Dionysus is also related to the feminine, and Apollo to the male, principle.²⁷ (Occasionally, Ivanov will deviate from this scheme and replace it by a triadic scheme, where Apollo, the male principle, still stands for ascent, but Aphrodite, the female principle, becomes descent, while chaos is the sphere of an androgynous Dionysus.)²⁸ Ivanov's sympathy is with descent rather than ascent, with the dyad rather than the monad, and with the feminine rather than the male. The titanism of Prometheus, seen by Ivanov as a victory of the male principle, is ultimately sterile, while the eternal-feminine (as manifest in Dostoevsky's *kbromonozhka*, for example) is joyously embraced.²⁹

While the ontological distinction of a male/female principle is a common one, particularly in Romantic philosophy, the distinction of "hunger" and "plenitude" as complementary impulses of artistic creativity, closely related to ascent/descent, comes from Nietzsche.³⁰

In fact, Ivanov also uses Nietzsche's principal example of plenitude, that of the Sun, whose tragedy is that it can only give and never take.³¹ It may not be superfluous to observe that a metaphysical preoccupation with the Sun as a negative symbol is characteristic of Russian Futurism. Ivanov's occasional observations on this esthetic category are interesting and valuable, such as when he defines *Macbeth* as a tragedy of hunger, *King Lear* as a tragedy of plenitude.³² His own tragedy, *Tantalus* (*Tantal*, 1904) is an allegory of man refusing the gifts of the gods and wanting to be a giver only. The pride of Tantalus is his undoing, but his glory too.³³ Ivanov extends this category to Christian symbolism: the hunger of the soul and the *kenosis* of Christ's godhead in His passion.

The ascent/descent category, clearly taken from Nietzsche³⁴ (though it is prominent in Platonic, Neoplatonic, and Christian thought), permeates every level of Ivanov's creativity. Every aspect of his thought is organized on a vertical axis. Ivanov's ontology, anthropology, ethic, esthetics, and even his history are dominated by this model. Vertical imagery plays a dominant role in Ivanov's poetry.³⁵ The action of his tragedies *Prometheus* and *Tantalus* is arranged on a vertical.³⁶ Ivanov sees ascent/descent patterns in other genres as well. The sonnet, his very special favorite, is characterized by a scheme of ascent/descent.³⁷

The primary form of the ascent/descent category is mythical. Ascent is quite literally "winged victory over earthly sluggishness,"³⁸ while descent is, also literally, a descent to the bowels of the earth or a return to the womb of Mother Earth.³⁹ Both of these mythical conceptions appear in Greek mythology, in Platonic, and in Neoplatonic myths.⁴⁰

Ivanov readily applies the ascent/descent category to Christian thought. He recognizes ascent in human striving for a union with the Divine, in Jacob's ladder, in a human soul's renunciation of this world. He sees descent in God's second hypostasis, the Son, in Christ's *kenosis*, in Christian sacrifice and humility (which latter he perceives as a distinguishing trait of the Russian people).⁴¹

Ivanov's view of the creative process develops from his understanding of the religious basis of true art. Art is generated by a

fusion of the ascent toward an epiphany of the ideal and the descent to its realization in a proper artistic form. The creation of a work of art is a sacrifice, since it represents a lofty spirit's descent to the real, through which the ideal is expressed. Artistic form always means descent.⁴²

Ivanov's attention is with descent more than with ascent.⁴³ He suggests that in lyric poetry there exists a possibility to create by ascent only. It is here that the "poet" is sometimes more important than the "artist." In fact, lyric poetry is "art" to a lesser extent than other art forms, all of which require some descent. Ivanov is not very much in favor of poetry created through the élan of ascent only.⁴⁴

Ivanov's conception of the creative process may be called psychoanalytic in that the events leading to the creation of a work of art are seen as stages in a mental process over which the creative subject has no conscious control. Ivanov's conception is remarkably close to that of Gaston Bachelard.⁴⁵

In his article "On the Boundaries of Art" (*O granitsakh iskusstva*, 1913) Ivanov presents a diagram of the creative process as ascent toward an epiphany which takes the creator's spirit through several regions of Being, followed by a descent to "a point of Apollonian contemplation of the apogee of ascent," and further down to an incarnation of the vision gained through the earlier ascent. Here the lowest form of art takes the artist to "a point of 'subjectivist' mirroring" of his own consciousness. Realist art, such as Flaubert's, takes the artist somewhat higher, to "a point of transcendent contemplation of a reality to be overcome" (called a "desert"). Art of "high symbolism" is capable of traversing the "desert" and reaching "points of intuitive grasp of higher realities." Finally, some rare artists, such as Dante, reach the highest level of intuition.⁴⁶

On its ascent as well as on its descent, the artist's soul experiences several stages of Dionysian excitation (*dionisijskoe volnenie*). The details of Ivanov's model of ascent/descent are Neoplatonic. In the late Hellenistic age, religious topography, mostly vertical, invaded every area of thought, as all things were ordered in a hierarchy of ascending/descending values. The topography of ascent/descent of

the soul through diverse regions of a spiritual cosmos is linked to Hellenistic cosmology as it appears in Ptolemaic astronomy.⁴⁷ Ivanov's diagrams bear a striking resemblance to astronomical charts. It may also be remembered that the ascent of the soul through various regions of the heavens is also a part of Orthodox eschatology.

Ivanov documents his model of the creative process with references to various poets: Dante, Pushkin, Wagner, Goethe, Nietzsche, and others. He quotes lines from Pushkin's "Autumn" (*Osen'*, 1833) as marvellous descriptions of Dionysian excitation and Apollonian dream.⁴⁸ Nietzsche's *Birth of Tragedy*, but also Wagner's *Meistersinger*, are other sources of "Apollonian dreams" [SS, II, 632].

The general scheme of an "inner canon" in the artist's soul coinciding with the "inner canon" of the work of art and symbolic of the mystic essence of things is Neoplatonic. It corresponds to the Plotinian concept of artistic creation "from inside," an "inner form" which recreates the true essence of things. This Plotinian conception dominates German idealist esthetics.⁴⁹

Ivanov applies the ascent/descent model to human affairs at large, and so to history. He is convinced that "not a single step on the ladder of spiritual ascent is possible without a step down the rungs that lead to its subterranean treasures: the higher the branches, the deeper the roots."⁵⁰ Thus, Dostoevsky "was the master builder of that subterranean labyrinth which was to give birth to the new spirituality of the universal, all-human Ego."⁵¹

Ivanov's philosophy of history is genetic, like Nietzsche's, rather than historical. He believes in a perennial alternation of "organic" and "critical" epochs, terms taken from Saint-Simon, and sees his own age as a "critical" epoch which has reached its apogee and is about to be replaced by a new "organic" period already inaugurated by Wagner, Nietzsche, Ibsen, and the great Russian novelists.⁵² Ivanov's conception of an organic epoch implies a resurgence of religious art, which he expects to arise from "the elemental creative power of the barbarian soul of the people."⁵³ He sees the role of the Russian intelligentsia as unique in history: a ruling class voluntarily descending to poverty, simplicity, and self-destruction.⁵⁴ Ivanov is convinced that "a true talent cannot but express the ulti-

mate depths of the consciousness of his age" and thus will "in such epochs surely serve the revolution even if he may appear to others, and even to himself, as its enemy."⁵⁵ This particular notion, Hegelian in origin, is found also in Plekhanov and in Lukács.

III

Ivanov's monism extends to his view of art and society. He wholeheartedly follows the Russian tradition of social organicism started by Belinsky: "For a true creator art and life are one."⁵⁶ The artist is, fundamentally, a craftsman (*remeslennik*) who fulfills the orders of his community.⁵⁷ He may do this in various ways. There are mystifiers, Dionysian artists who create riddles, mysteries, and masks (*oblachiteli*). There are also pluralists. Such were Aeschylus, Shakespeare, and Goethe. And there are demystifiers, those who reveal the patterns of life, who tear off masks. Such were Sophocles, Cervantes, and Tolstoy.⁵⁸

Ivanov also distinguishes "grand art," an expression of the communal soul (*sobornaja dusha*) of a nation or of mankind, from "small art," an expression of social movements, trends, and such. There are two varieties of each. Grand art can be either pandemic (*vsenarodnoe*), such as Dante's or Homer's, or demotic such as the great European novels. "Small art" is either intimate, as in most lyric poetry, or monastic (*kelejnoe*), severing all connections with the people (and in so doing aspiring once more to be universal). These four types of art represent an ascending gradation of independence for the artist. Yet with each successive ascent the artist also gives away some of the plenitude of himself as an individual. In the first stage "the creator's 'I' is submerged in the Nirvana of the popular 'I,' " and in the last it becomes fused with a metaphysical or cosmic "I." We have here a dialectic relationship between the artist and the people.⁵⁹

Ivanov sees the art of Russian *décadence* as "intimate art," but suggests that the period of "small art" is passing and that a period of grand national art is just around the corner.⁶⁰ He persistently calls for a new art that will revive the choral principle of Greek drama, making art a popular "happening," a religious celebration, and an

outburst of communal emotion.⁶¹ The theater of the future would become, through audience participation, a bearer of the "communal word" (*sobornoe slovo*), a creator of myths and an agent of theurgic art.⁶² The new drama would be a syncretic art form, utilizing verbal drama, music, and the visual arts. Ivanov sees an evolution from Wagner's *Musikdrama*, through the fusion of verbal drama and music in Maeterlinck and Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande*, to what he conceives as verbal drama with musical support.⁶³ He sees this development as "a struggle for the democratic ideal of a synthetic Action."⁶⁴ In every possible way Ivanov battles for a return to a unified art and against the fragmentation of art into separate domains through elitism, insiderism, subjectivism, and formalism.

It is remarkable that Ivanov's theories were realized not so much by Symbolists as by Futurists and Proletcultists, in Kruchenykh-Matyushin-Malevich's *Victory over the Sun* and the mass happenings of the revolutionary period, which even Western visitors thought were fulfilling the prophecies of Wagner and Nietzsche in bringing about a rebirth of Greek drama.⁶⁵

Ivanov tends to be critical of those aspects of modern art which are in conflict with his monistic philosophy of art. He deplores the "esthetic anarchism or eclecticism" of his age.⁶⁶ He sees much of modern music as "pure kineticism, movement without a goal" and "fragmentariness, atomism, and alogism."⁶⁷ He rejects abstractionism: ". . . some secret law of esthetics demands anthropomorphism in everything and punishes every deviation from it with the curse of amorphism, aridity, and monotony."⁶⁸ He also rejects French Symbolism (he must mean Mallarmé) on account of its making Symbolism into a game of riddles or patterns of connotative devices and declares that Russian Symbolism has nothing in common with it.⁶⁹ For the same reason Ivanov will have nothing to do with Russian *décadence* or Ego-Futurism: any art which abandons life, he says, also loses what it believes it possesses—art.⁷⁰

Consistently with his monistic philosophy, Ivanov also rejects the psychologism so characteristic of much of contemporary literature, and drama in particular. With remarkable insight into Dostoevsky's art, he saw in that writer "a great psychologist who

nevertheless opposes to psychological study a 'more real' penetration into the secret of human nature."⁷¹ Ivanov wants dramatic characters to be symbols, not individuals. Subjective psychological details merely detract from the true meaning of art.⁷² Interestingly, we meet a similar attitude in *Left Art*.

Ivanov always discussed the drama in terms of a living theater, even though his own plays have remained *Lesedramen*. He sees the theater as an inherently communal activity that resists the poet's efforts to convert it entirely into art.⁷³ The link of tragedy with the sacrifice and cathartic celebration of a suffering god, Ivanov believes, is still present in modern tragic art which, as ever before, signifies the external death and inner triumph of human self-assertion.⁷⁴ The heroic life and death of young Ilyusha in *The Brothers Karamazov* is a case in point.⁷⁵

Ivanov perceives three basic components of the theater: the community, manifest in the choral principle of tragedy and in audience participation; the hero, who realizes the religious or national issues of his community; and the mimetic principle (Ivanov believes that true tragedy is possible only on the grounds of a realistic vision of the world).⁷⁶ Ivanov emphasizes the dialectic tension among these three elements, and thinks that any drama that leaves out one of these three elements fails to actualize the true nature of drama.

Ivanov links the dominance of the hero over the communal principle in Shakespearean drama, and modern drama at large, with the rise of bourgeois individualism. He perceives a new trend toward an expansion of the individual "I" in the direction of a cosmic boundlessness (*bespredel'nost'*) achieved through deepened personal suffering.⁷⁷

Ivanov's conception of drama is basically Hegelian, as is borne out even by his use of Hegelian terms and explicit references to Hegel. He shares with Hegel the notion that the tragic is an attitude of the human spirit rather than a literary genre. (It is in this sense that Ivanov perceives Dostoevsky's novels, or even the *Iliad*, as tragic.) Like Hegel, Ivanov sees the content of tragedy as a dialectic of ideas which generates a logic of human consciousness.⁷⁸ External clashes (such as that between the forces of nature and the human

spirit) are therefore unfit to serve as the subject of tragic art.⁷⁹ Ivanov's conception of the distinction between tragic and comic drama is also essentially Hegelian.⁸⁰ One does not find in Ivanov's theory of tragedy any tendency toward an existentialist metaphysics, such as in the young Lukács's "metaphysics of tragedy."

IV

Ivanov generally likes to give credit to his sources. Whenever he does not, it is due either to the more literary than scholarly nature of a given essay or to the fact that the reference in question would be obvious to his presumed reader. Such would be true, for example, of references to Plato, Goethe, Schopenhauer, and Nietzsche (and major Russian poets and writers, of course).

Ivanov's esthetic theory very largely coincides with that of German objective idealism (Schelling, Hegel) and the romantic poets associated with it, Novalis in particular. It stands to reason that Ivanov would consider Tyutchev "the true originator of our true symbolism."⁸¹ The Platonic traits of Ivanov's esthetics are such as may be also found in German idealism and romanticism. Thus, Platonic *anamnesis*, the notion that mankind is seeking to remember something which it once knew, often alluded to by Ivanov,⁸² is also found in Goethe and Novalis and in Schelling's philosophy of revelation. Ivanov's mysticism is well in accord with the transcendentalism of German idealism. Heaven and hell, to Ivanov, certainly reside within the human soul, and the World Soul reveals itself through the human soul. Ivanov's inner sky and inner sea are familiar images of mystic poetry and of romanticism.

The ascent/descent symbolism which dominates Ivanov's esthetics surely originated with Nietzsche. But it is found in Plato's *enanodos*, the disengagement of the soul from the day that is night, and the catabasis of Socrates to the Dendidia (both in the *Republic*),⁸³ and it dominates Neoplatonic thought. Ascent/descent symbolism is prominent in Goethe (here the descent to the Mothers in *Faust II* is surely a source of inspiration for Ivanov)⁸⁴ and in the romantics.

Goethe was Ivanov's favorite poet.⁸⁵ He often quotes Goethe's

verses. Goethe's Neoplatonic organicism and vitalism appealed to him. He is said to have often quoted Goethe's "Das Lebendige will ich preisen / Das nach Flammentod sich sehnet" and "Und solange du das nicht hast, / Dieses: Stirb und werde! / Bist du nur ein trüber Gast / Auf der dunklen Erde" ("Selige Sehnsucht," 1814). Goethe, of course, believed in anamnesis. Ivanov liked to quote his line, "Das Wahre war schon längst gefunden" ("Vermächtnis," 1829). One can recognize Goethe's preoccupation with archetypes in Ivanov's chain of "doubles." Not infrequently, Ivanov will judge even Russian literature in Goethean terms. Stavrogin is the Russian Faust, and Marya Timofeevna is the Russian Gretchen, with all the symbolic implications.⁸⁶ When Ivanov finds fault with his *confrères*, the Russian symbolists who would be prophets rather than artists, he quotes Goethe's "In der Beschränkung zeigt sich erst der Meister." Altogether, Ivanov does not conceal but, on the contrary, gratefully acknowledges his debt to Goethe. He will go so far as to entitle an essay of his "Manner, Person and Style" (*Manera, litso i stil'*, 1912), echoing Goethe's "Einfache Nachahmung, Manier, Stil" (1788). Ivanov's essay follows Goethe's in seeing "style" as the highest form of creativity and a synthesis of objective and subjective art.

Ivanov refers to Hegel on occasion and is clearly conversant with his philosophy.⁸⁷ While direct references to Schelling seem to be absent in his writings, there are many traits that link Ivanov precisely with that thinker, and especially with the late Schelling, author of philosophies of mythology and revelation. Ivanov's preoccupation with the universality of myth, with Christian myth, and with modern mythology is a trait which he shares with Schelling, whose belief in the cosmic or astral origin of all religion, and so of mythology, appears in Ivanov as well. Ivanov also shares Schelling's notion of a continuity between pre-Christian cults of a suffering, kenotic god (or son of god) and the Judaic-Christian myth.⁸⁸ Here, Ivanov stays with Schelling, refusing to join Nietzsche in using this position as a basis for an attack on Christianity. Altogether, Ivanov's religious symbolism in many ways parallels religious romanticism.

Ivanov's conception of ascent/descent includes a number of coincidences with Schelling's *Philosophy of Mythology*, such as the iden-

tification of this principle with those of the male/female and the dyad/monad. The mythology of chaos (as the third principle, joining the other two), which appears in Ivanov's writings, is also discussed by Schelling.⁸⁹ I have found even more specific parallels. For example, Ivanov's magnificent sonnet which gives an allegorical meaning to the death of Heracles seems to echo Schelling's interpretation of that myth.⁹⁰

Nietzsche must have been for Ivanov a catalyst for much Platonic, Neoplatonic, and romantic thought. Ivanov took for granted that his readers were aware of these connections. On occasion he will gratefully acknowledge his debt, for instance, by entitling an essay of his "On the Joyful Craft" (*O veselom remesle*),⁹¹ echoing Nietzsche's *Die fröhliche Wissenschaft*. Of course Ivanov never accepts Nietzsche's estheticism: if Dionysian intoxication is merely an esthetic phenomenon, then mankind is only a band of actors, and men are merely wearers of temporal masks, the fortuitous forms of human individuality. Ivanov, as a Christian mystic, transforms Nietzsche's vitalist-esthetic conception of "beyond good and evil" into a vision of the metaphysically holy.⁹²

There are few references to French symbolism in Ivanov's writings. Baudelaire's "Correspondances" is quoted repeatedly, but little else. It must, however, be considered that Ivanov shared with some of the French symbolists, such as Maeterlinck, a whole complex of Neoplatonic traits, such as emancipation and hypostasis, ascent/descent, and elemental imagery.⁹³

A circumstance to which relatively little attention has been paid so far is that many specific traits of Ivanov's esthetics also appear in Russian Futurist theory.

Notes

1. In his essay "Zavety simvolizma," Ivanov suggests that all that was truly valuable about Russian Symbolism grew from native Russian soil. See *SS*, II, 596.

2. See, e.g., "Dve stikhii v sovremennom simvolizme," *SS*, II, 551.

3. See, e.g., "Vagner i Dionisovo deistvo," *SS*, II, 84–85. To be sure, in his later years Ivanov to some extent renounced the Dionysian Hellenism of his youth. See, for example, his poem "Palinodija" (1927).

4. "Mysli o simvolizme" (1912), *SS*, II, 609. On the other hand, Ivanov also believes that an artist who claims that he works only for himself, or for Art, is insincere. In that sense, the artist is an artisan who needs an order (*zakaz*) from society. See "O veselom remesle," *Po zvezdam: Stat'i i aforizmy* (St. Petersburg, 1909), p. 222.

5. "Sledstviem iz vysheskazannogo javljaetsja, naprimer, esteticheski gluboko opravdannoje trebovanie, chtoby material khudozhestvennogo proizvedenija byl oshchutim i kak by veren sebe, kak by vyrazil svoe soglasie na prinjatje pridavaemykh emu khudozhnikom form" ("O granitsakh iskusstva" [1913], *SS*, II, 634). Further in the same essay, Ivanov suggests that "there is more sanctity in marble or in the element of language and in every flesh of every art than in the human spirit which, in a work of art, vivifies the flesh that is visible to the eye or audible to the ear" (*SS*, II, 647).

6. "Zavety simvolizma" (1910), *SS*, II, 596.

7. Ivanov defines symbolism as "the world view of mystic realism or, to use Novalis' expression, 'magic idealism'" (*SS*, II, 599). Ivanov very much believes in the cognitive power of art: "Edva li ne bol'shinstvo ljudej nashego vremeni soglasno v tom, chto iskusstvo sluzhit poznaniju i chto rod poznanija, predstavljajemyj iskusstvom, v izvestnom smysle prevoskhodnee poznanija nauchnogo." ("O granitsakh iskusstva," *SS*, II, 641). This sounds very much like Schelling—or like Malevich or Kandinsky.

8. For a concise formulation of Ivanov's emanationist view of reality, see his essay "Sporady," *Po zvezdam*, p. 340, where "the mythical chronicle of the world and of man" is said to be "more truthful than history." It is for this reason, Ivanov adds, that Aristotle was right in suggesting that poetry was closer to philosophy than history. Obviously Ivanov interprets Aristotle's dictum in a Neoplatonic sense.

9. For example: "Zdes' svoboda perekhodit v neobkhodimost', proizvol delaetsja bezvol'nym, prorochestvennoe derznovenie obrashchaetsja v podchinenie prorocheskoe" ("Kop'e Afiny" [1904], *SS*, I, 731). Or: "Ideal vsekh stremlenij dvulik. Dukh volit soznat' sebja kak ob'ekt i kak sub'ekt" ("Novye maski" [1904], *SS*, II, 79). This is the language of German objective idealism. It prevails in most of Ivanov's writings.

10. "Titanizmu svojstvenno beskryloe soznanie prinuditel'nosti ovladevajushchej im voli, chuvstvo vnutrennego determinizma, kotoroe tak nepokhozhe na radost' sovpadenija svobody s neobkhodimost'ju—etu

bozhestvennuju pechat' oblagodatstvovannoj dushi" ("O dejstvii i dejstve" [1919], *SS*, II, 159).

11. See, e.g., Vyacheslav Ivanov, *Freedom and the Tragic Life: A Study in Dostoevsky* (New York, 1971), p. 7.

12. Prometheanism was certainly a common trait of Russian modernism. Ivanov knows it well (see note 10 above)—and condemns it.

13. See James West, *Russian Symbolism: A Study of Vyacheslav Ivanov and the Russian Symbolist Aesthetic* (London, 1970), p. 59.

14. Cf. Émile Bréhier, *The Philosophy of Plotinus* (Chicago, 1971), p. 43. Statements such as the following definitely remind one of Plotinus: "Zhizn' vo vremeni—umiranie. Zhizn'—tsel' moikh dvojniov, otritsajushchikh, umershchvljajushchikh odin drugogo" ("Kop'e Afiny," *SS*, I, 732). Cf. Armin Hetzer, *Vjačeslav Ivanovs Tragödie Tantal: Eine literarhistorische Interpretation* (Munich, 1972), pp. 111–12.

15. See, e.g., the poem "Iskushenie prozrachnosti" (*SS*, I, 756).

16. "Zavety simvolizma," *SS*, II, 598.

17. See West, p. 52. Ivanov's distinction between celebratory and transforming art has a parallel (or source) in *l'art admiratif/critique* of Fourierist esthetics.

18. Thus, Ivanov asserts that true tragedy, like true mysticism, is possible only on the soil of a deeply realistic view of the world (*Freedom and the Tragic Life*, p. 40).

19. See, e.g., "Dve stikhii v russkom simvolizme," *SS*, II, 541.

20. *SS*, II, 546.

21. For Dionysian and Apollonian stages in the creative process see "O granitsakh iskusstva," *SS*, II, 644–45. For Dionysian and Apollonian themes in lyric poetry see "Ekskurs: O liricheskoj teme" (1912), *SS*, II, 203–4. In a historical sense, Ivanov more or less identifies the Apollonian/Dionysian with the classical/romantic of Friedrich Schlegel and other romantic critics. See, e.g., "O veselom remesle," *Po zvezdam*, p. 233.

22. See, e.g., "Predchuvstvija i predvestija," *Po zvezdam*, pp. 199–200, and "Sporady," *ibid.*, p. 339.

23. See, e.g., "O dejstvii i dejstve," *SS*, II, 159, and *Freedom and the Tragic Life*, pp. 38–39.

24. Cf. my remarks on ascent/descent, below.

25. See "O granitsakh iskusstva," *SS*, II, 647 (where Ivanov quotes Solovyov's "Kogda reztsu poslushnyj kamen'") and *SS*, II, 649. For Ivanov's belief that "poetry is an immediate revelation of highest truth," see C. M. Bowra's introduction to *Svet vechernij* (Oxford, 1962), p. xv. To Ivanov, as to

the Neoplatonists of the Renaissance or to Schelling, "God is an artist, and His judgment, I believe, will be that of an artist" ("Sporady," *Po zvezdam*, p. 344).

26. "On byl iz tekhn pevtsov (takov-zhe byl Novalis), / Chto vidjat v snakh sebja naslednikami lir, / Kotorym na zare vekov povinovalis' / Dukh, kamen', drevo, zver', voda, ogon', efir" ("Pamjati Skrjabina," 1915).
27. See, e.g., "O sushchestve tragedii" (1912), *SS*, II, 191.
28. See "Simvolika estetcheskikh nachal" (1905), *SS*, I, 829.
29. See "O sushchestve tragedii," *SS*, II, 198, and *Freedom and the Tragic Life*, p. 60.
30. Hetzer, p. 113, suggests Nietzsche's *Die fröhliche Wissenschaft* (1887) as Ivanov's source.
31. See Hetzer, p. 116.
32. See "Krizis individualizma" (1905), *SS*, I, 835.
33. See Hetzer, p. 197, and Olga Deschartes' introduction to *SS*, I, 83.
34. There are many examples in *Thus spake Zarathustra*, e.g., for ascent: "Erhebt eure Herzen, meine Brüder, hoch! höher! Und vergesst mir auch die Beine nicht!" ("Vom höheren Menschen"); for descent: "Wenn die Macht gnädig wird und herabkommt ins Sichtbare: Schönheit heisse ich solches Herabkommen" ("Von den Erhabenen").
35. See my article, "The Aesthetic Categories of Ascent and Descent in the Poetry of Vjačeslav Ivanov," *Russian Poetics* (preprint of paper read at a symposium held at U.C.L.A. in September, 1975). In his essay "Simvolika estetcheskikh nachal" (1905), Ivanov identifies a whole series of images which he associates with ascent/descent (*SS*, I, 823).
36. See "O dejstvii i dejstve," *SS*, II, 169. It may be noted that Georg Lukács, in his early (pre-Marxist) essay "Die Metaphysik der Tragödie" also introduces the ascent/descent category.
37. See "O granitsakh iskusstva," where Ivanov presents a sonnet from Dante's *Vita nuova* as an example of ascent/descent (*SS*, II, 629).
38. "Simvolika estetcheskikh nachal," *SS*, I, 827.
39. See Carin Tschöpl, *Vjačeslav Ivanov: Dichtung und Dichtungstheorie* (Munich, 1968), p. 126, and Olga Deschartes' introduction to *SS*, (I, 225-26).
40. Ivanov frequently points this out himself. See, e.g., "O granitsakh iskusstva," *SS*, II, 640, or "Drevnij uzhas," *Po zvezdam*, p. 394.
41. See "O russoj idee," *Po zvezdam*, pp. 329-30.
42. See "O granitsakh iskusstva," *SS*, II, 635.
43. See Tschöpl, p. 172.

