

This book is the first detailed history of the Russian Symbolist movement, from its initial hostile reception as a symptom of European decadence to its absorption into the mainstream of Russian literature, and eventual disintegration. It focuses on the two generations of writers whose work served as the seedbed of Existentialism in thought and of Modernism in prose and the performing arts, and reassesses their achievements in the light of modern research. Because the Symbolists' philosophy aspired to art, their poetry to music, painting to poetry and theatre to liturgy, this study pays proper attention to developments in art, theatre, thought and religion. It also considers the historical background of revolutionary hope and foreboding, and the patronage of the fading court and the rising capitalist class. At the centre of the study are the Symbolists' literary works. Prose is quoted in English translation and poetry given in the original Russian with prose translations. There is a valuable bibliography of primary sources and an extensive chronological appendix. This book will fill a long-felt gap, and will be invaluable to students and teachers of Russian and comparative literature, symbolism, modernism, and pre-revolutionary Russian culture.

A history of Russian Symbolism

A history of Russian Symbolism

Avril Pyman

Reader in Russian literature, University of Durham



Published by the Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge
The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge CB2 1RP
40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011-4211, USA
10 Stamford Road, Oakleigh, Melbourne 3166, Australia

© Cambridge University Press 1994

First published 1994

Reprinted 1996

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress cataloguing in publication data

Pyman, Avril.

A history of Russian symbolism / Avril Pyman.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0 521 24198 7 (hardback)

1. Symbolism (literary movement) – Russia.
2. Russian literature – 19th century – History and criticism.
3. Russian literature – 20th century – History and criticism.
4. Russia – Intellectual life – 1801–1917. I. Title.

PG3015.5.S9P95 1994

891.709'15 – dc20 93–30418 CIP

ISBN 0 521 24198 7 hardback

Transferred to digital printing 2004

In memoriam

Nikolay Efremovich Andreyev
Dmitrii Evgenevich Maksimov

Contents

<i>Preface</i>	page xi
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xv
<i>Note on the text and list of abbreviations</i>	xvii
Prologue: decadence or rebirth? The European <i>fin de siècle</i> and the Russian precursors	1
Part 1 The art of the cell	17
1 Transitional writers (1892–1898). Volynsky and <i>Severvnyi Vestnik</i> , Minsky and the early Merezhkovsky	19
2 The new poetry in St Petersburg. Zinaida Hippus and Fedor Sologub (1893 onwards)	38
3 Russian Symbolism acquires a name. Bal'mont, Briusov, Dobroliubov and Konevskoi (1894–1900)	56
Part 2 Collective creation	91
4 The foundation of <i>Mir Iskusstva</i> and the role of the visual and performing arts. Benois, Diaghilev, Filosofov and their group (1890–1904)	93
5 From <i>Mir Iskusstva</i> to <i>Novyi Put'</i> . The development of Merezhkovsky's prose and thought, Rozanov, Shestov (1898–1904)	123
6 Russian Symbolism comes of age. Skorpion, <i>Severnye Tsvety</i> and <i>Vesy</i> . Briusov as organiser and teacher (1900–4)	160

Part 3 Gleams of paradise	181
7 The turn of the century. The early poetry of the second generation of Russian Symbolists: Viacheslav Ivanov, Bely, Blok (1900–4)	183
8 The Sophia-myth and the theme of Apocalypse. The influence of Solov'ev and Nietzsche (1892 onwards)	226
Part 4 A glittering hell	243
9 The Russo-Japanese War and the 1905 Revolution. Symbolism, Mystic Anarchism and the beginning of division (1904–6)	245
10 The anthesis. <i>Zolotoe Runo</i> and <i>Oraea</i> . Erotica in Skorpion, <i>Vesy</i> . Symbolist theatre. Polemics (1906–8)	285
Part 5 Our home from the beginning	303
11 'From the real to the more real'. Blok's 'Russia and the Intelligentsia'. Ivanov's 'A realibus ad realiora'. Bely's and Remizov's prose. (1907–10)	305
12 Russian Symbolism and Russian literature. Apollon and Annensky's summing-up. 'The crisis of Symbolism'. Disintegration and reconciliation. (1909–10)	323
Epilogue	337
<i>Chronology</i>	343
<i>Notes</i>	375
<i>Bibliography</i>	432
<i>Index</i>	447

Preface

This book has changed several times during the twelve years it has been in the writing. It sprang originally from material gathered for a Ph.D thesis on the 'Origins of Russian Symbolism with Special Reference to D. S. Merezhkovsky 1892–1985', Cambridge, 1958. Most of my work since, however, has been devoted to twentieth-century Russian literature, and the need for a history of the Symbolist movement as a whole is apparent. This was my contract for Cambridge University Press. At the same time, work on the origins of the movement left me with an abiding interest in the thought, or perhaps I should say in the unanswered questions raised by the thought, of the *fin de siècle*. New publications from and about the period in Russia, especially the flood of new material about Andrei Bely and Pavel Florensky, have reanimated this interest and confirmed my conviction that the literary movement calling itself Russian Symbolism was not an imitation of the French, who first laid claim to the term and experimented with the techniques, but part of a wider European attempt to give expression to this thought, these questions. As Shestov says: 'the most important and meaningful thoughts are born into the world naked, without verbal form: to find words for them is a special, very difficult task – an art in itself'.¹

For those who 'felt in their bones' that the veneer of humanist Enlightenment was paper thin, it seemed essential to probe beyond the bounds of reason, to 'open windows' and to move freely in the sphere of 'the unbounded' (V bezbrezhnosti). They chose to do this through the medium of the arts. Here, even the 'unsaid', the perfectly timed and orchestrated pause, could be meaningful. It was possible to venture beyond the certainties of the here and now because art is necessarily subjective, often imprecise. Words, colours, sounds and shapes could be used not so much to explain as to suggest, to provoke echoes and reactions, to awake memory and stir premonition.

To begin with the Symbolists (in Russia as elsewhere) were laughed out of court by a solid majority who considered that art had no 'philosophical' function but should be confined to the useful or the decorative, a

recreation for serious persons concerned with 'real life'. The Symbolist notion that the artist sees the world as transparent and that art can afford insights beyond the bounds of scientifically established truth seemed childish, irresponsible, downright destabilising. Slowly and painfully, at first by isolated individuals, then by small, intimate groups a new language was forged, a language in which the word was 'symbolic', equal to more than itself, mindful of its roots and capable of growth, change, transfiguration. From these scattered groups sprang a vigorous, outgoing literary movement which, gathering force like a river, emptied itself into the sea of Russian literature, opening out before it did so into a delta of many streams: Acmeism, Futurism of various descriptions, neo-realism and ornamental prose, Russia's early literature of the absurd . . .

This diversification simply separated, deepened and intensified various currents which had jostled along together in the main stream. Acmeism – domesticated, refined, translucent – emphasised that 'homesickness for World Culture' which had manifested itself from the very beginning in the Symbolist rebellion against utilitarianism and simplistic belief in progress. Futurism – romantic, primitive and turgid – continued to explore the matter of language, the roots and incantatory power of the word and the quest for a new poetics to express new science and technology. Formalism – essentially a critical rather than creative movement, eager to analyse and define – elaborated the emphasis on form and structure. Neo-realists extended the idea that every symbol is rooted in particularity freshly, subjectively perceived; ornamental prose, which overlapped with neo-realism, pursued the reinvigoration of language through neologism and archaism to provincialism and dialect. The Absurdists took the Symbolist polemic against cause and effect, rationalism and dogma to its logical conclusion, darting on in arbitrary twists and turns, disappearing into the abyss only to bubble up again with unexpected vigour, seeping away into the sand . . . Even Viacheslav Ivanov's 'realistic' Symbolism, ardently supported by Bely, which outlasted the 'crisis of Symbolism' by two or three years, seems, in retrospect to be but one of the many branches of this delta, though we may assume that it was in fact the remnant of the mainstream, rolling along in its depth the idea of the 'more real', always the unattainable goal of the movement, always beyond the grasp of art.

By piecing together the story of the Symbolist movement up to 1910, the year in which it was first challenged from within and its chief protagonists went on to concentrate on producing works of art, I have essentially sought to provide a map of this river from the source to the beginning of the delta, to chart the tributary streams, and it is this empirical approach which has dictated the structure of the book. Since I write here for students of Russian literature, rather than for specialists, I

have endeavoured to establish the main characters of my story one at a time before showing how they interacted with one another. The chronology at the end should act as a corrective to any confusion this may cause, especially at the beginning, where I was very conscious in writing of the dichotomy between earlier-established Petersburg Symbolists and their Moscow counterparts, with whose more declarative *début* the story of the movement is often begun. Briusov published the first two collections of *Russkie simvolisty* in 1894, whereas Hippus's first poems in her 'new manner', though written earlier, were published in 1895; but the battle for the Symbolist aesthetic, begun in 1892 with Merezhkovsky's 'On the causes for the decline . . .', and continued on the pages of *Severnnyi Vestnik*, was well underway in *Mir Iskusstva* before Briusov achieved maturity and recognition as an artist in his own right, or sufficient financial leverage to unite Petersburg and Moscow Symbolists about the 'Skorpion' publishing house and on the pages of its almanac *Severnnye Tsvety* at the turn of the century. *Vesy*, begun in 1904, the last year of *Mir Iskusstva* and *Novyi Put'*, though of central importance, was founded only after the literary debut of the so-called second generation of Russian Symbolism (Viacheslav Ivanov and Bely in 1902 and Blok in 1903), and its function was primarily to assess and explain, not to pioneer and promote the 'new art'.

So much for the overall plan or layout of this book. The approach, broadly speaking, has been that of the chronicler rather than the critic. I have sought primarily to present texts in context, to present thought, prose and poetry (the last both in the original and on-page translation) in a meaningful way as the work of particular people at a particular time in history and in a particular country, but also as text, as something that stands on its own, the appreciation of which can be heightened by an awareness of structure and device. The word 'strategy' (which I acknowledge can be useful in special articles for the specialist) does not enter into the vocabulary of this book. It is not an attempt to take foes at unawares, but to present friends to a new generation of readers and, having introduced them, to let their voices sound for themselves in the context of their time.

Acknowledgements

I would like to record my gratitude – in the chronological order suggested by the genesis of this book – to Henry Gifford, editor of *Cambridge Studies in Russian Literature*, who commissioned it, was my first reader and supported me with help and advice when it turned out a different kind of book to that envisaged by the original contract; to Malcolm Jones, his successor, another early reader unstinting in his support and advice; to William Harrison for unfailing help and support and to the University of Durham for allowing me to take six months leave and keeping up my superannuation contributions while I wrote and researched Parts III and IV; to my friend the editor Catherine Carver who helped, out of the goodness of her heart, to cut and shape the first version of the text and whose approbation, constructive criticism and wonderful eye for bunkum of all kinds kept me going through times of discouragement; to Katharina Brett of Cambridge University Press for supporting my applications to the British Academy and to my own university for subventions; to the British Academy and the University of Durham for the generous subventions granted – without which the book could not have been published in its present form; to Julian Graffy for impeccable constructive editing far beyond the call of duty and for invaluable suggestions for the bibliography; to Christine Cumming for her unfailing patience and efficiency in typing and retyping from manuscript; to Kevin Taylor of Cambridge University Press for picking up where Katharina Brett left off and for advocating the publication of this book in its present form.

I would like also to thank archivists in the Pushkin House (Academy of Sciences of the USSR as it was when I worked there); of the Central State Archive of Literature (TsGALI) and the manuscript department of the Lenin Library in Moscow; and of the manuscript department of the Saltykov-Shchedrin Public Library in St Petersburg. Of my colleagues, to so many of whom I owe so much, I would like to distinguish the late Zara Grigor'evna Mints of Tartu University with whom I talked in Munich about her plans (and mine) for a *History of Russian Symbolism* – curiously and quite unbeknownst to one another we often found our-

selves working simultaneously on the same subjects, and it is a loss to us all that she did not live to complete her grand project; and the late Ronald E. Peterson, with whom I also talked, thought I did not see his pioneering study until it was published in 1993 when this *History* was already at the stage of first proofs. The book is dedicated to the memory of my teachers who supervised my research on the origins of Russian 'Decadence' at Cambridge and on the life and times of Aleksandr Blok in St Petersburg.

Its shortcomings are, of course, my own.

Note on the text

Primary sources, and other sources belonging to the period covered by this book, are listed with full particulars in the Select Bibliography at p. 432, but are cited in condensed form in the Notes; secondary sources are cited in full on their first appearance, and in condensed form thereafter. Real names of authors habitually writing under literary pseudonyms are recorded in the Index; the notes record the name under which a work was first published but, in the case of occasional pseudonyms adopted by authors habitually writing under their own name, the real name is given in brackets; i.e. Nikolai Minsky, Fedor Sologub – but Avrelii (Briusov), Anton Krainyi (Hippius). Reference to Symbolists' works are normally given to first publication and to some more widely available publication, the *Collected Works (Sobranie sochinenii)* if such exist, or publications of poetry in the Biblioteka Poeta series. In the case of Bely and Bal'mont reference has been made both to the respective Biblioteka Poeta series and to the further commentaries provided by John Malmstad and Vladimir Markov (Munich: Wilhelm Fink 1982, 1988). The fact that the volume of A. Belyi, *Stikhotvoreniia* (1982) containing Bely's *Urna* and *Pepel* is still forthcoming has made it possible to refer only to the earlier poetry in vol. I, but Malmstad's notes in vol. III cover these books also and page references to them are given throughout.

ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviations and short forms are identified at the first instance. The following acronyms are used throughout.

ANSSSR	Akademiia Nauk SSSR (Academy of Sciences of the USSR)
LN	Literaturnoe nasledstvo (Literary Heritage)
MI	<i>Mir Iskusstva</i> (The World of Art)
NP	<i>Novyi Put'</i> (The New Way)
NY	New York
NZh	<i>Novaia Zhizn'</i> (New Life)

<i>PSS</i>	<i>Polnoe sobranie sochinenii</i> (Complete Works)
<i>SPb</i>	Saint Petersburg (Pb when Petersburg)
<i>SS</i>	<i>Sobranie sochinenii</i> (Collected Works)
<i>STs</i>	<i>Severnye Tsvety</i> (Northern Flowers)
<i>VE</i>	<i>Vestnik Evropy</i> (Herald of Europe)
<i>VZh</i>	<i>Voprosy Zhizni</i> (Questions of Life)
<i>ZR</i>	<i>Zolotoe Runo</i> (The Golden Fleece)

All *Collected Works* (*Sobranie sochinenii*) of Symbolist authors are referred to by author, *SS* and volume number. The last (ninth) volume of Blok's 1962–3 *SS*, published in 1965 under the title *Zapisnye knizhki*, is referred to as *ZK*.

Prologue: decadence or rebirth?

Напрасно так мало обращают внимания на декадентов, это болезнь времени, и она заслуживает серьезного отношения.

Лев Толстой*

To understand the way in which the first rumour of decadence, the cultural malaise which prepared the ground for Symbolism, reached the wider Russian public in the early 1890s, we must set the origins of Russian Symbolism in the context of contemporary art and literature and see it for what it was: a vigorous offshoot from the gnarled and ailing tree of European culture.

By the second half of the nineteenth century Europe had become unprecedentedly powerful in science, industry and technology: a small continent which had thrown a net of diverse influences over the rest of the world, passing on its faith, imposing its laws, spreading its culture. Yet long before the cataclysms of the twentieth century, a sense of oppression, a growing unease, was felt. Dostoevsky said simply: 'everything is undermined'. 'Life has gone dry at the source', was how his 'Silver Age' disciple Vasilii Rozanov put it. Max Nordau, one of the sturdiest European defenders of positivism and progress, called it 'a slight moral sea-sickness'.¹

The cause? Of the many causes, perhaps the most basic was the crisis of faith. It is well to remember, when we consider Russia specifically, that this easternmost bastion of Europe had passed through the age of faith, missed the Renaissance, but was exposed, through its educated upper classes, to the full force of the Enlightenment. The Orthodox Church, however, and the mass of the people were at first scarcely affected by it – an anomaly which created a curious cultural fault, extending right through to the Revolution of 1917. The Russian Intelligentsia, which came into being during the first half of the nineteenth century when

* 'It is a mistake to pay so little attention to the decadents, it is a sickness of the time and deserves serious attention.' Lev Tolstoy.

individuals of 'other ranks' (in Russian, the 'raznochinstsy') began to make their mark in educated society, straddled this fault. Culturally, even those who had emerged from the people, the priesthood or the 'dark kingdom' of the merchant class, were on the same side of the divide as the ruling classes. Politically, even those who stemmed from the Establishment were opposed to the status quo and wanted, or believed they wanted, to see the people invested with dignity and power. As members of the Intelligentsia, writers and artists of the Silver Age* still bestrode the cultural fault, which was felt – by the turn of the century – to be fast becoming a chasm. As individuals, they shared fully in the European crisis of faith, yet felt, like Dostoevsky's Versilov, that, being Russian, they still 'had a choice': to return to the faith of the people.

For the materialists it was, of course, desirable to educate the people in their own atheism, necessarily militant in countries kept in order by an established church. For the agnostic liberal progressives, however, materialism appeared coarse, a threat to their culture, and they embraced other systems: idealist or positivist. Both the chaos of unknowing and the possibility of faith were tidied away 'beyond the limits of cognition', but it was strongly felt mankind could not do without 'moral law' . . . without some sense of individual worth and purpose. For many thinking men this need was filled by Kant's 'categorical imperative' or modifications thereof – and by a residual sense of awe in the face of 'the starry heavens above', about which it was unnecessary to think because demonstrably impossible to think with any precision.

For a while, this had actually led to an upsurge in confident self-reliance. Applied science had, after all, given man a hitherto undreamt-of control over his environment, a control which was clearly on the increase. That mankind – armed with the categorical imperative – would know how to exercise that control in the interests of the majority was scarcely doubted. Religion had inculcated a residual morality which was now supposed to show itself in reasonable concern for others: 'Altruism, as preached on every note in the scale by the new generation, is that same love that was proclaimed by Christ, but in a higher, more perfect form', wrote Anna Pavlovna Filosofova, a Petersburg society hostess and philanthropist of the radical 1860s.²

Yet in 1898 Anna Pavlovna's home was to become the headquarters

* The flowering of Russian culture in the early nineteenth century, associated primarily with Aleksandr Pushkin and the elaboration of modern literary Russian, is known as the 'Golden Age'. The term 'Silver Age', with its connotations of art, dusk and the reflected brilliance of moon and stars, is normally applied to the last twenty-five years of Tsarist culture (1892–1917), though there are arguments in favour of variously calculated overlap into the Soviet period (usually until 1921).

of the first journal of the Silver Age, Diaghilev's *Mir Iskusstva* (The World of Art), and her Europe was already the Europe of Schopenhauer, Baudelaire, Dostoevsky's *Chelovek iz podpol'ia* (The Man from Underground). 'Let all the world go hang, but let me always have tea to drink', exclaims the 'Man from Underground'.³ To Dostoevsky's contemporaries the remark suggested moral insanity, but to the generation that succeeded him it appeared merely honest. 'The human being', said Friedrich Nietzsche, 'is that which must be overcome'.⁴ As faith faded, altruism was no longer respected. Why, it was asked, should we help the weak to flourish? Simply to make ourselves morally comfortable? Planned or enforced by society, the bearing of one another's burdens would surely sap initiative and self-sufficiency and lead to the tyranny of the very strong over the very weak – devitalisation. Yet the alternative of a jungle society 'red in tooth and claw' was too harsh to contemplate.

There was, not surprisingly, a strong negative, in part escapist, reaction in the face of these terrible alternatives. Nietzsche recorded the dereliction of his generation: '... there is no longer for you any rewarder or recompenser, no final corrector – there is no longer any reason in what happens, no longer any love in what happens to you – there is no longer any resting-place open to your heart ...'⁵ Deeply disorientated, people began to grope for short-cuts to lost certainties.

For some, there was a strong inclination to Parnassian retreat: the world of art was consciously preferred to the world of nature. For others, there was a reversion to curious cults, spiritualism and table-turning. Those of a more scholarly turn of mind explored the possibilities of older cultures, the religions of the Orient and the revival of myth from a time when humanity had been more in tune with the natural world. A kind of refined atavism, more bookish and potentially pernicious than the Romantic 'back to nature', pervaded the cultural climate. For the vulnerable and psychologically unstable, there was the possibility of experimenting with drugs, drink, sexual perversion and every kind of 'evil' not immediately and inevitably punishable by law, behind which there often lurked an obsessive desire to prove the existence of Supreme Good 'from the opposite': 'Aimes-tu les damnés, dites, connais-tu l'irrémissible?'⁶

Such were the negative reactions to the moral and religious crisis. Science and the philosophy of the ancients suggested another, cataclysmic but more positive direction. After all, our own green and populous planet had originally been hurled into space by a solar explosion and there were those who recalled with a thrill of hope Plato's thinking on the 'infinity' of matter which can yet be shaped and moulded to resemble the Forms: the doctrine that cosmos was born of chaos.

So there arose a new kind of nostalgia: for the distant, the far future

which would come into being after some great catastrophe. This took many forms: apocalyptic foreboding; national Messianism of all shades and hues; the emergence of such concepts as the Master Race and the Superman; a yearning towards some new, more vital culture conjured out of catastrophe by a superhuman effort of will. Marxism, with its hopes for the 'withering away of the state' after the Revolution, as understood – or perhaps misunderstood – by many, had much in common with such voluntaristic cults, although it denied their 'mysticism'.

The very acceptance of the ethos of revolution suggested a readiness to welcome dissonance, albeit as the necessary prelude to harmony and, in the early years of Russian decadence, Rimbaud's call to 'change life' seemed compatible with – although, to the poets at least, more drastic than – the Marxist call to change society. How the two blended in their minds can be seen from Osip Mandel'shtam's account of his private pilgrimage, in the aftermath of the Revolution of 1905, through wasted villages and smouldering baronial estates, to visit the grave of Ivan Konevskoi, 'the morning sacrifice of Russian Symbolism', who had drowned in the river Aa in the summer of 1901. Mandel'shtam, a romantic schoolboy who loved the poetry of Bal'mont but carried the Erfurt Programme in his pocket, felt that reading the political treatise brought him closer to his predecessor than poeticising after the manner of Zhukovsky:

I felt all the world as an economy, an economy run by humanity [. . .] and yes, my quick sense of hearing, alerted by the distant threshing machine out in the fields, caught the sound not of barley swelling to ripeness and growing heavy in the ear, not of the northern apple, but of the world, the capitalist world, swelling before it fell!⁷

But after the old world fell: What then? Would man conquer death, disease, personal tragedy, his own shortcomings? And was even a just and materially successful society really the summit of man's ambition? Dmitrii Merezhkovsky, one of the first ideologists of Russian Decadence, Symbolism or Modernism (the terms were used successively and often interchangeably), wrote that to relieve man of social injustice would be like curing a consumptive of toothache. It would simply set his mind and senses free to feel more acutely the anguish of mortality in the uncreated, purposeless void of existence.

For those who persisted in asking these eternal, accursed questions (the 'children's questions', as Aleksandr Blok called them), the quest led out into the realm of tragedy. Lev Shestov once wrote that – in this realm – even positivists accept the possibility of effect without cause. Tragedy replaces juridical guilt by the irrational but not unreasonable concept of

'tragic guilt'. The tragic hero can be slain by society, but can only be judged by the gods. 'Despair', Shestov wrote, 'is the most solemn and the greatest moment of our life. Up till now we have had to do with people and the laws of humanity, now – with eternity and the absence of all laws.'⁸ Eventually, this road via 'the absence of all laws' was to lead back to a new acceptance of the moral imperative: whether as tragic courage, existential choice or acceptance of the implications of the cross of Christ . . .

This took time and, to a society built on rationalism and belief in progress, the way seemed retrograde. In the years before the emergence of Symbolism, European literature had concentrated on depicting man in society. Literature – particularly in Russia – was acknowledged to be of interest only in so far as it pursued useful aims and its form was that of discursive argument and realistic or satirical description. Reading lyric poetry was considered a pastime, forgivable in pretty misses and young men in love. It was, therefore, scarcely surprising that the intellectual establishment – in Russia as in Europe – resisted both the *fin-de-siècle* mentality as such and the art-forms which a new generation was elaborating not only to express, but to help overcome, their own isolation.

This resistance was perhaps most trenchantly advocated by Max Nordau, a polyglot Hungarian Jew who lived in Paris and wrote in German, practised medicine and combined a particular interest in criminal psychology with a wide-ranging curiosity about literature, painting and the performing arts. This enlightened 'universal man' was one of the first to diagnose and seek to eradicate 'degeneracy', a term borrowed from the forensic psychiatric studies of his friend Cesare Lombroso of the University of Turin.

Nordau defined the subject of his book *Entartung* (Degeneracy, 1892) as a pathological condition not inconsistent with talent, or even genius. He considered its appearance in art in the second half of the nineteenth century as symptomatic of a social disease which in France (and afterwards in all other civilised countries) had been labelled 'fin-de-siècle', but which might be more justly termed 'fin-de-race', or even 'fin-de-classe'. The symptoms of 'degeneracy' Nordau defined as unhealthy nervousity, moral idiocy, 'cyclic' states of depression and exaltation, mysticism, childishness, atavism, an intellect so enfeebled as no longer to be capable of thinking in terms of cause and effect, and extreme subjectivity, sometimes passing into diagnosable egomania, combined with a tendency to congregate in groups – all, he insisted, abnormalities of the criminal mind well known to forensic psychiatrists. The perverted inclinations of the artistic as opposed to the criminal degenerate, Nordau maintained, do not

express themselves in actual crimes. Rather, the artist infects the healthy body of society with his own dangerous dreams and cravings. To do this he deploys techniques and methods suggested by his sick mind: synaesthesia, association of ideas and the babbling musicality of the lunatic who strings words together for the sake of their sound without regard for meaning. All these devices were associated with the theory and practice of Symbolism.

Nordau attacked Théophile Gautier's influential preface to Baudelaire's *Les Fleurs du mal*, most particularly the assertion that 'Poetry cannot, under pain of death or degradation, assimilate itself to science or morals.' With the innocence of pre-Freudian man, he insisted that morality 'has become, in the course of thousands of generations, an organised instinct'. It was, he maintained, dangerous for society when respectable people like newspaper critics took the part of degenerate artists. The task of the 'critical police' (Nordau deliberately extended the forensic analogy) was to expose and ridicule the propagators of such pernicious opinions.

Yet the influence of such degenerates, particularly Baudelaire, Nordau warned, had come to dominate not only the French but 'a portion also of the English', and, albeit to a lesser degree, Germany – though here artists had been longer protected than in 'the civilised nations of the West' thanks to the comparative dearth of industry and large cities. Neither Scandinavia, North America nor Russia (though presumably further even than Germany from the infections of civilisation) could be pronounced immune. Ibsen Nordau pilloried as a 'moral idiot' and Tolstoy he saw as a spoilt nobleman, foolish enough to envy the peasants their simple faith rather than their healthy minds: one who asks childish, unanswerable questions like 'What is the aim of life?' when all sensible, grown-up people have long since known that life has no aim.

Of the Russians, Turgenev gets a comparatively clean bill of health. At the time Nordau wrote his *magnum opus*, he appears to have been happily unaware of Dostoevsky. The English Pre-Raphaelites, however, incur his wrath no less than does Oscar Wilde, and Wagner is the subject of a separate and particularly scathing chapter.

The atavism of his contemporaries seemed to Nordau mere bestiality: beginning with Wagner, all the characteristics of whose art seemed to him 'to point not forward, but far behind', and ending with Nietzsche – 'enthusiastic over the "freely roving beasts of prey"'. But Nordau, in his way, was quite as ruthless as Nietzsche. If, he argued, it were true, as some critics dared to suggest, that degenerate sensibility was essential to the artist, then mankind would continue to build the good society without art, although this 'would, doubtless, destroy a charming delusion'. Science, he said, 'has not hesitated to pronounce faith a subjective error of

man and would, therefore, suffer far fewer scruples in characterising art as something morbid if facts should convince us that such is the case . . .'⁹

I have dwelt at length on Nordau, not only because his book might well serve as a negative compendium of the cosmopolitan sources of Russian Symbolism and because his views were typical of the so-called 'liberal censorship', in Russia as well as in western Europe, but because *Entartung* alarmed and directly influenced the doyen of Russian Populist critics, N. K. Mikhailovsky, who reviewed the first German edition in the January 1893 number of the journal of *Russkoe Bogatstvo* (Russian Wealth). Although he rejected Nordau's assessment of Tolstoy, Mikhailovsky took to heart the idea that ordinary citizens should be safeguarded against 'the very small minority who honestly find pleasure in the new tendencies [. . .]'. The old radical's convictions were perfectly attuned to Nordau's idea that 'the power to exercise an irresistible boycott' should lie not with the policeman, nor yet with the church, but rather with literary critics and 'all healthy and moral men'.¹⁰

In the very next number of the journal, Mikhailovsky felt called upon to exert this power of boycott against a Russian author, in the interests, as he no doubt honestly thought, of the healthy youth of his own country. In doing so, he conferred instant notoriety on the first serious discussion of 'the new trends' to be published in Russia. Its author was in fact an ex-disciple of his, the scholarly young poet and essayist Dmitrii Sergeevich Merezhkovsky.

In Mikhailovsky's view, Merezhkovsky's publication, at his own expense, of two lectures delivered on 7 and 14 December 1892 in St Petersburg under the title 'O prichinakh upadka i o novykh tehnieniakh sovremennoi russkoi literatury' ('On the reasons for the decline and on the new trends in contemporary Russian literature'), was an event to be deplored. More particularly was it to be deplored because the author, who had made his name with the Populists as critic and poet, had in the same year of 1892 elected to bring out his first collection of poems with the conservative publisher Suvorin and to call it *Simvoly* (Symbols).¹¹

Fresh from his defence of Tolstoy against Nordau, Mikhailovsky could hardly be expected to admit that conditions in Russia were such as to allow for the spontaneous rise of literary decadence. 'We are still too young,' he wrote, 'to be so disillusioned with life and to fear it so.' Not only France, Mikhailovsky warned, but 'Europe generally' was suffering a reversion to 'mysticism', with 'magi', 'neo-Buddhists', 'theosophers' and the like cropping up at every turn. The artistic expressions of these trends, he continued, were 'symbolism' and 'impressionism'. However: 'France is one thing and Russia is another.'¹²

Although Merezhkovsky's poetry was Symbolist in name only, it did express some *fin-de-siècle* attitudes. Also, the title was a declaration of intent and of solidarity with the French school, recently described with some sympathy by Zinaida Vengerova in the influential periodical *Vestnik Evropy* (The Messenger of Europe).¹³ Mikhailovsky made this connection in his polemical reply to Merezhkovsky's pamphlet. In developed capitalist countries like France, he conceded, the appearance of Symbolism and other symptoms of cultural exhaustion such as extreme individualism and aestheticism, was justifiable as a 'protest'. But here, in pastoral, primitive Russia: what was Mr Merezhkovsky protesting against?

Essentially, of course, Merezhkovsky was protesting against people like Nordau in Europe and in Russia who regarded art as expendable, faith as a subjective error, and morality as a prejudice so 'useful' it must be defended with staves and clubs. He was protesting against the entire line of people whom his future ally Vasilii Rozanov, writing in that same year of 1892, had labelled 'the sad utilitarians of the last two centuries, [. . .] joyless organisers of human happiness'.¹⁴ He was also protesting against philanthropists whose love for their fellow men Nikolai Minsky, like Merezhkovsky a 'turncoat' populist, was to characterise as 'a shop window, lukewarm love which does not burn themselves'¹⁵. Merezhkovsky did not, however, make his protest as an advocate of contemporary art from abroad. 'It is an unforgivable error', he wrote, 'to think that idealism in art is some sort of a yesterday's invention of Paris fashion. It is a return to the old, the eternal, the immortal.'¹⁶

Merezhkovsky, as another early ally, Akim Volynsky, was quick to point out, is not here using the term 'idealism' philosophically, but 'with the naïveté of a schoolgirl', as a blanket term to express 'the search for the . . . inexpressible, the dark, the subconscious', and 'love for the people, based on profound and ardent subjectivity and not on utilitarian politics or economic calculation'.¹⁷

Merezhkovsky advocated the 'new techniques' in art, because, thanks to 'mystical content, symbols and the broadening of the artistic sensibility', he considered that these techniques were fitted to express not only 'the brilliantly illumined *terra firma* of science' but also 'the dark ocean lying beyond the limits of our knowledge'. There is here an acceptance of (together with a desperate desire to escape from) Kant's theory of cognition which merits Volynsky's reproach as to the loose use of the word idealism. Merezhkovsky felt that Kant had erected a 'Cyclopean wall' between the life we can observe and comprehend and the meaning of life. To men like Nordau and Mikhailovsky, busy advancing the frontiers of science and improving society, the Kantian wall was a sheltering screen; but not to Merezhkovsky. The task of modern art, as the young critic saw

it, was to explore beyond the realm of pure reason, where the law of cause and effect must always be paramount.

If absolute truth cannot be reached by the deductive process, it can at least be approached through the relativity of symbols. To illustrate his meaning, Merezhkovsky recalled the crumbling remains of a Grecian sculpture of a naked youth leading a great horse. Implicit in the rhythmic proportion of the sculpture was the idea of man's kinship with the natural world and of his stewardship of it: the origin and the purpose, spontaneously and graciously symbolised through beauty. 'Symbols should arise naturally and involuntarily from the depths of reality', he explains. Symbolism, in other words, was not a matter of describing one known thing in terms of another. It was a breakthrough: 'Words only define and limit, whereas symbols express the unlimited aspect of thought.' Symbolism and Impressionism, Merezhkovsky claims, are international movements necessary to enable exploration 'beyond the wall', and also to provide that element of discovery or 'wonder' which both Poe and Baudelaire (and before them Plato) had considered to be an essential ingredient of every human achievement, every true work of art, every new thought.