44. See "O granitsakh iskusstva," *SS*, II, 639.
45. The work most relevant to Ivanov is *L'Air et les songes* (Paris, 1943). For a concise description of Bachelard's ideas, see François Pire, *De l'imagination poétique dans l'oeuvre de Gaston Bachelard* (Paris, 1967). Nietzsche was for Bachelard the quintessential poet of ascent (Pire, p. 105).
46. See Hetzer, pp. 121-23.
47. See Bréhier, pp. 34-37.
48. "O granitsakh iskusstva," *SS*, II, 630.
49. See the chapter "Innere Form" (pp. 128-83) in Franz Koch, *Goethe und Plotin* (Leipzig, 1925). Plotinus's concept of creation "from inside" has a correspondent in Bachelard's "inherent imagination."
50. *Perepiska iz dvukh uglov* (Moscow-Berlin, 1922), p. 23.
51. *Freedom and the Tragic Life*, p. 5.
52. "Predchuvstvija i predvestija," *SS*, II, 89.
53. "O veselom remesle," *Po zvezdam*, p. 245.
54. "O russoj idee," *Po zvezdam*, pp. 319-21.
55. "O veselom remesle," *Po zvezdam*, p. 226.
56. "Manera, litso, stil" (1912), *SS*, II, 617.
57. "O veselom remesle," *Po zvezdam*, p. 221.
58. "Sporady," *Po zvezdam*, pp. 345-46.
59. "Kop'e Afiny," *SS*, I, 730-31. See also Hetzer, p. 99.
60. "O veselom remesle," p. 242. See also Evelyn Bristol, "Idealism and Decadence in Russian Symbolist Poetry," *Slavic Review*, 39 (1980), 278.
61. See, e.g., "Poet i chern'," *Po zvezdam*, pp. 41-42, or "Estetika i isповедanie" (1908), *SS*, II, 568.
62. See, e.g., "Novye maski," *SS*, II, 76, "Predchuvstvija i predvestija."
63. *SS*, II, 95, and "Dve stikhii v sovremennom simvolizme," *SS*, II, 559.
64. "Vagner i Dionisovo dejstvo" (1905), *SS*, II, 85.
65. See Robert C. Williams, *Artists in Revolution: Portraits of the Russian Avantgarde, 1905-1925* (Bloomington and London, 1977), p. 5.
66. "Manera, litso i stil," *SS*, II, 618.
67. *SS*, II, 619.
68. "Predchuvstvija i predvestija," *SS*, II, 98.
69. "Mysli o simvolizme" (1912), *SS*, II, 611, where Mallarmé is singled out as an exponent of this undesirable tendency.
70. "Manera, litso i stil," *SS*, II, 619-20.
71. *Freedom and the Tragic Life*, p. 15.
72. See, e.g., "Manera, litso i stil," *SS*, II, 621. Cf. Hetzer, p. 129.

73. "Esteticheskaja norma teatra" (1916), *SS*, II, 213.
74. See Olga Deschartes' introduction, *SS*, I, 108. Hetzer (p. 102) suggests that the conception of Dionysian resurrection and catharsis implied in this is taken from Rohde.
75. *Freedom and the Tragic Life*, p. 14.
76. *Ibid.*, p. 40. See also "Esteticheskaja norma teatra," *SS*, II, 213.
77. *SS*, II, 212-14. Ivanov's thinking here is decidedly Hegelian.
78. "O sushchestve tragedii" (1912), *SS*, II, 192. For an example of Hegelian terminology: "Ego [Prometeja] pervyj mjatezh, pervaja vina, est' vosstanie protiv sobstvennoj bytijstvennoj sushchnosti, kak bytija 'konkretnego' (v smysle, pridavaemom etomu slovu Gegelem)" ("O dejstvii i dejstve," *SS*, II, 161).
79. "O sushchestve tragedii," *SS*, II, 193.
80. Ivanov suggests that in high tragedy the people are a chorus, a single body with a single will and mind, while in comedy they are merely a crowd ("Esteticheskaja norma teatra," *SS*, II, 208).
81. "Zavety simbolizma," *SS*, II, 597.
82. See, e.g., "Poet i chern'," *SS*, I, 709; "Perepiska iz dvukh uglov," pp. 57, 58. Ivanov specifically acknowledges his solidarity with Plato and his *anamnesis*, see "Drevnij uzhas," *Po zvezdam*, p. 394.
83. See Miroslav John Hanak, *Maeterlinck's Symbolic Drama: A Leap into Transcendence* (Louvain, 1974), pp. 36, 45. The mythological basis of Plato's conceptions are identified by Rohde.
84. See, e.g., "Drevnij uzhas," *Po zvezdam*, p. 394. For a poetic echo, see the poem "Mat" in *Cor Ardens* (*SS*, II, 377).
85. Goethe's influence on Ivanov is both deep and manifold. I would like to point out only one detail to suggest its extent. The lead poem of *Kormchie zvezdy*, "Krasota" (dedicated to Vladimir Solovyov) is written in the exact meter of Goethe's "Die Braut von Korinth," whose basic theme and ethos it also shares. I am sure that more such instances may be found.
86. *Freedom and the Tragic Life*, p. 61.
87. This does not mean that he always follows Hegel's thought patterns to the letter. For example, Ivanov sees the epic as "objective," and lyric poetry as a synthesis of both, retaining the Hegelian dialectic structure, but adjusting its content ("Manera, litso i stil'," *SS*, II, 624).
88. F. W. J. Schelling, *Einleitung in die Philosophie der Mythologie* (Stuttgart and Augsburg, 1856), pp. 313ff.
89. *Ibid.*, pp. 596ff.

90. *Ibid.*, p. 345.
91. "O veselom remesle," *Po zvezdam*, pp. 220-46.
92. "Nitsshe i Dionis" (1904), *SS*, I, 721, 725.
93. See Hanak's above-mentioned work (note 84).

ing lines of Leopardi's "L'infinito," a favorite poem, we may note here, of Ivanov's.

It was always dear to me, this solitary hill, and this hedge which shuts off the gaze from so large a part of the uttermost horizon. But sitting, and looking out, in thought I fashion for myself endless spaces beyond, more than human silences, and deepest quiet.

Sempre caro mi fu quest'ermo colle,
e questa siepe, che da tanta parte
dell'ultimo orizzonte il guardo esclude.
Ma sedendo e mirando, interminati
spazi di là da quella, e sovrumani
silenzi, e profondissima quiete
io nel pensier mi fingo . . .

Sitting in their respective "corners" Ivanov and Gershenzon are doing what Leopardi and the brothers Alyosha and Ivan are engaged in behind their partial screens and hedges: "fashioning endless spaces beyond."

Ivanov's first sentence, indeed, his very first word (*znaju*—I know), breathes confidence and conviction and strikes the dominant and affirmative note in Ivanov's letters. Gershenzon's reply, indeed, the very first word of his letter, is equally dramatic and sounds the negative and skeptical note of his side of the correspondence as it pertains to the central questions of contemporary life and culture: "Net." "No, Vyacheslav Ivanovich, I have not doubted personal immortality and, like you, I know the individual to be the repository of true reality." Gershenzon's decisive "no" seems not only to qualify his formal acceptance of personal immortality, but to anticipate his view of man as defined by the flat or horizontal dimension of human culture. "You and I, dear friend," Gershenzon continues, "are diagonal not only in this room but in spirit, too. I do not like to let my thoughts roam the metaphysical peaks, although I delight in watching you smoothly soar above them."

Gershenzon immediately introduces the leitmotif of his letters:

Ivanov's Humanism: *A Correspondence from Two Corners*

Robert Louis Jackson

There is a distinctively Russian drama in the opening line of Ivanov's first letter to Mikhail Osipovich Gershenzon in *A Correspondence from Two Corners* (*Perepiska iz dvukh uglov*, 1921).¹ "I know, my dear friend and neighbor in another corner of the room we share, that you have come to doubt personal immortality and a personal God." Part of the drama of this line comes from the juxtaposition of the eternal questions of God and immortality in all their amplitude or space, with the finite space of a room, indeed, a corner of a geometrical square. "And what will you tell me in reply from another corner of this same square?" Ivanov writes at the end of this first letter.

The image of a square bisected diagonally between two corners becomes a metaphor in *A Correspondence* for culture and the human condition. Is there a way out of the planimetric cultural geometry of the square? *That*, in essence, is the question that was posed by the poet Ivanov as he rested together with Gershenzon in a room in a sanatorium in Russia in the year nineteen hundred and twenty.

This was not the first time in Russian life or literature that the problem of the infinite was self-consciously posed within the limits of the finite. We may recall Dostoevsky's restaurant setting for the dialogue between Ivan and Alyosha in *The Brothers Karamazov*. The brothers Alyosha and Ivan are discussing eternal questions and sitting—Dostoevsky reminds us—behind a "partial screen." Real and metaphysical time, moreover, seem involved in Dostoevsky's play with spaces. "We've endless time before I leave," Ivan remarks. "A whole eternity, immortality." This setting, in turn, recalls the open-

weariness not only with "other-worldly speculations"—which, he writes, "inevitably fall into systems"—but with "all these abstractions." He confesses that he is depressed and oppressed by "the whole intellectual heritage of man, all the discoveries, knowledge, values amassed and established through the centuries." Stifled as though by heavy clothes, he contemplates the "bliss" of "plunging into Lethe, washing off without trace the mind's memory of all religions and philosophical systems, of all science, art, poetry," and coming out "naked like the first man, naked, joyous and light." There he would "freely stretch out to the sky his bare arms, remembering nothing of the past except how heavy and stifling those clothes were." Gershenzon writes in a later letter:

Culture is disintegrating from within—we can see this clearly; it hangs in tatters from our exhausted spirit. Whether this is how liberation will come about, or whether it will explode in a catastrophe, as it did twenty centuries ago, I do not know, and of course I myself shall never reach the promised land, but my feeling is like Mount Nebo, from which Moses saw it. And I am not alone in discerning it through the curtain of fog.

Confessing his dislike for the abstract, Gershenzon, paradoxically, will return again and again to his Mt. Nebo—to his abstract, idyllic and essentially passive dream. In contrast, Ivanov, while taking his point of departure from the absolute and the abstract, repeatedly plunges not into Lethe or forgetfulness but into the living stream of historical culture. For him, culture is a "hierarchy of reverences. And so many things and people in my surroundings fill me with reverence—from man and his tools and his great labor and his debased dignity down to the mineral—that I find it sweet to drown in that sea ('naufragar m'è dolce in questo mare')—to drown in God," he concludes, citing a line from Leopardi's poem, "L'infinito." For Ivanov, culture is at once finite and infinite.

"My dear friend," he writes in the opening of the fifth letter of *A Correspondence*, "we dwell in the same cultural environment as we do here in the same room, where each of us has his own corner, but there is only one wide window and one door." Gershenzon, he

points out, cannot conceive of dwelling with a culture "without essentially fusing with it." Ivanov, however, insists that "while consciousness can be entirely immanent in culture it can also be only partly immanent and partly transcendent." "To the believer, his faith is by definition separate from culture, as nature is separate, or love. . . . And so? So it depends on our faith in the absolute, which transcends culture, whether we shall have inner freedom, that is, life itself—or grovel inwardly before culture, long essentially godless since it imprisons man within himself."

Gershenzon replies that Ivanov's corner "is also a corner limited by walls—there is no freedom in it." "Civilized man, contemporary man," he observes pessimistically, "is incapable of soaring toward the absolute; and if he does have faith, it shares the condition of all his other psychic states—it is tainted with reflection, distorted and powerless. I repeat what I wrote in my last letter: Our consciousness cannot transcend culture, except in rare, unusual cases." And once again, Gershenzon strikes one of the dominant notes of his letters: "What do I want? I want freedom of creation, and of quest, I want primordial freshness of spirit, to go where I want, along untrodden paths . . . first, because this would be pleasant, and second because we might find more on new paths. But no: mainly because it is boring here, as in our sanatorium. One yearns for meadows and forests." Gershenzon is overcome by skepticism, a feeling of nausea and an organic urge to seek out freedom in his idyllic beyond. "Like Rousseau I imagine some blissful state of complete freedom and unencumbered spirit, some heavenly insouciance (*bespechnost'*). I know too much, and this burden oppresses me." "I would gladly exchange all the knowledge and ideas I have gleaned from books . . . for the joy of discovering for myself, from my own experience, just one bit of basic knowledge of the simplest kind, but fresh as a summer morn."

Here in Gershenzon's Rousseauesque, Arcadian dream there is more than boredom, spleen and a surfeit of knowledge; there is also, as Ivanov rightly notes, "much despair." Ivanov goes on to observe of "my dear doctor Faust in a new incarnation" that Mephistopheles would by no means abandon all hope of success of drawing "the

overtired member of four faculties out of his zealously guarded 'corner' into the free world." But the "boundless freedom" (*vol'naja volja*) Gershenzon would attain, Ivanov adds, would only turn out in the end to be an "inescapable prison."

Freedom for Ivanov, as for Dostoevsky, is not to be found in the bare opposite of containment, that is, in a notion of boundless personal liberty or physical freedom. We are not surprised that Ivanov uses the word *volja* in this connection: a word that in Russian literary use frequently has connotations of arbitrariness and self-will. Ultimate freedom for Ivanov is not to be sought in the Faustian "illusion of a free land and a liberated people," as he puts it, it is not to be sought on the "horizontal" plane. Ivanov writes:

Any number of planimetric designs and patterns can be drawn on a horizontal plane. The important fact is that the plane is horizontal. But I am no Mephistopheles and have no intention of enticing or luring you anywhere. In essence, what I am saying to you is that a vertical line can start any point, in any "corner" on the surface of any culture, young or decrepit. To me, however, culture itself, in its proper sense, is not at all a flat horizontal surface, not a plain of ruins or a field littered with bones. It holds, besides, something truly sacred: the memory, not only of earthly external visage of our fathers, but of the high initiations they achieved. A live, permanent memory that never dies in those who partake in these initiations.

With the word "memory" we are at the core of Ivanov's conception of culture and of the meaning of existence on earth. "Insofar as it is 'forgotten,' the past, historical or primordial, is homologized with death," Mircea Eliade has written in connection with the ancient Greek understanding of memory and forgetting. "The fountain Lethe, 'forgetfulness,' is a necessary part of the realm of Death. The dead are those who have lost their memories."² Gershenzon, in one part of his divided nature ("I lead a strange, double life"), wishes to plunge into the river of Lethe and wash himself clean of the past. For Ivanov, as for Dostoevsky, loss of memory implies a static view of the universe and, ultimately, moral and spiritual death. "Mem-

ory," Ivanov writes, "is the dynamic principle, while oblivion means weariness, interrupted motion, decay and a return to a state of relative stagnation. Let us, like Nietzsche, closely watch ourselves lest we harbor the poisons of decay, the infection of 'decadence.'" And Ivanov defines decadence as "the feeling of a refined organic bond with the material legacy of a past high culture, coupled with a painful pride in being the last in its line." "Decadence," he writes again, "is the numbness of memory no longer creative, no longer a living link with our fathers' initiation and a spur to our own initiative."

Ivanov, of course, is not accusing his close friend of stagnation, decadence or disregard for past culture. Gershenzon, as we know, was an indefatigable lover of culture and its art and artifacts, a scholar for whom memory of culture was all. Yet precisely that memory weighs upon him. And while in one part of his being he worships the past, in another he views it as a tomb. In the last analysis, his love of culture does contain an element of that decadence of which Ivanov writes. Respect for the forefathers of culture in him is not linked with a belief in their resurrection either in a spiritual or religious sense.

Gershenzon's ambivalent relation to culture is not a new one in Russian literature. Here we may recall another divided man, Ivan Karamazov, and his reaction to the great legacy of culture. Ivan is a man who also wants to live "in spite of logic" and who loves the "sticky little leaves of spring and the blue sky."

I want to go to Europe, Alyosha. . . . I want to go only to the graveyard, but to a most, most precious graveyard, let me tell you! There lie the precious deceased. Every stone over them speaks of such burning life in the past, of such passionate faith in heroic achievement, in truth, in struggle and in science, and—I know beforehand—I shall fall on the earth and will kiss these stones and weep over them, all the while convinced in my heart that all this has long been a graveyard and nothing more.

Ivan, as Dostoevsky notes, "remembers everything." So, too, Gershenzon remembers everything. He worships the precious stones of

culture, although in his heart he is convinced that they constitute nothing but a graveyard for our times. "O my friend, O swan of Apollo! Why were feelings so vivid, thought so fresh, words so meaningful then, in the fourteenth century, and why are our thoughts and feelings so dull, our language as if interspun with cobwebs?" But as Chateaubriand once remarked, and as Dostoevsky and Ivanov firmly believed, "We venerate the ashes of our ancestors because a voice tells us that not everything is extinguished in them" (*Nous respectons les cendres de nos ancêtres, parce qu'une voix nous dit que tout n'est pas éteint en eux*).³ Not without reason does Alyosha call upon Ivan to "raise up your dead who have perhaps not died after all." "Culture is the cult of ancestors—and, of course, their resurrection."

Gershenson in a striking way sums up for us the strengths and weaknesses of the nineteenth-century intellectual as he roamed much of Russian literature and life. If we assemble all that seems to define him in his letters: his self-proclaimed ambivalence, his anguish, his mistrust of reason, his disillusionment with a world whose lofty idealism has collapsed but whose materialism he cannot accept; his metaphysical boredom; his view of man—and himself—as poisoned with reflection, as distorted and impotent; his feeling of a surfeit of knowledge; and, finally, his yearnings for the idyll of primeval, so-called "natural" freedom; if we bring all these features together then the distinguished literary scholar of nineteenth-century Russian literature himself seems to emerge as a last and living example of these unhappy Russian Hamlets and Fausts, intellectuals, dreamers and superfluous men who inhabit Russian literature and about whom he wrote so keenly and well. Here is the "historic Russian sufferer," in the words of Dostoevsky, who sought refuge "in the bosom of nature from the confused and absurd life of our Russian educated society." This historic Russian type, this "wanderer in his native land," Dostoevsky maintained, early was embodied in Aleko, hero of Pushkin's narrative poem, "The Gypsies" (*Tsygany*, 1827):

Aleko, of course, still does not know how to express correctly his anguish: in him all this is somehow still abstract, he experiences

only a yearning for nature, a complaint about fashionable society, universal strivings, a lament about a truth lost somewhere by somebody, which he can in no way find. Here there is something akin to Jean-Jacques Rousseau. In what this truth consists, where and how it could appear, and precisely when it was lost, he himself, of course, cannot say, but he suffers sincerely. A fantastic and impatient person, he thirsts for salvation. Truth, he as much as says, is somewhere beyond himself, perhaps somewhere in other lands. . . . In the final analysis he is an alien in his own land.⁴

Did Gershenson, a brilliant critic of Russian literature and sensitive to all its moods, ultimately recognize himself, perhaps unconsciously, in the self-divided, superfluous hero? It is surely no accident that he echoes in an uncanny way another wanderer in Russian literature, the hero of Turgenev's story, "A Correspondence" (*Perepiska*, 1854), who mournfully writes in one of his letters: "Why have we been condemned only at rare moments to see the wished-for shore but can never stand on it with firm foot, never touch it—'nor weep sweetly like the first Jew / on the border of the promised land'?"⁵

The boundaries of fiction and reality have always been blurred in Russian life and history. Gershenson's anguish does indeed reflect the plight and pathos of the "historic Russian sufferer" as depicted in Russian literature. That anguish, of course, is also deeply personal.⁶ Yet it also reflects the plight of Russia in 1920 and the constantly repeated drama in Russian history of failed hopes; it gives expression, finally, to a rightly perceived crisis of values, a crisis of humanism, that characterized European society after World War I.

Ivanov, too, was profoundly responsive to Russian literature and culture. But he was the opposite of Gershenson in his religious humanism and in his constant emphasis upon the themes of memory and resurrection. In him, moreover, we recognize not so much a character from Russian literature as a maker of Russian literature. Reaching deeply into the recesses of Russian and European civilization, he sought to act upon the present and to lay the foundations for renewed cultural and spiritual life, for a new ecumenicity (*sobor-*

nost') that inevitably, he believed, belonged to the future. In this renewal the past cannot be neglected or scorned. Culture is built upon ruins and the respect for ruins. Nietzsche, Ivanov notes in *A Correspondence*, is "one of the great creators of ideals; from an iconoclast, he turns into an icon painter." And comparing Gershenzon's escapism unfavorably with Nietzsche's readiness at least to take on the burden of culture and man, Ivanov remarks prophetically:

It is doubtful whether in today's cultural climate any personal initiation can take place without the "initiate's" . . . meeting [Nietzsche] as the "guardian of the threshold." Nietzsche has said: "Man is something that must be overcome"—whereby he declares once more that the way of personal emancipation is a way up to the heights and down into the depths, a vertical movement. . . . "Could be, could be," you hastily wave this aside, for your loins are girded and your feverish eyes scan the desert's horizon: "First of all, out of here, out of here, out of Egypt."

Ivanov, of course, was one of those "initiates" who encountered Nietzsche and who ultimately went on his own unique way. Yet rejecting much in Nietzsche he remained faithful to his central vision: "What is great in man," Nietzsche wrote, is "that he is a bridge and not an end . . . I love him who does not hold back one drop of spirit for himself, but wants to be entirely of the spirit of his virtue: thus he strides over the bridge as spirit."

One may, of course, respond with some reserve to Ivanov's remarks on the Russian revolution in 1920, his insistence that

history is not proceeding under your sign, but stubbornly wants to remain *history*. Let us disregard what is random, unpredictable, irrational in the course of events, and look at the prevailing trends. The anarchic tendencies are not dominant; essentially, they seem to be correlates and shadows of the bourgeois social structure. The so-called conscious proletariat stands entirely on the ground of cultural continuity. The struggle is not for abolishing the values of the old culture, but rather . . . for the revival of everything in them that has objective and timeless significance. . . . I think

[it] will spoil much marble and durable bronze . . . but I think also that some unique, deep trace of the lion-claw [see "Of the Three Metamorphoses" in *Thus Spake Zarathustra*—ed.] will show forever on the memorials of our ancient Egypt.

More marble and bronze was to be destroyed in Russia than Ivanov or anybody else could anticipate in 1920. What is more, precisely the "random, unpredictable and irrational" were to become the hallmarks of the twentieth century. In the final analysis, however, Ivanov's cautious optimism with respect to the revolution (not unlike Blok's in "The Twelve") rested on a view of the revolution as an expression of spiritual forces that lay *beneath* consciousness and ideology.

Perhaps (I really believe this) the proletariat fighting for the possession of the cultural values is honestly mistaken in thinking that it needs them for their own sake, when it needs them only as means toward other attainments. . . . The general direction of the road is known only to the spirit, and consciousness feels cheated after each step. . . . Whatever we may observe in the Revolution today tells us nothing of the long-range designs for which the spirit has called it forth.

Later, as the Stalinist darkness descended over Russia, Ivanov's views—at least on the nature of the proletarian cause itself—hardened. "The proletarian cause," he wrote in his *Lettre à Charles Du Bos* in 1930, "is either a pretext or a method; its real goal is to extinguish God, to tear Him out of human hearts. Let everybody take his stand on the side of one or the other of the warring cities!" Yet Ivanov's faith in culture, and in Russian culture in particular, had not diminished. As he wrote to a despondent Russian émigré in 1935:

You mourn the 'destruction of Russian culture'; but it has not been destroyed; rather it has been called upon for new accomplishments, to make a new spiritual consciousness. Moreover, just as there is one Truth, and one Beauty, so culture in the fundamental and final meaning of the word—culture as the spiritual self-def-

inition and self-revelation of man—is an expression of universal unity and the task of universal unification. Thus Russian culture is only one of the types or one of the fringes of a unified culture. That which is immortal in art is immortal for all.

Whether contemplating culture in national or supranational terms, then, Ivanov resists corrosive skepticism and apocalyptic despair; everywhere his thought moves toward a notion of continuity and stability in culture.

Ivanov, we may note in conclusion, was translating Dante's *Purgatory* at the time he was "corresponding" with Gershenzon in the other corner. The mood of Dante's *Purgatory* surely pervades Ivanov's whole outlook in the *Correspondence*. At the conclusion of the seventh letter he addresses these words to Gershenzon's desire to free himself from reason and the heavy burden of a disintegrating culture:

Let us have faith in the life of the spirit, in holiness, in revelations, in the unknown saints around us, among the numberless united throng of striving souls, and continue hopeful on our way, looking neither aside nor behind, measuring not the road, ignoring the voices of weariness and sloth that speak to us of "poisoned blood" and "tired bones." One can be a joyful traveler on earth without leaving one's home town, and become poor in spirit without quite forgetting one's learning. We have long since decided that reason is a tool and a servant of the will; it is useful, just as the baser organs of the body are. The theories that pervade it, as you say, can be given away as we give away the books we no longer need, unless we let them repose in peace on the shelves of our libraries at home; but the vital sap of these theories and religions, their spirit and logos, their revelatory power—let us quaff them in deep drafts, for the sake of Goethe's 'old truth,' and thus, carefree and curious like strangers, pass by the countless altars and idols of historical culture, some neglected, sacrificing in abandoned places if we come upon imperishable flowers that, unseen by man, have grown from an ancient tomb.

There is a particular pathos in the closing lines of the last letter of *A Correspondence*. Here Gershenzon speaks of his relation to European culture as that of "a stranger acclimatized in an alien land." He senses the beauty and freshness of the "promised world," but writes wistfully: "Where is my homeland? I shall never see it, I shall die in foreign parts." As for Ivanov, Gershenzon rightfully perceives that poet's relation to culture as different from his own:

You, dear friend, live in your own country; your heart is here, where your home is, and your sky is above this land. Your spirit is not divided, and this wholeness enchants me, because—whatever its provenance—it is itself a flower of that land which is our future common home. And therefore I think that in our Father's mansion the same quarters are readied for you and me, even if here on earth we sit stubbornly each in his own corner and argue about culture.

Notes

1. Vjacheslav Ivanov and M. O. Gershenzon, *Perepiska iz dvukh uglov* (Petrograd, 1921). I have availed myself of the English translation of this work: Vyacheslav Ivanovich Ivanov, Mikhail Osipovich Gershenzon, "A Corner-to-Corner Correspondence," trans. Gertrude Vakař, in Marc Raeff, ed., *Russian Intellectual History: An Anthology* (New York, 1966), pp. 372-401.
2. Mircea Eliade, "Mythologies of Memory and Forgetting," *History of Religions* II, no. 2 (Winter, 1963), 333.
3. François-René de Chateaubriand, *Oeuvres complètes de M. le Vicomte de Chateaubriand* (Paris, 1926-28), XI, 290.
4. F. M. Dostoevskij, "Pushkin," in *Sobranie sochinenij* (Moscow, 1958), X, 443, 444.
5. "Ne plakat' sladostno, kak pervyj iudej / Na rubezhe strany obetovannoj?" Turgenev's hero paraphrases two lines from a poem of A. A. Fet, "When My Dreams beyond the Limits of Past Days" (*Kogda moi mechtj za gran'ju proshlykh dnei*, 1845).
6. In this connection see O. Deschartes's discussion of Gershenzon in her preface to V. Ivanov, M. Gershenzon, *Correspondance d'un coin à l'autre* (Lausanne, 1979), pp. 25-37.

Ivanov's Letter to Charles Du Bos: Confessionalism and Christian Unity

Cyril Fotiev

Charles Du Bos (1888–1939), the French essayist, philosopher and religious writer, started publishing *A Correspondence from Two Corners* (*Perepiska iz dvukh uglov*, 1921) in his journal *Vigile* in 1931. He asked Vyacheslav Ivanov to comment on *A Correspondence* which had come into being ten years earlier.¹ Ivanov's answer in French is dated October 15, 1930, during the period of his life spent in Pavia where he taught at the Collegio Borromeo. Ivanov's letter to Charles Du Bos appeared as a supplement in various foreign-language translations of *A Correspondence*; the French original is included in Ivanov's *Collected Works*.²

The decade that had elapsed between *A Correspondence* and the Charles Du Bos letter was one of great trials for Ivanov. The exchange of views on the fate of culture between Gershenzon and Ivanov concluded with the letter written by Ivanov on July 19, 1920. On August 8th of that year his wife Vera Konstantinovna died—three days after her thirtieth birthday. In 1919 Ivanov had wanted to take her abroad for medical treatment but he was not granted permission to leave the country. Two years later a similar request was at first withheld but finally granted to the ailing Alexander Blok after interminable intercessions on the part of relatives and friends, including Maxim Gorky. By that time, however, the poet was too weak to travel. He died August 8, 1921. In the autumn of 1919, Ivanov, accompanied by his son and daughter, moved south to Baku where they spent nearly four years. Ivanov taught at the local university and defended his doctoral dissertation there. He and his children left the country on August 28, 1924. "I have come to Rome to die,"

said Ivanov upon his reunion with the Eternal City. He was destined to spend almost a quarter of a century in emigration and, contrary to the popular opinion that creative natures cannot survive outside their native habitat, his talent was to experience a rich and ripe fruition.

Ivanov's letter to Charles Du Bos thematically exceeds the framework of the French writer's original request. It bears witness to Ivanov's faithfulness to his fundamental belief in culture as a set values, "a Jacob's ladder, a hierarchy of reverences"; it was that culture from which Gershenzon (a loyal follower of Leo Tolstoy and through him of Jean-Jacques Rousseau) wanted to detach himself spiritually. Furthermore, the "Letter" contains an appraisal of the spiritual state of the Western world and of Russian society, an appraisal that sheds light on Ivanov's decision to enter the Catholic Church not only as an act of personal faith but as the completion of the spiritual path of a Christian and a Russian European who is true to the tenets of the brotherhood of man.

As an ardent advocate of culture—the dominant theme of his correspondence with Gershenzon—Ivanov imparts to it a deeper and, to quote his own words, a "more rigorous" justification in the light of the personal experience of the past ten years. For Ivanov culture involves memory as more than preservation but as a living thing to which we must be grateful for the achievements of man's creativity, that same creativity which Gershenzon perceives as a once exquisite and now worn-out garment. In his letter to Charles Du Bos, Ivanov urges that a distinction be made between memory as the custodian of values and anamnesis as the creative recalling and contemplation of the past.

To illustrate the essential impotence of memory, Ivanov invokes Ernest Renan's prayer on the Acropolis: the weary son of a skeptical culture was able to conjure up only shadows of the past. Essentially, recollection is an attempt at halting the passage of time—a passionate but inevitably doomed look back at the fading light of the past. It is no coincidence that anamnesis is not only a philosophical but also a liturgical concept: that which "was" in a chronological sense continues to *be* as an integral part of the reality of our *esse*; that

reality is reactualized and continually sustains us for it is not subject to the changes of time. "Non-created Wisdom," writes Ivanov in his "Letter," "teaches humanity to transform the means of universal separation—distance, time, inert matter—into means of unity and harmony, thus implementing God's eternal design of a perfect creation," and he adds: "any major culture is but a manifold expression of a religious idea which constitutes its core." The term "Non-created Wisdom" readily reflects Vladimir Solovyov's teaching on Sophia as a universal, divine fundamental principle. This principle was taken up by Pavel Florensky and subsequently affirmed by Sergey Bulgakov who attempted to formulate it as a finished philosophical and theological system. Summing up his reflections on the nature of culture, Ivanov with the utmost clarity rejects the idea of a culture created in secular categories; to him, no culture exists without a "religious nucleus."

Referring to his perception of revolutionary and Soviet Russia, Ivanov touches only briefly upon his personal fears, ordeals and losses, for to him they were not decisive in shaping his attitude toward the events that affected his country after 1917. In discussing his own life and that of his intimates he ascribes his fortitude in the face of hardships and disaster to "an ability of long-standing to be humble and, at the same time, to meditate on retribution." Like many of his contemporaries—witnesses of the revolution—Ivanov contends that in terms of history, violence is subject to a limitation in time. The "relatively benighted condition of the empirical state," as he called it, came to an end after he had left Soviet Russia; he was then in a position to visualize the situation (in Herzen's words) "from another shore": his own vision became discerning and keen as he gained geographical distance from the "fires that consumed the sanctuaries of my ancestors." It was with a newly "synthetic perception" and an "integral awareness" that he came to view the events of which he had been an eyewitness. Post-October Russia emerged as a country which exposed to the world the fatal split in its personality, while pre-October Russia had merely forged it into specific historical forms. Thus Ivanov's Russia had outgrown herself and ceased to reflect her own destiny; the nature of the disaster was

determined by her national characteristics. Ivanov contends that Russia's moral impact is not to be sought in the radiance of her golden nineteenth century which nurtured him but in her revolutionary madness. Russia's universal humanitarian mission consists either in saving all people by her monstrous sacrifice or "implicating them in a universal godlessness, in a crucial war against the Lamb of God which, in the past, she had loved more than anything else in the world." Ivanov insists that no one has the right to stay away from that confrontation and struggle: the very development of the spiritual destiny of Man calls on each thinking and conscientious person "to stand up *for* or *against* the One who is the sole object of hatred of the apostles of hate." The so-called "cause of the proletariat," according to Ivanov, is merely an alibi or a method, at best, the true and ultimate goal being "to *drown* out God, to pluck Him out of Man's heart."

This image of a theomachist and profoundly sinful Russia—despite her greatness in the sufferings imposed on her—is pitted against the image of the West after the First World War as it appears to Ivanov after an absence of over ten years. At that time, in 1930, the retribution for fratricidal war which was coming to the West by way of dictatorial regimes which the anemic and impotent democracies were unable to oppose was only looming in the shadows.

In taking the West to task, Ivanov dealt harshly with the characteristics that had already been attacked by A. I. Herzen, Leon Bloy, Konstantin Leontiev and Nikolay Berdyaev. There is the sham optimism of the West, the tolerance that generates skepticism and the rejection of any kind of exacting dogmatic appraisal or thought, the pursuit of all types of exotica and, last but not least, an ineradicable faith in humanitarian progress that brings Western society closer to the East European pattern of a "collective homunculus." The criticism so familiar to us merely aims at Western cultural and axiological schemes.

The "Letter" contains no political appraisals and offers no positive solutions (on the whole, these are absent from Ivanov's writings). He speaks of the "spiritual parochialism of the bourgeois world" while contrasting that world with the revolutionary *frenzy* as

a sort of strangely compatible "diabolic counterpoint." Such an "apolitical attitude" does not, of course, imply tolerance toward any type of totalitarian regime on the part of Ivanov. There is a persistent rumor that Ivanov held some government post in Baku under the Soviets. Berdyaev once dropped the totally irresponsible remark that Ivanov had allegedly "adjusted" to fascist Italy. Both of these allegations are not founded on any evidence either in his writings or his biography and have been refuted by Olga Deschartes in her introduction to the first volume of Ivanov's *Collected Works* in Russian.

Examining the tragedy of his country and his people and appraising the Western world, Ivanov concludes that the world's only salvation is the "Boat of the Fisherman" and only the great Western Church is the ultimate stronghold against general collapse, apathy, and barbarization. Ivanov contends that on his path of spiritual development he was providentially steered to that haven.

As to his religious awareness, it had taken a long time for his faith, instilled in him by his pious and profoundly Orthodox mother, to take root on the ruins of his pagan humanism. A decisive moment in Ivanov's spiritual growth was his contact with Vladimir Solovyov (1853-1900), whom he calls "a great and holy man."

We are not sure when Vyacheslav Ivanov met Vladimir Solovyov, but it may safely be assumed that their relations reached a height in the summer of 1900. Ivanov and his wife Lydia Dmitrievna met with Solovyov in St. Petersburg and proceeded directly to the Kiev-Pechersky monastery after that meeting. It was there, in the spiritual center of Orthodoxy, and not in Vilnius or Czestochowa, that they finally and consciously joined the Church, this decision being inspired by the meeting with Vladimir Solovyov. Ivanov was more prepared for it than his wife. She was more impassioned in her rejection of what to her were "patent Christians" and a "trite and ignoble Church." These sentiments almost fully coincide with Alexander Blok's position vis-à-vis the Church, one which he maintained until his death. Vyacheslav and Lydia Ivanov sent Solovyov a telegram from Kiev, unaware that he was on his deathbed in Uzkoie, the Trubetskoy estate near Moscow.

That pilgrimage to the Kievan monastery raises doubts about

the assumption that it was Solovyov who in his late years prompted Ivanov to join the Catholic Church. By the 1890s Solovyov had gone a long way from the ideas expressed in his books *The Russian Idea* (1888) and *Russia and the Universal Church* (1889), published in French in Paris. This is not the place to go into Solovyov's theories of a theocratic utopia which provides for an imperial, autocratic Russia in alliance with the Chair of St. Peter to save humanity from national wars and the temptations of socialism. Solovyov's *The Russian Idea* is more relevant in our context: he sums up his old argument with the Slavophiles, accusing them of substituting nationalism for universal consciousness. Nationalism, in Solovyov's terms, is a selfish attitude assumed by the people, and he is merciless in his criticism of Imperial Russia for its policy in Poland and its oppression of Jews and Old Believers. Solovyov traces the roots back to the Byzantine heritage as it was adopted by Russia. He writes in *The Russian Idea*: "It is not in the West but in Byzantium that the original sin of national isolation and caesarian-papal absolutism initially introduced death into the social Body of Christ."

But after the storms of Russia had subsided and his theocratic utopia had lost impetus, Solovyov's views mellowed greatly. No doubt the reason lies, in part, in the adverse reaction to his theocratic utopia on the part of the hierarchy of the Catholic Church. Upon receiving *The Russian Idea* from Solovyov's friend and admirer Bishop Strossmeyer of Djakovo, Pope Leo XIII commented: "A beautiful idea! But except for a miracle it is impossible" (Bella idea! Ma fuori d'un miracolo è cosa impossibile).

Solovyov wrote to V. V. Rozanov in 1892: "I am equally far removed from both the Latin and the Byzantine narrow-mindedness. My own religion of the Holy Spirit is broader and, at the same time, richer than all other religions." Solovyov converted to Catholicism but on his deathbed confessed and received Holy Communion from Father Belyaev, an Orthodox priest, although he could have asked for Father Tolstoy, a Russian Catholic.

A predecessor of Ivanov on his path towards Rome was P. Ya. Chaadaev (1794-1856); to him the reunification of the Church was a corollary of the mystery of history; he went even farther than

Solovyov in his fierce condemnation of Russia's spiritual and confessional isolation and in the description of its fatal consequences. In his book on Chaadaev (1908) M. O. Gershenzon is not altogether mistaken in reproaching Chaadaev for a certain inconsistency in not converting to Catholicism. In full awareness did Ivanov embark upon his solitary path towards reunification with the Catholic Church. In writing about that decision Olga Deschartes says that Ivanov "knew that he would not be understood, yet he was serene." In the "Letter" to Charles Du Bos, Ivanov stresses that nothing could have shaken his decision, not even the feeling of brotherly solidarity with, and loyalty to, the suffering Mother Church; the hierarchy of the Eastern Church had for centuries been fostering in their flock profound suspicions of Rome. Ivanov sternly refers to that hierarchy as "inadequate shepherds, wheeler-dealers, enemies of theocratic unification." But Ivanov must have realized that no hierarchy could account for such deep-rooted distrust of Rome in the Eastern Christians, although he chose to pass over this issue in silence: it is not the fruit of indoctrination but the memory of multiple waves of a cruel march over the centuries against Eastern Christians by the state, the Church, and the military forces of the West.

Ivanov is right in his perception of the spiritual state of the Russian émigrés of the 1920s and early 1930s. By and large, as he points out in his "Letter," the Russian émigrés zealously cherished the familiar confessional forms that identified them with the idea of the fatherland, while at the same time they displayed a total indifference to the religious vision and the fate of the people whose hospitality they enjoyed. All émigré churches, built by political exiles and refugees in the poor neighborhoods of West European cities, seemed to carry an invisible slogan: "The only thing left to us of Russia is the Church." Even Russian exiles who were not really closely committed to the Church yearned for it or, rather, for the comforting beauty of its religious rites. Although this is true of most Russian exiles—who were refugees rather than political émigrés—the intellectual elite and the theologians took a different position. Surrounded as they were by distrust or, at best, by the

indifference of the overwhelming majority of the Russian émigrés, people like Florovsky, Frank, Berdyaev, Bulgakov and dozens of others were not only deeply committed to the problems of Christian reunification, and keenly aware of the spiritual challenge which confronted the Russian diaspora, but they were also the advocates and inspirers of what has become known as the ecumenical movement. It is unfortunate that Ivanov does not mention them, even though during his years in Russia he was close to both Bulgakov and Berdyaev. The Russian theologians and philosophers in exile had raised the issue of Christian reunification as a vital problem of our time in the consciousness of the Orthodox churches on the Balkan Peninsula. These theologians wanted to see the Church reunited, but by a doctrinal consensus which had yet to be achieved. Ivanov's path was not theirs; his reproach to them for their adamant refusal to grasp the meaning of Christ's words about the rock of the Church, the sole, universal, and apostolic Church, was groundless. The alleged obstinate unwillingness to understand Christ's words (Matthew 16: 18–19) was, in fact, a commitment to a traditional interpretation more ancient than the centralist and monarchist idea of Russian primacy.

Ivanov knew that his entrance into the Catholic Church was his personal answer to the tragic division of the Christian world: even to him it was merely the "anticipation" of the one Church which would be universal:

The holiness of another faith
 Makes the proud heart humble,
 The radiance of promise shines
 Over a unified and universal Church . . . [SS, III, 592]

To Ivanov it was not a break with Orthodoxy, so close to his heart: he had, in his own mind, not crossed the line of demarcation that separated him from his own Church by merging with the sacredness of the Western Church, a merger which his friend and inspirer Vladimir Solovyov visualized in his late years as lying beyond the boundaries of history, as an eschatological event.

Notes

1. *The Correspondence from Two Corners (Perepiska iz dvukh uglov)* between Vyacheslav Ivanov and M. D. Gershenzon (1869–1925) dates back to June/July 1920.
2. See *SS*, II, 418–32.
3. See *Letters*, vol. III, pp. 43–44.

Recurrent Motifs in Ivanov's Work

Dmitri Ivanov

One of my earliest recollections goes back to the 16th of November, 1917, to Moscow and to our apartment on the Boulevard Zubovsky. I was five at the time. My father was standing, perhaps he had just come into the room; I ran toward him and threw my arms around his knees. I looked up; he seemed so tall above me. I began solemnly to recite what had composed itself, I know not how, in my little head:

Everything passed as in a distant dream . . .

Vse proshlo dalekim snom . . .

My father, who always gave the closest and often the most respectful attention to what we had to say to him, was astonished. A few hours later (it was always at night that he wrote) he took the phrase I had communicated to him and wrote his poem "Vremja" (Time):

Everything passed as in a distant dream;

The shore of former days sank

And melted like snow

In the boundless and the nocturnal . . .

Or did our ships depart

Silently into the distance,

Trusting their free flight to the wind?

The shore began to float—

Where, in the fog beyond the stern,

Lulled in Ariadnean

Slumber, widow-life

Is alive—

Where, beyond the hazy edges,
Seized by slumber,
Bygone life quietly awaits
The bridegroom . . .

Have we not from our treacheries
Forged captivity,
What the mortal race
Calls Time?

Time, like a wind, whirls us away,
Divisively divides us—
It will take into its maw its serpent tail
And die.

Vse proshlo dalekim snom;
V bespredel'nom i nochnom
Utonul, izmlel, kak sneg,
Prezhnij breg . . .

Ili nashi korabli
Tikhomolkom v dal' ushli,
Vverja vetru vol'nyj beg?
Pòplyl breg,—

Gde,—v tumane, za kormoj,—
Ariadninoj dremlj
Usyplennaja, zhiva
Zhizn'-vdova,—

Gde,—za mglistuju kajmoj,—
Obujannaja dremlj,
Zhizn' bylaja zhdet, tikha,
Zhenikha . . .

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]

The images evoked are familiar already in the poems of *Pilot Stars* (*Kormchie zvezdy*, 1903). Again, the boat, the river bank, the sea are parts of the key images in *Svetomir*; the narrative on which Vyacheslav Ivanov was still working on the day of his death. And behind these images are the constant identifications: ocean-eternity; ocean-birth; earth-death; earth-a bitter dream:

Ocean and Earth—as birth and death
And Earth—a bitter dream.

Okean i Tverd'—kak rózhden'e i smert';
I Zemlja—o, gor'kij son.

[SS, I, 597]

And finally, the call, the invitation, the order:

"Remember, remember," comes the call from the deaf
wave . . .

"Vspomni, vspomni," zvuchit za glukhoj volnoj . . .

[SS, II, 306]

Memory is one of the major themes throughout Ivanov's work.

The boat is the bond between sea and land, between eternity and the kingdom of death. It is in the boat that the Bridegroom will arrive, for whom the widow-Life waits. It is in the boat (in *Svetomir*) that the Virgin Mary passes by. Time, redoubtable as the wind, is the prison that shuts us in, separates us, whirls us away: "Time, like a wind, whirls us away," writes Ivanov in 1917. And it is like an echo of what he wrote in Athens in 1903:

Like a dead whirlwind, horses carry us far off,
Time whirls us away.¹

Kak mertvyj vikhr' nesut nas glukho koni,
Nas vremja mchit . . .

[SS, I, 699]

The prison where Time detains us,¹ where the soul, deprived of the unity to which it aspires, is condemned to its solitude: this is the experience that the poet has himself lived, the experience which is on the edge of the long narration of his life that is his poetic work: "My life lies open in my songs. . . ."

As he emerged from adolescence the young man suffered a profound sickness. The religious fervor of childhood gave way "abruptly and without sorrow to a total atheism." At the same time he felt called, like many of his companions, to the revolutionary struggle. One problem troubled him, it is true: "terrorism as a means of social revolution"—and after long and painful hesitation, he opted against terrorism. Meanwhile, he remained a militant atheist. He gave lessons in atheism "by word and in writing" to one of his most loved friends. But "my atheism cost me dear," Ivanov recounts, "its consequence was a pessimism of spirit which weighed on me for many years, a passionate desire for death which I sang in my poems of that period and even a naïve attempt at suicide . . ." [SS, II, 14]. The crisis led to an increasingly distressing state of mind, a feeling of spiritual isolation of the individual trapped in his closed universe, paralyzed by his inability to communicate, by the illusory character of the world as it presented itself to him:

Where am I? Where am I?
I am thirsting after myself
I am in the depth
Of my mirrors.

Gde ja? Gde ja?
Po sebe ja
Vozalkal!
Ja—na dne svoikh zerkal.

[SS, I, 741]

Such was his sense of the metaphysical solitude of man enclosed within the insuperable limits of individuality, of his "cell" as Ivanov used then to say. He was incapable of perceiving the reality of the outside world and he doubted his own reality. Later, analyzing Dos-

toevsky's characters, he spoke of their "idealism with no way out" (*beziskhodnyj idealizm*).

The young man found himself in Rome when an event took place that provoked a salutary crisis and a radical change of spirit. This was his meeting in 1893 with Lydia Dmitrievna Zinovieva. Ivanov was to recall it in his *Autobiographical Letter*.

This love took complete possession of me, went on to grow without ceasing and to deepen spiritually. . . . The one through the other, each of us has found himself, and more than just himself. I would say that we found God. Our meeting had been like a powerful storm in spring, Dionysiac, after which everything in me renewed itself, blossomed again, again grew young. The poet awoke in me for the first time and became conscious of himself, freely and strongly; not only in me but in her also. One can affirm without exaggeration that all our life together since then has been for both of us an almost unbroken period of inspiration, of tension, of spiritual ardor [SS, II, 20].

The life of Lydia Dmitrievna ended abruptly in 1907. "What that meant for me," Ivanov writes, "he for whom my poetry is not made up of lifeless hieroglyphics understands; he knows why I live and what makes me live [SS, II, 21].

Her presence made this world which, he thought, was illusory and spectral, suddenly real. The poet "mute and captive" until then was coming to know the word "thou" and thou was the first reality; more real, it seemed, than the uncertain reality of his captive ego. The same change was taking place with the "other."

"The one through the other, each of us has found himself." Later, Ivanov in his book on Dostoevsky was to analyze at length this mutation; this change in the spirit that the novelist used to call *proniknovenie* and which might be translated as "intuition" or "identification of oneself with the other."

It is a transcension of the subject. In this state of mind we recognize the other *Ego* not as our object but as another subject. It is therefore not a mere peripheral extension of the bounds of in-

dividual consciousness but a complete inversion of its normal system of coordinates. . . . The transcension finds its expression in the unconditional acceptance by our full will and thought, of the other existence—in “Thou art.” If this acceptance of the other is complete; if with and in this acceptance the whole substance of my own existence is rendered null and void (*exinanitio, kénosis*), then the other-existence ceases to be an alien *Thou*; instead, the *Thou* becomes another description of my *Ego*. “Thou art” then no longer means “Thou art recognized by me as existing” but “I experience thy existence as my own, and in thy existence I again find myself existing.” *Es, ergo sum.*²

“The one through the other, each of us has found himself,” Ivanov wrote, adding “and more than just himself; I would say that we found God.” Through the experience of the reality of the other and of himself, man comes to postulate the existence of God.

Humanity is a multitude of beings and the reality of each is authenticated by the other. But just because each one is a real, independent universe, all these beings together postulate a still more real reality, a unifying principle which contains all *I* and all *Thou*. God alone “warrants the reality of my realism, the actuality of my acts and realizes for the first time what I vaguely feel as essential in me and outside of me” [SS, II, 21]. When man says: “Thou art, therefore I am” to each being, he says it, through them, to the Absolute Being.

The real meeting of two beings takes place only if the one and the other find God in their own selves. To be is to be together. The Absolute Being—God—is there as a “third party,” as the contriver of unity:

You were the third, between the two,
Hidden Spirit.

Tret'im ty stojal mez dvukh,
Tajnyj dukh!

[SS, III, 211]

Saying *es—ergo sum* to each other and at the same time to God is the kernel of what Ivanov will later call *sobornost'*.

This finding of God again in oneself, at the same time as the rediscovery of the “other” and of the reality of the world, was the consequence of a profound mutation of the spirit—its outcome was abrupt and overwhelming—and to be sure, not at all the result of theoretical reasoning. Yet for a long time and at a different level, another mutation was brewing. A new teaching appeared: that of Friedrich Nietzsche. Under his influence Ivanov dedicated himself to the study of the history of religions and in particular the religion of Dionysus. In fact, from childhood his heart's desire had been to explore the Greek spirit, a desire long repressed on account of his long apprenticeship in Roman history under Mommsen and Hirschfeld (an apprenticeship culminating in his Latin thesis, recently reprinted).³

It was not a matter solely of scientific and abstract interest, though his philosophical and historical studies were very strict. An insistence within himself urged the young scholar on. The spiritual crisis persisted; the precepts of Zarathustra only aggravated it. He felt that he was freeing himself from the appeal of Nietzsche in the sphere of religious consciousness only by going more deeply into the message that came to him from Greece.

The study of the Dionysiac cults actually estranged him from Nietzsche: Nietzsche, having discovered Dionysus, saw in him Christianity's antithesis. Ivanov, the admirer of Dostoevsky and Vladimir Solovyov's disciple, showed that the religion of Dionysus “was a stream that poured all its waters into the Christian ocean.” He showed that the Dionysiac religion, as it is revealed in its true nature (and especially in the Orphic mysteries) is essentially a stepping-stone on the path of Christianity—“the Old Testament of the Gentiles.”⁴

At the British Museum in London and then during a long sojourn in Athens, he collected material for what was to be, in 1903, his series of lectures in Paris and later his book, *The Hellenic Religion of the Suffering God*.⁵ He retraced through the metamorphoses and the facets of the myth the various aspects of the passion, the death and the palingenesis of the god. He studied the orgiastic cults, the

identification of the follower with the sacrificial victim and of the victim with the god himself. Through the Dionysiac ecstasy, the Ego rescued from the prison of the self reached a reality that transcended it, succeeded in "crossing the limits, in consummating the destruction and annulment of the individuality." It was the Orphic *kénoisis*, the void, the death of oneself, the initial impulse of every authentic religious experience. But, as in the myth, the death of the god-victim opened the way to a new birth, the annihilation of Ego was a "creative" or "constructive" death—*zizhditeljnaja smert'*—and emerging into a life renewed. As in the Dionysiac myths that Ivanov explored, death and life, suffering and joy, are in his poems in constant dialectic, on intimate terms.

Thus the great upheavals of personal life were on a par with his exploration of the myth, an exploration that was at one and the same time exegesis, interpretation and verification through intimate experience in his innermost spirit.

Always, and always in a different way, Ivanov conveys the same Dionysiac myth. Whether he sings of Spring or love, of Persephone or Orpheus, he invariably celebrates the oneness of suffering and exultation, of death and new birth [SS, I, 66].

Myth and symbol have fundamental significance in Ivanov's terminology. Let us confine ourselves now to recalling the brief definition that the author himself made: "myth is the instrument of imaginative knowledge of the supernatural realities; it is an objective truth about being. The true myth is never either invention or allegory; it is the hypostasis of a reality or energy." For Ivanov, as Olga Deschartes writes,

a symbol is a sign or a signification. It does not stand for or express any single definite idea. Otherwise it would be merely a hieroglyph, and a combination of several symbols would be "graphic allegory," a communication in code which needs to be read with the help of a key. In different spheres of consciousness the same symbol has different meanings. Like a ray of light a symbol travels through all the levels of being and all the spheres of consciousness;

on each level it signifies different entities and in each sphere it fulfills a new function. The symbol, like a descending ray, appears at each point of intersection with each sphere of consciousness as a sign whose meaning is figuratively yet completely revealed by a corresponding myth. Thus, the snake has a symbolic relation both to the earth and to incarnation, to sex and to death, to sight and to knowledge, to temptation and to illumination. It represents different entities in different myths. Yet the whole body of snake-symbolism and every one of its different meanings are linked together by the great cosmogonic myth, in which each aspect of the snake-symbol has its place in a hierarchy of the planes of the divine all-pervading unity. A myth is the objective truth about entity; it is the key to the imaginative cognition of extrasensory entities. A true myth is far from being fiction or allegory; it is the hypostasis of a certain entity or "energy." In remote ages when myths were genuinely created, they answered the questions posed by experiential reason in that they represented *realia in rebus*. (Not all myths, however, are collective in origin; some derive from a mystical vision, and have become popularized.) By disclosing symbols, i.e. signs or another reality in the reality of surrounding objects, art makes our reality significant.⁶

The dialectic of I and Thou which is a constant motif in Ivanov's works appears not only in the relations between two beings. It exists as well within man himself. And here a new myth, that of Psyche, initiates Ivanov's research into the psychology of the religious experience. The name Psyche echoes throughout his poetry and is the starting point of two basic writings: *Tj esi*, of 1907, taken up again and elaborated in German in 1933 under the title *Anima*.⁷

Experiences of an ecstatic nature, Ivanov thinks, depend on the feminine element in us. They take place when Psyche, the Soul, tries to become free of the speculative and conscious Mind, always ready to keep it in tutelage. Psyche rejects the tyrannical power of the Mind; in her partner, who is nevertheless con-substantial with her, she does not recognize, or no longer recognizes, the divine Guest whom she has lost and for whom she seeks in vain [SS, III, 264 ff.].

Eighteen years after he wrote *Ty esi*, on reading in Rome *Parabole* in which Paul Claudel described, in terms astonishingly close to his, the conflict within our being between *Anima* and *Animus*, between Psyche in us and the spirit of knowledge and reasoning, Ivanov was very happy to find this chance meeting-point. It was the same when he read Carl Gustav Jung, in the same period, though Jung's approach was fundamentally different. Exploring the complex proceedings that go on in our ego, Ivanov takes up his position on the narrow line of demarcation between psychological analysis of religious phenomenon and the description of mystical experiences that this phenomenon implies. The dialectic between Psyche, *Anima*, the soul, and the Mind, *Animus*, is "the fundamental dogma of mystical psychology," as Ivanov was glad to read in Henri Bremond's *Prière et Poésie* when he was rewriting *Ty esi* in Rome.