Although Merezhkovsky was acutely aware of the tenuous, even dangerous nature of the Symbolist quest, it was the thrill and excitement of emancipation – the right of art to complete autonomy, to freedom from every other discipline but its own exacting discipline of beauty – that he chose to emphasise. Indeed, the 'decline' (*upadok*) he speaks of in his pamphlet is not Nordau's 'degeneracy' or *fin-de-siècle* decadence (*dekadentstvo*), but, on the contrary, the decline in artistic standards brought about by preaching the 'useful prejudice' of morality as though it were sacred truth:

... only ugliness, only banality in art are immoral. No pornography, no seductive pictures of vice debauch the human heart so much as the lie about the good, as the banal hymn to the good, as hot tears shed by naïve readers over falsely humane sentiments and bourgeois morality. He who is in the habit of weeping over a lie will pass by truth and beauty with a cold heart.¹⁸

Merezhkovsky's lectures were heard and read by a mere handful of people. Mikhailovsky's attack upon them echoed throughout literate Russia. It was primarily responsible for the myth, still stubbornly recurrent in studies of the period, that Russian Symbolism was a direct transplant from France, without *raison d'être* in Russian society. Contrariwise, the fact that it was Mikhailovsky who labelled the new 'trends' as 'degenerate' or 'decadent' engendered an equally misleading attribution of the origins of Symbolism in Russia to a purely local reaction against

the utilitarian values of Populism.¹⁹ Although Russian Symbolism was part of a wider European trend it was primarily a creative, poetic movement. Viacheslav Ivanov, in the retrospective articles he devoted to the origins of the school in 1910–12, emphasises the importance of its roots in *Russian* literature: the prose of Dostoevsky and Gogol' and the poetry of Vladimir Solov'ev, Afanasii Fet and, above all, Fedor Tiutchev. Although, as we have seen, there can be no doubt of the cosmopolitan nature of the 'new trends', there is the unmistakable ring of poetic truth in Ivanov's insistence that 'symbolism does not cut itself off from the soil; its desire is to combine roots with stars and to grow up as a starry flower from familiar, native roots.'²⁰

Tiutchev, whom Ivanov identified as the first to elaborate a 'consistently applicable method' based on suggestion rather than communication, began publishing in Pushkin's *Sovremennik* (The Contemporary), but the bulk of his poetry – sonorous, moody, impregnated with German *Naturphilosophie* – was written later. To the Symbolists, most of whom only came to appreciate Pushkin comparatively late in life, he represented an alternative tradition. In 1910, Valerii Briusov wrote of how: 'Tiutchev stands as the great master and originator of the poetry of suggestion, on an equal footing with Pushkin, the creator of our truly classic poetry [...]. Only at the end of the nineteenth century did Tiutchev find true successors, who accepted his precepts and tried to approach the perfection of his images.'²¹ What fascinated Tiutchev's spiritual heirs, Briusov's contemporaries, was above all his awareness of the difficulty of communication:

Как сердцу высказать себя?
Другому как понять тебя?
Поймет ли он, чем ты живешь?
Мысль изреченная есть ложь.*

This last line – 'The thought, once spoken, is a lie' – became a Symbolist slogan. However, it was above all Tiutchev's poetic technique which interested his 'true successors', his ability to achieve the impossible, to express the inexpressible, to show how 'Poniatnym serdtsu iazykom, tverdiat o neponiatnoi muke' ('pain beyond understanding is told in a language that speaks to the heart'). The music of his poetry could conjure the sobbing cadences of the night wind and assemble the most contradictory insights and desires in majestic harmonies – as in the famous do/don't invocation:

* 'How can the heart tell all it has to say? / How can another understand you? / Will he understand all that you live by? / The thought, once spoken, is a lie.' From the poem 'Silentium'.

О, страшных песен сих не пой,
 Про древний хаос, про родимый!
 Как жадно мир души ночной
 Внимает повести любимой.*

This man who saw love as a duel, who wished only to keep himself to himself and to shine in unseen splendour like ‘a day-time star’, wrote of human nature and of nature with disturbing nihilism and sensual power. What sultry desire is expressed by the howling ‘u’s’ and guttural double consonants in the line: ‘Ugriumi, tusklyi ogn’ zhelan’ia’ (‘The dour, dull flame of desire’) – yet how brightly the summer rain patters on the leaves in a rush of silvery vowels, sibilants and labials in the poem about the death of his last love: ‘Lil teplyi dozhd, ego strui / Po list’iam veselo zvuchali’ (‘Warm rain poured down, its torrents / Pattered merrily on the leaves’). This man, whose sensibilities were so close to those of the Russian writers of the 1890s, pointed the same way as their models from western Europe: towards music and nuance, paradox and oxymoron, dream and symbol. Writing of Tiutchev, it seemed natural to Merezhkovsky to quote, or rather misquote, Nietzsche: ‘Die Nacht ist tief, und tiefer als der Tag gedacht.’²² Tiutchev’s doubts were in advance of his generation: ‘You must either bow before the *madness of the cross*’, he once said to a friend, ‘or deny everything.’ He was, perhaps, the first Russian poet of the abyss:

Но меркнет день, настала ночь,
 Пришла — и с мира рокового
 Ткань благодатную покрова
 Сорвав, отбрасывает прочь . . .
 И бездна нам обнажена.†

Afanasii Fet, the other immediate poetic precursor of Russian Symbolism, was an army officer and an astute landowner, a hefty asthmatic with the lightest of light touches in verse. Fet was one of nature’s impressionists. Briusov saw in his poetry ‘a call to the great intoxication of the moment which suddenly, beyond the colours and the sounds, opens into a transparency through which we can glimpse the “sun of the world” – out of time into eternity.’²³ Konstantin Bal’mont was perhaps the first to learn from Fet’s mastery of verbal music. For the younger symbolists, he was a cult figure. Andrey Bely, between the age of seventeen

* ‘O, do not sing these dread songs / Of ancient chaos, native chaos! / How eagerly the world of the nocturnal soul / Harkens to the beloved story’. From the poem ‘O chem ty voesh’, vetr nochnoi’.

† ‘But day grows dim, night falls; / She has come – and from the fateful world / Has stripped the blessed veil, / And cast it aside . . . / And the abyss is laid bare before us.’ From the poem ‘Den’ i noch’.

and nineteen, admired Fet more than any other poet, accepting him together with the concept of music propounded by Schopenhauer (whom Fet had, in his time, translated into Russian), and finding in his poetry 'a harmonious meeting of thought and feeling: their transformation into something else again. Of course, for me he is a "SYMBOLIST"'. When Aleksandr Blok's fiancée told him shyly that he was as great a poet as Fet, they both felt that she was confirming his place in the 'apostolic succession'. It was in Fet's understanding of the function of the poet that Blok found the precedent for the concept of self-immolation so central to his own, and from a poem by Fet that he took the title for his last collection: *Za gran'iu proshlykh dnei* (Beyond the Boundary of Bygone Days).²⁴

Perhaps as a reaction against the all-pervading utilitarianism of the age, Fet deliberately and consciously confined his poetry to the sphere of the beautiful, and was consequently dismissed as empty-headed and superficial by the critics of the 1860s, and as a 'hissing serpent' and a confirmed misanthrope by Saltykov-Shchedrin in the 1870s. He was virtually drummed out of literature for the twenty years between 1863 and 1883, the first victim of the 'critical police', a pre-Symbolist martyr and, as such, deeply revered by later generations.

Dostoevsky, in an article written two years before Fet's exclusion, in the momentous year of the Emancipation of the serfs, summed up the temporary uselessness and eternal worth of the artist by imagining Fet as an eighteenth-century Portuguese poet whose most famous lyric poem appears on the front page of a local newspaper on the very day of the Lisbon earthquake. People interested only in casualty lists and relief measures would have been shocked to read:

Шепот, робкое дыханье
Трели соловья,
Серебро и колыханье
Сонного ручья
Свет ночной, ночные тени,
Тени без конца.
Ряд волшебных изменений
Милого лица,
В дымных тучках пурпур розы
Отблеск янтаря,
И лобзания, и слезы,
И заря, заря!*

* 'Whispering, timid breathing, / Nightingale trills, / Silver and rippling / Of the sleepy stream, / Light of night, night shadows, / Shadows without end. / Succession of enchanting changes / Of the beloved face, / In smoky clouds the purple of the rose / Gleams of amber, / And kisses, and tears, / And the dawn, the dawn!' (Untitled)

and when, Dostoevsky continued,

by way of an afterword to the poem, there was a prose appendage encapsulating the well-known poetic maxim that he who dares not leap head first from the fourth floor is no poet [...] it seems to me that there and then they would have executed their famous poet before all the populace on the main square, and not in the least because he had written a poem with no verbs [...] but rather because the poet's act in celebrating such entertaining things at such a moment in their lives would really have seemed excessively offensive and unbrotherly.

Nevertheless, Dostoevsky concluded, 'thirty or fifty years later they would put up a monument to him on the main square for his astonishing verses in general, and for "the purple of the rose" in particular [...]'.²⁵

Fet died in the year of Merezhkovsky's lecture on 'The new trends'. Vladimir Solov'ev, although mentioned by Ivanov among the precursors of Russian Symbolism, influenced the content, not the form, of their poetry. Other poets he does not mention such as Aleksei Apukhtin, Apollon Maikov, Iakov Polonsky and Konstantin Sluchevsky were fatally constricted, objectively, psychologically and linguistically, by the relegation of their art to the category of 'charming delusion'. They wrote for and were dearly loved by a cultivated, sensitive minority. Their words have the nostalgic, musty elegance of pot-pourri. It fell to the Symbolists and, in the words of Nikolai Gumilev, in particular to Bal'mont (disciple of Fet, inspiration of Viacheslav Ivanov and Bely),

to guess the truth, plain as day, old as time, but very difficult to understand, that in the end, poetry consists of words, just as painting consists of colours, music of an alternation of sounds. He [Bal'mont] guessed that words pronounced for the first time live, pronounced for the second time exist and finally, pronounced for the third time, only are.²⁶

Nevertheless, this poetry of words that 'existed' and 'only were', written on the eve of the day the axe struck at the Cherry Orchard, was the poetry of the Symbolists' childhood and youth and provided a continuum of chiming nostalgia just below the surface of their conscious thought:

Вечерний звон [...] И в отдаленье,
Сквозь гул тревоги городской
Ты мне пророчишь вдохновенье
Или могилу и покой.
Но жизнь и смерти призрак миру
О чем-то вечном говорят,
И как ни громко пой ты, — лиру
Колокола перезвонят.*²⁷

* 'Evening chimes [...] and in the distance, / Through the roar of the town's alarm / You foretell inspiration for me / Or the grave and peace. / But life and the shade of death / Tell the world of something eternal, / And however loud you sing, the lyre / Will always be outrung by church bells.'

The simple juxtaposition of art and eternity in this poem by Iakov Polonsky is a fundamental subtext of Aleksandr Blok's poetry. Indeed, so frequent are the quotations or echoes from the poem that one has the impression it rang on somewhere at the back of the younger poet's mind all his life long. Yet the roaring sound Blok heard when writing of the Russian people was different from the 'roar of the town's alarm' (he actually made a note of the fact at the time).²⁸ It had more to do with the civic tradition of Russian poetry which was also a very powerful ingredient in the Silver-Age cocktail.

The influence of that tradition was not that of the Symbolists' immediate predecessor, the elegiac Semen Nadson, a personal friend of Merezhkovsky's who enjoyed cult status during the 1880s only to be rejected – even by his former admirers – as the epitome of civic sentimentality and flaccid prosody. Rather, it was that of the more robust poet who originally gave Nadson house room in his famous journal *Otechestvennye Zapiski* (Notes of the Fatherland), Nikolai Nekrasov. Ivanov does not mention Nekrasov in his list of predecessors and, indeed, did his best to combat his influence on Blok and Bely. Merezhkovsky, on the other hand, in his comparative study 'Dve tainy russkoi poezii' (Two mysteries of Russian poetry), unhesitatingly ranks him with Tiutchev: '[...] in Russian squiredom, in Russian serfdom – Tiutchev, as if on a bed of roses, was lulled by mortal indolence, whereas Nekrasov was tormented by mortal anguish, wounded to death by the thorns of those same roses.'²⁹

So many terrible things had by then been said about Nekrasov, acclaimed in his heyday as the greatest poet Russia had ever produced . . . Turgenev complained that his verses smelt of waterweed, pike and roach; Tolstoy ascribed his success to the fact that his 'false folksiness happened to please the general public at the time of writing'. By the turn of the century, the consensus among people of taste was that Nekrasov was at best a radical journalist who happened to write in rhyme, at worst an out-and-out hypocrite who made good money from civic sorrow.

Nekrasov himself wrote: 'Mne bor'ba meshala byt' poetom, / Pesnia mne meshala byt' bortsom.' ('The struggle hindered me in being a poet / Song hindered me in being a fighter.') He had not achieved, or known how to achieve, or tried to achieve, the identification of self with the sicknesses of his age which the amoral and individualistic 'decadents' were to consider a *sine qua non* for the lyric poet who aspires to speak for others, and which eventually brought about a new concept of civic poetry. Nekrasov could see a young peasant woman flogged, compare her to his 'bleeding, knout-torn muse' – and go on to eat a good dinner. He could cry out:

От ликующих, празднo болтающих,
 Обагряющих руки в крови,
 Уведи меня в стан погибающих
 За великое дело любви!*

aware that his cry would be taken up by a whole generation of youthful terrorists as a blessing upon their violence and martyrdom. 'That poem is in very truth all soaked in blood', wrote Vasilii Rozanov, looking back from the comparatively peaceful year of 1911. Yet, in the same breath, Rozanov continues:

Nekrasov has ten or so pages of verse that are *closer to folk poetry* than any single one of our poets or prose writers has as yet been able to achieve. Those roughly 2/10 of his verses are an *eternal contribution* to our literature and *will never die*.³⁰

Some of that two-tenths did pass into the anonymous immortality of folksong. Bely dedicated his second book of poetry, *Pepel'* (Ash, 1909), a book inspired by the social unrest leading up to the 1905 Revolution, to Nekrasov. And it was Nekrasov's ballad about the robber Kudeiar, 'O dvuk velikikh greshnikakh' ('Of two great sinners'), that was thundering and wailing at the back of Blok's mind, not Polonsky's 'Evening Chimes' – the roar of the awakened folk element, not that of the modern city – that he heard while writing *The Twelve*.

By 1915, Merezhkovsky was writing that 'now, but probably precisely and only now, Nekrasov is closer, more necessary and more contemporary than Tiutchev'.³¹ The modernists were anti-Utopian but never conservative, and the radical hopes of Nekrasov's generation – including the hope in revolution – were dear to them, sacred even. The supposedly reactionary Rozanov wrote of this:

The ideal of the '60s was 'utilitarian', but in a kind of prophetic, holy sense. Did it give tone to a whole era, a specifically poetic tone? Yes. Living now in a grey and indecisive time, a time which has produced no ideas at all, a time which nurses no hopes in any direction, it is impossible not to feel most acutely the beauty of the '60s ...³²

Nevertheless, before they could recycle what was best in Nekrasov and the radical tradition, the creators of the 'new artistic sensibility' had to exorcise the eight-tenths of this tradition (according to Rozanov's arithmetic, I have not weighed or measured!) which was anti-aesthetic and attitudinous. This was hard going. Hardest of all, perhaps, for the first generation of Symbolists, was the struggle to ban superficial civic commit-

* 'From those who rejoice and chatter idly / And have blood-stained hands, / Lead me into the camp of those who perish / For the great cause of love.' From the poem 'Rytsar' na chas'.

ment and lachrymose sentiment from their own poetry. Before they could achieve this, they had to challenge the authority of the utilitarian critics and find a journal willing to champion their cause and provide an outlet for their creative work.

Part 1

The art of the cell

1 Transitional writers (1892–1898)

Петухов ночное пенье
Холод утра это мы.

Д. С. Мережковский*

The first chill light of the dawning Silver Age emanated from the literary section of a formerly well-respected Populist journal, *Severnyi Vestnik* (The Northern Herald). The literary editor, Akim Volynsky (real name Akim L'vovich Flekser), was an old-fashioned Kantian idealist who in fact disapproved – both aesthetically and ideologically – of much that the new poets whose work he published were trying to do, and who not infrequently subjected their innovations to virulent criticism in his section of the journal.¹ Their enemies, however, were his: utilitarianism, materialism and the cultural complacency of the liberal establishment.

Volynsky had accepted the literary editorship of *Severnyi Vestnik* in 1891, shortly after Liubov' Gurevich took over as publisher and editor of the ailing journal in partnership with M. N. Al'bov, a relict of the Populist editorial board of the 1880s.² Volynsky was encouraged by Gurevich to use his position to further the cause of 'idealism in art'. He did not consider himself a 'symbolist' or a 'decadent', but he was brave enough to fly in the face of public opinion by publishing a handful of semi-outcast or debutant authors who had been branded as such, and thus, for a few brief years in a long, industrious life, became a mover of literature. Under Volynsky, although far from being exclusively an organ of Russian decadence or symbolism, *Severnyi Vestnik* did bring out original works by such authors as Minsky, Merezhkovsky, Merezhkovsky's wife, Zinaida Hippus, Fedor Sologub and Konstantin Bal'mont and a scattering of translations from Maeterlinck, Verlaine and D'Annunzio.

Moreover, in his capacity as literary editor, Volynsky paved the way for the acceptance of the new art by challenging – again with quixotic disregard for the cost to his own literary reputation – the glorious company of martyrs who had established the tradition of radical literary

* 'Cockcrow at night / Cold of morning – these are we'. Dmitrii Merezhkovsky.

criticism: Belinsky, Chernyshevsky, Dobroliubov, Pisarev and their successors in the 1880s and 1890s.³ Volynsky embarked upon this venture not in the name of any modern trend, but rather – like Merezhkovsky, though from a less cosmopolitan standpoint – in defence of the eternal values of literature. Russian literature, particularly, he maintained, was ‘austere, simple and serious’, whereas the radical critics had consistently denigrated it as ‘lacking in civic merit’.⁴ ‘Russian art’ he wrote, ‘in the persons of its most talented representatives, has always run contrary to the aspirations of the journalist reviewers’.⁵

In this spirit he launched out, in the pages of *Severnyi Vestnik*, into a polemical history of nineteenth-century literary criticism. Belinsky, whose writings on Russian literature were still immensely influential – Sologub, for instance, claimed to have read his complete works by the age of fourteen – Volynsky exculpated on the grounds that, when he first instituted the idea that literature should convey a civic moral, he could not have known where it would lead.⁶

It was Chernyshevsky, Volynsky maintained, who had formulated utilitarian demands more clearly, and with less feeling for literary form. He radically challenged Chernyshevsky’s definition of ‘content worthy of the attention of a thinking man’ as political or civic content: ‘Tell me *in the name of what* you wish people well and I will tell you whether I can be your comrade’, wrote Volynsky. ‘There is nothing in the world higher than abstract truth.’ Political questions he dismissed as ‘superficial’.⁷ Chernyshevsky’s successors, Dobroliubov and Pisarev, with their strident insistence on realism and usefulness, although they figure as ‘a generation of legendary militants’, are seen as leading in the wrong direction.⁸ Their ideas, strongly held and strongly advocated under great external pressure, had ‘been handed in for small change’ by their successors, ‘losing all their vital freshness’ in the process.

This careful retrospective, in the course of which Volynsky had done much to undermine the authority – at least in the sphere of art – of the men of the 1860s, led up to a scathing denunciation of the uncritical literary establishment, ‘people devoid of original mind or talent with a small stock of well-worn phrases from the current realist vocabulary, people incapable of independent cultural work’.⁸ It was time, Volynsky maintained, to give up ‘propagating false views’ on the excuse that they were ‘right for Russia’.⁹

Predictably, this attitude brought Volynsky under fire for ‘escapism’, for blinking the *real* issues of contemporary life in ‘much-suffering Russia’. There can be no doubt, however, of the sincerity of his conviction that ‘truth and life’ were directly connected.¹⁰

Another legacy of the 1860s, which particularly incensed Volynsky and

others who wished to change society's attitude to the arts, was the sheer bad manners customary in Russian literary polemics. These manners had, Volynsky suggested, been introduced by Dobroliubov and had 'engendered in Russian society a tendency to wild, malicious, cackling laughter'.¹¹

Merezhkovsky, in his 'O prichinakh upadka ...', had attributed the 'clipped, rather arrogant, Bazarov-like style' fashionable in literary criticism of the Populist type to Pisarev, after whom it had degenerated, transforming forcefulness into 'coarseness, irony – into an insulting familiarity towards the reader, simplicity – into contempt for the most necessary conventions'.¹² Volynsky was a good deal more explicit and emotional:

There is nothing more shameful than Russian journalists' polemics with their cynical fabrications, their lack of respect for human personality, the uncultured virulence in the way they use the basest words and expressions. [...] No, that is not liberalism: it is the expiring philosophy of people unable to stem the truly progressive torrent of the time and ready, in the blindness of their narrowly selfish interests, viciously to calumniate any and every display of honest thought.¹³

One sees here what Hippicus meant when she wrote of the deplorable style of 'Flekser's monstrous articles', but Flekser-Volynsky had good reason for his somewhat incoherent indignation. His courageous and unpopular stance had called down attacks from every side. *Novoe Vremia* (The New Times), for instance, should, in theory, as a consistently pro-government paper, have been ready at least to lend a favourable ear to an attack on radical criticism. Instead, their critic V. S. Burenin had subjected Volynsky's initial articles on Belinsky to two blistering reviews, in the second of which he quoted – with considerable relish – a letter approving his 'thrashing of the impertinent yid' [i.e. Volynsky] in the first. The liberal establishment, on the other hand, disapproved not of Volynsky's Jewish origins but of his opinions, and the Populist A. M. Skabichevsky submitted him to personal humiliation, having him turned away at the door of a jubilee dinner. The note, informing him in offensive tones that he would not be welcome, was, according to Volynsky, deliberately sent too late to prevent his attempt to attend the occasion.¹⁴

Hippicus, who also had difficulty placing her own and Merezhkovsky's works, likened the radicals to grim Old Testament figures with a passion for excommunicating heretics. 'The law of the liberals', she wrote in 1904, 'is called "freedom" but, for all that, it is not one whit less law.'¹⁵ Indeed, the long battle against the authorities had involved the Intelligentsia in a kind of schoolboy solidarity from which they ruthlessly excluded all those who broke their self-imposed rules. Though not actually 'expelled' from literature, Merezhkovsky, an enthusiastic propagandist of such 'empty

amusements' (as Chernyshevsky would have called them) as Aeschylus, Cervantes and Shakespeare, had scant hope of publishing in the more prestigious journals. Instead, he was forced to peddle his work to such magazines as *Mir Bozhii* (God's World), a 'literary and popular-scientific journal for self-education'; *Zhurnal dlia Vsekh* (literally the Russian *Everybody's*), a monthly illustrated publication with dim sepia photographs of famous paintings and shiny pen-and-ink drawings depicting scenes of high melodrama or lachrymose sentimentality in the spirit of the age; *Niva* (The Meadow), almost indistinguishable from *Zhurnal dlia Vsekh*, and *Trud* (Labour), a publication, in outward appearance at least, as uninspiring as its name. Hippius, with characteristic detached amusement, followed suit.

For both Merezhkovskys Volynsky and *Severnyi Vestnik* were a blessing. The literary editor was not afraid of Hippius's 'new manner' in poetry, which not only failed to take elsewhere but got him into serious trouble with his own editorial colleagues. He also agreed to serialise Merezhkovsky's first historical novel, *Otverzhennyi* (The Outcast), starting from January 1895, but submitted the work to unceremonious cutting. His relations with the author were not helped by the fact that, as Aleksei Remizov later mischievously remarked, he 'always wrote on the same subjects as Merezhkovsky'.¹⁶

Two books by Volynsky devoted principally to Dostoevsky – both compilations of previously published articles – came out in 1901 and 1904 respectively, and formed an integral part of the reappraisal of that author's work then in progress.¹⁷ Their appearance coincided with that of a two-volume study of Tolstoy and Dostoevsky by Merezhkovsky.

Not Dostoevsky, however – who was so to speak common property¹⁸ – but Leonardo da Vinci was the rock on which the alliance foundered. Hippius, in her biography of her husband, gives a vivid account of a journey to Italy undertaken à trois in 1896. Merezhkovsky had formed the intention of following up his novel *Otverzhennyi* on Julian the Apostate with a sequel about Leonardo, and was deep in research on the project, sharing his discoveries and expansively enlarging on his plans to his travelling companions. Volynsky, he thought, might well take up an allied subject: Machiavelli, for instance, a cult figure for European decadence. Volynsky, however, soon left the party, finding Merezhkovsky, who wanted to visit Leonardo's birthplace in an out-of-the-way mountain village and retrace his every step in Italy and France, an inordinately slow travelling companion. Two years later he refused to serialise Merezhkovsky's new novel in *Severnyi Vestnik*. The indignant author had to resort to yet another obscure journal, *Nachalo* (Beginning), to secure the financially essential contract for serialised publication.

According to Hippius, the couple were quite astonished when Volynsky brought out his own, luxuriously illustrated, life of *Leonardo da Vinci* in 1900, the year before Merezhkovsky's vast work was finally published in book form.¹⁹

This, however, affected them less than one might think. Volynsky's star was sinking, Merezhkovsky's very much in the ascendant. *Severnyi Vestnik*, meanwhile, had closed down in 1898, and the Merezhkovskys had withdrawn their cooperation the year before that, taking with them Minsky and Sologub. Hippius would have us believe that this happened because of her ineradicable distaste for Volynsky's literary style,²⁰ but the reasons were probably more complex. For one thing, *Severnyi Vestnik* never provided the Modernists with more than the most precarious of footholds. The political section of the journal remained firmly Populist and members of the staff still remembered the good old days when it had been the organ of the great Mikhailovsky. Volynsky himself looked on this as hard evidence that the new 'ideal' art was truly 'above' politics and not in any way 'reactionary' or even conservative. Nevertheless, in practice, he was torn between commitment to his fellow editors and to his wayward authors. In order to publish Hippius's sensational 'Posviashchenie' (Dedication) he had had to wait until Gurevich was on holiday, and she was not best pleased at the ensuing scandal. Al'bov actually resigned on the issue.

Volynsky, too, was far from wholehearted in his support for his new authors. 'Contemporary Russian literature', he wrote in *Severnyi Vestnik* in 1895, the year he published not only Merezhkovsky's *Otverzheniye*, but Hippius's 'Pesnia' (Song) and 'Posviashchenie' (Dedication) and Sologub's first novel *Tiazhelye sny'* (Oppressive Dreams), 'presents, in spite of a number of artistic talents, all the symptoms of aesthetic decadence and moral degeneracy.' 'Decadent' works not published in the journal, such as the first two numbers of Briusov's *Moskovskie simvolisty* (Moscow Symbolists) and the young Petersburg Symbolist Aleksandr Dobroliubov's *Natura naturans. Natura naturata*, he condemned out of hand; and, though he published Bal'mont's poetry, he blasted that poet's first two books for want of profundity and simplicity, while at the same time offending Minsky and Merezhkovsky by pointing out the younger writer's superior gift. He censured Sologub for moral turpitude and waxed ironic on the Nietzschean element in Merezhkovsky's novel and in his 1896 collection *Novye stikhotvoreniia* (New Poems).²¹

Although Volynsky disliked the Populists' 'materialism', he shared their optimistic view of human nature and their belief in progress: 'Humanity', he wrote, 'is constantly developing and the growth of moral and scientifically philosophic ideas is accomplished according to the

eternal law of the consummation of spiritual perfection.' In his review of P. P. Pertsov's *Filosofskie techeniia v russkoi poezii* (Philosophical Trends in Russian Poetry, 1896), a volume which, together with the same editor's anthology *Molodaia poeziia* (Young Poetry, 1895) was an important milestone in the modernists' reassessment of the past and present of their own literature, Volynsky deplored the 'decadent' acceptance of 'chaos' as the basis of existence, which, he said, made 'an empty chimera' of all moral ideas. What was needed, he argued, was 'a consistent philosophy, organised with methodical harmony, a philosophy *which does not hurry on ahead with the aid of arbitrary jumps*'.²²

The Symbolists – as we now see from Florensky's memoirs and new publications on Bely not untouched by scientific premonition – trusted instinctively in chaos and 'arbitrary jumps'. Nor did they relish being described as 'monstrous bats and feeble moths who will fade from sight in the first rays of the rising sun'.²³ In every respect, Volynsky and *Severnyi Vestnik* were still too close to the 'fathers' of Populism to provide a lasting shelter for the rebel 'children' preparing the way for Symbolism.

Yet when Mikhailovsky died in 1904, Hippicus could write with almost filial piety: 'His disciples have not renounced him, but have simply outlived him and gone further [...] Every truly Russian modern person should go through a stage of enthusiasm for Mikhailovsky [...]'.²⁴ This in itself was proof of how gradual was the shift and of how well the campaign for better-mannered criticism had, in fact, succeeded. In their own journals, *Mir Iskusstva*, *Novyi Put'* and *Vesy*, the 'decadents' were to put into practice the *desiderata* first elaborated in the literary section of *Severnyi Vestnik*, replacing sarcasm with irony and distinguishing the matter of the argument from the personality of the opponent. Russia had never been short of great artists, but it was here in Volynsky's journal that the first steps were taken towards the cultivation of what Merezhkovsky called a 'literature', the civilised exchange of aesthetic ideas.

Of the poets working tentatively towards renewal, the oldest, Nikolai Maksimovich Vilenkin (better known by his literary pseudonym N. Minsky), had begun publishing in 1876. His narrative poem *Posledniaia ispoved'* (The Last Confession) appeared in the first number of the illegal Populist newspaper *Narodnaia Volia* (The People's Will) in 1879 and inspired Il'ia Repin's famous picture of a political prisoner rejecting the services of a priest before execution. Minsky's close and uncritical association with the radical movement reached its culmination in 1883, when the censor ordered the destruction of his first collection of verse. The next year saw the publication of an article 'Starinnyi spor' (An old argument) which signalled a change of heart. Minsky was beginning to

question whether lyric poetry could properly take as its subject civic themes beyond the experience of the poet. The question a poet should ask, he now felt, was not 'Is my truth useful?' but 'Is it true?' To his shame, he found that it was not true for him, a loner who neither had nor coveted close friends and who despised the 'herd', to claim he 'loved the people': for 'is it possible that, loving people, I could bear to live through one day, one hour, one minute?'²⁵

The lyric poet should write about himself and Minsky felt increasingly that, having sown the wind of libertarian defiance, he had absolutely no desire to reap the whirlwind of social revolution: 'Mne snitsia mrachnyi dukh – ya sam k nemu vozzval – / Dukh mesti i grozy.' ('My dreams are haunted by a dark spirit – I conjured it myself – / The spirit of revenge and storm'). He saw himself rather as a mother-bird, indifferent to the fact that the storm which threatens to destroy her nest will bring relief to the parched motherland: 'Chto krai rodnoi, / Kogda ne stalo navsegda, / Gnezda, rodimogo gnezda?' ('What is the motherland to me / When gone for ever / Is my nest, my own home nest?')²⁶

The attitude Minsky voices here was not unconnected with the polarisation which had taken place in society after the assassination of Alexander II in 1881 and the execution of the assassins. The political clamp-down which followed was powerless to stop the spread of Marxist ideas – profoundly opposed to that individualistic, self-sacrificing love of the peasantry, compounded of guilt, admiration and nostalgia, which was the motive force of Populism. The concept of class warfare and of the inevitability of the historical process combined to suggest that the slogans of brotherhood and justice are used by each rising class simply to clear for itself a place at the table of life, a place which it will, if necessary, take by force. 'The real aim of the socialist workman and the capitalist dandy is one and the same',²⁷ Minsky decided, and, although he continued to acknowledge the justice of the workman's claim, he felt that social justice was now a practical matter for the economist rather than a theme for the poet.

What, then, was the aim of poetry? Still, in a sense, to serve the people: but to do so through the search for truth. The poet must have something to *offer* the people, some faith to go before them through the desert of pessimism as the pillar of fire went before Moses. In a treatise entitled *Pri svete sovesti* (In the Light of Conscience, 1890), Minsky propounded his own credo, his 'meonistic legend'. God, he maintained, is not only unknowable, but it is inconceivable that He – the Perfect and Eternal – should co-exist with an imperfect and temporal world. God is dead – He sacrificed himself to bring the world into being, to give human beings life and freedom. To resurrect Him, mankind must make an answering

sacrifice. Our assurance that this is so comes from our mystic awareness of 'meons' (from a Greek word meaning 'that which does not exist'). We become aware of meons in moments of 'ecstasy', most often engendered by art.²⁸

To cross the floor from a generally respected agnostic attitude to this kind of aesthetic mysticism must have required a good deal of moral courage. After all, the first thing that had to be done was to renounce the profoundly heart-warming notion that art is useful: 'For me, the realisation that utilitarianism will bring forth no fruit is not a matter of intellectual speculation, but of experienced suffering', wrote Minsky. Yet he concluded that it was nevertheless necessary to 'accept the twilight of contradictions on which, evidently, there will be no dawn [...] that is the final part of the unhypercritical conscience. Let us choose that part ...'²⁹

He came in for a storm of ridicule. Mikhailovsky wrote scathingly and at length 'of Mr Minsky's conscience'. Lev Tolstoy, though he enjoyed Minsky's critique of secular radicalism and the Positivist ethic, noted in his diary for 31 December 1889: 'Reading N. Minsky's book. Remarkably powerful beginning, the negative part, but the constructive part is terrible. It is not even raving, but madness. It's supposed to be about the purpose of life – yet, instead of that, here we have this vague ecstasy in the presence of meons.' Vladimir Solov'ev, Christian philosopher and friend of Dostoevsky, and, as his family maintained, 'a great warrior' in the cause of truth, smote Minsky hip and thigh in a detailed review in the periodical *Vestnik Evropy*.³⁰

It makes more sense, however, to look at 'meonism' as an aesthetic credo rather than as a philosophic or religious statement. It was about the purpose of art rather than the purpose of life. Here, for instance, is how the author set out his longing for an unattainable deity:

Мгновенных образов бесследное мельканье
Твердит мне о Твоей таинственной судьбе.
Причастный смерти, Я причастен и Тебе,
О жертва, чей алтарь — все мироздание.
Даруют мне восторг, томящий как печаль,
Все проявления смерти и разлуки
Люблю я замирающие звуки,
Неясных черт исполненную даль
Но высшей радостью душа моя объята
Пред зрелищем небес в прощальный час заката ...*³¹

* 'Each vanished glimpse of transient images / Informs me of Thy secret destiny, / As I partake of death, so I partake of Thee, / O Sacrifice, whose altar is the Universe. / All manifestations of death and parting / Fill me with ecstasy, languorous as sorrow, / I love dying sounds / Dim-featured distances. / But my soul is wrapped in loftiest joy / In contemplation of the heavens at the farewell hour of sunset.'

This is heavy-handed stuff indeed compared to Fet, abstract, rhetorical cogitation compared to Tiutchev, flaccid self-indulgence compared to Nekrasov: but there are two lines which have the unmistakable ring of the new, a kind of fall-away musical cadence, the sound echoing the content: 'Liubliu ia zamiraiushchie zvuki, / Neiasnykh chert ispolnennuiu dal' ...' Had Minsky caught this *fin-de-siècle* sound from the poetry of the French Symbolists, which Zinaida Hippus tells us he read in the 1880s at a time when few Russians had yet heard of them?³² Or did these few 'living' words simply come to him as he groped for a way to express the inexpressible, the 'ecstasy of the nonexistent', the Symbolist quest?

The fact remains that this transitory figure, whose best poems today are scarcely remembered and who wrote more than his share of bad verse, was considered by several of his own generation as one of the founding fathers of Russian Symbolism.³³ It is said that Briusov, the first *organiser* of Russian Symbolism, would often quote as a kind of slogan Minsky's lines:

Лишь то что мы теперь считаем праздным сном —
Тоска неясная о чем — то неземном,
Куда-то смутные стремленья,
Вражда к тому, что есть, предчувствий робкий свет,
И жажда жгучая святынь, которых нет, —
Одно лишь это чуждо тленья.*³⁴

It must have been the paradoxical content rather than the form of the poem that attracted Briusov; but precisely in this respect it is worth noting the optimistic vigour which keeps breaking through the deliberate effort to sustain a minor key. All the negative, vague expressions – 'O chem-to', 'kuda-to', 'neiasnaia', 'nezemnom', 'smutnye', 'robkii' – are contradicted and outweighed by the energetic 'vrazhda', 'zhazhda zhguchaia' and the triumphant affirmation in the last line that there is, after all, *something* that has no part in decay, which is 'chuzhdo tlen'ia'. From the beginning the youthful vigour, which Mikhailovsky had felt made decadence unnecessary in Russia, keeps breaking through in the movement itself.