This dialectic springs from the tragically dissociated state of our person. *Anima*, Ivanov says, knows that she must find again the supreme good that she has lost—something which is the best part of herself and is no longer herself, something divine. She feels lost, exhausted, captive; Ariadne abandoned, she waits for her Betrothed, the Friend who will come to set her free. She thinks she recognizes him in *Animus* but he betrays his mission, ignores the messages. Then, as "a wild Maenad," she rises up against him. *Cor Ardens* contains many poems evoking the Maenads and their tragic excesses.

Things are quite different in the reasoning and conscious part of our ego. *Animus* drives *Anima* violently out of his inner life although her participation is indispensable. Without her, he cannot reach the divine and transcendent Being in him. He is doomed therefore to an idealistic contemplation of himself in a world that seems to him to be constructed according to his own image. Or else he attempts, by a magical effort, to bring forth his double and thus obtain, through a kind of gnosis, knowledge of the transcendent world; knowledge that is illusory, however, without the presence of *Anima* who alone is capable of bringing about the change, the necessary transcension, so that the miracle may take place. And Ivanov refers to St. Paul saying in effect, What good is knowledge if I have not love?²⁸

It is, in fact, a redeeming miracle which *Anima* awaits. It takes

place through ecstasy. Then the soul plunges into the depths of its original self—its *samost'*, according to the expression used by Ivanov in Russian, its *Urselbst*, according to the term used in the German version of his text—these depths that constitute the third and most secret element of our selves. There, the soul—exhausted, helpless and venerating—discovers a reality against which man—were he the bearer of all human virtualities and realities—can no longer rise, and which he cannot claim for his ideal universe.

To transcend oneself, to cross the last frontiers of one's own immanence, means meeting God in the holy of holies of oneself, meeting the Absolute Being, essentially different from man though dwelling in him and united with him through an ineffable communication—God, the transcendent principle of Being. We find Him within our selves but He is not our self; He is the "Guest" who visits us, the Father, to whom we can only say: Thou art. Ivanov elaborates in *Anima* the Christian teaching on the life of the Holy Trinity in man's soul.

"How it is possible to reach knowledge of the absolute transcendence of God through an interior experience?" Ivanov asks himself. "Does not the latter, by definition, have its limits in the contents immanent within the human mind and does it not serve, therefore, only to know itself? That is what speculative reason (in the sense of Kant's theory of cognition) must ask itself. But we are exploring a field in which *Animus* is no longer all-powerful . . ." and Ivanov recalls the *noūs katharós* of the Neoplatonists.

The way in which the soul can know the transcendent is the experience of mystical death. This is not the delight of losing oneself in cosmic life, in the all animated by the divine breath. This loss of oneself can, it is true, interrupt the sense of our individual existence and of our will for a time but it does not deprive us of the feeling of the reality in which all things are plunged. It is different if we reach this region of the life of the soul in which everything that our phenomenological observation had been able to distinguish "disappears in the dark ocean of an all-powerful reality that suppresses all forms and washes away all the signs that the world has drawn on the quicksands of the soul" [SS, III, 284 ff.].

Is this new reality, one that completely wipes out preceding

existence and can be compared only to death, still the same as the one intercepted by our phenomenological examination? Before it the soul feels incapable of continuing to exist; it sinks into a deep nothingness—in its death struggle it has to obey the order: "Die and become" (Goethe's *stirb und werde*). How else could it come about, the new birth to which it aspired so ardently and whose other name is resurrection? From antiquity on, in fact, mystical initiations were considered an anticipation of death.

A good part of Ivanov's book on Dostoevsky is dedicated to the metaphysical aspects of the writer's "novel-tragedies." Ivanov attributes the acute sense of the ontological destiny of his characters beyond their empirical vicissitudes to the psychical upheaval Dostoevsky experienced on the scaffold; an experience that reflects and recalls, in a way, this discovery of God in us, which he describes in *Anima*. Dostoevsky, Ivanov thinks, was initiated into "higher reality" on the scaffold:

He underwent a sudden and decisive transformation of the soul—a beatified death, followed by the unexpected gift of divine mercy to his corporeal shell. The years of forced labor and exile were the swaddling bands tightly swathed about the new-born child, bringing about the extinction of his outer personality, of his stubborn self-consciousness that was needed to consummate his resurrection. At the place of execution, in those moments of preparation for death, he felt that his soul had overrun death and knew itself to be alive: indeed living more intensely than ever before, in a life already beyond the threshold of the grave. The personality was thus forcibly extricated from the conditions of his earlier existence and became, for the first time, conscious of its own true substance, revealed behind the receding vision of external things; behind the wrappings falling from the embodied spirit. Like a midwife, that hour seems to have brought forth from limbo the inner-Ego slumbering in the depths of the soul's being. . . . From then onwards all the spiritual doing and striving of Dostoevsky were sustained by the inspiration of the newly-created man within, for whom much that we regard as transcendent came to be in some way

immanent in his being—just as, conversely, some part of what is given to us directly was for him now removed to an exterior region.⁹

Here it is: the "constructive death," (*zizhditelnaja smert'*), the death-midwife, that brings forth new lives, which we find so often in Ivanov's poems.

By saying "Thou art" to God man chooses Being. But there may be—for man is free—the suicidal will to oppose this existential necessity that is faith in God. Then we have flight to non-Being—rebellion. The soul is called to make this fundamental choice even before the beginning of its empirical existence. It is this prior choice, this *Prolog im Himmel*, that underlies Dostoevsky's novels, according to Ivanov. It is this choice that foreshadows man's empirical decisions. In his novels Dostoevsky

lays bare the most deeply hidden tragedy contained in the dualism of necessity and free will as components of human destiny. He leads us, so to speak, to the loom of life and shows us how the threads of both intersect and are enmeshed at every crossing of warp and woof. His metaphysical interpretation of events is implicit in his psycho-empirical interpretation. The main direction of the path that each individual takes is laid down for him by the inmost will—whether resting in God or opposing itself to God.¹⁰

The long poem *Man (Chelovek)* evokes this *Prolog im Himmel* and is the cosmic history of the world. It opens with this first "Thou art" said to God and also with the suicidal rejection. In the series of lyrics—of great freedom and perfection of form—the poet narrates the long dramatic confrontation between the creature and God. God would like to confirm the divine filiation that Adam is entitled to, provided Adam recognizes in God his father and says to Him: "Thou art."

It is impossible to summarize this complex work here (Pavel Florensky intended to write a commentary on it but the war and the Revolution put an end to that). The main theme of *Chelovek* is the one at the center of Ivanov's whole Weltanschauung, which he some-

times called "monanthropic." In it man assesses and assumes the whole of history:

There is only God and you: two of you.
You alone have been made by the Creator.
Everything heavenly, earthly
Is you before the face of God.

Est' lish' Bog—i ty: vas dvoe.
Sozdan ty odin Tvortsom.
Vse nebesnoe, zemnoe—
Ty pred Bozhiem litsom.

[SS, III, 238]

But man said "No" to God. The descendants of Adam, divided by hatred, suicide and fratricide, rise up against one another. Mother Earth, sullied and offended, groans and calls in vain for Adam, the liberator, whom she awaits since all creatures were conceived by God and brought out of nothingness for him and since he, man, is responsible for them.

Adam, Mother-Earth groans
For you, the liberator . . .
But man does not remember
The sole aim of all things.

Adame, Mat'-Zemlja stenaet,
Osvoboditel', po tebe.
A chelovek ne vspominaet . . .
O tselogo edinoj tseli.

[SS, III, 233]

Yet, despite the division inflicted on them by the two principles of separation, Time and Space, despite the hatred that set them against one another on the two banks of one river, the enemies are actually only doubles, for "one Adam lives in them."

When will the enemies see
From the two banks of one river
That they hate each other
As only doubles hate,
That one Adam lives in them?

Kogda zh protivniki uvidjat
s dvukh beregov odnoj reki
Chto tak drug druga nenavidjat
Kak nenavidjat dvojniki;
Chto v nikh edinyj zhiv Adam?

[SS, III, 233]

The poet constantly feels this substantial unity in spite of the countless individualities into which it has been broken. In a poem written in 1919 during one of the most tragic periods of his life, physically and psychically, Ivanov tells how he goes into a house where an old woman who has died of hunger is being buried. In this dead woman he recognizes himself. The priest who is censuring the corpse is again himself; and again he is the visitor who has entered by chance and to whom a candle is handed, Pilate, showing the Man to the crowd full of hatred, is again himself, as is the fearful Galilean who watches the execution from a distance, and the Roman, respectful of the gods, on duty near the cross.

An old woman who has starved to death,
I lie under the white shroud.
A priest, I cense the incense of the Spirit
Over the yellow mummy.

And a stranger who has happened by,
I hold a candle distractedly in my fingers;
I look perplexedly
At the bones under the withered skin . . .

To the joy of the brutish crowd
I lead out the Man
And with a white hand,
Pontius Pilate, I point to him.

And—a fearful Galilean—
I watch the execution from a distance.
And—a god-fearing Roman,
I superstitiously guard the cross.

Otgolodavshaja starukha
Pod belym savanom lezhu.
Svjashchennik fimiamom Dukha
Nad zheltoj mumiej kazhu.

I svechku, chuzhenin zakhozhi,
V perstakh rassejannykh derzhu;
Na kosti pod issokhshej kozhej
V nedoumenii gljazhu . . .

Tolpe na radost' ozvereloj
Ja Cheloveka vyvozhu
I na nego rukoju beloju,
Pilata Pontijskij ukazhu.

I—galilejanin puglivyj—
Za kaznju izdali slezhu.
I—rimljanin bogoljubivyj
Krest sueverno storozhu . . .

[SS, III, 233, 237]

The great collective task of humanity and the personal one of every man is to reunite in the one Man who will recognize Himself definitively as the Son of God, "and we know that Adam, when he achieves his supreme goal, will remember himself, will live again his whole life in his memory; he will remember himself in each of his faces, going up through the reverse path of the times, up to the threshold of Eden, and then he will remember his native Eden." Then time will not exist any more.¹¹ But today this is only a fleeting intuition. We are still living under the sign of the forgetfulness of unity.

"Man, caught up in his fratricidal struggle, does not remember the sole aim of all things." Man has forgotten. Time, Space, Matter have become for him instruments of separation and the ransom of non-Being which he has preferred to Being.

When we look behind us into the past, we see the night at the end and we try vainly to distinguish shapes similar to remembrances. Then we experience the exhaustion of spirit that we call

forgetfulness. Non-Being is directly revealed to our conscience in forgetfulness.¹²

But man has a weapon against time and a remedy against forgetfulness: it is memory. Just as forgetfulness is non-Being, memory is the principle of Being. If God forgets us, we cease to exist. Memory is "the gauge of immortality," affirms the poet in "The Trees" [SS, III, 533].

Memory is the creative act by which God maintains in Him every image of the Creation, such as he conceived it and such as it must become. The gift of memory infused in us reveals the reality of the world . . . awakes in us the remembrance of the Soul of the world.¹³

Memory warrants the reality and the freedom of our personality. Memory realizes the true community (*sobornost'*) of men because it roots it in absolute reality. Memory is the ecumenical energy (*sobornaja energija*). It establishes the union between living and dead. "Memory conditions our thinking, our knowledge, and the knowledge of our knowledge. Ivanov's gnoseology is an anamnesiology."¹⁴ A Latin formula, whose words suddenly resounded in Ivanov's spirit, sums up this intuition: *quod non est, debet esse; quod est, debet fieri; quod fit, erit.*

The Creation that God calls into being is first in God's memory. In order to realize itself perfectly in God it must become and, during its existence, find again its image. In the divided world man is imprisoned in his individuality, but in him and around him "the permanent action of the infused memory" goes on. This action is the manifestation of the Word in time. It is a *veiled* manifestation that man becomes aware of by discovering the absolute reality behind the phenomena and learning their symbolic language: *a realibus ad realiora* [SS, II, 638 and 657]. In the history of humanity the ways of this internal revelation are different according to the different stages of mankind's spiritual evolution. Every great "spiritual event" illuminated by them announces and foreshadows the absolute reve-

lation, the unique incarnation in history of God become Man, Christ.

In his letter to Charles Du Bos, Ivanov wrote:

When talking about the great cycles of world history, what we usually call "general culture" . . . is, in my opinion, essentially based on the permanent action of the infused memory through which the Uncreated Wisdom leads humanity to transform the instruments of natural division—Space, Time, Matter—into instruments of union and harmony, to bring them back to their destination in conformity with the divine image of the perfect Creation. Every great culture, as an emanation of Memory, is the incarnation of a fundamental spiritual event; and the latter is an act and a particular aspect of the Word's revelation in history. That is why every great culture can only be a plural expression of a religious idea which is its basic element. The dissolution of religion is therefore an unmistakable symptom of the extinction of memory [SS, III, 428].

Quod fit, erit. The eschatological end of all becoming is in the re-composition of the initial unity. In no way does this mean that Ivanov—on a historical plane—believes in an optimistic evolutionism. Like man in his own self, culture always oscillates between memory and forgetfulness, between the will towards Being and the anguish of Nothing.

The action of memory and the quest for Nothing determine man's attitude towards culture. Culture, as man himself, is antinomian. It can be anamnesis, an ascension to the lost unity, to the absolute reality, a door always open to freedom. It can, on the other hand, enclose man in the circle of its phenomena. It then becomes "a system of subtle constrictions." Our belief in the absolute—which is culture no more—or our rejection of the absolute, depends on our inner freedom (that is to say our life) or on our inner enslavement to culture.¹⁵

We have dealt so far with problems of cognition, the epistemological meaning of "Thou art," in the sphere of relations between the ego and the external world, as well as within our ego. The tragic

dissociation of the person led, as we have seen, either to the final wrench, the desire for non-Being, or to the discovery, in the depths of our being, of a principle that is at once transcendent and closely linked with us. But what is this transcendent principle? The exploration of Dionysian cults, the multiple variations of the religion of God the Victim and the suffering God, revealed to Ivanov the processes of religious experiences, ecstasy as a means of going beyond the limits of individuality. Study of the religion of Dionysus supplied a "how," a method, a mystical way but not a "what." Orgiastic cults initiated the faithful into the tragic sense of the world through a rupture, an initial fault. They showed them God the Victim whose sacrifice took place by a common will and encompassed the whole of creation. They celebrated the passion, the death, and the return of God, but these celebrations were only a rite; the palingenesis of God was only an appearance, starting over and over again. It could not be otherwise because the suffering God was only a symbol; he was not the concrete, real, unique and irreplaceable person that Christ would be.

"The religion of Dionysus," Ivanov wrote in *The Hellenic Religion of the Suffering God*, "was like ploughed land waiting to be fertilized by Christianity; it needed it as its final issue, the last word that it had not uttered." This last word was the Word become flesh, Christ.

Christ, a concrete person, unique and irreplaceable, was always present in Ivanov's soul. (The only time I remember seeing him with tears in his eyes was during a conversation about Christ). As a child he dedicated poems to Him; during his period of militant atheism he remained, nevertheless, deeply attracted to Him. When he emerged from his solipsist crisis, he found himself—spontaneously and naturally—a Christian.

Return to Christ meant return to the Church.¹⁶ Christ is there where *sobornost* is, i.e. where a real meeting of two beings takes place and where God attends as "a third party," as the contriver of unity. Church is the mystery of "universal love and of free union in Christ." Christ alone, in his human and divine reality, can accomplish, Ivanov believed, what our divided soul aspires to and what the whole Creation, for which man is responsible and whose spokes-

man he is, also aspires to. When the Son of Man dies His redeeming death, the whole Earth—Mother Earth—is Golgotha; death, we are again reminded, becomes birth and the grave leads to real life:

The Tomb has become the womb of new births.
 "Not Earth is your mother, children, but Golgotha . . ."

Lono rozhdenij stalo grob.
 "I ne Zemlja,—deti, vam mat'—Golgota . . ." [SS, I, 556]

Christ is the Betrothed awaited by Psyche in us and by the whole earth. Only Christ, the new Adam, brings about this reunification of the whole of mankind, for "in each one the Word has become flesh and dwells with everyone and resounds in a different way in each one, but the word of each one finds an echo in all the others and all are one free consent—for all are the same Word." Through the peripeties of human life, *sobornost'* mystically continues its work on earth. The eschatological aim is to transform all humanity into the mystical Body of Christ, the Church. When this is accomplished, Adam will be restored to his initial unity.

Then he will no longer remain in the "humiliation of the creature"; for having, through the mouth of Christ, said "Yes" to his Father, he will again find his divine filiation definitively. The poem *Chelovek* ends with this promise to Adam:

Rest assured in your grateful heart:
 God does not want the man created
 By Him to remain for ever
 In the humiliation of the creature.

Vedaj v serdtse blagodarnom:
 Bog ne khochet chtob navek
 Prebyval v smiren'e tvarnom
 Bogozdannij chelovek.

[SS, III, 238]

Thus, not only will the re-establishment of unity take place one day but what the Fathers of the Church call *theosis*: the divinization of man, the assumption in God of His human nature. That is an eschatological hope, but the transfiguring action of the mystical

Church is already proceeding. It is visible only to pure eyes, to those who are—as the Virgin confided to Seraphim of Sarov—"members of our family."

Where this meeting between God and creation takes place, Paradise blooms on earth. This secret Paradise around us—an idea familiar to Dostoevsky, a belief dear to the Russian people—is one of the great themes of Ivanov's last work, *The Tale of Prince Svetomir*. Another major motif appears then: Sophia, though Ivanov very rarely mentions it in his theoretical writings. "Sophia is there," he usually confined himself to saying, "where Logos touches the earth."¹⁷

Notes

1. On space and time in Ivanov see O. Deschartes, in V. Ivanov and M. Gerschenson, *Correspondance d'un coin à l'autre* (Lausanne, 1979), p. 165.
2. *Dostoevsky* (New York, 1971), p. 26.
3. *De societatis vectigalium publicorum populi romani Petropoli, MDCCCLXI*. Reprint L'Erma di Bretschneider (Rome, 1972).
4. O. Deschartes, "Vyacheslav Ivanov," *Oxford Slavonic Papers*, V (1954), 43.
5. The lectures were first published in *Novy put'* (1904) and *Voprosy zhizni* (1905). See SS, I, 59.
6. *Oxford Slavonic Papers*, V, 50. [SS, II, 537].
7. SS, III, 269. German translation in *Das alte Wahre* (Berlin and Frankfurt, n.d.), pp. 7-30.
8. I Corinthians 13:2.
9. *Dostoevsky*, p. 34 ff.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 17.
11. "Terror Antiquus," SS, III, 92. German: *Das alte Wahre*, see note 7.
12. *Ibid.*
13. About the Soul of the world, see "Terror Antiquus," SS, III, 104.
14. O. Deschartes, "Être et mémoire selon Vyatcheslav Ivanov," *Oxford Slavonic Papers*, VII (1957), 94.
15. See *Correspondance*, Third letter, and *Lettera ad A. Pellegrini*, SS, III, 446. In French translation in *Correspondance*, p. 100.
16. Church in the mystical sense; with regard to the institutional Church, and particularly the official Orthodox Church, both Ivanov and Du

Bos expressed a great many reservations at that time. About the Catholic Church, see *Lettre à Charles Du Bos*, in *SS*, II, 85 and 418. The way to Christ led Ivanov to the concrete reality of the Church, as Solovyov taught it in consonance with the whole Christian tradition. Ivanov felt a deep personal friendship and veneration for Solovyov, though he sometimes disagreed with his philosophical views. Solovyov, he wrote, "has been the true shaper of our religious search" (*SS*, III, 297).

After their last meeting with him, shortly before his death, Ivanov and Lydia Dmitrievna, his wife, went to Kiev where they confessed, after years, and received communion. This return to the sacramental life of the Church—particularly to the Eucharist—was a mystical necessity and a logical step on a long journey that began with Ivanov's reflection on the religion of the suffering God, the victim and the sacrifice. Quite naturally, this return to the Church—which was not a "conversion" but the result of long spiritual evolution—led to a pilgrimage to one of the great centers of Russian spirituality, Kiev. There, rooted in the Eastern Orthodox tradition, was Ivanov's (and Solovyov's) spiritual fatherland, and so it would remain for the rest of his life (though this did not prevent him from liking, and feeling at home in, the other "Latin" tradition).

For Ivanov, as for Solovyov, the Church is mystically and sacramentally *one*; but, on the plane of historical evolution and hierarchical structure, there is a tragic division, a split; in Ivanov's opinion, it initially had purely political origins: Byzantium's struggle with the West. In breaking the links with the Bishop of Rome, successor of Peter (the "foundation stone of the Church"), the Eastern hierarchy, Ivanov believed, lost its independence; the Church became "national" and fell more and more under the power of the State. The division had another, deeper spiritual consequence: it was a wound in the body of the one Church. For Ivanov this split had been a source of "increasing suffering" for many years; his duty, he felt, was to help restore the lost unity, at least through his own actions. Ivanov publicly joined the Roman Catholic Church on March 17, 1926 in the basilica of St. Peter; he then attended a mass celebrated in the Byzantine rite on the tomb of the apostle Peter. In so doing, he writes Charles Du Bos, "for the first time I felt myself to be Orthodox in the full sense of the word, the owner of a sacred treasure that had been mine from the day of my baptism, but the ownership of which up to this time had been clouded, over many years, by a feeling of a sort of dissatisfaction that became more and more agonizing with the consciousness that I was deprived of the other half of that treasure of holiness and paradise, that I was breathing like a consumptive, with only one lung. I experienced a great joy of peace, a

freedom of movement that I had never known before; I felt the happiness of a communion with numerous saints whose help and tenderness I had involuntarily renounced. I had the gratifying feeling that I was doing my personal duty and, in my person, the duty of my people; I was certain that I was acting according to its will, which I then clearly saw as [indicating] a readiness for Union; I knew I had remained faithful to its supreme commandment: forget yourself and sacrifice to the universal cause of Ecumenicity."

17. Ivanov develops his ideas on Sophia in one of his last essays (1947): "Lermontov," in *Protagonisti della letteratura russa*, a cura di Ettore Lo Gatto (Bompani, 1958), p. 268. The Italian original and the Russian translation in *SS*, IV: "We would define the idea of Sophia," Ivanov writes, "analogically to what had been said on art, as *forma formans* of the universe in God's intellect."

also happened very often that I would have been called to preach at the house of some of the friends of the cause, and I would have been very glad to do so. I remember very well that I once preached at the house of some of the friends of the cause, and I would have been very glad to do so. I remember very well that I once preached at the house of some of the friends of the cause, and I would have been very glad to do so.

The friends of the cause, the Church, is especially and fundamentally on the side of human freedom and individual justice. There is a great desire, a yearning, in the hearts of men, to do good, to do right, to do what is just. This yearning is the basis of all moral action, and it is the basis of all social progress. It is the basis of all human freedom and individual justice. It is the basis of all human freedom and individual justice.

Reminiscences

Lydia Weston REMINISCENCES

An old friend of the cause, Mrs. Weston (1800-1870) lived in London with her husband, Joseph, and their family. She was the first woman to be elected to the Executive Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society. She was a devoted friend of the cause, and she was very active in its work. She was a devoted friend of the cause, and she was very active in its work.

Arrival in St. Petersburg

In the spring of 1847, we arrived in St. Petersburg. We were very glad to see each other, and we were very glad to see the friends of the cause. We were very glad to see each other, and we were very glad to see the friends of the cause. We were very glad to see each other, and we were very glad to see the friends of the cause.

Mother was so affectionate, but I am afraid our second journey was not so successful as the first. We were very glad to see each other, and we were very glad to see the friends of the cause. We were very glad to see each other, and we were very glad to see the friends of the cause.

The first thing that Mother did, was to visit the friends of the cause.

Reminiscences

Lydia Ivanova†

An old friend of the Ivanovs, Marusya (Maria Mikhailovna Zamyatina, 1866–1919) lived in Geneva with the children, Seryozha, Vera and Kostya (born from the first marriage of Lydia Dmitrievna Zinovieva-An-nibal to Konstantin Schwarsalon); and Lydia Ivanova (Lydia Dmitrievna's daughter by her marriage to Vyacheslav Ivanov). The recollections here pick up at the moment the family was united in St. Petersburg in Vyacheslav Ivanov's flat called the "Tower."

Arrival in St. Petersburg

In the spring of 1907 our parents decided to give up our Geneva home and move the entire family to Petersburg. All our belongings were sent to Russia. Vera stayed behind with our friends the Ostrogas¹ in order to take her final examinations at the *lycée*, but Kostya and I, under the tutelage of Marusya, took a train and arrived in Petersburg on Easter day. My heart overflowed with happy patriotism. For the first time in my life I was in Russia. All the people around spoke Russian, even the cabbies. Rain and slush—what did it matter?—I was in my own country.

Mother met us affectionately, but I am afraid our arrival presented her with an unpleasant necessity: the Tower had to be enlarged and another three rooms added to the original four. This was done by breaking through the wall of the next-door flat, the windows of which looked onto Tverskaya Street. A household was established complete with children and a servant—an intrusion into her bohemian life, her freedom.

The first thing that Mother did, not more than an hour after

our arrival, was to send Kostya and me, on our own, to Somov, Kuzmin and (I do not remember if at the same time) to Struve. It was unlikely we would lose our way since it was straight ahead from Tavrisheskaya. We were told to introduce ourselves as Mother's children and to ask everybody to come to our place in the evening.

My memories of that day are rather dim, as if of a dream. No wonder, we had only just arrived after many days of traveling. I felt overwhelmed by patriotic emotions, excitement and natural shyness. I remember how Somov and Kuzmin arrived (separately, I believe). I liked Somov a lot; he was round, soft and gentle, like a cosy cat. Kuzmin riveted one's attention by his extraordinary eyes—enormous, dark, slanting downwards from the bridge of his nose.

Mother called us and we sat in her Eastern Orange Room on the floor on mattresses covered with soft material and cushions. In the evening the two of us and Marusya were moved into a big room with an attic window and grey wallpaper; it looked very gloomy. "It was the Voloshins who papered it in this way," said Mother. Later it was repapered in a lovely bright blue; yet I always remember that room with a certain dislike.

In the beginning of the summer of 1907 Mother sent Kostya and me to the Chulkovs for a few days' stay at their summer house in Finland. I believe she preferred introducing us gradually to her friends. Chulkov was one of them. He used to come to our place fairly often. He had the habit of tossing back his thick hair, pressing it down with all five fingers of his hand to keep it from falling onto his forehead, and exclaiming in an almost sing-song, declamatory voice: "The taiga! Vyacheslav, the taiga!" His talk about Siberia where he had been deported was most interesting and he adored the taiga. His wife, Nadezhda Grigoryevna, was a beautiful woman of a pronounced southern type, a woman of great spirituality and kindness.

We were happy at the Chulkovs. One day they took us in a boat along some narrow river. Leonid Andreyev was also with us. He was dark, bearded and good-looking. He wore a White Russian shirt. As soon as he was told that we were Vyacheslav Ivanov's

children, Andreyev began talking about him at length and with great animosity.

Then, about two or three days after our arrival, Mother sent Kostya and me to make the acquaintance of our Uncle Sasha, Aunt Lisa and their six sons, our cousins. Uncle Sasha, Mother's brother, Alexander Dmitrievich Zinoviev, was at that time Governor of the St. Petersburg province (the town of St. Petersburg itself had its own Governor and was not under his jurisdiction). I remember his telling me when we met years later, "I am happy that there was not one single execution during my time." The Zinovievs lived in a magnificent detached house. On the ground floor there was a huge hall, a solemn-looking hall-porter and a wide, carpeted staircase to the floor above. We were taken into an enormous dining room. The table looked endless to me and it seemed as if a whole regiment of guardsmen was sitting at it; they all rose as one man and came forward to welcome and kiss us by brushing our faces with their fresh, smooth cheeks that smelled of lotion. There were, in fact, six of them; the younger ones were in the Corps of Pages, the older ones were Officers of the Guards. Uncle Sasha's elder son had been killed during the war with Japan. Aunt Lisa had always dreamt of having a daughter but continued giving birth to defenders of the fatherland. For a long time she dressed her younger son, Misha, as a girl and let his hair grow long. Kostya became very fond of the Zinovievs, saw them often and stayed with them; they treated him like another son. I met them less often and liked particularly Aunt Lisa.