Dmitrii Sergeevich Merezhkovsky, who first began to publish in 1881, travelled a similar road. In 1890, the Populist critic Skabichevsky still felt able to include both him and Minsky in his *History of Modern Russian Literature* as poets who have 'close points of contact with the epoch in which we are living, who have been created by it and express it'. Merezhkovsky's narrative poem 'Vera', particularly, impressed Skabichevsky:

* 'Only that which we now consider an uneasy dream – / A vague longing for something not of this earth, / Confused aspirations towards we know not what, / Hostility to that which is, the timid light of premonitions, / And ardent thirst for sacred things which do not exist, – / This alone has no part in decay.'

[...] it is as though you yourself had lived through this drama [...] It depicts a youth, wearied and embittered by his classical education, who falls victim to dark pessimism and scepticism, quite out of keeping with his years and the hot blood running through his veins. From this moral and intellectual senility he is saved by love, although this rebirth costs him dear: by his affected coldness he has brought about the death of a girl he loved with all his heart, and only her dear memory has awakened his powers and set him on the salutary road of social service [...]³⁵

Indeed, this poem, published only two years before Merezhkovsky's collection, *Simvoly*, was received with general acclaim from the Populist camp:

We cannot take up any other attitude than one of profound respect and sympathy towards a poem which sends its greetings 'to all who desire the happiness of the Motherland', 'to all who are working for her welfare and who are suffering for her' [...]³⁶

wrote the future publisher of Merezhkovsky's most 'mystic' works, Pertsov, from his position on the staff of the Populist *Russkoe Bogatstvo*. Yet by the time 'Vera' appeared in print in 1890, the poet was no longer so sure of his mission:

И что я дам теперь народу?
Он полон верою святой
И я . . . ни в счастье, ни в свободу
Не верю скорбною душой.*³⁷

Nonetheless, Merezhkovsky always cherished his dream of serving the people and even remained true to it – in his fashion. 'In my Populism' he was to write later, 'there was much that was childish, superficial, but nevertheless sincere, and I am glad that it *was* in my life.'³⁸

Merezhkovsky was a small, colourless man with a powerful bass voice and a passion for abstract ideas. His father, who held the rank of a *Deistvitel'nyi Tainyi Sovetnik* (Acting Privy Councillor) in the upper echelons of the Ministry of the Interior, but who had resigned after the assassination of Alexander II, seems to have been a figure reminiscent of Tolstoy's Karenin; cold, unapproachable, absorbed, after the death of his wife, in spiritualism. Physically, Dmitrii Merezhkovsky resembled him. A seventh son, he had three sisters and the whole tone of his childhood memories seems to have been set by the lines: 'Navstrechu rannim pasmurnym lucham / Byl slyshen zvuk odnoobraznykh gamm' / ('To meet the dim early rays / The sound of monotonous scales was heard').³⁹ The children were brought up, as he says himself, 'like mushrooms in the

* 'And what shall I now give the people? / They are full of holy faith / And I . . . neither in happiness nor in freedom / Does my sad soul believe.'

shade', by a series of nannies and governesses; their parents were often away from home, partly in vain attempts to improve the mother's delicate health. Even later in his adult life, Merezhkovsky 'had not a single friend', as his wife later wrote. 'Essentially, he was *totally alone*, and all the strength of his love, from childhood, was concentrated on one person: his mother.'⁴⁰ Rozanov, who admired and appreciated Merezhkovsky's human qualities as well as his thought, wrote of him: 'He is one of the few people I could never love [. . .] even his sadness is cold,' and Blok: 'He is more alone than anyone else.'⁴¹

Merezhkovsky's marriage in 1889 to Zinaida Nikolaevna Hippus was an extraordinarily close union and she probably rightly felt it providential that it was contracted in the year of his mother's death: 'I could not replace his mother – no-one can, a person has only one mother – but at least he wasn't left alone.'⁴² Nevertheless, it was almost as though Zinaida were an extension of himself. In fifty-two years they were never a single day apart and Merezhkovsky's human relationships were channelled through her.

Pessimism and isolation is certainly the stuff of his poetry. 'I khochu, no ne v silakh liubit' ia iudei' ('I want, but have not the strength to love people'); . . . 'No blizhnikh ne liubliu, kak ne liubliu sebja' ('But I do not love my neighbours, even as I do not love myself'); 'Ia liudiam chuzhd i malo veriu / Ia dobrodeteli zemnoi' ('I am alien to people / and have little faith in earthly virtue'); 'Ia ne liubliu rodneykh moikh, druzia / Mne chuzhdy, brak – tiazhelaia obuza' ('I do not love my family, my friends / Are alien to me, marriage – a heavy burden'). Most poignantly, perhaps:

Чужое сердце — мир чужой,
И нет к нему пути!
В него и любящей душой
Не можем мы войти.*⁴³

Merezhkovsky felt that his generation had inherited a bankrupt tradition – and stated this in a poem which sounds like a tinkling echo of Lermontov's 'Duma' (Meditation), a robust, romantic diatribe on the same theme:

Отцы и дети, в играх шумных,
Все истожили вы до дна.
Не берегли в пирах безумных
Вы драгоценного вина.†⁴⁴

* 'Another's heart is another world / To which there is no road! / Even with a loving soul / We cannot enter in.'

† 'Fathers and children, in your noisy games / You have emptied everything to the dregs. / In your wild feasting you took no care to preserve / The precious wine.'

Here the very poverty of form and invention emphasises the writer's sincerity. He is still following in the footsteps of his admired acquaintance Nadson, whose whole *art poétique*, according to Briusov, was contained in the lines: 'Lish' by khot kak-nibud' bylo izlito / Chem mnogozvuchnoe serdtse polno' ('If only somehow or other might be poured out / All that of which the sounding heart is full').⁴⁵

Merezhkovsky felt himself to be the prophet of a culture which would replace the moribund nineteenth century tradition, yet had little hope of winning through to it himself:

Дерзновенны наши речи,
Но на смерть осуждены
Слишком ранние предтечи
Слишком медленной весны.
[...]
Мы — над бездною ступени,
Дети мрака, солнца ждем,
Свет увидим и, как тени,
Мы в лучах его умрем.*

His whole generation seemed to him transitory: 'flowers without roots, flowers in water', 'priests deserted by our gods'. Their place would be taken by some great Renaissance figure: 'we will surrender our lyre to you, divine poet . . . and saluting you, we will die'.⁴⁶

It was not, however, merely a matter of generation. Merezhkovsky, a man of taste and understanding, must have doubted, and with good reason, that he himself had the power to convey through his poetry the anguish and excitement of his aesthetic and spiritual quest. 'A tragedy indeed,' Rozanov wrote of him, 'to possess the secret of a magician, but not to be a magician'.⁴⁷ Merezhkovsky at his best was a passionate, exciting literary critic. Yet his poetry, although richer in tone, more cultivated and assured than Minsky's, is strangely impotent. No wonder one of his best-known poems is a prayer for 'wings'.⁴⁸

Merezhkovsky *knew* what symbols should be, that they should not be dead allegories but should 'arise naturally from reality', yet for him they did not. The world, for him, was not transparent. This shows in his poems about nature, which he loved but described in stereotyped language which suggests no 'correspondences', makes nothing 'new'. He speaks of 'the gloom of night', 'the damp earth', 'the cold, blue distance', 'the colours of the vivid rainbow', 'the still of night', 'the most distant star', 'the azure

* 'Bold are our words / But condemned to death / Too early precursors / Of too tardy a spring [...] / We are steps over the abyss, / Children of darkness, we await the sun, / We shall see the light and, like shadows, / We shall die in its rays.'

heavens', 'the pale moon' . . . He also loved his wife, and his poems to her are among the most original and moving he wrote. The sentiment is contradictory, contemporary and genuine, but it is expressed with analytical clarity, leaving nothing 'unsaid':

Не утешай, оставь мою печаль
 Нетронутой, великой и безгласной.
 Обоим нам порой свободы жаль,
 Но цепь любви порвать хотим напрасно.
 [. . .]
 Но я еще сильнее тебя люблю,
 И бесконечно я тебя жалею, —
 До ужаса сливаю жизнь мою,
 Сливаю душу я с душой твоею.

И без тебя я не умею жить.
 Мы отдали друг другу слишком много,
 И я прошу, как милости, у бога,
 Чтоб научил Он сердце не любить.*

Even when attempting to convey a hesitancy, a kind of shame about telling his love, he is explicit, although love seems to him to be 'too terrible and divine a mystery to be spoken of' and our 'best feelings are shy and silent'.⁴⁹

Merezhkovsky sought faith, religious experience, but felt that he lacked 'power' – in prayer as in poetry. Essentially, he seems to have been as firmly enclosed by the old Kantian wall as Minsky with his confessed 'meonism', as Volynsky with his transcendent idealism.

Both Minsky and Merezhkovsky wrote of the 'two ways' to God, playing games with their disorientation. It was, they claimed, 'all the same' which way was travelled and Merezhkovsky wrote:

И зло, и благо, — тайна гроба,
 И тайна жизни — два пути —
 Ведут к единой цели оба.
 И все равно, куда идти.
 [. . .]
 Ты сам — свой бог, ты сам свой ближний,
 О, будь же собственным Творцом,

* 'Do not comfort me, leave my sorrow / Untouched, vast and voiceless. / Both of us at times regret our freedom / But in vain we wish to break the chain of love. [. . .] / But I love you still more / And infinite is my tender pity for you, — / To the point of terror I blend my life / I blend my soul with your soul. // And I do not know how to live without you / We have given one another too much / And I ask as a boon of God / That he should teach my heart not to love.'

Будь бездной верхней, бездной нижней,
Своим началом и концом.*⁵⁰

Tolstoy, commenting on Merezhkovsky's advocacy of 'decadent' amorality, suggested it was rooted in the *underestimation* of evil, the conviction that some kind of diablerie was necessary as a *sauce piquante* for the insipid fare of nineteenth-century art and thought, and could be used without danger. Like Dostoevsky, like Gogol', Tolstoy had a very clear perception of evil, which he thought of in terms of negation:

Evil is so powerful that it is always there for contrast. If we are to admit its right to exist it will suck us under, there will be nothing but evil, and there will be no contrast. There won't even be evil – there'll be nothing. To make sure of contrast and evil, it is necessary to put everything one has into the battle for good.⁵¹

Those like Minsky and Merezhkovsky, born of a generation which believed in 'reasonable egoism' and healthy altruism, were, to begin with, far from such robust thinking. Nevertheless, the idea of the 'two ways' of evil and of good did not last for long. Merezhkovsky, as he became more involved with the search for faith, gradually reversed the position defended in his early poetry and the first two novels of his historical trilogy (in which Julian the Apostate appears as an advocate of Anti-christ, Leonardo da Vinci as above good and evil), and by 1901 considered himself a Christian and had explicitly rejected the Devil and all his works. He always maintained, however, that morality followed from belief in God and was totally secondary to it.

The collection *Simvol'y* (Symbols, 1892) opened with a poem entitled 'God' – a bold appropriation of the title of one of Lomonosov's superb odes and a calculated challenge to prevalent agnosticism. Belief here is born of unbelief and the vision of immortality is pantheistic rather than Christian: 'Kogda umru – s Toboi sol'ius', / Kak zvezdy s utrennei zarei' ('When I die, I will dissolve in you, / As stars dissolve in the light of dawn').⁵²

However, it is not in his 'religious' poetry, any more than in his love lyrics or nature poetry, that Merezhkovsky approaches most closely to Symbolism as breakthrough, as an alternative method. His best poems are about culture, perhaps because it was books and legends and things made with human hands that he most loved:

* 'Both evil and good are the secret of the grave / And the secret of life is two roads / Which both lead to the same goal. / And it is all the same which way we take [...] / You are yourself your God, you are yourself your neighbour / Oh, be your own Creator, / Be the abyss above, be the abyss below, / Your own beginning and end.'

I know no sweeter or deeper feeling than that which one experiences when one meets one's own thoughts in the works of someone of a faraway culture, separated from us by the centuries. Only then does one cease for a moment to feel lonely and understand what people have in common in their heart of hearts, the shared faith and suffering of all ages.

So he wrote in the preface to his collection of articles, *Vechnye sputniki* (Eternal Companions, 1897), a vividly subjective re-evaluation of world classics, which probably did more than any other single book to educate the rising generation to respect and love literature for its own sake, and to accustom them to the concept of the *timeless* quality of ideas, the *eternal* task of the artist.⁵³

As Rozanov remarked: 'Merezhkovsky always builds with other people's materials, yet with a feeling that they are somehow germane to him [...] In this relating to other people's ideas there is much generosity.'⁵⁴ It is certainly true that Merezhkovsky's poetry comes alive when he writes of his own problems in terms of images presented by literature, art, myth . . . Bookish it may seem, yet Hippus tells us she never saw her husband so happy as on the Acropolis, which they visited together for the first time in 1892, and there is a poem to bear her out (besides an eye-witness account of his attachment to the chips of marble which, with true Russian disregard for the 'Strictly Forbidden' notices, he had slipped into his pocket at the time!).

It was in a poem inspired by another great monument of the ancient world, the Roman Pantheon, that Merezhkovsky expressed the essence of a dilemma which was to occupy his thought throughout the 1890s. His question was, essentially: Is not Christianity opposed to culture and to the world? Is it not a cult of death and self-denial? I, Dmitrii, a lonely human being, love and need Christ, but I, Dmitrii Sergeevich Merezhkovsky, writer, poet and thinker, need World Culture from ancient times to the present day and the material world of which it is a reflection. The ancient Pantheon, long used as a Christian basilica, served him as an image of this dichotomy:

Путник с печального Севера к вам, Олимпийские боги,
 Сладостным страхом объят, в древний вхожу Пантеон.
 Дух ваш, о люди, лишь здесь спорит в величьи с богами:
 Где же бессмертные, где Рима бессмертный Олимп?
 Ныне кругом запустение, ныне царит в Пантеоне
 Древнему сомну богов чуждый, неведомый Бог!
 Вот Он, распятый, пронзенный гвоздями, в короне терновой.
 Мука — в бескровном лице, в кротких очах Его — смерть.
 Знаю, о боги блаженные, мука для вас ненавистна,
 Вы отвернулись, рукой очи в смятении закрыв.
 Вы улетаете прочь, Олимпийские светлые тени! . . .

[. . .]

О подождите, молю! Видите: это — мой Брат.

Это — мой Бог! . . . *

The 'wayfarer from the sad North' is immediately recognisable as Merezhkovsky himself. The measured unrhymed verse reminds us of the classical *ginnazii* or grammar school which, for all the revulsion it had awakened in his young heart, had first opened Merezhkovsky's mind to the ancient world, giving him, as it were, direct entry through a first-hand knowledge of Greek and Latin. The third line of the poem, however, suggests that there was already a later influence at work, that of Friedrich Nietzsche. The gods are dear to the poet because they have come to stand for the pride of the world, because they admit the possibility of a challenge from humankind, from the hero, the proud spirit. He loves them and there is genuine distress behind the rhetorical questions and the tolling repetitions with which he bewails their fall. Skillfully, he gives the victorious God now in possession of the Pantheon two adjectives: the modern 'alien' and the ancient 'unknown'. The latter takes us back to the beginning of the struggle: St Paul's speech in the market place in Athens, where the apologia for Jesus of Nazareth begins with a reference to the altar to an 'unknown god'.

For Merezhkovsky, history directly affects what happens today, and thought is timeless. Still addressing the ancient gods, he introduces the crucified Christ: 'There He is . . .' From the description, which uses the conventional terminology ('pierced with nails, crowned with thorns') it is clear that this is a God of death and torment. The reaction of the Olympians is told dramatically. They recoil, they take flight for the world of sunlight and joy which, to the poet, they personify. Yet he needs both the Olympians and the personal, suffering God. The exclamatory cries, the ardent staccato plea to wait, to understand, are not rhetorical only. They convey genuine emotion.

Had the poem stopped there, we would have had a remarkable devotional lyric, if not yet a Symbolist poem. Merezhkovsky, however, liked to make sure he would be understood, and he continues for another twelve lines, ending on a note of pure abstraction:

* 'A wayfarer from the sad North, to you, Olympian deities / Filled with sweet dread, I enter the ancient Pantheon. / Here only, o people, your spirit rivals the gods in greatness. / Where are the immortals, where is Rome's universal Olympus? / Now there is desolation everywhere, now in the Pantheon reigns / An unknown God, alien to the ancient host of gods! / There He is, crucified, pierced with nails in a crown of thorns. / Torment is in his bloodless face, in the meek eyes – death! / I know, o blessed gods, that torment is hateful to you, / You have turned away, hand over eyes in confusion, / You are flying away, Olympians, bright shades / Oh, wait, I implore you! See! This is my brother, / This is my God.'

Где же ты, истина? . . . В смерти, в небесной любви и страданиях,
Или, о тени богов, в вашей земной красоте?
Спрячут в душе человека, как в этом божественном храме, —
Вечная радость и жизнь, вечная тайна и смерть.*⁵⁵

As Briusov said, 'Merezhkovsky looked on poetry as a means, and that is his sin before art; but he used this means with great skill, and used it for honourable ends, and that is his justification.' Indeed, in the same article, Briusov maintains that Merezhkovsky's two collections *Simvoly* and *Novye stikhotvoreniia* (News Poems, 1896) between them adumbrated all the principal themes of poetry for the next generation of writers⁵⁶, and this is perfectly true.

In 'Leda', arguably his most accomplished poem, Merezhkovsky makes his own one of the favourite themes of the European *fin-de-siècle*. The opening lines devoted to Leda herself show that, when he put his mind to it, he was quite capable of producing 'musical' verse in Verlaine's sense of the word. The complex metre and rhyme-scheme, the varying length of line and capricious stress are handled with assurance, as are the elusive repetitions and the suggestive combination of alliteration and assonance: the accented a's, the v's, b's and zh's. Visually, the languorous white Leda suggests images from Poe and Baudelaire and the long, wavering line of turn-of-the-century Modernism.