Zagorye. Mother's Death

In the summer of 1907 Marusya's aunt, Elisaveta Afanasyevna, invited us all to her estate Zagorye in Mogilyov province. The estate itself was absolutely ruined and practically all the land was mortgaged, but Elisaveta Afanasyevna still lived with her large family in the manor house. The landscape there was amazingly beautiful: hills, fir forests, a copse of aspen trees looking like a temple with tall silvery columns, and a large pond.²

Apart from our hosts' house, there was a wing for our own use: for Marusya, Kostya, me and Vera, who arrived later; there was also a large newly built house that had not been lived in yet and which smelt of fresh wood and tar. This was for Mother and Vyacheslav; they slept and worked there, coming to our wing only for their meals.

As was customary, the outbuildings stood around the large courtyard: stables, cattle and poultry sheds, as well as the living quarters for the workmen of the house and for the German bailiff. As soon as Mother saw Zagorye and entered her new house she was overcome by the beauty of it all and suddenly burst into tears. Later that same autumn, on October 17, Mother died in this same house after a four-day illness. A violent epidemic of scarlet fever had broken out; Mother went around neighboring villages to look after the peasants and caught the infection.

I remember how Mother used to walk about Zagorye in her tunic. She felt proud of having lost a lot of weight by going on a diet of her own invention. She taught us how to distinguish the types of edible mushrooms, how to cook them, and how to flavor salads with garlic. While bathing, she taught me to swim both "like a dog" and "like a frog." There was a small boat on the pond and she enjoyed rowing.

I was the cause of a minor squabble between her and Vyacheslav. Mother was extremely fond of horses and was an excellent rider. At one stage of their travels in Palestine she and Vyacheslav had to make a lengthy desert crossing. They were riding in the company of their Arab guides. Vyacheslav's horse was temperamental and threw him. He fell heavily and injured his head against a rock; they found themselves in a very distressing situation in the midst of the desert and ever since, Vyacheslav retained a dislike and fear of riding. There were horses at Zagorye and I was longing to ride. In spite of Vyacheslav's fears, Mother decided to give me this pleasure and to train me gradually. For my first time on horseback an aged, 26-year-old water-carrier horse was saddled; I was placed on its back and told to ride. The water-carrier proceeded at a wise and measured pace straight along the road, past the manor house, the aspen copse and

farther on. My problem was how to make it turn back. I could not pull the reins hard enough. Unfortunately I met Vyacheslav strolling on his own towards me. I asked him, "Do take the horse by the reins and turn it; it refuses to obey me." Vyacheslav overcame his terror of horses and did as I requested. The water-carrier was pleased, increased his speed and, without taking the slightest notice of me, went galloping to the stables. Luckily I had enough sense to duck before we went through the door. But Vyacheslav and Mother had a violent argument and, as a result, my chances of riding at Zagorye were gone.

In spite of all the pleasures and joys of this summer, my recollections of Mother seemed to fade and grow sad. Pilgrims passed through Zagorye on foot on their way to Jerusalem. This inspired in Mother the longing to go on a pilgrimage in the same way: barefoot and alone.

At the end of the summer holiday Marusya took me and Kostya back to town. Kostya went for a year to the private school of Gurévich, while I went to the New School of the Society of Teachers on Preobrazhensky Street, as well as to the Borovka College of Music to attend Sophie Enakieff's classes. Mother, Vyacheslav and Vera were reluctant to leave Zagorye and remained there until late autumn.

Mother's death abruptly broke the whole course of our lives. One period had gone, and another had begun. Although the life surrounding me was varied and rich, it seemed as if all of us lived and acted in a constricted, partly unreal atmosphere; as if a dark cloud continually hung above us, the same cloud that had burst like thunder on October 17 and refused to dissolve. It took years for it to recede; this happened only at the end of our Petersburg period.

Some time after Mother's death, Aunt Lisa asked me to stay with them for a month at Koporye, the Zinovievs' family estate. At about three versts from the manor house and its unbelievably large park, stood Koporye itself, the fortress famous in history for its heroic resistance to the Swedes. The fortress was a ruin; around it were the village and the church where the Zinovievs went to Sunday service, always standing near the icon screen. An elegant horse-drawn carriage took them there, driven by a coachman in splendid coach-

man's dress: a brightly-colored Russian silk shirt with a sleeveless, blue cloth jacket, a round cap with peacock feathers on his curly hair. When in town, the coachman's overcoat was lined with a thick layer of quilted padding and sitting on his box he looked like a roly-poly. Kostya and I called such coachmen "cushions"—"I drove on a cushion today"—"Really?"

At Koporye I was shown a 40-year-old horse, Caprice, that Mother used to ride in her youth, and a small, long-haired Siberian horse with its mane down to its knees; Sasha was riding it when he was killed in the war. Dunya, one of our former young girls,³ came to see me from a nearby village. She had married a fisherman; she looked hungry and unhappy.

Aunt Lisa once told me that after Mother's death she had hoped to take her place as far as possible. However, this could never have been because we and the Zinovievs belonged to entirely different worlds.

The "Tower"

The house on Tavricheskaya 25⁴ stood on the corner of Tverskaya. It had a peculiar shape since its corner formed a tower; half of the tower consisted of outside walls with large windows, the other was part of the inside of the flats. The roof above the tower rose in a cupola; it was possible to enter it and to admire the marvelous view of the town, the Neva and the fortresses. I often went there, and even Vyacheslav made visits to it now and again. In the flats under ours, the tower contained large, round halls (in one of them there was a dancing school, in another a communal library); the hall in our flat was divided into three small rooms with a tiny dark entrance lobby. These rooms were a curious shape, like segments of a circle. Each had a huge window looking down upon the tops of the trees in the Tavrichesky Gardens. Father had the room in the middle.

Apart from the tower all the rest of the rooms had small, attic windows. Our flat was a modest one on the fifth floor. There was a lift up to the fourth floor. The large entrance hall on the ground

floor and the staircase up to the fourth floor were covered with carpets. The hall-porter, Pavel, dressed in livery, reigned over the downstairs. He was middle-aged and had a well-groomed, gingery beard.

In 1904 General Kuropatkin, Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Army, took a flat in our house. Pavel liked bragging about such an important inhabitant and identified himself with him: "Yesterday [V. K.] Plehve [the Minister of the Interior] called, but we did not receive him." The telephone was next to Pavel's flat and to use it you had to walk down five floors (the lift took you upstairs only). An old, short fur cape hung in our entrance hall and was called "the communal cape," as both hosts and visitors put it around their shoulders when they had to go down to the telephone.

Crowds of people came to the "Tower." Visitors and friends not only came but occasionally remained—some of them for two or three days, others for longer. Some of our Moscow friends never bothered to give any warning beforehand but simply walked in with their luggage. The two flats joined together in Mother's day no longer sufficed, so a third was added by breaking a door through into it. This flat gave onto Tverskaya and had three small rooms and an entrance that led to a different staircase. (Kuzmin lived there during our last years in the "Tower.") A single servant was no longer able to cope. But Vyacheslav refused to have more than one servant, saying it would be too bourgeois. The tiled Dutch stoves were wood-burning; there were paraffin lamps to be attended to. Once, to my delight, I was allowed to tend them instead of practicing the piano. There were 26 of them, so it is easy to imagine what happened when they were neglected and one or more began to smoke.

Eight, nine or more people sat down to table at dinner. It went on and on, the samovar never stopped boiling until late at night. The diversity of those who sat at our table! Great writers, poets, painters, philosophers, actors, musicians, professors, students, beginners of every kind, people dabbling in the occult, people truly half-mad and others pretending to be so as to appear original; "decadents," exalted ladies. I recollect one of these ladies who called on Vyacheslav and insisted on his going to her house on an island so

as to enable her to give birth to a superman. It was said that she made the rounds of famous men with the same request.

Conversation was animated and mostly unintelligible to me. Once I ran to the kitchen to talk to Matryosha and she remarked: "Isn't it odd? They are speaking Russian, aren't they? Yet one cannot understand a word they say!" It was snug in Matryosha's kitchen—the stove lit, something nice always cooking on it which could be tasted. Matryosha's cat, Flokin, sat in front of the range covered in coal dust; it loved to roll in coal and was not admitted to the Tower. Matryosha herself had given it the name Flokin because, she said, in the "most noble" family where she had been in service, a dog had been given that name. I think she must have Russianized the name "Flock." A similar transformation of a name took place later when Dima's nurse announced Baltrušaitis as "Trushachkin."

Some of the conversations at table enthralled me. Such were, for example, Gumilyov's tales about Africa and his poems describing it:

Far, far on lake Chad
Wanders the exquisite giraffe . . .

Both Father and I listened spellbound. Father had many truly youthful strings in his heart and his vivid imagination helped him to experience what in real life lay beyond his capabilities. In his old age, lying in a deck chair in Switzerland, Father liked to look at the high mountains and imagine climbing them, with all that implied—difficulties, tiredness and delight. He took an active interest in our lives, down to the slightest detail and always shared it with us.

Visitors at the "Tower"

After Mother's death, the Wednesdays were given up, but a great many people continued to come in the evenings. On one such occasion I was introduced to Zinaida Gippius. She looked at me (through her lorgnette, I believe) and said in a slight drawl: "Tell

me something interesting and frightening." But I am afraid I went numb and her request remained unanswered.

Another time Akhmatova stood on a rug with everybody around her; she was demonstrating her suppleness: bending backwards she was trying to pick up with her teeth a match placed vertically on a cardboard box that lay on the floor. I believe she managed to do it. She was tall, thin, dressed in something dark, long and clinging and she looked like some incredibly beautiful, snake-like, scaly creature.

Another glimpse—a rare visitor at our table. Everybody agreed that he was as beautiful as Apollo. Beautiful, yes, but what a heavy face! This was Blok. Another memory—a young student in a worn uniform, his hair brown, his nose very long. He kept silent, concentrating intensely on his thoughts with his nose down near his plate. He never lifted his head throughout the meal. This was Pavel Florensky.

Karatygin, the music critic, used to come to see Father and play the work of Debussy and Ravel for hours, introducing him to contemporary music. Father, who was musical to the highest degree, liked Ravel, but Debussy was alien to him. Beethoven was the composer he was linked with his whole life from his very youth, and my own impression is that the stuff of which Father's soul was woven contained many threads of Beethoven. Through the year following Mother's death he listened every evening to one or another of Beethoven's sonatas. They were played to him by one of his close friends, an excellent amateur pianist, Anna Mintslova.

Vyacheslav and I both enjoyed the evenings when Kuzmin demonstrated bit by bit, as he wrote them, the parts of a charming operetta he was composing. He himself wrote both the music and the words. The subject was borrowed from an Eastern fairy tale. The hero, in love with the Sultan's wife, was dressed as a bird and put into a cage that was brought into the harem. I remember some extracts from it.

Sultan's honor! Sultan's honor!
Who will dare to challenge it?

Who will dare to voice a doubt
That he'd ever be betrayed?

Andrey Bely was one of the Muscovites who used to walk straight in with his suitcase. In the course of a conversation between Bely and me it transpired that I liked to play with tin soldiers. Bely was overjoyed and alleged that it was his favorite game too. There was a half-empty room in the "Tower" where rings were suspended for my gymnastics, where I played the violin, and in which stood a long expandable table. This table became our kingdom. We mustered whole armies of a variety of soldiers: infantry, artillery, cavalry. Make-shift fortresses were erected, mine on one side of the table, his on the opposite side. Battles were fought and enemy troops were attacked by firing dried peas from minute guns. Bely's eagerness for the game lasted for a fairly long period. On several occasions he brought new tin soldiers when he came to Petersburg.

At this time he was writing his novel *Petersburg*. He read the new parts of it to Vyacheslav as soon as they were written. Vyacheslav was enthusiastic about the novel. His affectionate nickname for Bely was "Gogolek." Bely liked imitating the cinema (silent in those days). He would jump toward a wall and move along it, gesticulating and trembling spasmodically all the time. This was meant to be a funny parody and to produce laughter, but with Bely's steely eyes staring into the distance, I found it rather frightening.

Emil Medtner came from Moscow frequently. He was usually full of complaints about his friend Bely, who was always blaming Medtner for one thing or another. Bely, Medtner and Ellis lived in Moscow. They were bound by a curious kind of friendship that alternated between tragic break-ups and pathetic reconciliations. At one time Bely's charming wife, Asya Turgeneva, used to come also. She was a painter and produced an unconvincing portrait of Vyacheslav.⁶

We saw a great deal of Sergey Gorodetsky who often stayed with us. He was young, exceedingly tall and had an ugly face, but it was always fun to be with him. Vera, Kostya and I (when Kostya was home during the holidays) used to go with him, by special

permit, to the part of the Tavrishesky Gardens that was fenced off near the Duma. There was skating on the pond and very high, ice-covered toboggan runs. The toboggan flew down at breakneck speed. I remember sitting on Gorodetsky's back as he lay stretched out in all his endless length and steered. Gorodetsky was a wonderful caricaturist. Every week he produced a magazine dedicated to life at the Tower. He called it *Les puces de gamin*. I hope that it has been preserved in some archive in Russia; it was a talented production with good drawings of various people and of our family life.

The drawing *Le lever du roi* comes to my mind. In it, Father has woken up and rings the bell. The clock shows 2 p.m. Marusya wheels some kind of trolley at full speed along the corridor. There is a tray with Father's breakfast on the trolley, his mail, and all kinds of garments hanging on hooks. Another family picture: my return from school. I am shown from behind: two plaits and hands covered with ink spots; at one side of the staircase two pianos rush away from me in horror. A third picture: the steeple of the Fortress of Peter and Paul to which a balloon is fastened with the face of E. V. Anichkov on it—the caption: *Ballon captif*. Our portly friend Anichkov, a member of the Socialist Revolutionary party, had been imprisoned in the Fortress in solitary confinement.⁷

Country Life at the Anichkovs

The Anichkovs had lived in Paris for a very long time. Mrs. Anichkova wrote under the pseudonym of "Ivan Strannik." She was great friends with Anatole France, who was her literary guide and adviser. There were three children, the youngest, Tanya, my friend and contemporary. Vyacheslav had been asked to meet the elder two, Igor, 14 years old, and Vera, who was 16. He was much impressed by their intellect and maturity and told us they had had outstandingly clever philosophical discussions.

The Anichkovs invited me to stay at their estate and I spent two summers with them, as well as visiting them regularly in winter. We became very close friends. To my horror Igor told me that he was reading Kant; Vera had made a vow to meditate daily for three

or four hours. Often she performed her meditation while I was playing the piano. She walked endlessly around a table, her heels tapping at every small step, inevitably out of time. Now and again a cracking sound could be heard when she bit off a piece of sugar with her pretty white teeth. She was perfectly right, of course: sugar stimulates mental activity.

However, although the Anichkovs' elder children behaved like prodigies, this certainly could not be said about Tanya—at any rate not while the two of us were together. Disregarding the disapproval of the peasants, trousers were made for us and we spent days on end running about the estate (1,250 acres in all), climbing onto the roofs of granaries and stealing peas and carrots from the gardener. We were present at the birth of a calf and implored that this wet, newly-born being should not be condemned to be slaughtered. We ran in the evenings about the wood, with eyes half-shut, in the hope of getting lost. We looked for unoccupied horses to ride saddled or bare-backed. Once we stayed awake all night (Oh, this was hard indeed but it had to be done) and went out to the main road before dawn, close to a gypsy camp that had been pitched nearby. We dreamed of being stolen by the gypsies; they would dye us dark to make us unrecognizable (I would become a brunette at last), teach us tight-rope walking and how to jump through a hoop on a galloping horse. Alas! The gypsies not only never stole us but did not even touch the Anichkovs' horses out of gratitude for being allowed to camp on their land.

The Anichkov family, and particularly the children, were monarchists and very anxious to belong to Court circles, but the political views of their father and his arrest were a handicap.

The Meyerholds

The summer when I was sent for ten days to visit the Meyerholds brought great happiness into my life, for I became extremely fond of Marusya, their elder daughter. The Meyerholds lived at Kuokkala in Finland that summer. Meyerhold himself only appeared at odd moments. The family consisted of his wife, Olga Mikhail-

lovna, and their three daughters, Marusya, Tanya and Irisha. Irisha was only four or five but had already made up her mind to be a ballet dancer since she yearned to have fame and oceans of flowers at her feet. When I first arrived I was sent at once to see the children in a tiny little garden that had a big heap of sand in the middle. I felt deeply hurt. Marusya was nine, two years younger than me and here I was supposed to play with this mite and in the company of two babies! To bake mud-pies and make mud-balls! Within a quarter of an hour this was exactly what I was doing—oblivious to all the world.

I adored Marusya and regarded her as a saint, as an ideal in every way. She was kind, generous, always in high spirits, and she had a passion for dancing. Whenever dancing was arranged for the children or a children's ball took place, she pleaded so ardently to be allowed to go that no one had the heart to refuse. Yet, the next day, without fail, she was struck down by an attack of pneumonia. A couple of years later we met doctors who insisted on her being sent to Moscow, so she went as a boarder to the Arsenyeva School (very strict and pedantic). The Petersburg air was poison to those suffering from lung troubles, whereas Moscow's climate, dry, cold and sunny, was regarded as salubrious. Marusya came to Petersburg on her holidays but after I left the town we never met again and I heard that she died from tuberculosis while quite young.

Vera entered the College for Women's Higher Education, in the faculty of classical philology; Rostovtsev and Zelinsky were her professors. The Rostovtsevs kept "At Home" days and Vyacheslav and Vera often went to visit them, finding them interesting and entertaining. Vera told me with glee how Rostovtsev once dressed up as a cat with a long fur tail, and walked on all fours on the carpet. A man appeared at that time in Petersburg who maintained that he had discovered a method for extracting all necessary nourishment from grass; there would be no more starvation according to him. At their next party, the Rostovtsevs asked their friends to partake of hay, but when I inquired of Vera what it tasted like she disappointed me by saying that no hay had been served.

I remember Meyerhold talking at the table about his production

of *Tristan* at the Marijnski Theater. He complained about the trivial gestures of the singers and parodied them amusingly. He told us with pride of an idea he had had: he commissioned sets which were most complicated, inconvenient to move about and so unsteady as to collapse at the slightest movement. Thus the wretched singers had to stand as motionless as posts for fear of breaking a limb. The cast was very cross but the director (Meyerhold) rubbed his hands—he had achieved the result he wanted. Meyerhold took all of us, old and young, to the dress rehearsal.

Two friends of mine, Cassandra's nieces,⁸ had lived in Paris for a long time and spoke perfect French. Vera had the idea of staging theatricals for children in French; she left the acting to us and was concerned only about the production. We performed Racine's *Esther* and, as a short piece, the farce of *Maitre Patelin*. Vera did not have the text of the farce; she remembered only the general plot from her literature lessons in Geneva. She narrated it to me and suggested that I should write it down in my own words, divide it into acts and sketch in the outline of dialogues. We did not learn any text by heart but it served as a general plan. When the evening of the performance came we felt so unselfconscious that we made use of much improvisation on the spot.

Meyerhold was present. He treated our dramatic play with utter contempt but was enthusiastic about *Maitre Patelin*, said it was a manifestation of the *Commedia dell'arte* and that the production had given him valuable ideas.

This performance served as a test to Vera, a preparation for the realization of her dream: to stage theatrical productions by creating the Tower Theatre. Long discussions followed about the choice of a play. In the end Calderón's *Adoration of the Cross* was settled upon. Planning went on for months and the number of talented people who became interested and were drawn in grew ever larger. The materials from Mother's basket eventually fell into the hands of Sudeykin, who turned them into sets and costumes. Meyerhold came to the dress rehearsal and started directing everybody. Vera was acting the part of Eusebio, the chief hero (she had chosen a man's part as always); she put her whole heart into it. Even I was given a minor comic

part, that of Menga. It was all immensely enjoyable. There seemed to be far more spectators present than the small room could possibly hold, all the more so as part of it was taken up by the stage. This too must have been some trick of Meyerhold's. The Tower Theater was mentioned in the press, and there is Father's poem about it.⁹

I met Meyerhold again years later, in Rome in 1925. It was a great and unexpected joy. He arrived on a well-paid mission to Italy with his young wife, Zinaida Raikh, an actress in his theatre. They were deeply in love with each other. To her he was her husband, her *maitre*, her teacher—the man who had created her as an actress. To him she was his last joy; but although the sun was still bright and shone in its glory, the sunset was approaching.

A number of amusing anecdotes arose in connection with this intense mutual infatuation. Once the concierge came to us with a complaint: "Who are those two persons who have come to visit you? Ours is a decent house, we cannot allow kissing on the stairs." "But they are husband and wife." "Well, that is hardly likely; they are too much in love with each other."

Meyerhold was as jealous as Othello of his Zinaida. One evening we went with some friends to eat ice cream at the Villa Borghese. We were in high spirits and Zinaida, with her brand-new Venetian shawl—her husband's latest present—thrown over her shoulders, walked with dancing steps, purring a song. Naturally, the group of Italian sailors who saw this frivolous young beauty began to call out compliments to her. Nobody paid attention to them; but Meyerhold fell silent, his face became deathly pale. We asked "What has happened to him?" Zinaida's answer was "Don't worry. Vsevolod has cut his throat."

Yet complications lay in store for us. Meyerhold had invited us to the smartest night café in Rome. It was full of well-known personalities, fascist hierarchs, generals, and the cream of Roman society. We squeezed through the crowd, sat down at two or three tables, and gave our orders to the pompous waiter for masterpieces of the confectionary art. All of a sudden Meyerhold jumped up with a jerk, moved away among the tables into the illuminated square, went towards the depths of the park and disappeared. Time passed

but he did not return. The waiters carried two trays high above the heads of the clients and placed them in front of us. None of us had any money! Zinaida grew anxious: "Vsevolod has cut his throat; we had better go back to the hotel." We had to leave the trays untouched, get up and pass through a battery of scornful looks.

Meyerhold was very amusing when he demonstrated how a bill should be paid in a restaurant if you did not speak Italian. The proprietor brought the bill. Meyerhold examined it for a long time, frowning; then he stared at the proprietor. The proprietor began feeling nervous, took back the bill, made some corrections and brought it back. The procedure was repeated: the scrutiny of the bill, the staring at the proprietor, his confusion, another correction and another return. After one more such pantomime, Meyerhold paid the bill and felt he could now go to bed with an easy mind.

Mussolini had come to power two years earlier. The Roman cafés were packed with youths proudly wearing their black shirts and their black fezzes. Meyerhold was terrified of them and refused to go into any café they might be in. "Vyacheslav!" he would whisper, hurrying away, "Vyacheslav! The fascists!" He had the feeling that if they caught just one glimpse of him they would know that he was a dangerous Bolshevik.

The Auto-incinerated Beard

Once Vyacheslav took a sleigh to the Women's College of Higher Education where he lectured on Greek literature. He wanted to light a cigarette, so he lit a match and, to prevent it from being blown out by the wind, pushed it into the partly open match-box. He never noticed that the tips of the remaining matches were turned toward him; the box burst into flames and half of his beard was burnt off. The students waited in vain that day—their professor was at the barber's. He never wore a beard again and many jokes were made about the "auto-incinerated" beard.

I recall another funny incident. Kostya came home dazzled and jubilant. The Grand Duke Konstantin Konstantinovich had been at the First Cadet Corps that morning. He was a poet; some of his

poems enjoyed wide popularity and were set to music and sung everywhere, as for instance, *Nakinuv plashch*.

"I had a personal conversation with him," declared Kostya. All the cadets had been lined up in the courtyard. While inspecting them the Grand Duke stopped at Kostya:

"... the poet Vyacheslav Ivanov is your step-father?"

"Just so, Your Imperial Highness."

"Have you read his works?"

"Just so, Your Imperial Highness."

"And have you understood them?"

"Just so, Your Imperial Highness."

"Well, in that case, you are more intelligent than I. I have not understood a thing."

A house was rented in Sillomagi, Estonia, for the summer of 1911. It stood amidst a lovely grove not far from the sea. When I arrived from the Anichkovs' estate, I saw a terrace typical of a summer house. Vyacheslav was sitting at the samovar talking to someone unknown to me. This was Gershenzon who spent that summer close by and often came to see Vyacheslav. I think this was when their close friendship began. It was a cozy family life that summer. Matryosha was there, too, with her Flokin. A whole group of professors from Moscow had come to the village nearby for their summer holidays. I remember the names of the historian Petrushevsky and the lawyer Ordynsky. They all gathered in the square after dinner and played games of *gorodki* (a kind of skittles) in which Vyacheslav also took part. It was fun and the game would go on until dark.

Vyacheslav's "Audiences"

There was a special expression in our family: "to ask for an audience." "Vyacheslav, So-and-so asks for an audience." So-and-so came, retired with Vyacheslav into a room and the two had a long talk.

At the "Tower" I was no longer as afraid of Vyacheslav as I used to be in Geneva, yet our relationship was not really free and easy; I felt rather shy in his presence. Once, however, a problem

arose that greatly puzzled me and for which I was incapable of finding a solution on my own. At school a girl took my friend and me aside and asked, "Listen, God is almighty, isn't He?" "Yes." "But could He create a stone that He himself would be unable to lift?" We did not know the answer. When I came home this question continued to worry me even more. In the end, I summoned up the courage and, at a suitable moment, asked Vyacheslav: "Could I ask for an audience with you?" Vyacheslav treated my request with affectionate respect and extreme courtesy; he fixed the time. He always behaved toward children, even quite small ones, with polite consideration.

I felt extremely nervous as I entered Vyacheslav's room in the "Tower." He met me affably and offered me the most important (Renaissance) black armchair. Then he asked what was the matter. He listened to me with attention and gave an immediate answer that seemed to me worthy of King Solomon: "God not only could, He has created such a stone. It is man, with his free will." Then Vyacheslav went on explaining to me in detail what was meant by free will. I left him feeling happy and light-hearted.

Having gained confidence, I asked him for another audience after a time, and was received once again with affection and consideration. That time it was a purely intellectual question. At our table I had heard the expression *La propriété c'est le vol*, and I wanted to know what it meant. Vyacheslav gave me a full historical explanation. We parted friends. However, this conversation left no particular impact—the statement was of no deep significance for me nor, possibly, for him.

Vyacheslav worked hard and regularly. Having seen off his friends, he went to bed and worked there until sunrise. It is no wonder that his day sometimes began at 2 p.m. He was a true chain-smoker and smoked up to eighty cigarettes a day, though it must be admitted that his visitors helped him too; the room he was in was always full of thick smoke.

Leaving for France

Spring was approaching. I would be sixteen before long. All

of a sudden Vyacheslav turned to me and asked me to his room in the "Tower" for a talk. We went through the small room on the left. Vera sat there looking at us timidly as we passed. I sat down again in the important black armchair and heard amazing news: Vyacheslav and Vera loved each other and had decided to join their lives forever. This was no betrayal of Mother. Vera was for Vyacheslav a continuation of Mother; a gift from her, as it were. A child was expected. A child always creates new life, new light. Could I accept what Vyacheslav was telling me? If so, I would remain with them. If I found it unacceptable, an independent life of my own would be organized—with Marusya, should I so wish.

The words I heard shattered the whole inward world in which I lived. Vera was a continuation of Mother for Vyacheslav? There they were, both shy and full of anxiety, as if waiting for a verdict from me, a girl in her teens. I was to be their judge? Accept what they were saying? But what if this meant the abandonment of Mother? What if I betrayed her by it? It was a very hard decision to make, a most painful moment. Yet my heart filled with love and I made up my mind: "I am with you." Vyacheslav said: "Whatever happens in our life in the future, I shall never forget this moment." We went to the room next door where Vera was waiting, "She is with us," said Vyacheslav.

A few days later we three left for France and settled down at Neuvecelle near Evion on Lake Lemane.

Translated from the Russian by Irina Prehn

Notes

1. Felix Ostroga, son of a Polish émigré, piano professor at the Geneva Conservatory.
2. In Zagorye, Ivanov wrote the cycle of poems *Povecherie* in *Cor Ardens* (SS, II, 277–82).
3. Mother used to take with her several young girls, treating them as members of the family. She found them in Russia where she succeeded in saving them from all kinds of hardships and even tragedy. I remember Dunya,

from a fishing village; Anjuta; Olga, the daughter of a sign-painter who drank a lot; she later became the wife of my music teacher, Felix Ostroga. The names of Vasyunia and Kristina also come to my mind.

4. The building is still there, but it now has the number 35. For further information about the "Tower," see *SS*, II, 692 and 821.

5. Dmitri, son of Vera and Vyacheslav Ivanov.

6. Reproduced in *SS*, III, 65.

7. For more about Anichkov, see *SS*, II, 826.

8. "Cassandra's" real name was Aleksandra Nikolaevna Tchebotarevskaya (1869-1925). Sister-in-law of the writer Fyodor Sologub, she was an old friend of Ivanov. See *SS*, II, 724.

9. *SS*, III, 54 and 703.

Chronology of the Life and Work of V. I. Ivanov

CHRONOLOGY

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Chronology of the Life and Works of Vyacheslav I. Ivanov

Valery N. Blinov

1866, 16/28 February

"I was born in my parents' own little house, almost on the outskirts of what then was Moscow, in Gruziny, on the corner of Volkov and Georgiev Lanes, across from the Zoological Garden fence." (*Autobiograficheskoe pis'mo* [Autobiographical Letter]).

His father, Ivan Tikhonovich Ivanov, was "first a land surveyor, then an employee of the Control Board, an unsociable, opinionated man, a Russian *intelligent* of the 1860s." (O. Deschartes)

"A loner—and an unbeliever." (*Mladenchestvo* [Infancy])

His mother, Aleksandra Dmitrievna (née Preobrazhenskaya) "was the granddaughter of a village priest, the daughter of a Senate civil servant." (O. Deschartes)

"She was ardently religious . . . during portentous times she had prophetic dreams, and she even had visions while awake." (*Autobiographical Letter*)

"She came to love the Bible, Goethe and Beethoven, and in her soul she cherished an ideal of intellectual diligence and high education which she wanted to see embodied in her son without fail." (Ibid.)

"She hated nihilism and flirted with Slavophilism of a liberal tinge; her devotion to the idea of Slavdom was reflected in the choice of my first name." (Ibid.)

"I inherited traits of my mother's spiritual makeup." (Ibid.)

1871, February

Father dies of consumption.

"It was a gray day; I played at home
And I, unwillingly leaving my game,
Was wordlessly brought to the deathbed.
Death's weariness consumed the sufferer;
His sweat ran in a stream.
He made a cross with his hand." (*Infancy*)

1872

"My mother nourished the poet in me. . . . While my father was still alive I came to know the magic of Lermontov's poems . . . the less comprehensible they were, the more magical they seemed." (*Autobiographical Letter*)

"Mother meets the New Year—
Predicts, opening the psalter:
'In my father's family, I, a young shepherd,
Was the youngest. My fingers
Created the stringed psalterion . . .'
'The prophetic pages predict to you
The gift of songs . . . Their legacy
Since then is inseparable from my soul.'" (*Infancy*)

1873

"At the age of seven I was deeply shaken and captivated by Uhland's 'Des Sängers Fluch', a verse translation of which I discovered in an old illustrated journal." (*Autobiographical Letter*)

"From the age of seven I began to be taught foreign languages and Russian literature. My teacher was a pretty young lady, the daughter of our landlord . . . and I was agonizingly jealous of her fiancé, a naval officer. This was already the second time I had fallen in love." (*Ibid.*)

"I was seven years old when my mother told me to read the acath-

ismata in the morning; every day we would read a chapter of the Gospel together." (*Ibid.*)

"The esthetic was interwoven with the religious even in our little vowed pilgrimages on foot to Iverskaya or the Kremlin on summer evenings." (*Ibid.*)

"From that time I came to love Christ for life." (*Ibid.*)

1875

"Until I was nine I attended a private school established . . . by the family of our well-known economist M. I. Tugan-Baranovsky; the Tugan brothers, their cousin, and I made up the upper class, and we competed in the writing of novels." (*Ibid.*)

First poem, "The Taking of Jericho" (*Vzjatie Jerikhona*): "I became acquainted with the pride of literary success and the sting of critical insinuations simultaneously: the stupid teacher declared that she had seen something like it somewhere." (*Ibid.*)

"At nine Vyacheslav was sent to a *gymnasium* housed in a beautiful old building. His entry into school coincided with the visit there of Alexander II, who was idolized by Aleksandra Dmitrievna." (*O. Deschartes*)

1876

"At ten I was captivated by Schiller's *Die Räuber*." (*Autobiographical Letter*)

1877

"During my second year of school the Russo-Turkish War was going on; my mother and I were seized with enthusiasm for Slavdom. . . . I sent letters to my brothers in the trenches, full of martial, patriotic poems, which I recognized as childish prattle a year later." (*Ibid.*)

"Another experience from that time remained unforgettable. Vyacheslav was taken to the unveiling of the Pushkin monument, and to the ceremonial convocation at the University." (*O. Deschartes*)

1878

"At around age 12 Vyacheslav's piety reached its apogee." (O. Deschartes)

"At night I would spend long hours standing in front of an icon, and I would fall asleep on my knees out of fatigue." (*Autobiographical Letter*)

"I passionately studied Greek a year before the teaching of it began." (Ibid.)

1879

"Vyacheslav's teaching activity began when he was 13; no matter how much Aleksandra Dmitrievna economized, by this time nothing had been saved of the small sum of money that remained after the prolonged illness and death of Ivan Tikhonovich. . . . He [Vyacheslav] gave so many paid lessons that he could read and think only at night." (O. Deschartes)

1880

"Suddenly and painlessly, I realized that I was an extreme atheist and revolutionary." (*Autobiographical Letter*)

1881, 1 March

Assassination of Alexander II.

"My student compositions, sometimes on themes that were dangerous for me, aroused the amazement of friends who were initiated into the secret of my worldview, because of the diplomatic adroitness with which I managed at one and the same time neither to give myself away nor to play false to myself." (Ibid.)

"My teachers . . . forgave me the errors in my Latin and Greek assignments because of their generally excellent style and feeling for language, and they acknowledged my Russian 'compositions' . . . to be exemplary." (Ibid.)

1883

"The main question tormenting me was that of justifying terrorism as a means of social revolution; my answer matured only toward the end of *gymnasium* and was definitely negative." (Ibid.)

"My free-thinking did not come cheap to me: its consequences were a pessimistic despondency that weighed on me for several years, a passionate longing for death that I celebrated in my poems of that time, and when I was 17 a childish attempt to poison myself with toxic paints I had received from my father." (Ibid.)

"It is noteworthy that at the time of my atheism my love of Christ and dreams about him did not die out, but actually grew more intense." (Ibid.)

First *poema*, "Jesus," about the temptation in the wilderness, with the image of Christ in the spirit of Feuerbach: "May man be proud and free!"

Intimacy with fellow poet Kalabin, "who with pure clairvoyance divined in me the poet concealed from the world." (Ibid.)

"In the 1880s this *gymnasium* student [Ivanov] wrote 'Clarity' (*Jasnost*), a poem so mature that 22 years later the poet, so demanding of himself, decided to include this early attempt in his second book of poems." (S. Averintsev)

"In his last years in the *gymnasium* Vyacheslav became intimate with his classmate Aleksey Dmitrievsky, with whom he translated a passage from *Oedipus Rex* into Russian trimeter." (O. Deschartes)

"When Vyacheslav graduated from the *gymnasium*, the director offered to arrange for him, the best pupil, to become a fellowship student at the Leipzig Philological Seminar. But this classical seminar . . . seemed to the Russian intelligentsia of the day to be a pernicious institution. . . . For Vyacheslav, to become a fellowship student would mean to be guilty of a traitorous concession to reaction, and he categorically refused." (O. Deschartes)

1884-85

Ivanov studies in the Department of History and Philology at Moscow University.

"The two years of my student life in Moscow were a time of an upsurge of spiritual powers that was bold to the point of excessive presumption. . . . I was an historian . . . through history I dreamed of independently mastering the problems of society and finding a path to social action. Klyuchevsky enchanted me; P. G. Vinogradov gave me . . . German books from his library." (*Autobiographical Letter*)

"The professors immediately noticed and valued Vyacheslav, and in the very first year they awarded him a prize for his work in ancient languages." (O. Deschartes)

The poem "A Legend" (about the conversion to Christianity of a Jewish boy in medieval Spain) is accepted for publication by *Russkij vestnik* (The Russian Herald), but publication is stopped by the author because of the journal's reactionary character.

Close friendship with Aleksey Dmitrievsky's sister, Darya Mikhaylovna.

"Vyacheslav and Darya strolled along the paths of a neglected garden and declared their love for Beethoven, Pushkin, Schubert, and each other. The Hermes of their affair was Aleksey." (O. Deschartes)

"I fell passionately in love with her, and a year later we decided to marry and go off to study in Germany." (*Autobiographical Letter*)

"I could not bear to stay in my homeland: it was suffocating and sinister. Further political inaction, in the event that I remained in Russia, seemed to me to be a moral impossibility. I would have had to throw myself into revolutionary activity, but I no longer believed in it." (Ibid.)

1886, May

Marries Darya Mikhaylovna Dmitrievskaya.

"I was married for the first time in Moscow when I was twenty years and three months old, to Dmitrievskaya. At the time I was mad about her brother. And perhaps if I had not loved the brother so much, I would not have married his sister." (From conversations with M. S. Altman)

"I spent my last summer in Russia on the estate of the Golovin brothers outside Moscow, where I prepared the younger brother Pavel for the sixth year of the lycée . . . and studied a little Greek with the other brother . . . , Fyodor Aleksandrovich (later the Chairman of the Second State Duma)." (*Autobiographical Letter*)

"The Golovins filched my manuscripts, and I was exposed not only as a poet, but as a Symbolist poet, although none of us knew the word 'symbolism' in the sense of a literary movement." (Ibid.)

autumn

Leaves for Germany. Participates in Theodor Mommsen's famous seminar on Roman history at the University of Berlin.

1887

"The first semester (beginning in autumn of 1886) was devoted to mastering the language. At the end of the second semester I presented Mommsen with a trifling bit of research on the tax system of Roman Egypt and was affectionately encouraged by him." (Ibid.)

"On this happy day sarcastic Mommsen
Praised me with a smile"

(From verse diary of 1887)

"My wanderings in the realm of historical problems began, taking me away from where my inclinations lay—the study of the Hellenic soul." (*Autobiographical Letter*)

Study of the Ravenna exarchate and Byzantine institutions in southern Italy, as well as philosophy, paleography, political economy. Study and personal contact with Hirschfeld, Cumont, Curtius, Zeller, Wattenbach, Schmoller, etc.

1888, spring

"O. Hirschfeld acknowledged the first draft of my future dissertation to be 'solid work.'" (*Autobiographical Letter*)

Contact with visiting Russian scholars: P. G. Vinogradov, Prince S. N. Trubetskoy, A. I. Guchkov, etc.

"As soon as I found myself abroad, mystic searchings began to ferment within me, and the need to recognize Russia in its idea awakened. I began to study Vladimir Solovyov and Khomyakov." (*Autobiographical Letter*)

"On the occasion of Bismarck's resignation, which marked a 'new course,' I wrote a sonnet in which I compared the young Emperor to Phaeton, whose presumptuous daring was sure to entail a world conflagration and the ruin of its perpetrator. Several poems from my student days in Berlin were included in revised form in my first collection." (*Ibid.*)

Birth of daughter Aleksandra.

1889

"Parting forever with his youthful atheism" (S. Averintsev), he writes a verse epistle to A. Dmitrievsky, "Ars mystica,"

"May there resound in the ears both familiar and new
The saving word of the Universal Community."

(*Autobiographical Letter*)

1890

"Nietzsche became ever more fully and powerfully the master of my thoughts." (*Ibid.*)

"The author of *The Birth of Tragedy* revealed Dionysus to him as an extra-temporal principle of the spirit, as the element of music and holy madness, as the power that delivers from the bonds of individuation." (O. Deschartes)

1891

"Having spent nine semesters in Berlin, and admonished by Hirschfeld to think over my dissertation carefully and draft it in Latin, and also to make a thorough study of the Louvre, I set out for Paris." (*Autobiographical Letter*)

"Over the course of almost a year I did exercises in French stylistics every day. It was also then that I went to England for the first time, on a short visit." (*Ibid.*)

Meeting with I. M. Grevs in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris: "After a meeting on the ground of our common study of Roman history there followed a sincere friendship as well. He imperiously ordered me to go to Rome." (*Ibid.*)

1892, spring

Tour of Italy and arrival in Rome.

"Here he assiduously frequented the German Archeological Institute, participated together with its pupils . . . in making the rounds of the antiquities, finished his Latin dissertation for Mommsen, and thought of nothing but history and philology." (O. Deschartes)

Contact with Professors Krasheninikov, Speransky, Rostovtzeff, the artist Nesterov, and others.

1893, July

Meeting with Lydia Dmitrievna Zinovieva-Annibal in Rome.

"Through each other, each of us found himself and more than just himself: I would say we found God. My meeting with her was like a powerful, Dionysiac spring thunderstorm, after which everything

in me was renewed, blooming, and green. And not only in me did the poet reveal himself and recognize himself, freely and confidently, but in her as well. Our entire life together, full of deep inner events, could without exaggeration be called a time of almost uninterrupted inspiration and intense spiritual enthusiasm for both of us." (*Autobiographical Letter*)

"We are two tree trunks set on fire by a thunderstorm,
Two flames in the midnight pine forest;
We are two meteors flying in the night,
The double-pointed arrow of a single fate!
We are two arms of a single cross"
(*Kormchie zvezdy* [Pilot Stars])

August

Lydia Dmitrievna returns to Russia. The Ivanovs move to Florence.

1894, August

Lydia Dmitrievna's second trip to Italy. She, her children from her first marriage, and the Ivanov family stay in Florence.

1895, January

Ivanov's "flight" to Rome "for archeological work"; his family and Lydia Dmitrievna's family remain in Florence.

12-15 March

Lydia Dmitrievna visits Rome and meets Ivanov again.

Summer

Ivanov returns to Florence. Settles on divorce.

"Nietzscheanism helped me—cruelly and responsibly, but in all conscience, correctly—to resolve the choice that faced me in 1895, between the deep and tender attachment that my feeling of love for

my wife had become, and the new love that had entirely captivated me and that was destined only to grow and spiritually deepen from that time throughout my whole life, but which in those first days seemed both to me and to her whom I loved to be only a criminal, dark, demonic passion. I told my wife frankly about everything, and we decided on a divorce." (*Autobiographical Letter*)

"Dmitrievskaya and I got a divorce, and it was very grim and cruel, but you see, I was a Nietzschean then. . . . Now I perceive it as a murder, because Dmitrievskaya's life was utterly shattered." (From conversations with M. S. Altman)

After his wife departs, Ivanov sets off through Berlin to Moscow, sees his mother, accomplishes the formalities of the divorce and returns to Italy to be reunited with Lydia Dmitrievna Zinovieva-An-nibal.

August

Ivanov's dissertation on tax-farming in ancient Rome, *De societibus vectigalium populi Romani*, is presented to the History Department at the University of Berlin and approved by Hirschfeld and Mommsen.

1896

First meetings with Vladimir Solovyov.

"From that time, over the course of several years, whenever I went to Russia I had meetings with him that were important to me. He was the patron of my muse and the confessor of my heart." (*Autobiographical Letter*)

April

Death of Aleksandra Dmitrievna Ivanova.

16/28 April

Birth of Lydia Vyacheslavovna Ivanova.

Trip to Berlin and visit to Mommsen. His comment: "the dissertation is far above the ordinary level." (*Autobiographical Letter*)

"All I had yet to do was to appear at an examination which, according to Hirschfeld's assurances and a hint from Mommsen himself, was simply a formality; Hirschfeld also assured me that after receiving my doctoral degree I would get a place as a *Privatdozent* in Germany. But I was not destined ever to appear at the examination: the zealous study of specialized papers and thick books . . . did not insure me against the possibility of missing some elementary question, and my self-esteem could not be reconciled to that possibility. And at that time my heart was already full of something else." (Ibid.)

"Not only internal but external reasons deprived Ivanov of the possibility of working peacefully at Berlin or Moscow University. . . . Lydia's husband refused to give her a divorce, and the legal dissolution of a marriage that had in reality long ceased to exist took many years and the most complex proceedings. While waiting for the opportunity of marrying, Vyacheslav and Lydia had to lie low and hide Lydia's children, whom their father was threatening and trying to abduct. A time of wandering began. They traveled around Italy, France, England and Switzerland; they also visited their homeland to meet with relatives, but they came separately and without their children." (O. Deschartes)

1897

Stay in London: "I had not, however, abandoned Rome for Hellenism, and during our almost year-long stay in England I assiduously collected materials in the reading room of the British Museum in London, for a study of the religio-historical roots of the Roman faith in Rome's universal mission." (*Autobiographical Letter*)

1898

First publication of poems, in *Kosmopolis* and *Vestnik Evropy* (The Herald of Europe), on the initiative of Vladimir Solovyov.

1899, winter

Lydia Dmitrievna Zinovieva-Annibal's divorce from her first husband, Konstantin Semyonovich Shvarsalon. Marriage of Vyacheslav Ivanov and Lydia Dmitrievna Zinovieva-Annibal in Greek Orthodox Church in Livorno.

autumn

Vladimir Solovyov's invitation to visit him in his "little hermitage"—"a rare privilege for the philosopher's spiritually closest friends" (O. Deschartes). Ivanov, however, lost his way: "He looked for the hermitage for many hours without success; finally, by nightfall he trudged into some railroad station or other, took the first available train and returned to town. And in vain Solovyov waited for him patiently all day. The appointed meeting never took place." (O. Deschartes)

Publication in a separate brochure of translation of Pindar's First Pythian Ode.

1900

"From 1900 a settled life began, and a house was taken in Geneva. There, far from the time of troubles in the homeland, our parents settled the family. And this also freed them for literary activity. They took an apartment in St. Petersburg which acquired the name the 'Tower,' and only came to see the family for rather short stays." (L. Ivanova)

"Our little villa in Geneva, 'villa Java,' was darling, with two stories and yet a third story on top, where there was a garret and mansards. A very large garden surrounded it." (L. Ivanova)

The children were raised under the supervision of Marija Mikhailovna Zamyatnina, a friend of Lydia Dmitrievna Zinovieva-Annibal's youth, who became a trusted member of the Ivanov family.

summer

"In the middle of the summer of 1900, Vyacheslav Ivanovich and Lydia Dmitrievna visited Vladimir Solovyov in St. Petersburg, and, in fulfillment of his tacit will, they set off directly from his home to Kiev, as pilgrims to the Cave Monastery." (O. Deschartes)

Vladimir Solovyov approves of the title of the first collection, *Kormchie zvezdy* (Pilot Stars), which refers to the collection of ecclesiastical law: "'Nomocanon . . .—they will say that the author is a philologist, but that doesn't matter. Very good, very good.'" (O. Deschartes)

31 July

Death of Vladimir Solovyov.

1902, spring

"From Athens Lydia Dmitrievna Zinovieva-Annibal and I went to Palestine for Easter and visited Alexandria and Cairo along the way. After this trip I fell ill in Athens, with typhus of such a lingering and dangerous strain that the doctors were already almost despairing of my recovery." (*Autobiographical Letter*)

"Thinking of my possible death, which in itself had always been a desired object to me, I was glad that I was leaving *Pilot Stars* behind me: the book had been published in Russia." (Ibid.)

"In Athens, where I spent a year, I was already entirely devoted to the study of the religion of Dionysus. This study was prompted by an insistent inner necessity: this was the only way in which I could overcome Nietzsche in the area of problems of religious consciousness." (*Autobiographical Letter*)

"Ivanov assiduously studied epigraphy in the Museum, participated in Derpfeld's archeological expeditions and collected materials on questions of Greek myths and cults, which lay at the basis of all his scholarly works." (O. Deschartes)

1903

"In spring Ivanov returned to his family in Châtelaîne. The Ivanovs lived there until 1905. 'Lived,' however, is not an entirely apt word; more precisely, Vyacheslav and Lydia came there from time to time, as before. They would visit Russia, spend the whole winter in Paris, and were often away in various cities and countries for more or less extensive periods of time." (O. Deschartes)

"In Châtelaîne Ivanov studied Sanskrit with De Saussure." (O. Deschartes)

Publication of first book of poems, *Pilot Stars*.

"The debutant emerges . . . as a real master who understands the contemporary tasks of verse and works at them. . . . All times and countries are equally congenial to him; he gathers his honey from all flowers. He handles the sonnet with the refined elegance of the Italian masters, its creators; he is strict and powerful in his terzinas, free and classically lucid in his hexameters and elegiac distichs; he adapts the Alcaic and Sapphic strophes to Russian poetry, lending an amazing lightness to these alien meters and bringing them close to Russian verse; at one moment he approaches the harmoniousness of Pushkin's melodies, at the next he renews the intoxicated sounds of Yazykov, then again he uses the form of our folk songs in a new way." (V. Bryusov)

"In 1903 Ivanov went to Paris to give a course of lectures on the Hellenic religion of Dionysus in the 'University of Social Sciences' that had been established for Russians by M. M. Kovalevsky. The lectures were a huge success: they were attended not only by pupils of the school, but by the professors; they were also attended by representatives of the Russian elite who were visiting Paris." (O. Deschartes)

"There I met Valery Bryusov, who came to my lecture, and who had already reviewed my book of poems. Merezhkovsky wrote and asked me to send my lectures on Dionysus to *Novyi put'* (New Path)." (*Autobiographical Letter*)

"The relationship with Valery Bryusov was a series of the most complex vicissitudes, shifting from genuine intimacy to unpleasant clashes and back again." (O. Deschartes)

"How strange amid the noise of our arguments,
Our ardent blindness,
Is the melody of your victorious choruses
To undying beauty:

And joining our northern lyre
To an Aeolian chime,
You proclaim to me and the world
A native and near horizon!" (V. Bryusov)

1904, spring

Arrival in Moscow.

"Ivanov! Ivanov! Ivanov! Ivanov!" (A. Bely)

"But I was captivated, conquered, touched, when I visited the Ivanovs, who were staying in a house that stood on the place where now a monument to K. A. Timeryazev has been erected." (A. Bely)

"Vyacheslav Ivanov, who hasn't been living in Russia, has just been here, among us; he flashed with brilliance, perplexed, enchanted, many didn't like him; and he left; we didn't know him." (A. Bely)

"The next year my wife and I met the Moscow poets. Bryusov, Balmont, Baltrušaitis solemnly recognized me as 'the real thing,' and we just as solemnly became good friends." (*Autobiographical Letter*)

Trip to St. Petersburg: "And following that we also became acquainted with the Petersburg circle 'New Path.'" (Ibid.)

"Ivanov's relations with Balmont were established immediately and for his whole life: they were sincerely friendly and featured neither outbursts nor ruptures." (O. Deschartes)

"Ivanov's friendship with Baltrušaitis was deep, tender, and true." (O. Deschartes)

"A brilliant, doomed monologist, inexhaustible in 'tête-à-tête conversations'—Vasily Rozanov—became intimate." (O. Deschartes)

"The friendship with Merezhkovsky, which endured stormy arguments and long periods of separation, remained unfailingly strong up to the death of the two writers." (O. Deschartes)

Return to Switzerland. Work on *Tantal* (Tantaluš).

Publication of second book of poems, *Prozrachnost'* (Transparency), published by Skorpion.

"There is a sort of person who is destined to steep all the convolutions of his life in the blood of thought, who is accustomed to take the whole many-storied edifice of human history into account. Such people will derive true enjoyment from Vyacheslav Ivanov's book. . . . It is valuable as a lesson in an at times steely verse, as a combination of verbal and logical forms that is fascinating sometimes in the boldness of its conception. In this respect it resembles a chiseled miniature in which movement is depicted so precisely, with such perfection on the part of the artist-caster, that it may at times be taken for a living figure." (A. Blok)

Publication of poems and articles in *Severnye tsvety* (Northern Flowers) and *Vesy* (The Scales).

"During Russia's difficult years my parents did not want to abandon their homeland. They seldom came to see us, and were entirely absorbed in the literary activity of St. Petersburg." (L. Ivanova)

"During the time of Ivanov's stay in Russia in 1904 he began to doubt whether it was admissible, spiritually permissible for him to continue his quiet life far from his homeland." (O. Deschartes)

"Ivanov's Paris course of lectures was published, in the form of a series of articles, in the monthly *New Path* of 1904 and in the monthly *Voprosy zhizni* (Questions of Life; which replaced *New Path*) of 1905." (O. Deschartes)

1905

The events of the first Russian revolution.

Poetic cycle, *Godina gneva* (The Year of Wrath).

Publication of the tragedy *Tantalus* in *Northern Flowers*.

"Vyacheslav Ivanov has imprinted a tragedy of a bright moment with magic force in the dazzling *Tantalus*, his drama, which grips our soul." (Andrey Bely)

Publication of articles in *The Scales* and *Questions of Life*.

autumn

"In early autumn 1905 they left the Villa Java for good." (O. Deschartes)

Beginning of "Tower" period.

"The house at 25 Tavricheskaya was at the corner of Tverskaya Street. The form of the house was peculiar: its corner was built in the shape of a tower. Half of this tower had external walls with large windows, and the other half was part of the inner section of the apartments. A cupola rose over the tower roof, and one could cautiously climb up there to enjoy the marvelous view of the city, the Neva, and its environs. I would often betake myself there, and now and then even Vyacheslav and his guests would too. In the apartments below us the tower formed a large round hall (on the first floor was the Znamensky Dancing School, on the second a public reading room). In our apartment the tower hall was divided into three small rooms with a tiny dark foyer. The shape of the rooms was whimsical, since they were sections of a circle. In each room there was a very big window with a view of the sea of treetops in the Tavrichesky Garden. Father's room was the central one in the tower. Our apartment on the fifth floor was a modest one. All the rooms except the tower had small mansard windows." (L. Ivanova)

"Vyacheslav Ivanov had just then moved in and was getting acquainted with the Petersburgians. . . . He would very politely en-

velop his interlocutor in his amazing understanding of everything, his unusual erudition, which he knew how to spread softly under his interlocutor's feet; it often seemed as if he was weaving a web of ideas, connecting unconnectable people and enchanting all of them." (A. Bely)

"The first foundation of the people making up the era of 'brilliant Wednesdays' was laid; they were D. Merezhkovsky and his wife, Berdyaev and his wife, Blok, and Rozanov." (A. Bely)

"Soon the Wednesday *jours fixes* turned into 'Ivanov Wednesdays,' about which entire legends arose. People of quite various gifts, positions and tendencies met there. Mystical anarchists and Orthodox, decadents and professors, poets and scholars, artists and thinkers, actors and public figures—all came peacefully together at the Ivanov 'Tower' and peacefully conversed about literary, artistic, philosophical, and occult topics, about the literary news of the day and about the final, ultimate problems of existence." (N. Berdyaev)

"V. Ivanov is the best Russian Hellenist. He is a universal man: poet, learned philologist, specialist in Greek religion, thinker, theologian and theosophist, a publicist who dabbles in politics. He could converse with anyone on the topic of that person's expertise. He was the most remarkable, the most skillful *causeur* I ever met in my life, and a real *charmeur*. He was one of those people who have an esthetic need to be in harmony and correspondence with their milieu and the people around them." (N. Berdyaev)

"It was a talent for imperceptibly introducing each person into the atmosphere of his own interests, his own themes, his own poetic and mystical experiences by way of the path each person was taking toward life." (N. Berdyaev)

"Those two—Vyacheslav Ivanov and Lydia Zinovieva-Annibal—were happy in their own inner fullness, in a way that Russian people are not, in a way they were not then, with the stifled days of December behind them. They seemed to be not of the first decade of the twentieth century, but newcomers from the great, the heroic century, contemporaries of Beethoven." (E. Gertsyk)

"In 1905 I myself promoted the meeting between Ivanov and Blok, seeing in it the beginning of the selection of people for a collective. . . . Ivanov captivated the Bloks." (A. Bely)

"A little stooped, not old, not young,
All an emanation of secret forces,
Oh, how many souls' desert coldness
Have you pierced with your own coldness!