Here is Leda, 'white, more transparent than a broken lily':

... у пруда, там, где пахнет водой, —
В душной тьме грозовой,
Вся преступная, вся обнаженная, —
Там, где сырость, и нега, и зной,
Там, где пахнет водой и купавами,
Влажными, бледными травами,
И таинственным, илом в пруду —
Там я жду.
Вся преступная, вся обнаженная,
Изнеможенная . . . †

The swan, as in Yeats's later poem on the same subject, sails in triumphantly from Michelangelo's full-blooded picture:

Крылья воду бьют,
Грозен темный пруд, —

* 'Where are you, truth? In death, in heavenly love and suffering; / Or, o shades of the gods, in your earthly beauty? / In the soul of man, as in this divine temple, / Eternal joy and life dispute with eternal mystery and death.'

† '... by the pond, where it smells of water, - / In the stifling, thunderous dark / All sinful, all naked, - / There, where there is damp, and languor, and heat, / There, where it smells of water and kingcups, / Of damp, pallid grasses, / And the mysterious mud of the pond, - / There I wait / All sinful, all naked, / Languorous ...'

На спине его щетиною
Перья бледные встают, — *

The appearance of Helen, to the harsh and sonorous sound of falling Troy, evokes the Greek language as well as Greek tragedy:

И слышен вопль Гекубы в Трое,
И Андромахи вечный стон,
Сразились боги и герои,
И пал священный Илион.
А ты, Елена, клятву мира
И долг нарушив, — ты чиста.
Тебя прославит песнь Омира,
Затем, что вся надежда мира
Дочь белой Леды — Красота. †

Even this poem, though, is an accomplished allegory, expressing ideas through images; it is not a Symbolist lyric but an explicit statement about the amoral power of Beauty. As Briusov wrote to a friend as early as 1895: 'In spite of all Merezhkovsky's sympathy for Symbolism, he remains classical in spirit.'⁵⁸

This was not how he was regarded at the time. Like Volynsky and Minsky, Merezhkovsky, as soon as he began to write about the 'new trends' and to cultivate them, however cautiously, in his own work as novelist and poet, met with a solid front of heavy sarcasm and personal abuse. Following Nordau, established critics dismissed the perpetrators of these trends (including, it must be said, even so 'realist' a writer as Anton Chekhov, who seemed to them overinterested in nuance and lacking in political backbone) as prematurely aged, perpetually adolescent or simply in need of psychiatric assistance. Even when there was a serious attempt at constructive criticism, it was quite clear that the older generation were not prepared to make or were not capable of making the effort to understand. When they did not dismiss the modernists as imitators of foreign models (something which it became increasingly difficult to do as their ideas gained in popularity), the 'fathers' saw them as a new generation of Rudins, and cried reaction.

Life itself, however, and the movement of history was on the side of the modernists. Gradually, it was to become clear to the reading public and

* 'Wings thrash the water, / Dread is the dark pond, / Along his back in bristles / Pale feathers rise.'

† 'And the cry of Hecuba is heard in Troy, / And the eternal groan of Andromache, / Gods fought heroes, / And sacred Ilium fell. / But you, Helen, vow of peace / And duty broken, you are innocent. / You will be glorified in the song of Homer, / Because all the hope of the world / Is in the daughter of white Leda – Beauty.'

even to the new writers' ideological opponents that these innovators who wrote so much of *Eternity* were in fact working towards the expression of the contemporary world. In spite of Volynsky's wavering and the inability of Minsky and Merezhkovsky to achieve an artistic breakthrough, it was the spade work done in the early '90s and begun in the critical section of *Severnyi Vestnik* which first breached the solid front of mockery and misunderstanding that had met and bade fair to stifle the earliest efforts of the new art.

2 The new poetry in St Petersburg

И дни текут. И чувства новы.
Простора ищет жалкий дух.
Но где несказанное слово
Которое пронзает слух?

Зинаида Гиппиус*

Granted that it was Briusov and his young friends in Moscow and Petersburg who first insisted on the term 'Symbolist', but it was Hippius and Sologub, with their 'decadent' poetry and short stories in the new manner, who first emerged as acknowledged, if much abused, practitioners of the school. Though their work is concurrent with and continuous from that of such 'transitional' writers as Merezhkovsky and Minsky, it has the unmistakable ring of the new. In spite of the notion current at the time that Hippius wrote Merezhkovsky's poetry and he her prose or vice versa, it was in thought and in their general cultural activity that the two were inextricably interlinked. As artists, they were very different. Hippius's short stories lacked sustained imaginative power but her lyric poetry was a revelation in her own generation. Before the publication of her first long-delayed collection of poetry in Moscow in 1904, the novice poet Aleksandr Blok wrote his new friend Andrei Bely: 'but the poems, Zinaida Nikolaevna's poems! Exhausting and works of genius [...] I feel that one should abstain from them; but in the early morning her poems go wailing piercingly through my head.'¹

It has been suggested that, as a poet, Hippius should be considered with Blok and Bely as one of the 'second generation' of Symbolists.² This is surely because she stands out among her own contemporaries, because she was the *first* to find the 'unsaid word' capable of conveying new feelings, of penetrating old hearts:

Окно мое высоко над землею,
Высоко над землею.

* 'And days flow by. And feelings are new. / The pitiable spirit seeks untrammelled space. / But where is the unsaid word / That penetrates the ear?' Zinaida Hippius.

Я вижу только небо с вечерней зарею, —
 С вечерней зарею.
 И небо кажется пустым и бледным,
 Таким пустым и бледным . . .
 Оно не жалится над сердцем бедным,
 Над моим сердцем бедным.
 Увы, в печали безумной я умираю,
 Я умираю,
 Стремлюсь к тому, чего я не знаю,
 Не знаю . . .
 Но это желанье не знаю, откуда,
 Пришло откуда,
 Но сердце хочет и просит чуда,
 Чуда!
 О, пусть будет то, чего не бывает,
 Никогда не бывает:
 Мне бледное небо чудес обещает,
 Оно обещает,
 Но плачу без слез о неверном обете,
 О неверном обете . . .
 Мне нужно то, чего нет на свете,
 Чего нет на свете.*³

Of the appearance of this poem, entitled simply 'Pesnia' (Song), written in 1893, but rejected everywhere until Volynsky in 1895 risked the wrath of his editors for it, Hippicus remarked that, although she was publishing poetry (seldom signed with her full name) in various journals at the time, this particular lyric was turned down by a number of editors because it 'didn't seem like a proper poem'. When it did appear, 'as everyone shortly thereafter began talking about decadence, my manner was also considered "decadent" [. . .] As to the French innovators of that time, they were not much known in our circles . . .'⁴

Hippicus's innovations in 'Pesnia' were in both form and content, and the form she found to express the content, the plaintive demand for 'miracle' in the face of a seemingly empty heaven, was a profoundly

* 'My window is high above the earth, / High above the earth. / I see only the sky and the sunset – / And the sunset. // And the sky seems empty and pale, / So empty and pale . . . / It will not take pity on this poor heart, / On my poor heart. // Alas, in crazed sadness I am dying, / I am dying, / I am reaching out towards I know not what, / I know not . . . // But this desire I know not from where / It comes – from where, / But the heart wills and implores a miracle / Miracle! / O, let that happen which never happens, / Never happens: / The pale sky promises me miracles, / It promises. // But I weep without tears over the broken promise, / The broken promise. / What I need is something not found on earth / Not found on earth.'

Russian way of achieving the musicality, freedom and subtly ‘conversational’ cadences at which the new poetry was aiming throughout Europe. The poem is one of the earliest illustrations of Hippus’s use of ‘dol’nik’, a tonic meter popular in Russian poetry before syllabic and later syllabo-tonic verse was introduced from Western Europe in the course of the eighteenth century. Although nineteenth-century prosody was familiar with the *dol’nik* and used it in stylisations of folk poetry, Hippus and Briusov, prompted in part by Aleksandr Dobroliubov, were the first to perceive it as a form peculiarly suited to the spirit of the Russian language; it was Blok, however, who was to become its supreme exponent.⁵ Hippus, whose ear for the cadences of popular speech and song was remarkably acute for one usually considered something of a hot-house poet, seems to have picked up her rhythms instinctively, and used them with ease and grace when they suited her mood.

Belated as was its appearance in print, ‘Pesnia’, together with ‘Posviashchenie’ (written 1894, published March 1895) established Hippus in the forefront of the new poetry. ‘Posviashchenie’ contains four lines which were to become programmatic for the new movement:

Беспощадна моя дорога,
Она меня к смерти ведет.
Но люблю я себя, как Бога, —
Любовь мою душу спасет.*⁶

Burenin of *Novoe Vremia* (The New Times) paid the new author the backhanded compliment of encapsulating her five-verse poem in a neat four-line parody:

Ты глуп, как сивый мерин,
Я, пожалуй, еще глупее тебя,
Но я в себе очень уверен,
И больше Бога люблю себя.†⁷

This was a double swipe, as ‘Posviashchenie’ is clearly a ‘Dedication’ to Merezhkovsky, but by this time the couple were impervious to hostility and mockery. Indeed, they found Burenin genuinely amusing. Certainly he was talented, talented enough to ape not just the content of Hippus’s ‘new’ poetry, but the style: the repetitions of near-repetitions, the deceptive sing-song simplicity, the break with conventional metre and deliberately missed feet (*pauzniki*).

Hippus herself gives us few clues as to where these innovations came

* ‘Ruthless is my road, / It leads me to death. / But I love myself as I love God. / Love will save my soul.’

† ‘You are stupid as a jackass [lit: a roan gelding] / I, maybe, am even stupider than you, / But I am extremely sure of myself, / And love myself more than God.’

from. This new poet (for Hippus, who, in her poetry, habitually though not invariably wrote of herself in the masculine gender and chose masculine *noms de plume* for her literary criticism, the doubtful word 'poetess' is particularly inapplicable) – this new poet, then, appears to have entered literature in full maturity, like Pallas Athene stepping armed and helmeted from the head of Zeus.

Of course, this was not quite so. In the disappointing book she forced herself to write about Dmitry Merezhkovsky after his death in 1941, Hippus did manage a few vivid pages evoking her own girlhood and their first meeting and courtship. She tells us here that she was the eldest of three sisters, of Scandinavian, Lutheran descent on the father's side. The Hippuses had lived in Russia for centuries (since 1534, according to Zinaida) and had worked with books. The poet's father, whom she had dearly loved, died of consumption when she was ten. An intelligent child, she inherited his delicate health and her education was, for this reason, spasmodic, improvised, interrupted by whole winters of being confined to the house, by whole years in the provincial South.

When Merezhkovsky met her at the mountain resort of Borzhomi in the Caucasus just after she had completed her schooling, she was surrounded by a lively extended family and a whole *côterie* of cousins and schoolboy admirers – all, in their own eyes, future writers or poets. He thought her original but ill-educated and tried to persuade her to read Spencer. Piqued but thrilled to meet a 'real' poet, a friend of her idol Nadson, Hippus deliberately set out to flout and challenge her would-be mentor's authority on every conceivable aesthetic and intellectual issue. Self-confident and ravishingly pretty in an unusual, boyish style, yet at the same time different, spiky, fundamentally desolate, again and again she provoked him into furious argument, until the day when they suddenly started talking – as if it had all been settled long before – of what they would do when they were married:

Looking at D.S. [Dmitrii Sergeevich] and me from the outside it would have been hard to say that the basis of my soul was (if the expression is possible) darker, of his – lighter. But so it was. And with the years it became more emphatically so, although to others he occasionally appeared downright dour, whereas I seemed full of the joy of life.⁸

The basic dualism of Hippus's soul, the dark foundation and the powerful upthrust towards the light, stemmed from childhood. Her Siberian grandmother ('with a green lampadka* and dark icons in the corner') told her one day to pray for her little sister, who was dangerously ill: 'A child's prayer goes straight to God' ('Detskaia molitva dokhodchiva'). She

* Lampadka: oil-lamp suspended before icon.

prayed and the sister had got better – ‘after which it always seemed to me that if one prayed hard enough about anything at all, even for fine weather, it would be granted; only one didn’t always get round to it’. Yet by the time she was ten she had lost a young aunt and her father . . . and ‘in general at that time death took possession of my soul for life’.⁹

From the beginning, then, Hippus was a prayerful poet who believed in the efficacy of prayer, the willed miracle. At the same time, she was not a believing poet: or rather she was a poet on a quest which – she deeply feared – had no object. ‘Mne strashno, chto strakha v dushe moei net. / Lish’ kholod bezgorestnyi serdtse laskaet, / A mesiats skloniaetsia – i umiraet.’ (‘What frightens me is that in my soul there is no fear. // Only insensible cold caresses the heart, / And the moon sinks – and dies’).¹⁰

Merezhkovsky undoubtedly helped his bride to poetic maturity, albeit indirectly. He took her to live in Petersburg where they moved among the literary elite, attending many ‘kruzhki’ (discussion circles) of the most various persuasions. Sergei Konstantinovich Makovsky, a younger contemporary and author of one of the best essays on Hippus, recalls how ‘she loved to please, both by her wit and her feminine charm, to shine and take first place in literary circles, to teach, to lay down the law on every conceivable question’. At the same time: ‘her longing for love had a certain Don Juan-like quality (not without aestheticism) but of course this was Don Juanism in search of the highest ideal’.¹¹ Indeed, Hippus, whose marriage to Merezhkovsky was rumoured to have been unconsummated, was a honey-pot soon surrounded by all the literary bumblebees of the day: Minsky, old Aleksei Pleshcheev, who had shared Dostoevsky’s traumatic experience of last-minute reprieve after the Petrashevsky affair, and Apollon Maikov, the doyen of the Petersburg poets, the conservative editor Aleksei Suvorin and, of course, Akim Volynsky, were all, at one time or another, a little ‘in love’ with Hippus, and she argued with and learned from them all. Merezhkovsky took her abroad, to Italy, Paris, Nice, Capri and Greece, not only acquainting her with much that was new in European culture but also completing her education, sharing with her his own encyclopaedic erudition about the ancient world and the Renaissance. During the years between 1889 and 1893 she became a professional, writing and publishing a good deal, mainly in prose, to ‘help our modest budget’.

Of her influence on Merezhkovsky, Hippus herself says that, whereas she always remained fundamentally the same, he developed ‘in phases’, working through and then rejecting a series of ideas: ‘It sometimes happened’, she says, ‘that I anticipated some idea of D.S.’s. I formulated it before he was ready to meet it on his own road. In most cases, he would take it up there and then (because, in essence, it belonged to him as well)

and with him it would immediately somehow come into *full bloom*, acquire a body.’

V. A. Zlobin (1894–1967), who lived with the Merezhkovskys throughout their exile after the Revolution, maintains that Merezhkovsky’s ability to produce a comforting synthesis from Hippius’s paradoxical thought was essential to her well-being as a person, perhaps to her sanity. As a poet, however, Hippius, when in a ‘following’ vein, tended to become as abstract and didactic as her spouse. Take, for instance, her ‘Elektrichestvo’ (‘Electricity’) – which Merezhkovsky never tired of quoting:

Две нити вместе свиты,
 Концы обнажены.
 То ‘да’ и ‘нет’, — не слиты,
 Не слиты — сплетены.
 Их темное сплетенье
 И тесно, и мертво.
 Но ждет их воскресенье,
 И ждут они его.
 Концов концы коснутся —
 Другие ‘да’ и ‘нет’,
 И ‘да’ и ‘нет’ проснутся,
 Сплетенные сольются,
 И смерть их будет — Свет.*¹²

This is the kind of accomplished modern allegory – for the time of writing, it was *very* modern – which earned Hippius the reputation of a poet of ‘harsh and tangy aridity’ ... ‘original, interesting, witty, sometimes brilliant, sometimes insupportable, but devoid of all that goes to the heart ...’¹³

Harsh and abstract Hippius’s poetry often is: Makovsky compares it to steel etching but quotes Innokentii Annensky: ‘This abstraction is not essentially schematic, or, more precisely – in her schemas there is always a hint of anxiety, of something left unsaid, or of the agonising sway of a pendulum in the heart’.¹⁴ This breathless, all-too-human, swaying *angoisse* is exquisitely conveyed by the image of a swing in one of Hippius’s mature lyrics, ‘Mezhdu’ (Between):

На лунном небе чернеют ветки ...
 Внизу чуть слышно шуршит поток.
 А я качаюсь в воздушной сетке,
 Земле и небу равно далек.

* ‘Two threads twisted together, / The ends laid bare. / That is ‘yes’ and ‘no’ – not blended / Not blended – twisted together. / Their dark embrace / Is close, and dead. / But resurrection awaits them / And they wait for it. / Ends touch on ends – / Other ‘yes’ and

Внизу — страданье,верху — забавы,
И боль, и радость — мне тяжелы.
Как дети, тучки тонки, кудрявы . . .
Как звери, люди жалки и злы.*¹⁵

In these lines (many other example could be cited) we see that Hippius was not self-consciously or consistently innovative. The metre here is regular: amphibrachic with strongly marked caesurae to help along the rocking effect. The rhymes, alternating masculine and feminine, are far from trite but not so original as to shock. They are not always full rhymes: 'zabavy' and 'kudriavy', for instance. Further she has 'stydno' and 'obidno', 'redkii' and 'setke'; but Russian prosody was never so meticulous as to render this freedom startling. The repetition of words in rhyming position is there too, as in 'Pesnia', but less obvious: 'v setke', for instance, recurs in three of the five stanzas but in each case finds a different rhyme: 'vetki', 'detki' and 'redkii'.