And many charms, and many songs,
And the beauties of ancient visages . . .
Your world, miraculous indeed!
Yes, you are an autocratic tsar." (A. Blok)

Participation in Religio-Philosophical meetings.

1906 January

Participation in the almanac *Fakely* (Torches). Article, "On Non-Acceptance of the World." Beginning of polemics about "mystical anarchism."

"Harsh attacks on 'mystical anarchism' in general and Ivanov in particular began in *The Scales* immediately and continued until 1908." (O. Deschartes)

summer

"An unexpected letter from Sologub, again full of a sort of bifurcating love-hate, with beautiful verses on the name 'Vyacheslav.' A kind of new attempt at sorcery." (*Diary*, 1906)

Society of Hafizites at the "Tower."

"I turn to you, oh Hafizites. My heart and mouth, eyes and ears have turned to you. And here I stand alone among you. Thus my solitude is one with me among you." (*Diary*, 1906)

June-August

Lydia Dmitrievna Zinovieva-Annibal visits Switzerland.

"In the summer of 1906 we rented a chalet with our friends the Wulfs, high in the mountains, in Comballaz over the city of Aigle. Mamma came there to see us for a very short time. It was her last trip to Switzerland, and she made it without Vyacheslav." (L. Ivanova)

August-September

Platonic "affair" with Sergey Gorodetsky, "from the cradle of the autumn moon to the second waning," (O. Deschartes)

"A young man who wrote poems began to visit the "Tower" assiduously. He was tall and well-built. A supple, mobile, 'adolescent' body. A large aquiline nose, large receding forehead, and a small chin that also receded lent a birdlike air to his face; a luxuriant head of hair standing on end, and a somewhat bobbing, flighty step also confirmed the impression of a long-legged bird. The young man was 22 years old." (O. Deschartes)

"Pages of experiences made of fire and blood poisoned with the subtlest venoms. A chronicle of unheard-of suffering and happiness of an unheard-of completeness." (*Diary*, 1906)

"A shapely aspect at the threshold . . .
Sweetness and anxiety in the heart . . .
No breath . . . No light . . .

Half-adolescent, half-bird . . .
The summer lightning of storm-clouds under his brows
Rocks the dim reflection."
(*Eros*)

November

Meeting with Margarita Sabashnikova, the wife of Maksimilian Voloshin.

"At the summons a woman appeared." (O. Deschartes)

"Lydia and Vyacheslav decided very quickly that Margarita, intelligent, spiritually troubled, was quite capable of being *a third*." (O. Deschartes)

"A mysterious hand shines
In your maidenly and prophetic dreams,
Where birds of the sun, on amber vines,
Drink the juice of the grape clusters, having hastened here from
afar,

And the shades of white cavalry—clouds—
Torment the azure in unresolved thunderstorms,
And the bees of midday swarm on the roses
Of the wreath you haven't finished plaiting."

("Zoloty zavesy" ["Golden Curtains"])

"Finally the two competitors in applying to life the theory of the merging of three began to doubt the correctness of the very way the question was posed." (O. Deschartes)

winter

Lydia Dmitrievna Zinovieva-Annibal falls ill. Anna Mintslova appears at the "Tower."

"Theosophist, mystic, shaken from within by a chaos of spiritual forces: she appeared from who knows where, there where a tragedy was ripening, and catastrophe was threatening." (E. Gertsyk)

Preparation of the collection *Cor Ardens* for publication. Appearance of book of poems, *Eros*. Work with the publishing house "Ory." The article "*Ty esi*" ("Thou Art")—first draft of the future "Anima."

1907 February

Margarita and Maksimilian Voloshin move into the "Tower."

"The year 1907 was the apogee of Andrey Bely's audacious speeches against 'mystical anarchism,' 'the overcoming of individualism,' 'ecumenicity.'" (O. Deschartes)

spring

"During the spring of 1907, my parents decided to break up the Geneva home and finally move to St. Petersburg." (L. Ivanova)

"It seemed as if they had grown sick of the decadent, orgiastic whirlwinds swirling at their Wednesdays. . . . They were drawn toward work. They undertook to begin publishing a journal in the fall, an artistic-philosophical organ of the Symbolists who dissociated themselves from the estheticizing *Scales*." (E. Gertsyk)

summer

"Vyacheslav Ivanovich and Lydia Dmitrievna spent the summer of 1907 in the sticks, at Zagorye, a distant estate in the province of Mogilyov. They wanted quiet and solitude." (O. Deschartes)

"When Mamma caught sight of Zagorye and entered her new home, the beauty of the place agitated her: she became excited and suddenly started to cry." (L. Ivanova)

17 October

Lydia Dmitrievna Zinovieva-Annibal's unexpected death from scarlet fever.

"Just before the end Lydia became lucid and, fully conscious, said distinctly, 'A wave of bright light; Christ is born.' With that she passed on." (O. Deschartes)

"He to whom my lyrics are not dead hieroglyphics will know what that meant for me; he knows why I live and what I live by." (*Autobiographical Letter*)

"Death answered me: 'Look: my light scorches.
I am love's flame-bearer. Your Psyche,
Desiring the holy font,
Flew ahead into my fire. It will slake
The desire of souls whom the Spirit orders
To light the Earth, shining and flaming.

The dearest shade went off to what was dear to her. Later
Your fused monolith will melt." (*Cor Ardens*)

November

"At the end of November 1907 he appeared in Moscow. . . . One was struck by his now gaunt, suffering, somewhat nacreous profile." (A. Bely)

"Mamma's death abruptly breaks off the whole course of our life. One period ends and another begins. A varied, rich life goes on all around us, but we all seem to be living and acting in a sort of straitened and half-real atmosphere, as if a dark stormcloud were hanging over us. . . . It took years for it to disappear." (L. Ivanova)

"Life flowed on as before at the 'Tower': literary, bohemian-academic gatherings at night, abundant supplies of wine in simple jugs, mint cakes, flickering candles stuck in whatever came to hand—candelabra, candlesticks, bottles—symposia with friends until morning. Ivanov was constantly surrounded with admirers and adversaries: poets, artists, and scholars came from the towns of the homeland and from foreign lands and stayed for long periods in the strange and hospitable house on Tavrisheskaya." (O. Deschartes)

1908

"I am working in the new tower, already long orphaned . . . on the ordering of Her works." (*Diary*, 1908)

winter

Anna Rudolfovna Mintslova moves into the "Tower" "almost of her own accord." (O. Deschartes)

"I perceived Mintslova's influence to be completely negative and even demonic." (N. Berdyaev)

"She came to Ivanov unbidden, clasped his hand with her soft,

always very hot hand, and whispered, 'She is here, she is close by, no need for despair, she can hear, you will hear. . . .' She came to the Tower and never went away again. She settled in." (E. Gertsyk)

spring

Johannes von Günther arrives at the "Tower" from Germany. Translation of *Tantalus* into German in the meter of the original, by Henry von Heiseler (publ. 1940).

summer

"Vyacheslav Ivanov spent the summer with us in Sudak. . . . We put him in a room with a balcony—the attic of our old home. Again an astrologer in a tower, to which a spiral staircase wound its way." (E. Gertsyk)

Abatement in the polemic about "mystical anarchism."

A. Bely "began to depart from the intimacy with the 'faction' of authoritarian Symbolism, an intimacy that was against his nature, and again became close to Ivanov; moreover, the very struggle between the two different tendencies of Symbolism lost its intensity." (O. Deschartes)

winter

The "heard" Latin poem, "Breve aevum separatum."

1909

"Vyacheslav worked a great deal and regularly. After sending away all his guests, he would lie in bed and work until sunrise. Naturally, his morning sometimes started at two in the afternoon. He chain-smoked, in the true sense of the word." (L. Ivanova)

"I never again had occasion to meet a more discussion-oriented person than the Vyacheslav Ivanov of the prewar period. . . . In his love of conversation there was not so much partiality for the battle

of opinions as love for the feastlike play of the spirit. Even when attacking an opponent, Ivanov never ceased to attract him with his enchanting amiability. . . . All his public and semi-public speeches were distinguished by a singular combination of profundity and brilliance, erudition and improvisation, weightiness and inspiration." (F. Stepun)

"I want to measure hearts truly,
Weigh them correctly—and in a viscous gaze
I craftily submerge my gaze,
Spreading the conversation like a net."

(*Cor Ardens*)

Visit to the "Tower" by V. Khlebnikov, "who was drawn to him and feared him, and whose poetic talent Ivanov immediately valued." (O. Deschartes) Appearance of O. Mandelshtam at the "Tower."

"Once a grandmother brought her grandson to be appraised by Ivanov, and we were very amused both by this poet's grandmother and by the boy himself, Mandelshtam, who read precise porcelain poems." (E. Gertsyk)

"He not only recognized Mandelshtam as a genuine poet, but felt a great, almost fatherly tenderness for the frail and ardent young man." (O. Deschartes)

"Vyacheslav Ivanov is more of the people and more accessible (in the future) than all the other Russian Symbolists." (O. Mandelshtam)

June

"I am translating Novalis's *Geistliche Lieder*." (*Diary*, 1909)

Break with Margarita Sabashnikova.

"After Lydia's passing all the significance of former relationships disappeared for Ivanov, but Margarita began to live on the hope of a new sort of intimacy between them. This was natural on the woman's part, but completely intolerable for Ivanov." (O. Deschartes)

"Friday is the beginning of the final break (M.'s arrival from Finland). Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday—without her. I hope that tomorrow is the last meeting. . . . And at the same time I do not want to let her go with the impression of external discord, with offense at a harsh word." (*Diary*, 1909)

July

"It is difficult and terrible to describe the merciless battle of recent days, the pitiless, cruel felling of an accursed forest, verdant and tender but poisonous and inhabited by malicious demons. It seems as if I am killing off something agonizingly vital, which gazes touchingly and tries with its final malice to sting me fatally." (*Diary*, 1909)

August

Move to the "Tower" of Mikhail Kuzmin, "whom he loved ardently for his impeccable artistic taste and genuine poetic gift, and with whom he constantly and just as ardently clashed and argued over his impermissible escapades." (O. Deschartes)

"But if, exciting the heart,
I see a dear phantom glitter for a moment,
You will divine me."

(*Nezhnaja tajna* [Tender Mystery])

"I awakened late. Lydia [Dmitrievna] had long been with me in my dreams. I had a joyful and amazed conviction that her return had actually been realized." (*Diary*, 1909)

September

"I was awakened by a sharp pain and a cry from the soul *de profundis*, summoning Lydia. I remember that I had to call her with all my will, with all the pain of separation, to contain all its anguish and terror in that thrice-repeated summons. And when I called her, her answering call faintly resounded. And for an instant before I awoke,

I was able to feel all the happiness and all the hope that blazed up in me at that reply." (*Diary*, 1909)

"In the latter half of that month Innokenty Fyodorovich Annensky (1857-1909) and Ivanov met almost every day, helping S. K. Mavrovsky put together *Apollon*, the first issue of which appeared in October." (O. Deschartes)

"That year the *Apollon* literary group was born. While thinking highly of several of the young poets, future Acmeists, Vyacheslav Ivanov fiercely attacked the estheticizing spirit of the circle." (E. Gertsyk)

"The discussion of the end of Symbolism began in jest." (A. Bely)

"No matter how Ivanov responded to Acmeism in the period of its beginnings, all his life he ingenuously and unfailingly loved the three main representatives of that literary movement." (O. Deschartes)

"Among the conversations at table were a sort that enthralled my father and me alike. These were Gumilyov's stories about Africa, which he alternated with readings of his poems." (L. Ivanova)

"Andrey Bely was one of the Muscovites who would come to visit us literally with suitcase in hand. . . . At that time he was writing his novel *Petersburg*, and would read new parts to Vyacheslav as they were composed." (L. Ivanova)

"He was fusing Blok's themes, mine, and his own, as if preparing for the union of Symbolists, which he realized through patient effort, making peace with Blok; the union was realized in 1910 and flowered into Musagete; he really knew: we are made akin by the feeling of crisis." (A. Bely)

Active participation in the Religio-Philosophical Society. Publication of first book of articles, *Po zvezdam* (By the Stars).

1910, spring

Disappearance of Anna Mintslova.

"When she understood, in the spring of 1910, that the relationship between Vyacheslav and Vera was taking a turn that was dangerous for her, she bluntly announced to Ivanov that he was destined to play a beneficial role in the fate of his country, but that in order to do so he must live in the world like a monk, taking a secret vow, and remain celibate so as not to dissipate the powers that would be granted him. Ivanov answered with a decisive refusal. . . . She went away. Forever. No one who had known her in Russia ever saw her anywhere again. . . . Strange surmises and rumors began to be spread around the city." (O. Deschartes)

"With every glance at your surroundings, every time you feel the touch of things, you must recognize that you are in contact with God, that God appears before you and reveals Himself to you, surrounding you with Himself; you will contemplate His mystery and read His thoughts. Every movement of your feelings must become benediction and reverence, directed outside yourself and your body, which flows in God. Incessantly glorifying God in this way, in external objective reality, your soul will merge with everything, for its praise will be an affirmation of divine reality in you yourself." (*Diary*, 1910)

April

Production by V. E. Meyerhold of Calderón's mystery play *La Devoción de la Cruz* at the "Tower."

"The plan for the production was months in the making, and the enterprise attracted the interest of an ever greater number of the talented people in our circle." (L. Ivanova)

"Thus the advent of Bacchus,
Without loss to art,

In nineteen hundred and ten
Performed Calderón's play."
(*Tender Mystery*)

summer

Collection of materials in Italy for a book on Dionysus. Vera arrives from Greece.

"As it had been with her mother, everything was decided in Rome."
(O. Deschartes)

"Between the columns, where Persephone shines,
In the folds of a damp chiton I see
Your bowed neck.

Tender pilgrim to the shrine,
Childish copy of the daughter-goddess
Who stepped across the forbidden threshold." (*Tender Mystery*)

"A vivid but insane life shook the foundations of the times."
(A. Bely)

"Even Ivanov's 'Wednesdays' were already Thursdays." (A. Bely)

"There was no limit to the hospitality, the cordiality, the affection shown to his guests by Vyacheslav the Magnificent; Shestov called him that." (A. Bely)

"Soon, having shaved off his beard and even his mustache, somehow drawing himself up straight, even seeming younger in his frank old age, clearly gleaming with the silver of the gray hair that was advancing on him, he became a lecturer at the University and a collaborator with Zelinsky, having turned away from mystical anarchism and turning to Greece, to rhythmic, to 'mere poetry'; he was already philosophizing about our own contemporary life, not Cretan; he appeared with a face grown younger, like a cross between Tyutchev and Mommsen." (A. Bely)

"With his head wrapped up, he would be buried in proofs on the

low sofa-bed, working without getting dressed, sipping black tea brought right to the bed. . . . By 7:30 in the evening he would appear as if it were morning—pink, fresh as a rose, washed, dressed—to have supper." (A. Bely)

Movement of the "younger," religious or realistic Symbolism—Vyacheslav Ivanov, Blok, Bely—centered around the publishing house Musagete.

"Realistic Symbolism admits as a symbol any reality, taken in conjunction with the higher reality, that is, that which is more real in the series of the real. For realistic Symbolism the higher reality is found through a single act of intuition either outside the lower reality which reflects it, or immanent to the lower reality which envelops it. Realistic Symbolism seeks in things the sign of their ontological value and connection." ("Simbolismo")

Publication of Latin dissertation on Roman tax farming. Beginning of teaching in Raev's Women's Classes. Participation in "Society for the Development of the Artistic Word."

1911

"One day in 1911 the poet Gumilyov brought his young wife, who wrote poetry, to the 'Tower'. . . . She ventured to read. . . . Everyone waited to see what Ivanov would say. . . . He silently rose, walked up to the young woman, kissed her hand: 'I greet you and congratulate you. Your poems are an event in Russian literature. You will be a famous poetess.'" (O. Deschartes)

"Once Anna Akhmatova demonstrated her suppleness on the carpet in the center of a circle formed by the guests: bending backward, still standing, she had to seize in her teeth a match that had been stuck vertically into a box lying on the floor." (L. Ivanova)

"Having recognized Akhmatova immediately for who she was, he subsequently rejoiced at her spiritual growth and poetic fulfillment." (O. Deschartes)

Publication of third book of poems, *Cor Ardens*, in two volumes.

"I seem to hear the words 'with fear and trembling' when I try to speak about the best, most significant, and perhaps at the same time the most intimate book by one of our major teachers and leaders in poetry. . . . Vyacheslav Ivanov's poetry is the sound of trumpets and flutes, the rustling of wings, the running of white horses who moan with a tender neighing only in the hour of sacrificial quiet. . . ." (M. Kuzmin)

summer

"In the summer of 1911 a dacha was taken in Sillamiagi (Estonia). The dacha stood in the middle of a marvelous grove, not far from the sea." (L. Ivanova)

"Gershenzon . . . was also living in a dacha not far from us, and he would often stop in to see Vyacheslav. I think this was the beginning of their fast friendship." (L. Ivanova)

1912, spring

"Spring of 1912 was setting in. Soon I would be 16 years old. And suddenly Vyacheslav turns to me and invites me to come to his room in the 'Tower' so that he can have a little talk with me. We pass through a little side room on the left. Vera is sitting in it and watches timidly as we pass. I am again seated in the solemn black armchair and hear improbable things." (L. Ivanova)

"In the spring of 1912, Ivanov set off for Switzerland with Vera, who was expecting a child, and his daughter.

June

In June they moved to France, to Savoie, and settled in a small villa near the hamlet of Neuvecelle." (O. Deschartes)

The 'Tower' period ended. A completely new time of life began. I

had the sensation that the stormcloud, the gloom, which had hung over us in St. Petersburg even at joyful moments, had dispersed. It was as though morning had come." (L. Ivanova)

12 July

Birth of Dmitri Vyacheslavovich Ivanov.

Work on a book of poetry, *Tender Mystery*.

autumn

"We moved to Rome and made our home in a pension on the Piazza del Popolo that belonged to a certain Englishwoman. . . . The situation, on the corner of the Via del Babuino, was delightful. Several windows looked directly out onto the square, and several overlooked the park of Monte Pincio. Vyacheslav was happy and gay in his beloved Rome." (L. Ivanova)

"There were meetings of friends passing through; but the most valuable thing was that in Rome his friendship with Vladimir Frantzevich Ern was strengthened. The friendship was only broken with Ern's death." (L. Ivanova)

"Vyacheslav Ivanov would visit the learned monk Padre Palmieri, a zealous advocate of the reunification of the churches." (E. Gertsyk)

Beginning of work on translations of Aeschylus.

"But if there is anyone before whom he would not be ashamed to bow down, it is the poet-priest of ancient tragedy; and if there is a service by means of which he might surpass those services he has heretofore rendered, it is the recreation of Aeschylus in Russian poetry." (F. Zelinsky)

Beginning of work on the long poem *Infancy* and the book *Dionis i pradionisijstvo* (Dionysus and Predionysianism). Participation in the journal *Trudy i dni* (Works and Days), which advances the platform of "younger Symbolism."

1913, summer

Marriage to Vera Konstantinovna Shvarsalon.

"Vyacheslav and Vera remained for the summer in Italy, where they were married in the Greek Orthodox Church in Livorno and where Dima was christened, in Florence." (L. Ivanova)

autumn

"The final move to Moscow, to 25 Zubovsky Boulevard, took place in the autumn. . . . The view from all three windows was magnificent, since the apartment was located on the upper floors and there were no high buildings in front; a wide and open panorama of the whole city was spread out before us." (L. Ivanova)

"Life was more normal in Moscow than in St. Petersburg, although there were no fewer friends. Perhaps the existence of a small child itself created a certain rhythm." (L. Ivanova)

Active participation in Religio-Philosophical Society and close contact with N. Berdyaev and P. Florensky.

Meeting with A. N. Skryabin. "My friendship with him in the last two years of his life was a deeply significant and bright event on the paths of my spirit." (*Autobiographical Letter*)

"And my family clavier remembers
The magical touch of his fingers . . ."
(*Vechernij svet* [Evening Light])

Publication of fourth book of poems, *Tender Mystery*.

"His verse has acquired the power of confidence and impetuosity, his images have acquired precision and color, his composition—clarity and a beautiful simplicity. On every page you feel that you are faced with a great poet who has reached the utter peak of his powers." (N. Gumilyov)

1914

Publication of book of translations of poems and fragments by Alcaeus and Sappho.

1914, 30 January

"Vyacheslav Ivanov takes part in a public debate about the theater. In a long speech with sketches Vyacheslav Ivanov demonstrated that the scenic art consists of three elements: the social, mimesis, and heroics." (*Russkie Vedomosti* [Russian Record])

March

Participates in the collection *Sinn*.

October

Vyacheslav Ivanov joins the lecture committee "War and Culture," for the organization of public readings in the capital and the provinces, on behalf of the Townspeople's Union. S. I. Bulgakov, S. A. Kotlyarevsky, P. B. Struve, and others also join.

1915, 16 January

Vyacheslav Ivanov gives lecture, "Čiurlionis and Problems of the Synthesis of the Arts."

21 January

Vyacheslav Ivanov participates in a public debate on contemporary literature, held by the Symbolists in the Kalashnikov Exchange Building.

1 March

The newspaper *Utro Rossii* (Russian Morning) publishes an address "To the Russian People," demanding equality of rights for the Jewish

nation. Among the signers are Vyacheslav Ivanov, Leonid Andreyev, Nikolay Berdyaev, and Fyodor Sologub.

Work on the melopoeia *Chelovek* (Man) and the essays "Icon and Masks of Russia," and "*Legion i sobornost*" ("Legion and Ecumenicity"), devoted to themes connected with the melopoeia. Completion of the tragedy *Prometej* (Prometheus).

September

Vyacheslav Ivanov participates in the collection *Shchit* (The Shield), which has as its aim the struggle against anti-Semitism.

1916, April

Publication of second book of articles, *Borozdy i mezhi* (Furrows and Boundaries).

summer

"In the summer of 1916 we rented a dacha, along with the Ern's, in Krasnaya Polyana, several dozen versts from Gagra. It was a Greek settlement of several dachas, built by a group of professors from various universities." (L. Ivanova)

autumn

"After Krasnaya Polyana and after taking a two-week mud cure in Matsesta (near Gagra), Vyacheslav settled along with Vera and Dima in the 'Svetlana' pension in Sochi, and did not return to Moscow for the winter but stayed the whole year in his beloved South." (L. Ivanova)

"He had received a commission from the Sabashnikov publishing house for a translation of Aeschylus, and during his long stay on the shores of the Black Sea, among the 'swarthy cypresses,' in the shade of the plane trees, he translated almost all the tragedies of his favorite writer, in the original meters." (O. Deschartes)

October

Emergence of first plans for *Povest' o tsareviche Svetomire* (Tale of Prince Svetomir).

"He dreamed of the image of the novice-prince; he is trampling the grapes for the communion wine; a monastery, a pointed mountain, the sea; the Virgin in a bark. . . . The prince is singing. Ivanov wrote down his song. He learned his name—Svetomir." (O. Deschartes)

Essays on war, Russia, and the spiritual essence of the Slavic people, to be included in *Rodnoe i vseleenskoe* (Matters Native and Universal).

1917, winter

"Autobiographical Letter to S. A. Vengerov" for the book *Twentieth-Century Russian Literature*, edited by Vengerov.

"At present I am occupied primarily with translating the tragedies of Aeschylus and Dante's *Vita Nuova*." (*Autobiographical Letter*)

February

Revolution in Russia. Overthrow of the autocracy.

"It was decided to compose a new hymn to Russia. Vyacheslav and Balmont wrote it." (L. Ivanova)

Publication of third book of essays, *Matters Native and Universal*.

autumn

"Everyone returned to Moscow relatively early." (L. Ivanova)

October coup in St. Petersburg. Fighting in Moscow.

"The October Revolution burst upon us like thunder over our heads. Our house was on the front line. The fighting in Moscow lasted six days. Cannons thundered, and people told us they were shooting from the Sparrow Hills into the center of town—in other words, the

shells were flying over us. But there was also constant shooting of rifles and machine guns in the streets." (L. Ivanova)

Attempt by a group of Red Army soldiers to arrest Ivanov: "But something in his calm, his voice, perhaps a sort of spiritual power, affected them, and they suddenly seemed to sink, they were almost embarrassed . . . and they left." (L. Ivanova)

Completion of printing of *Ellinskaja religija stradajushchego boga* (The Hellenic Religion of the Suffering God).

"V. Ivanov's great significance as one of the forerunners of this [Slavic] Renaissance derives from the fact that he is both a poet and a student of antiquity. He began his career as a philologist, and he has remained a philologist to this day. His philological paper, in Latin, on publicans, his book about the suffering god (Dionysus), and his introduction to Homer show him to be a conscientious and patient student of antiquity, that maternal soil of his ideas." (F. Zelinsky)

"Directly opposite our windows, which gave onto such a broad horizon, a huge conflagration was blazing. By night the hellish glow enveloped half the sky. These were buildings that were burning, in one of which the Sabashnikov publishing house was located. In the printing shop there, all the copies of Vyacheslav's just-printed book *The Hellenic Religion of the Suffering God* were reduced to ashes." (L. Ivanova)

"The building burned to the ground, and in it the entire edition of the book along with the manuscript perished on the eve of its publication. One of the proof copies . . . was in the author's possession, and it is still intact; another or others remained in Moscow. Their fate is unknown." (O. Deschartes)

1918

"We began to try to get a transfer to another apartment, since the water pipes in ours were beginning to burst from the frost. Vyacheslav was allotted half an apartment on the former Afanasievsky

Lane, to which we moved. The apartment was furnished and had been abandoned by someone; they gave us three rooms in it and a kitchen shared with the neighbors." (L. Ivanova)

"In the first years of the October Revolution, open public debates were often arranged. . . . Ivanov often appeared at them in defense of religion. At one of these debates he happened to speak immediately after People's Commissar for Education A. V. Lunacharsky. Lunacharsky was a good orator. He eloquently declared for pure atheism. Thunderous applause resounded after his speech. Ivanov came out onto the platform. In a quiet voice (this quiet voice could be heard everywhere), as if imparting a cherished mystery, he spoke of Christ and the Antichrist, of the suffering God, of God's chosen people. . . . He read poems, recounted legends. The crowd listened spellbound. When he finished and fell silent the silence held. It could be felt as a presence. . . . Suddenly it disappeared in a burst of applause." (O. Deschartes)

"In 1918, when the persecution of the Church intensified, Sergey Bulgakov entered the priesthood. Ivanov was present at his ordination. Their friendship deepened." (O. Deschartes)

"The more people were tormented and mired in their everyday life, the keener and more vital became their longing for a genuine existence: circles were formed, and receptive youths, thirsting for knowledge, would gather. Listeners and scholars would come poorly dressed, frozen, but enthusiastic and ardent in spirit. Ivanov loved to converse with them about religion, poetry, Hellas; he taught them versification . . . , he demanded that they guard the purity of the language." (O. Deschartes)

"When the Theatrical Department of the People's Commissariat for Education was formed in 1918, Ivanov began working there. Here he encountered many old friends from the literary theatrical world." (O. Deschartes)

Participation, along with Blok and Bely, in the journal *Zapiski mechtatelej* (Dreamers' Notes), organized by S. Alyansky, published by "Alkonost." Publication of the poem "Infancy."