What is remarkable about the poem is its balance and lightness. The protagonist sits not in a swing but a net (a rope hammock? a gossamer elfin swing? the choice is ours), seeing now the treetops above, now the water below, now earth, now sky, now sorrows, now delights, and he (she) will have none of any of them, choosing to be 'between', neither here nor there. He/she is merry and irresponsible, using children's diminutives, not sentimentally but mischievously as children do themselves, and children's words like 'zabavy' which I have translated as 'delights', but which also means simply 'fun and games': a 'zabavnik' is a fun-loving child. Even the judgement on people, 'zhalky i zly', might have been made by a child: she feels sorry for them but they are cross, unapproachable. The position between earth and sky, man and woman, sensuality and spirituality, is not abstract. Hippius is describing the real position of the lyric poet: 'merry and frightening' according to Blok, 'irresponsible as a child absorbed in a game' according to Tsvetaeva. Yet the poet is not a child, and what anguish there is in the final presentiment: 'Uzhel' do solntsa ostanus' v setke? / Ia znaiu, solntse – menia sozhzhet' ('Will I really stay in my net till sunrise? / I know that the sun will burn me up'). Up there in the swing, she (he?) is bound to miss something: the glorious dawn they are all waiting for, perhaps, or just the sweet earthly sunrise that ordinary mortals can, if they are up to see it, experience every day.

'no,' / And 'yes' and 'no' will awake, / What was twisted will blend, / And their death will be – Light.'

- * 'Against the moonlit sky branches show black . . . / Below – the torrent rushes, scarcely heard. / But I am swinging in an airy net, / Equally far from earth and sky. / Beneath are sorrows, above delights, / Pain and joy are both difficult for me. / The clouds, like children, are delicate, curly . . . / People, like wild beasts, are pitiable and fierce.'

Hippius was not primarily a didactic poet, certainly not the 'naïve moralist' Tsvetaeva thought fit to label her,¹⁶ but her poetry, like her short stories, walks a razor edge between lyricism and didactic abstraction. Sometime it slips. For this reason, and because her output was small, Hippius can scarcely be considered a major poet. Nevertheless, she has a good claim to be thought the first true Symbolist poet in Russia. Her themes were theirs and her 'manner' exquisitely fitted the themes: cerebral but deeply felt, musical, idiosyncratic and truly original, leaving the reader with a sense of something unsaid.

Hippius's poetry is a celebration of love and death: love of God or the idea of God – everywhere; love of Christ – persistent, apologetic; a possessive, acquisitive, faithful love of souls; subtly erotic lyrical poems, often written as from a man to a woman, demanding, but not giving, love. There are in this poetry all kinds of love: love that deceives and grows cold and love that saves the world; playful, Platonic sensuality – 'vliublenost', as she called it, and fearful, demonic sensuality associated with repulsive images of spiders, leeches and predatory plants. Sometimes she rejects human love as bondage – as in the poem 'Neliubov'' ('Non-Love'). Here, Chaos comes tapping at her window, claiming her for 'freedom and non-love', and Chaos wins:

Охладевая, творю молитву,
 Любви молитву едва творю . . .
 Слабеют руки, кончаю битву,
 Слабеют руки . . . Я отворю!*¹⁷

In a sense, isolation is a necessary pre-condition for poetry. Hippius herself wrote that she considered her poetry 'very contemporary, that is very particularised, strung in a way peculiar to me alone and, in this single-stringed quality, monotonous and therefore of no use to other people'.¹⁸ The thought of a reader who will understand her poetry is, for Hippius, the thought of a 'miracle' – although she did consider the isolation of the poet in the modern world a 'contemporary and therefore temporary phenomenon'. Poetry had been necessary to the reader in the days of Pushkin, Nekrasov . . . and would be so again, but not in *her* day. In *her* day the individual was isolated not only from other individuals but from the living God, longing for Whom is the whole content of poetry, embracing all other longings.

Yet the themes of nothingness and death in Hippius's work often seem more powerful than those of love and longing. She writes of human death,

* 'Turning cold, I make my prayer, / I can hardly force myself to make the prayer of love . . .
 / My hands grow weak, I cease to struggle, / My hands grow weak . . . I will open now!'

the death of the year, but above all of the death of the soul, death metaphysical and everlasting: all these aspects of death combine in Hippius's poetry against her 'will': the will to invoke miracle, the will to prepare for and accept the 'effort of resurrection' in a world where the blind sky bears down on helpless, unloved humanity 'like a slab of stone'.¹⁹ Rarely, is there a moment of respite:

Сквозь окна светится небо высокое,
Вечернее небо, тихое, ясное.
Плачет от счастья сердце мое одинокое,
Радо оно, что небо такое прекрасное.*²⁰

In the preface to her first book of poems, Hippius quoted Baratynsky's beautiful definition of poetry as 'polnoe oshchushchenie dannoi minuty' ('the full feel of the given minute'). 'The next – the next minute – is already different', she adds. In her poetry, certainly, beatitude gives way to struggle, struggle to dereliction:

Смеется, чернея,
Мои́ла открытая;
Я требую чуда
Душою всесильною . . .
Но веет оттуда —
Землею могильною . . . †²¹

Such minutes of pain and rebellion can lead to an ambiguous sympathy for the Devil: a romantic Devil, who has undoubted affinities with both Lermontov and Baudelaire, a fallen angel, a 'wise seducer', and, possibly, even a 'misunderstood teacher of great beauty'. Typically, she offers this seductive spirit to God and, in the poem 'Bozhii tvar'' ('God's creature'), prays for his salvation:

За Дьявола Тебя молю,
Господь! И он — Твое создание.
Я Дьявола за то люблю,
Что вижу в нем — мое страданье. ‡²²

Did Hippius believe in the Devil? In as far as she saw in the fallen angel the fallen creature, a mirror of her own unhappiness and humiliation – yes. Here as elsewhere, the individual is the touchstone of her thinking. If God made man 'in His image', then it is His spirit which animates her, the

* 'Through the windows shines the lofty sky, / The evening sky, quiet, bright. / My lonely heart weeps for joy, / It rejoices that the sky is so beautiful.'

† 'The black mouth of the open grave / Laughs; // I demand a miracle / By the power of my all-powerful soul . . . / But from down there wafts / The earthy smell of the grave.'

‡ 'It is for the Devil I pray to You / Oh Lord! He too is Your creation. / I love the Devil because / In him I see my own suffering.'

sentient subject, suffers with her and must save her to save Himself. Many of Hippius's 'prayers' sound more like demands, and Briusov, who, unlike Hippius, was not consciously concerned with religion, parodied her stance vis-à-vis the Almighty in the lines:

Я дорогой иду непрохожей,
 Но знаю, дух мой высок.
 Мы с Тобой, о Боже, похожи,
 За что же ко мне Ты строг! *²³

Perhaps Hippius laid herself open to such treatment: the devotional poetry of a worldly soul rings hollow at times. Nevertheless, it is fair to judge her poems by her own criteria: as the full flavour of the given minute, subjective, particular. Jacob wrestling with the angel seems far from this lonely woman with her great green eyes, wasp waist and mocking tongue, but there were *moments* when they were close kin.

Fedor Kuz'mich Teternikov, who wrote under the pseudonym Sologub, was another 'dark soul', a convinced singer of Death and the devil, who shared many themes with Hippius. His poetry, however, is further removed from his life as he lived it; it is escapist rather than questing, a retreat from experienced reality. Transfiguration is to be achieved only temporarily, only through art.

In a remarkable prose allegory, a genre at which he excelled, Sologub encapsulates his attitude to 'Life and Death'. A knight captures Death and imprisons her in a dungeon in his castle. At the trial, Death refuses to defend herself:

I have nothing to say to you as yet, but let Life speak for me.
 And the knight saw Life standing beside him, a great, stout, red-faced woman, hideous.

And she launched into such coarse and impious speech that the bold knight trembled and hastened to open the door of the dungeon.

Death went her way and, again, people died. When the time came the knight died also and to no-one in the whole world did he ever tell what he had heard from Life, that hideous and impious woman.²⁴

There is a world of difference between Hippius's 'Liubliu ia sebia, kak Boga' ('I love myself as I love God') and Sologub's 'Ia – Bog tainstvennogo mira. / Ves' mir v odnikh moikh mechtakh' ('I am the God of a mysterious world. / All the world is in my dreams alone'. Briusov's parody on Hippius quoted above begins: 'Ia znaiu udovol'stvie smerti, / No eshche pozhit' khochu' ('I know the pleasures of death, / but I want to live

* 'I walk a road untrodden, / But know, my spirit is lofty, / You and I, o God, are alike, / Why are you so hard on me!'

a little longer'). She did, of course. The poems and her whole life were a constant struggle *against* morbidity and towards the fullness of life, Life with a capital letter. If so much can be said of Sologub, it is only with the most profound reservations.

The very act of creation, it might be argued, is life-affirming. In his earliest poems this is most evident:

Злые виденья
Раненой жизни,
Спите до срока в мятежной груди!
Ключ вдохновенья,
На душу брызны,
Чувства заснувшие вновь разбуди!*²⁵

As he wrote, 'Ia slagal eti mernye zvuki, / Chtoby golod dushi zaglushit'' ('I composed these measured sounds / To soothe the hunger of my soul').²⁶ However, in his conscious mind at least, Sologub gradually came to set up the world of his imagination as anti-life. If God is the god of the living, Sologub elected to worship the Devil.

His poetry embodies a personal myth (*mythologema*). The Devil here is no fallen angel to be redeemed, no Baudelairean fellow-sufferer banned from the delights of Heaven. On the contrary, the Devil is an alternative God, the god of beauty and of death. This deity Sologub hails as 'Father': Otets moi, D'iavol'. When invoked, this Devil-god can save from the storms of life and in his gift is the power to weave spells of oblivion, to create and rule an alternative world. The price?

Тебя, Отец мой, я прославлю
В укор неправедному дню.
Хулу над миром я восставлю
И, соблазняя, соблазню. †

In the world of Sologub's poetry, Life is repulsive, cruel, arid. He rejects life and therewith the symbolic source of life; the sun – the 'serpent', the 'dragon' as he calls it: 'Zmii'.

Змий, царящий над вселенною,
Весь в огне, безумно злой,
Я хвалю тебя смиренною,
Дерзновенною хулой. ‡

* 'Evil visions / Of a wounded life, / Sleep till the time is ripe in my mutinous breast! / Gush from my soul, / Spring of inspiration, / Wake again feelings I thought asleep!'

† 'Thee, father, I will glorify / As a reproach to the unjust day / I will vilify the world / And, seducing, I will seduce.'

‡ 'Dragon who rules the Universe, / All inflamed, crazed with anger, / In your praise I sing / Humble paeans of audacious obloquy.'

He reproaches the sun for waking life in the cool dampness of the earth, for waking men from the refreshing night, when 'the clear cold of inspiration / Creates crystals out of dreams' ('... iasnyi kholod vdokhnoven'ia / Iz grez kristally sozdaet'). This longing for freshness, forest shade, damp meadows, night, death and cool crystallisation is fundamental to his poetry. It preceded the mythical world and the 'humbly audacious' glorification / vilification of the Dragon-Sun in the name of the Devil. As early as 1894 Sologub was already vowing himself to Death: 'O smert'! Ia tvoi. Povsiudu vizhu / Odnu tebia, – i nenavizhu / Ocharovaniia zemli...' ('O death! I am yours. Everywhere I see / You, only you – And I hate / The enchantments of the earth').²⁷

Like Minsky, who influenced him during his first years in St Petersburg and whom he still considered an intellectual ally (*edinomyshlennik*) as late as 1914,²⁸ Sologub was and remained enthralled by Schopenhauer. Indeed, his poetry is, to a very considerable extent, a mythologisation of the German philosopher's concept of the world as Will and Representation, the sun standing for the evil and ungovernable, irrational Will which, for Schopenhauer, animates the world of matter. But, according to Schopenhauer, man has the power to opt out; subjectively speaking, he has a choice and can create his own gentler, lovelier world: the price, however, is steadfast nay-saying to the struggle for existence. In poetry, Sologub makes this choice, though as one brought up as a strict Orthodox Christian he is aware, as Minsky was not, of heresy.

The other *mythologema* which runs right through Sologub's work is one which, in various forms, appears in much of our own English, late Victorian and Edwardian literature. It is the 'Secret Garden', the land 'At the back of the North Wind', the dream-world of Kipling's 'Brushwood Boy' – a world of the imagination on to which repressed and love-starved children project their need for life and beauty and, often, for an absent, dead or otherwise unsatisfactory mother. Sologub calls it the world of Oile. It revolves about the one clear star Mair. The land of Oile exists not only in Sologub's poetry, but in his stories as well, and it is to the prose we must look for the concept of the missing mother. The psychological insight of his early stories anticipates many Freudian discoveries, but they are never clinical in tone. To read them is to look into an apparently clear, rippling stream where monsters lurk just beyond sight, betrayed by the occasional bubble or flicker in the depths. Many of Sologub's short stories are about children – one parodist suggested a Sologub tale entitled 'The suicide of fourteen boys' – sad, quiet, barefoot children whose innocence is perpetually under threat both from the outside world and from their own cruel, sensuous dreams. Often, the hero is a young boy who has lost his mother – she is dead – or, worse, who believes his true.

beautiful, 'white' mother to have been supplanted by a changeling, cruel, 'black' mother.²⁹

Sologub's own mother is a malevolent presence in an early poem, 'Ia iz uchilishcha prishel' (I came home from the school).³⁰ It is totally different in character from the endless variations on the theme of day versus night, life versus dream, in most of the writing at the time. In this realistic poem, as in life, the maternal figure is a tyrant.

The poet's mother, after the father's death, worked as a cook in a house which was full of books and music and afforded tantalising glimpses into the world of theatre and opera. The father had been a serf, the illegitimate son of his owner; after the Emancipation, he became a tailor in St Petersburg, but died of consumption in 1867, leaving a son aged four, a daughter aged two. His widow, brutalised by a hard life, did her best for her children. This involved beating them hard and frequently and actually requesting Fedor's schoolmasters to do the same – as, she said, her son was poor and had to make his own way in life. More fiercely than the punishments, Fedor resented his precarious position as the son of a servant, banished to sleep on a chest in the hot, smelly kitchen, yet half accepted into the intellectual life of his 'superiors'.

When he finished school he trained as a teacher and, in 1882, took his mother and hunchback sister who was for long his only friend to the provincial town of Kresttsy where he worked at his new profession, enduring the appalling humiliation – by special dispensation at his mother's request – of walking to and from school and teaching barefoot 'as an example of humility and thrift'.³¹ The kind of life he led over the next ten years can best be pictured by reading his own semi-autobiographical novel *Tiashelye sny* (Bad Dreams, 1895). His masterpiece *Melkii bes* (The Petty Demon, 1905) also paints a nightmare picture of the life of a provincial schoolmaster and the town in which he lives, a picture which, according to the author, is actually toned down. Almost unbelievably, Sologub's mother, whom he continued to honour and support until she died in 1894, still flogged him at times, and he ruefully recounts how, after one such occasion, he took out his ill-temper on his pupil 'and ordered that he should be whipped more often'.³² In 1891, Sologub escaped the provinces to St Petersburg, where he was soon appointed Inspector of Schools and, besides rather quickly making a name as a poet, became a much respected advocate, in the liberal newspapers of the time, of educational reform and the humane treatment of children.

Not surprisingly, Sologub refused to divulge any particulars of his biography when a selection of his poetry was published in the collection, *Poety simvolizma* (Poets of Symbolism) in 1908. 'My biography', he wrote in his clear, somewhat unformed schoolmaster's hand, 'is of no use

to anyone. A writer's biography should follow only after thorough-going attention on the part of critics and public to his work. So far, this has not been forthcoming.' Possibly he was right, but his reticence gave rise to unsavoury speculation. 'What you wrote to me about Sologub filled me with horror, delirium, indignation, nausea, almost', wrote Andrey Bely to Ivanov-Razumnik, who spent much time with Sologub during his last years. 'It was whispered that there was a touch of sadism in his work but, in the first place, he was a victim; in the second, an innocent victim.'³³

There are so many ways of explaining the appearance of a school of poetry. It can be attributed to literary fashion, environment, influences, inhibitions, class, country, history. All these things go to form a trend. The individual artist must react to circumstances, must contribute to the formulation of certain ideas and techniques, which in their turn will be assimilated, propagated, used and eventually rejected. To be convincing, however, convincing as an artist and not just as a more or less typical cultural phenomenon, the individual must draw from wells of emotion he himself has not fully plumbed. Jung once said of a patient he had successfully cured: 'There was an element of genius in him, but he was deeply disturbed. Now he is a sane man, but the genius has gone'.³⁴ Though the artist need not, of course, be insane, he does create out of the unconsciousness, and the Russian 'decadents' were no exception. Certain themes and techniques were brought into prominence by literary fashion and precedent, but each writer drew upon the depths of his or her own nature and experience in his treatment of them.

The theme of death was of extraordinary importance to the forerunners and first practitioners of Russian Symbolism, but it meant different things to different people. For Minsky, life was the manifestation of self-will, opposed to the divine principle of self-sacrifice, and 'death' was touched with 'meonistic', ecstatic hope, a cerebrally induced yet genuine shudder of longing for a higher state of being. For Merezhovsky, a simple man who indulged in complicated theories, death was at one and the same time both the supreme challenge (the *summus passus* of Dostoevsky's Kirillov) – a challenge which the individual must somehow accept in order to transcend his own nature – and well-earned rest. For Hippus, death was separation, a constant and real threat to her loved ones and her own frail being. When, in her poetry, she sings of her longing for that which is not of this world, this is no celebration of the Baudelairean 'au-delà', but rather a yearning for the fullness of life. Hippus, from childhood to old age, was quite exceptionally sheltered: someone – her mother or husband or some devoted younger friend – always stood between her and the world. She was, moreover, unencumbered by parenthood or property.

The reverse of the medal was that she never knew the instinctual satisfaction of motherhood or, it seems, of simple sex, the coarser aspects of which seem to have struck her as absurd and repellent.³⁵ Half-acknowledged frustration and a remarkably immediate awareness of mortality: these were the irritants around which the pearl of poetry was fashioned.