1919

"Hunger was approaching gradually but implacably." (L. Ivanova)

Death of M. M. Zamyatnina.

"Vyacheslav endured all deprivations stoically, never complained, calmly bore all the inevitable, morbid nervous outbursts at home, and continued his thinking and his work." (L. Ivanova)

March

Work on the epilogue to the melopoeia *Man*.

"I don't recall any large gatherings of friends in those years. There were only intimate meetings." (L. Ivanova)

Publication of the tragedy *Prometheus*.

"The present lyrico-dramatic work is a tragedy—in the first place, of action as such; in the second place, of the active personality's exhaustion of himself in action; in the third place, of the continuity of action. In general, it is a tragedy of a titanic origin, like the primal sin of human freedom." (From the author's preface *O dejstvii i dejstve* [On Action and the Drama])

autumn

Vera and Dmitri, both ill, stay in a sanatorium in the small town Serebryany Bor.

December

Ivanov visits his wife and son in the sanatorium.

"His *Zimnie sonety* (Winter Sonnets) deal with that Christmas of 1919. From them and from the photographs of that time, in which he wears a beret, one can guess the hell that was in his soul then. Outwardly he was still just as calm and open to everyone." (L. Ivanova)

"And I see, as if in a crystal ball,
My family in a nearby sanctuary,
In the mellifluous light of holiday candles.

And my heart, wearied by the secret closeness,
Awaits a little spark in the midst of the pine forest. But the sleigh's
Straight flight rushes past, past"

(*Winter Sonnets*)

"To endure . . . is not enough—but what he was able to do in 1919, when we all were silent, to turn his feelings into art, that is what has some meaning." (A. Akhmatova)

1920

"In the beginning of 1920, thanks to Lunacharsky's patronage, Balmont and Vyacheslav were granted permission for trips abroad. Our case was particularly exceptional, since trips with one's family were usually not permitted. Everything was already arranged and even the day of departure, some time in May, had been fixed. Vera, and all of us as well, dreamed of the departure for Davos. We believed that there she would be able to recover from her pulmonary tuberculosis. . . . When Lunacharsky wangled the trips for Balmont and Vyacheslav, he asked them to personally give their word of honor that when they got out of the country they would not speak out against the Soviet government, at least for the first few years. He took responsibility for them. Both of them gave their word. But as soon as Balmont, who left first, had gotten to Revel, he sharply criticized Soviet Russia. As a result of Balmont's speech, Vyacheslav's trip was cancelled. I can remember the tragic look on Vera's face . . . when she heard this news." (L. Ivanova)

spring

Last meeting with A. A. Blok.

"Outwardly there was no great closeness between Ivanov and Tsve-taeva, but at times their inner bond would unexpectedly be revealed to me." (O. Deschartes)

"You write on the sand with your finger,
And I have approached and am reading.
Already gray hair on the temple.
My head is golden.

And the twilight steals up like a thief,
Like a black and fatal army . . .
You know, in order better to read,
Oh Rabbi!—I close my eyes . . .

You write on the sand with your finger . . ." (M. Tsvetaeva)

June–July

Composition of *Perepiska iz dvukh uglov* (A Correspondence from Two Corners) by Ivanov and M. O. Gershenzon.

"They had both received permission to spend six weeks in a sanatorium for writers outside Moscow, and they were allotted a common room." (L. Ivanova)

Ivanov's definition of culture as the "cult of memory," as the "ladder of Eros and the hierarchy of reverence."

"There will be an epoch of great, joyful, all-embracing return. Then springs will begin to gush out from between the old flagstones, and rose bushes will sprout forth from gray tombs." (*A Correspondence from Two Corners*)

8 August

Death of Vera Konstantinovna Shvarsalon.

"A slow finger completes its appointed circle,
And a hammer suddenly strikes the heart"
(*Evening Light*)

"After Vera's death Vyacheslav was seized by a horror of spending another winter in Moscow. He asked at work for permission to take a trip, to Italy if possible, but if not, then somewhere in the South,

where he would not have to see snow, where everything would be different. Meanwhile, in order to give him a chance to rest, he was sent with his family . . . to a sanatorium in Kislovodsk for six weeks." (L. Ivanova)

autumn

"Life flowed by peacefully in Kislovodsk, until a certain day when suddenly the sounds of cannonade could be heard from early in the morning." (L. Ivanova)

October

"Soon after this it was announced to us that the Kislovodsk Sanatorium was to be closed down. All the patients were asked to write down where they would like to move. The choice was between Moscow, two towns in central Russia, and Baku." (L. Ivanova)

"Vyacheslav was firm in his choice of Baku. It's in the south, and the border is close by. Who knows, maybe one could manage to cross it, and then get to Italy by a roundabout way?" (L. Ivanova)

"On the ninth day Train no. 14 reached Baku. All the passengers alighted except us: we had nowhere to go. Vyacheslav went to have a look at the town and suddenly ran into Gorodetsky. It turned out that he and his family were living in Baku . . . It was impossible to find living quarters in the town, but for the first few days he lodged us in a dark passageway in an apartment stuffed with numerous families." (L. Ivanova)

"It transpired that a University had been founded in Baku not long before our arrival. Its initial nucleus was a group of professors from the University of Tiflis, since all Russian professors had been expelled at the time of the short-lived national government in Georgia. Professors from various cities gradually began to converge on Baku University . . . The People's Commissariat for Education immediately sent Vyacheslav to the University, where he was greeted with open arms." (L. Ivanova)

"His new colleagues sacrificed their smoking room in order to install us in it." (L. Ivanova)

"Our room was located on a corridor in the University, and so people were constantly dropping in. Students with whom Vyacheslav had an especially close relationship would come by. Among them, Moisey Altman would drop in at least once every day." (L. Ivanova)

November

Ivanov is selected as Professor Ordinarius of Classical Philology and Poetics.

"At that time the University was quite young, and one could sense that the professors and students regarded it lovingly. As yet it had little contact with the central government, and it adhered to the old traditional structure. Vyacheslav worked there with enthusiasm." (L. Ivanova)

"Everyone loved to hear Ivanov. He lectured in the first auditorium, which held 600-1000 people, and students from all departments would gather, and be standing in the aisles." (S. Makovelsky)

"Ivanov took an active part not only in the scholarly, administrative and economic life of the University, but in the cultural life of the entire town. He participated in the selection of scholarly personnel, in the organization of the library, in the purchase of equipment, in the housing commission, and played a large role in the organization of the theater and the cinema." (O. Deschartes)

"But Ivanov's chief concern and delight was his contact with talented students. Several of them became real scholars, significant representatives of scholarship. Ivanov's inner, spiritual influence on his students was of particular importance. Former Baku students later testified that in difficult moments of their lives they would remember their teacher's words, and these words would lend them faith in their own powers and would help them overcome the difficulties. Their inner contact with their teacher ceased neither with parting nor with Ivanov's death." (O. Deschartes)

1921

"Vyacheslav Ivanov was a gentle man, but it was a catlike, tigerlike gentleness, gentle and strong-willed. For all his gentleness, his interlocutor always felt himself taken firmly in hand. At the same time, never simplifying and sometimes speaking of things that were incomprehensible to us at our age and stage of development, Ivanov never humiliated his interlocutor with the sense of that infinite distance between himself and us. . . . Ivanov was wisdom itself. But he displayed such loving personal interest that one could speak with him as with a father, as with a person who is wiser than you but who talks to you like an equal, although you know that equality is out of the question." (V. Manuilov)

"The other day I was given an examination by Vyacheslav Ivanov. Our conversation lasted about an hour. In the course of it we examined a plan of Athens and photographs of the ruins, and he told me about them. He read me entire lectures on Dionysus and pre-Dionysus. And just at random he would ask me sly questions." (E. Millior)

"At that time Khlebnikov suddenly appeared in Baku. One beautiful morning he turned up completely unexpectedly. . . . Vyacheslav was terribly happy, since he loved him very much." (L. Ivanova)

"Aleksey Kruchonykh, still an unknown, beginning poet, was also living in Baku. He would come to see Vyacheslav and they would eagerly converse. Kruchonykh was preaching his trans-sense language." (L. Ivanova)

Nominated for the post of Dean of the University, but declines.

Publication of *A Correspondence from Two Corners*. "The most important thing to be said about humanism since Nietzsche." (E. R. Curtius)

1912

"A poetic circle called 'The Chalice' was formed. Its members were not only Vyacheslav's closest students." (L. Ivanova)

In the summer of 1922 we rented rooms with some friends on a very deserted and beautiful peninsula, Zyk, near Baku." (L. Ivanova)

"On Zyk there is neither a vine
Of clustered grapes nor a fig tree:
The heat has burned everything up, the thirsty heat has drunk
everything up,

And I drowsed in the cool hut
Till mid-September"

(*Evening Light*)

"And the smile, the humor, the seriousness of Vyacheslav Ivanov.
He is really here, I see him every day, several times a day." (E. Millior)

1923

"During the third year of our time in Baku, Kabanov, the University bursar, died and his apartment was divided between us and his widow and her niece." (L. Ivanova)

Ivanov participates actively in the scholarly life of the university, but refuses to be nominated for administrative positions.

"Since we are on the topic of Vyacheslav Ivanov's participation in the election of the Rector and deans, we must point out the groundlessness of the reports . . . that Ivanov was the Rector of the Azerbaidzhan State University, and even a People's Commissar for Education in the Azerbaidzhan Republic. In point of fact, Ivanov was only nominated at the meetings of the appropriate bodies for the post of Dean in 1921 and Rector in 1923, but both times he withdrew his candidacy, and indeed the number of votes nominating him was not great." (N. Kotrelyov)

Publication of *Dionysus and Pre-dionysianism*.

"The first book about Dionysus, *The Hellenic Reform of the Suffering God*, described the nature of Dionysian ecstasy and was concerned

with the problem of the Dionysian psychology and the mysticism of Dionysian sacrifice; in the new book Ivanov examines Dionysianism as a system of conceptions, perceptions, and initiations, and tries to recognize the god in all his metamorphoses and migrations, in all the tales about him: he looks far and wide for the Dionysian roots of the Dionysian religion." (O. Deschartes)

Appearance of first German edition of *A Correspondence from Two Corners*.

1924

Composition of libretto for the operetta *Ljubov'—mirazh?* (Is Love a Mirage?)

"At the end of May 1924, Ivanov was summoned to Moscow to deliver a speech at a jubilee conference celebrating the 125th anniversary of Pushkin's birth." (O. Deschartes)

"He went by himself, and Dima and I continued our peaceful everyday life. Suddenly we received a telegram from Vyacheslav in Moscow informing us that we were going to Venice and instructing us to collect all our things and get to Moscow. . . . Vyacheslav's speech in the Bolshoi Theater was a success. He took advantage of the auspicious moment and renewed his request to be allowed to go abroad with his family. There was always an alternation of periods in the government: for a while everything is easy and simple, everything is permitted; then everyone is pulled up short, everything is refused. Vyacheslav's petition came at a happy moment. He was authorized to spend six weeks in Venice for the opening of the Soviet Pavilion at the Biennale. And, most difficult, his family was allowed to accompany him." (L. Ivanova)

"And now after a rather complicated journey we ended up in Moscow. We were given a room next to Vyacheslav's in Tsekubu, an establishment on Kropotkin Street (formerly Prechistenka), and there ensued a long period of endless bureaucratic fuss about the departure for abroad." (L. Ivanova)

Meetings and beginning of friendship with Olga Aleksandrovna Shor (Olga Deschartes).

"She became a beloved member of our family." (L. Ivanova)

"Among the many voices of her contemporaries—almost always alien to her—the young seeker, who ponders Memory and Existence, distinguishes sounds that are intimate and kindred to her. Vyacheslav Ivanov constantly sings of memory—Mnemosyne in his poems." (D. Ivanov)

"To you, my guardian genius,
Doctor of spiritual wounds and flesh,
Guide of my visions in the twilight,
Interpreter of my earthly fate,

To you, who beyond the boundary of phenomena
Remember the world of heavenly villages
And hear the flight of angels,
Presiding over everyday custom

Humbly-wisely, anonymously."
(*Evening Light*)

"She knew how much evil and how much good there was in the world, and she struggled inwardly, and made a constant prayer, just as, most likely, the saints do." (D. Ivanov)

"Vyacheslav delightedly met old and new friends. From morning till night the premises of Tsekubu were full of people who wanted to see him." (L. Ivanova)

"While still at a distance I caught sight of a long, winding line; it began at the door leading into Ivanov's room, extended across the corridor, descended a small staircase and trailed off somewhere in the garden. . . . When I approached, I saw Pasternak in the crowd. Bending slightly, he was sketching something with pencil in a notebook. . . . I regret to this day that I did not stay there for their last meeting." (O. Deschartes)

Last meeting with V. Ya. Bryusov.

"Their conversation was very significant and crucial. . . . Ivanov walked up to Bryusov sternly, greeted him and said roughly the following: 'Well, Valery, look at what you have done with your life, and most importantly, with your creative gift.' And Ivanov began severely and angrily to express his opinion of Bryusov's latest poems of the revolutionary period." (V. Manuilov)

"'I am going to Rome to die,' he told his friends." (O. Deschartes)

August 28

Departure abroad with daughter and son.

"Then there was the border: passports, the long customs procedure. Again we all boarded the car. The train started off, and at first we went very, very slowly. A Red Army soldier who was sitting with a sheaf of some sort of documents in his hands got up, went to the door of the car and jumped off. The train started to pick up speed. A long ditch appeared through the window, and a large sign affixed to two posts and directed to the foreign side: 'Proletariat of all nations, unite!'" (L. Ivanova)

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.
(*Rimskie sonety* [Roman Sonnets])

Meeting and friendship with Ettore Lo Gatto, historian of Russian literature.

December

"I have received your beautiful poems, accept my most sincere gratitude, Master." (M. Gorky)

"The feeling of salvation, the joy of freedom has not lost its freshness

to this day. To be in Rome—so recently it seemed like an unrealizable dream!" (*Diary*, 1924)

"The whole time I have been abroad I say over and over: Hannibal ad portas! I mean communism. Everyone has said in one voice: falsehood. . . . Communism is the social expression of atheism if only because it alone can be a surrogate for faith, and it answers the question about the meaning of life in almost cosmic terms." (*Diary*, 1924)

"I went walking without an overcoat—and come what may, I walked myself up a store of Roman happiness." (*Diary*, 1924)

"He had taken along whatever he had managed to grab: old notebooks, journal offprints, newspaper clippings of poems." (O. Deschartes)

1925

"In spite of his happiness in Rome he was depressed because of his concern for our future." (L. Ivanova)

"From Russia there come suggestions that we return. In Moscow, L. S. Kogan hopes that Vyacheslav will want to become a member of the Academy of Arts and Sciences." (L. Ivanova)

Frequent meetings with Pavel Muratov and the circle of his Italian and Russian friends, and with O. I. Reznovich-Signorelli, to whose salon comes all literary and artistic Rome.

Ivanov meets Vsevolod Meyerhold and Zinaida Raikh during their visit to Rome. At Meyerhold's request Ivanov writes an article about "The Inspector General."

1926

Publication of *A Correspondence from Two Corners* by M. Buber in the journal *Die Kreatur*.

January

Lectures at the University of Pavia on the Russian spirit and culture.

March 4

"On the day that was St. Vyacheslav's Day in Russia . . . Ivanov read the formula for joining the Catholic Church before the altar of St. Vyacheslav in Rome's Cathedral of St. Peter . . . and then, after standing through a Church Slavic mass in the chapel over the grave of the Apostle, he took communion in two kinds, in the Orthodox manner." (O. Deschartes)

For the first time I felt myself to be Orthodox in the full sense of the word, the owner of a sacred treasure that had been mine from the day of my baptism, but the ownership of which had to that time been clouded, over many years, by a feeling of a sort of dissatisfaction that became more and more agonizing with the consciousness that I was deprived of the other half of that treasure of holiness and paradise, that I was breathing like a consumptive, with only one lung." (*Letter to Charles Du Bos*)

autumn

Father Leopoldo Riboldi, Rector of the Collegio Borromeo in Pavia, invites Ivanov to become a permanent professor and lecturer for students of French, German, and English literature.

"There, in semi-monastic seclusion, Ivanov reexamined, tested, re-evaluated the spiritual legacy and cultural achievements of humanity." (O. Deschartes)

"Ivanov's monastic seclusion in the sumptuous Renaissance palazzo was often disturbed by visits from French, Italian, and German poets, writers, and philosophers of from French, Italian, and German poets, writers, and philosophers of various schools. . . . Once Benedetto Croce suddenly appeared, accompanied by several of his followers." (O. Deschartes)

1927

O. A. Shor (Deschartes) arrives in Rome.

"Only O. Deschartes can write about the real me, and she knows

my life and all my writings as no one else does." (Ivanov, quoted by S. Makovsky)

"And has your Hymettian honey really sated me?
Who stole your idol from the myrtle grove?
Or did I smash it myself in prophetic horror?
Have I really stopped loving you, Hellas?"

And I ran away, and in the foothills of the Thebais I eat
The wild honey and tough locusts of silence"
(*Evening Light*)

"In 1927 Ivanov wrote 'Palinodia,' so that after a short renunciation of humanism he could find it in the spirit of Christianity, as a *docta pietas*." (O. Deschartes)

March

Martin Buber visits Ivanov in Pavia. Their close friendship begins.

1928, September

Beginning of work on *The Tale of Prince Svetomir*.

"On the morning of September 28 Ivanov cheerfully and embarrassedly told me, 'I have begun writing.' And after a brief silence he added, 'It's prose.'" (O. Deschartes)

"If the tale did not come into being earlier, it is only because it took Ivanov a long time to find a form of expression. He tried both in rhymed and blank verse. . . . It all seemed not quite right. Only abroad did he find the desired form: a prose *skaz* in the spirit, perhaps, of a chronicle account, with a division into strophes of uneven length which are connected into chapters." (S. Makovsky)

"The entire summation of his spiritual experience was to be reflected . . . in this work; it was conceived by the poet as his *Faust*, Part II." (S. Makovsky)

Travel to Switzerland. Lectures in Zürich and Lucerne.

1929, summer

Another trip to Switzerland. In Davos, Ivanov meets his old friend E. K. Metner. Detailed discussions about C. G. Jung (Metner was his close friend and collaborator).

1930

Publication in the journal *Vigile* of French translation of *A Correspondence from Two Corners*, by Charles Du Bos.

October

Letter to Charles Du Bos.

"Sympathetically, with a tender and loyal hand, you gathered up the pale leaves that, set whirling in the vortex of the Revolution, were carried off and flew to your garden; and immediately, without wavering, you made up your mind to appeal to me for the confessions you needed to interpret the news of the wind that blows wherever it pleases. . . ." (*Letter to Charles Du Bos*)

1932

Italian edition of *A Correspondence from Two Corners*. Publication of *Dostoevsky* in German in Tübingen (the Russian original is lost).

1933

Publication of Spanish translation of *A Correspondence from Two Corners* by Ortega y Gasset in *Revista de Occidente*.

July

Death of Ivanov's first wife, Darya Mikhaylovna Dmitrievskaya.

December

Appearance of special issue of the journal *Il Convegno*, devoted to Ivanov, with articles about him by E. R. Curtius, F. Zelinsky, F. Stepun, G. Marcel, and A. Pellegrini.

1934, February

Letter to Pellegrini about *docta pietas*.

"Universal anamnesis in Christ—this, then, is the goal of humanistic Christian culture: because this is the historical prerequisite for the realization of worldwide ecumenicity." (Letter to A. Pellegrini about *docta pietas*)

"Ivanov spent eight years in Pavia. For vacations he would go somewhere by the sea, or to Switzerland, or most often to Rome." (O. Deschartes)

Invited to University of Florence as Professor Ordinarius of Slavistics.

"Ivanov spent the early autumn of 1934 in Rome. The vacation had ended and courses had begun at the universities when news of an unexpected rejection came from Florence: the minister of education had rescinded the Department's decision because Ivanov was not a member of the Fascist Party, and such membership was then obligatory for a newly selected professor." (O. Deschartes)

Publication of the article "Anima" in the journal *Corona*.

1935

At his daughter's request, Ivanov writes a drama in verse, *Nal and Damayanti* (unfinished). Work on the German edition of *Diomysus and Predionysianism*.

1936

"In February of this year Vyacheslav Ivanov turned 70. We, his friends, the witnesses of the rapid flowering of his distinctive talent . . . have every reason to remember him as the most versatile, but at the same time the most integral figure of the Russian Symbolist school. For the disclosure of the supreme idea of Russia, which according to Dostoevsky consists of the reconciliation of all ideas, Vyacheslav Ivanov was given exceptional talents and powers. Nature generously endowed him with the gifts of a poet, philosopher and

scholar. . . . The result: a unique combination and reconciliation of Slavophilism and Westernism, paganism and Christianity, philosophy and poetry, philology and music, archaism and publicistics." (F. Stepun)

February

Lecture on Pushkin during ceremonies on the anniversary of his death.

March

Ivanov moves to a house on the via Monte Tarpeo.

"Ivanov was noticeably beginning to weary of wandering among strange rooms and little pensions. He decided to rent an apartment and finally begin to live *en famille*, in his own home. As if by magic, a dwelling was found on the Capitoline itself, with a view that in its beauty and grandeur was quite exceptional even for Rome." (O. Deschartes)

"And there is the magical staircase of the Capitoline. . . . Skirting Marcus Aurelius, we walk along a narrow side street, between old buildings. We are already on the famous cliff. . . . There is not a single step from the steep side street into the house where Ivanov lives. But the old houses on the Tarpean Rock have their surprises. If you pass through the anteroom and the tiny dining room, and through the glass door of their little balcony, there is a ravine, and a very long staircase along the outer wall: it is rickety, elbow-shaped, with miserable steps, and resembles a fire escape. It leads to a dark, dense little garden." (Z. Gippius)

"A murmuring little garden, and behind it
Your naked relics, Rome!
There is laurel in it, fig trees, and roses,
And vines in heavy clusters"
(*Evening Light*)

"True, he no longer has golden curls; but gray-haired, he has come

to resemble more a Greek sage (or an old German philosopher). He has the same gentle, extremely gentle, amiable manners, the same attentively lively eyes. And a detailed response to everything." (Z. Gippius)

Among the visitors to the Tarpean Rock, besides the Merezhkovskys, are F. Zelinsky, I. Bunin, B. Zaitsev, G. Papini.

spring

At the invitation of the Rector, Father Phillippe de Régis, Ivanov begins to teach Slavic languages and read lectures on Russian literature in the Russian Catholic Seminary ("Russicum"). He receives an offer to give a course on Slavic languages in the Eastern Institute of the Vatican ("Orientale").

summer

"In the summer of 1936 an offer came from the Swiss publishing house Benno Schwabe to publish Ivanov's works on Dionysus in German. Of course Ivanov gladly agreed, but under the condition that he would check the translation himself and add new notes to the old text. . . . The publisher was in a hurry. The author took his time. Time passed. The war broke out. . . . During the first two years of it the publisher stubbornly insisted that Ivanov send *Dionysus*. Then he died. So the book did not appear." (O. Deschartes)

1938, spring

Private audience with Pope Pius XI.

"At the end of a long conversation the Pope said that the peoples of the West and of Russia would soon be subjected to difficult trials, but that then better times would come, the unnatural discord among the churches would cease and the longed-for union would be realized." (O. Deschartes)

1939

Publication of long poem *Man*.

"Once Pavel Florensky . . . suddenly said, 'It's a beautiful work, but hardly anyone will understand it. Would you like for me to write notes to it?' Of course, Ivanov was delighted with such an offer. . . . Florensky began to write the notes, but slowly.—War, revolution; the publication was delayed and never came about." (O. Deschartes)

"And, Good Spirit, save our souls.

Source of blessings, Choir-leader of life,

Show us God's City in the earthly homeland"

(*Man*)

Beginning of World War II.

1940, January

Move to apartment at Via Leon Battista Alberti 25 on the Aventine.

"Let the space be built up at sunset

By a ring of neighbors' dwellings,

All the same, from behind roofs and laundry

I am favored to see the Dome"

(*Evening Light*)

1941 June

Germany invades Russia.

Beginning of work on introductions and notes to *Acts of the Apostles* and the *Revelation of St. John*.

1943, September

Rome is occupied by German troops.

1944

Roman Diary, 1944 is written.

"And suddenly, in that difficult, fatal time, unexpectedly for Ivanov

himself, 'the sealed spring began to play' within him, and that source gushed through all of 1944. The poems were immediate lyric responses to the events of the day, as well as quiet meditations." (O. Deschartes)

June

Liberation of Rome by the Allies.

"Soon after the liberation of Rome, before the end of the war, an American officer from the front unexpectedly appeared at Ivanov's home—the well-known writer Thornton Wilder, with whom Ivanov had previously been personally acquainted. An incredible closeness was immediately formed, a penetrating, heartfelt understanding of each other, of a sort that seldom occurs even among old friends." (O. Deschartes)

December

"Goodbye, my lyric year!
You accompanied
The sublunary round-dance of the Horae
With the private play of strings
And, obedient to the step of the planets,
You led thought to clarity and feelings to harmony"
(*Evening Light*)

1945

Intense work on *The Tale of Prince Svetomir*.

Among the visitors to the house on the Via Leon Battista Alberti are J. Maritain and G. Marcel.

1946

Letter from Professor S. A. Konovalov at Oxford, offering to print Ivanov's new poetic works.

"That was when it was essentially decided to set about publishing a collection of poems." (O. Deschartes)

Work on the preparation of fifth book of poems, *Evening Light*.

"The magnificence and inner energy of the word have made Vyacheslav Ivanov the prophet-philosopher of twentieth-century Russian poetry and a unique druid of European poetry of the Modern era." (A. Rannit)

Publication of Italian translation by Rinaldo Küfferle of the long poem *Man*.

Publication of *Acts of the Apostles* and the *Revelation of St. John* with forewords and notes by Ivanov.

1947

Publication of English translation of *A Correspondence from Two Corners* in the journal *Mesa*.

autumn

Isaiah Berlin and Maurice Bowra come from Oxford for the manuscript of *Evening Light*.

"And so, to the poet's delight, three Oxford professors became patrons of his muse. . . . Thinking of his imminent death, Ivanov was glad that Oxford intended to make public his last songs." (O. Deschartes)

Essays, "Forma formans and forma formata," and "M. Lermontov."

1948

English publication of *A Correspondence from Two Corners* in the American journal *Partisan Review*.

"In 1948 the 82-year-old man received a "spiritually profitable"

commission from the Vatican: to write an introduction and compile notes to the Psalter. He finished this task several days before his death." (O. Deschartes)

1949

"On parting I asked the poet his opinion of the future of European thought. He answered, smiling, that he knew nothing about the fate of European culture, but that he knew one thing for a certainty: if he were not permitted to read, speak, and write Greek in the next world, he would be deeply unhappy." (A. Rannit)

"The poet violated the Muse's interdiction against writing poetry three times. The last of these three poems was a sonnet. Ivanov began writing it in February 1949; he reworked it many times; he introduced final changes on July 14. . . . The sonnet ends with the words the poet wrote two days before departing this life: 'Death cleaved with a merciless pole-axe.' " (O. Deschartes)

July 16

"Two hours before his death he said to me: 'Save my Svetomir'. . . . 'Finish it. You know it all. I will help.' He sighed. He was silent for a bit. 'Save my Svetomir.' And he said no more." (O. Deschartes)

Death at 3:00 in the afternoon.

Vyacheslav Ivanovich Ivanov was buried in Rome in the Catholic cemetery of Verano.

—Translated by Susanne Fusso; passages from *Infancy* translated by Carol Ueland; passage from *Roman Sonnets* translated by Lowry Nelson, Jr.