Sologub, on the contrary, had been exposed early to cruelty, to every form of degrading experience. He really believed he wanted to die, for death seemed to him the only true antithesis of life. The imaginary land of Oile is a toy for his comfort, associated with all the qualities of freshness and silence with which he invests death alone, of which he writes: 'I ia ponial, chto zlo pod dykhan'em tvoim / Vmeste s zhizn'iu liudei ischezaet, kak dym' ('And I have understood that evil, even as you breath upon it / Vanishes away like smoke, together with the life of man').³⁶

Yet his best writing is about life. His fear was of the grey dustiness of life which, in the novel *Melkii bes* and in many poems, he personifies as the 'Nedotykomka' or the faceless 'Likho':

Лихо ко мне прижимается, шепчет мне тихо:
 'Я — бесталанное, всеми гонимое Лихо!
 [...]'
 Только тебе побороться со мной недосужно, —
 Странно мечтая, стремишься ты к мукам.
 Вот почему я с твоею душою так дружно,
 Как отголосок со звуком.*

This personification of emptiness, dressed like a Russian beggar in a threadbare kaftan and stove-pipe hat, persecutes the poet as it persecuted his unspeakable alter ego Peredonov in the novel *Melkii bes*:

Недотыкомка серая,
 Истомила коварной улыбкою,
 Истомила присядкою зыбкою, —
 Помоги мне, таинственный друг!
 [...]'
 Недотыкомку серую
 Хоть со мной умертви ты, ехидную,
 Чтoб она хоть в тоску панихидную
 Не ругалась над прахом моим.†³⁷

* 'Likho comes snuggling up to me, whispers quietly to me: / "I am dull, stupid Likho whom everyone drives from them! / . . . / Only you can't find time to struggle against me, / Lost in strange dreams, you crave torments. / That is why I am as close to your soul / As the echo to the sound."'

† 'The grey Nedotykomka / has exhausted me with its leering smile, / Exhausted me with its wild, wavering dance; / Help me, mysterious friend! [. . .] / Kill the grey Nedotykomka / The evil spirit, even if it means killing me with it, / So that at least amidst the yearning prayers for the dead / It should not desecrate my dust.'

Surely this is a Russian devil if ever there was one? There is nothing here borrowed from the rich demonology of the English, French or German. Sologub, unlike most of his fellow-Symbolists, was no traveller. Yet he did appreciate (and translate) French poetry and prose, particularly Verlaine, whom he began translating as early as 1892 'for no exterior reason. I translated him, because I love him'.³⁸ One of his first Verlaine translations of 'Le ciel est, par-dessus le toit ...', set to music by S. V. Panchenko in 1901, was for Blok 'one of the first poignant revelations of the new poetry [...] bound up with the music ...'³⁹

Sologub counted the translations from Verlaine he published in 1908 as his own seventh book of poems. So intense was his interest in conveying the French through the Russian that he actually published two or more versions of five of the thirty-seven poems, an innovation which predictably awoke the wrath of some critics, the enthusiastic approbation of others. Briusov, in the introduction to his own translations of Verlaine, noted Sologub's ability literally to 'recreate some poems in another language so that they seem like the original verses of a Russian poet'.⁴⁰

What did the Russian school-master find in the work of the French poet so profoundly in tune with his own mood? He answers the question – in part, at least – in the foreword to his translations: 'that which I would call mystic irony', 'every impossibility is affirmed as essential, behind the many-coloured veil of chance, the eternal world of freedom is attained. Every earthly and coarse intoxication affords mysterious glimpses of beauty and ecstasy.'⁴¹ In 'Le ciel est, par-dessus le toit ...', a sense of paradise lost is expressed through a delicate exploitation of paradox and the trick of leaving out that to which one most needs to call attention – in this case, the all-important fact that the lyric evocation of the tree, the blue sky and the peaceful town are all that can be seen of the world from a prison window, a prison to which the poet is confined by his own fault. This feeling of the world as prison was a commonplace of Romanticism and neo-Romanticism and was familiar to Russians through the poetry of Fet. What is new here is the understatement. The prison is not named or described but implied by the suggestive monotony of repeated words and weak rhymes, by the hesitancy of the faltering rhythm.

It would be a gross exaggeration to say that Sologub taught himself to write poetry by translating Verlaine. He had been pouring out his heart in verse for a dozen or so years before he fought his way back to St Petersburg and – immediately it seems – singled out Minsky, Merezhkovsky and Hippius as the writers most likely to understand him, and began to publish his poetry with theirs. He had known what he wanted way back in 1880:

Чтоб всегда иметь шалунью
 Рифму под рукою,
 Изучай прилежно слово
 Трезвой головою.
 Сам трудись ты, но на рифму
 Не надень оковы:
 Муза любит стих свободный,
 И живой, и новый.*⁴²

Nevertheless, it was Petersburg – and Verlaine – that actually brought Sologub's poetry to life, making it 'free', 'alive' and 'new'. Before that, he was trying too hard to give explicit expression to thought and mood, to body out his perception of the beautiful in nature or in painfully imagined 'ideal' women. Gradually, he learnt the power of the unsaid, but the images and anguish of his early period were to stay with him, breaking forth in identification with a lost animal, often a dog, which recurs as a *leitmotif* throughout his poetry.⁴³

In such poems, the lyrical persona's road lies along 'animal tracks through the marshes' and he feels himself outcast and evil, 'like a beast in the cold darkness of a cave', a 'brother to soulless rocks'. Here is the voice of the pariah, a spasmodic howling, culminating in a whole series of 'dog' poems written in 1905 which in turn reach a climax in the famous 'Vysoka luna gospodnia' ('High is God's moon') with its final irresistible call to a poet's midnight barking:

Под холодную луною
 Я одна.
 Нет, невмочь мне, — я завою
 У окна.

 Высока луна Господня,
 Высока.
 Грусть томит меня сегодня
 И тоска.

 Просыпайтесь, нарушайте
 Тишину.
 Сестры, сестры! войте, лайте
 На луну!†⁴⁴

* 'If you would have that romp / Rhyme always to hand, / Study the word industriously / With sober head. / Work hard yourself, but as to Rhyme / Do not think to put her in fetters: / The Muse loves verse that is free, / And alive, and new.'

† 'Under the cold moon / I am alone. / No, I can't bear it, / I shall start to howl / At the window. / High is god's moon, / High / Sadness gnaws at me today / And yearning. // Wake. break / The silence. / Sisters. sisters! Howl. bark / At the moon.'

Later, as a successful author and dramatist, Sologub was to take stock of his howling capacity in a series of self-deflating poems, 'Kogda ia byl sobakoi' ('When I was a dog'), written in 1911 and 1912.

Sologub was, naturally in the circumstances, concerned to make his writing pay. Strangely, this most pessimistic poet does not at first appear to have struck his contemporaries as being outrageously decadent, perhaps because the foreground of his poems and stories was vivid and immediately comprehensible. Nevertheless, although he published his work wherever he could and was a welcome contributor to journals and newspapers normally closed to the 'new trends', it was with the authors appearing in *Severnyi Vestnik* that Sologub felt at home. They encouraged and admired him from the beginning, and the ever-critical Hippius wrote to him on the appearance of his first book of poems in 1895 that a few were 'almost perfect'. From 1895 onwards, it was to the Merezhkovskys and to Sologub that younger poets came to discuss all that was new in literature and, if Hippius and Merezhkovsky were the principal fount of ideas, Sologub was considered by many to be the arbiter of taste and technique. Gradually, informal gatherings at their homes became regular *jours fixes* and the nucleus of Russian modernism in St Petersburg. Poets from the older capital, too, sought out their acquaintance and approbation.

3 Russian Symbolism acquires a name

Из жизни медленной и вялой
Я сделал трепет без конца

Валерий Брюсов*

The writer who links the Petersburg or *Severnyi Vestnik* group with Moscow is Konstantin Bal'mont. Born on his father's estate in the province of Vladimir, resident in Moscow in the 1890s but welcome contributor to *Severnyi Vestnik* from 1893 onward, Bal'mont published his first collection in Vladimir and the next two (all at his own expense, as did most of the early Symbolists) in St Petersburg; he lived in Moscow from 1886 and was associated closely with Briusov from 1894 onwards.

Most exotic of all the Russian Symbolists, polyglot and much travelled, Bal'mont was yet the first to have deep roots in the Russian countryside. His father, Dmitrii Konstantinovich, served briefly in the navy and then, well on into the twentieth century, in local government. He appears to have been somewhat under the thumb of his wife, Vera Nikolaevna, a general's daughter, who was, according to their son, 'a clever and exceptional woman who had the most profound influence on my poetic life [...] who introduced me to the world of music, literature, history and languages'.¹ Both parents were full of good works, Vera Nikolaevna devoting much time to teaching and healing the peasants on their small estate, Dmitrii Konstantinovich doing what he could to combat illiteracy and injustice at the level of the *Zemstvo*, the organ of local government. His leisure was devoted to the chase, hers to arranging concerts, amateur theatricals and generally raising the tone of social life in the district.

Yet the idyllic, gentlemanly world into which the poet was born had outlived its natural span. It was beginning to fade, a state exquisitely depicted in an early attempt at an elegy, which Bal'mont wrote for and recited at a literary evening in 1893 dedicated to the memory of Ivan Turgenev:

* 'From slow and torpid life / I have made a vibrancy without end.' Valerii Briusov

Дворянских гнезд заветные аллеи.
 Забытый сад. Полузаросший пруд.
 Как хорошо, как все знакомо тут!
 Сирень, и резеда, и эпомеи,
 И георгины гордые цветут.

Затмилась Ночь! Чуть слышен листьев ропот.
 За рощей чуть горит луны эмаль.
 И в сердце молодом встает печаль.
 И слышен чей-то странный, грустный шепот.
 Кому-то в этот час чего-то жаль.*

The picture is reminiscent of a canvas by the 'Blue Rose' artist, Borisov Musatov. Where the painter uses delicate pastel shades, avoiding primary colours, to convey the wavering transparency of his 'ghosts', the poet likewise avoids direct statement. The pond is 'half-overgrown', the rustle of leaves 'only just' audible, the enamel moon (a precious image, which glows with a light of its own against the otherwise conventional lexical background) shines 'faintly' and its beam 'scarcely' trembles. Just as the artist indicates figures by a few impressionistic brush strokes, making no attempt to paint realistic portraits, so, in this poem, Bal'mont suggests presences by 'someone's' melancholy whispering, by 'someone's' regret for 'something' and, dimly glimpsed at a distance, an aerial flutter of imaginary women: 'Elena, Masha, Liza, Marianna, / I Asia, i neschastnaia Suzanna' – Turgenev's heroines with their simple, melodious Russian names ...²

Bal'mont, however, had bumped his nose against a more solid 'reality' when, at the age of nine, he began to attend the local *gimnaziia* in the town of Shuia, a thriving centre of textile manufacture, a 'Russian Manchester' whose busy offices had already produced that most notorious revolutionary Sergei Nechaev. Here the world was changing, and changing fast, although the outer crust, personified for the boy by the detested school, was still intact. Konstantin's fellow pupils were of a very different social status: sons of merchants, clerks, craftsmen, priests and even the nascent 'working class'. The young poet made very little effort to master the official programme but put his heart into reading and teaching himself foreign languages (inspired, apparently, by Kropotkin's expression 'self-help'!) and into drawing up impractical plans to run away 'to the people'

* 'Secluded avenues in nests of gentle-folk. / Neglected garden. Pond half-overgrown. / How pleasant, how familiar it all is! / Lilac and mignonette and barrenwort, / And dahlias proudly in flower. // The night grows dark! Only just audible is the murmur of the leaves. / Faintly, the enamel moon shines beyond the grove. Melancholy rises in the young heart. / And you can hear someone's strange, sad whispering. / Someone, at this hour, is regretting something.'

or 'to the sectarians'. At the age of seventeen, he was expelled for belonging to a revolutionary circle.³

The 'circle' was harmless enough, basically devoted to discussion and propaganda, though it did handle literature from the terrorist 'Narodnaia Volia' (People's Will) group. Bal'mont was the only 'dvorianin' (nobleman); otherwise the group's composition appears to have been rather colourful and very Russian: a young lady described as 'an actress', schoolboys, students, the consumptive inspector of the local hospital, a priest's son who did not survive the prison sentence imposed for the leading part he played in this pocket 'revolution', and a renegade fool-in-Christ who wore penitential chains and lived in a barrel, could quote from Marx, Liebknecht and Lassalle and described himself as 'Smetkin the democrat, cynic and epicurean'. The schoolboys were not given prison sentences, but were redeployed to complete their education elsewhere 'under observation'. At a new school in Vladimir Konstantin lived as a boarder in the flat of his class master, a Czech teacher of Greek, who dissuaded him from further attempts to publish after his short-lived triumph of having three poems accepted by a Petersburg journal, *Zhivopisnoe Obozrenie* (The Pictorial Review).⁴

The very summer he left school, Bal'mont began to indulge a lifelong passion for travel, driving with the Zemstvo factory inspector all round his native province of Vladimir, heartland of European Russia. Later he was to journey to the Caucasus, the Crimea, Europe, Mexico, the United States, Australia, New Zealand and the East Indies, sprinkling epigraphs in German, English, French and Spanish through his books. Yet in his last and longest exile he could still write of the cornflowers in the yellow harvest fields of his native land:

Я видел всю землю от края до края.
Но сердцу всех сказок милей,
Как в детстве, та рифма моя голубая
Широкошумящих полей*⁵

Whether it was the fatal legacy of Bal'mont's early reputation as a radical (he was arrested briefly for involvement in student rioting during his first year at Moscow University, 1886–7), or his first, early and disastrous marriage, which led to a break with the parental home, attempted suicide and divorce, or simply his own unbalanced temperament, one way or another the poet never completed his higher education.

* 'I have seen the whole world from end to end. / But of all the stories, the dearest to my heart, / As in childhood, is that pale-blue rhyme of mine / Flowers of the wide whispering fields.' (I have supplied the word 'flowers'; the identification between the cornflowers punctuating the yellow fields and 'blue rhymes' in fact occurs earlier in the poem. Tr.)

Instead, he embarked upon a bohemian *Künstlerleben*, starving in attics, drinking heavily when he could afford to do so (in part, almost certainly, to overcome a naturally tender and shy disposition), and earning his living by translating, from an almost unbelievable variety of languages – from Scandinavian to Sanskrit, Slovak to Spanish, French and Latin to German and English, not to mention Polish and Portuguese. He developed a lively interest in the religions of the Orient, in ancient Chinese grammar, Japanese prints, Aztec and Thai legends, Russian *byliny* (sagas) and Baltic folklore, and read copiously in the natural sciences as well as in history, art, philosophy. There was no apparent attempt at order or system in all this, although Bal'mont does appear to have transformed all he touched into literature.

The impression he made on his contemporaries was of someone who had opted out of the dear but fading world of childhood, which would have entailed the obligation to shoulder social responsibility in his poetry and to love 'the sadness of the earth',⁶ in favour of unlimited freedom of mind – travel, books, languages – and, above all, of imagination. A tragi-comic figure, he was extreme in all things, not least in the matter of form. 'I have the serene conviction that before me, by and large, no one in Russia was capable of writing mellifluous verse',⁷ he once declared. Although the first love of his youth was German Romanticism, it was English poetry, and above all Shelley's (which he translated systematically almost in its entirety) and Edgar Allan Poe's (which he also translated extensively), that served as a model for the devices of alliteration and internal rhyme, which he used from the outset of his poetic career with unbridled enthusiasm.⁸

Bal'mont's first widely-known collection, *Pod severnym nebom* (Under a Northern Sky, 1894), contains a poem dedicated to his patron Prince Andrei Urusov, an amateur of literature and the theatre whom Bal'mont first met in Moscow in 1892. An expert on Flaubert and Baudelaire, Urusov financed the publication of two volumes of Bal'mont's translations of Poe in 1895, and encouraged 'that admiration for musical sound' to which at that time, under the influence of literary prejudices, the poet 'was afraid to surrender'. The first verse of the dedicatory poem reads:

Вечер. Взморье. Вздохи ветра.
Величавый возглас волн.
Близко буря. В берег бьется.
Чуждый чарам черный челн.*

* 'Evening. Seashore. Sighs of wind. / Majestic response of waves. / Near is the storm. / Against the shore there beats / A black skiff impervious to charms.'

The last line has remained a riddle and a joke. It was, however, difficult to resist the hypnotic onomatopoeia of the rest. The critics found Bal'mont's alliterative exuberance ludicrous, but readers were enchanted by the new musical poetry, both here and in the euphonious twittering and whispering of 'Pesnia bez slov' (Song without words):

Ландыши, лютики. Ласки любовные.
 Ласточки лепет. Лобзанье лучей.
 Лес зеленеющий. Луг расцветающий.
 Светлый, свободный, журчащий ручей.
 [...]

 Ветра вечернего вздох замирающий.
 Полной луны переменчивый лик.
 Радость безумная. Грусть непонятная.
 Миг невозможного. Счастья миг.*⁹

Although Hippius claims that Bal'mont had not 'found his voice' in these early poems, the last two lines, if nothing else, mark the débutant poet as a Symbolist – whether or not *malgré lui*. The categorical demand for the impossible, the readiness to exchange sanity for joy, the conviction that the cause of our sorrow is beyond understanding – all these are the sentiments of a generation in revolt against causality and common sense. Only in 'the moment' does the impossible become possible. Andrei Bely was later to work out a whole philosophy of Symbolism and to maintain that 'the moment is that point in time which, viewed from another angle, may stretch out to eternity'. This was the belief of his own, 'theurgic' generation of Symbolists. Bal'mont knew no such certainty, but he had discovered the moment as breakthrough.

The very title of his next book, *V bezbrezhnosti* (In the Unbounded, 1895) was a declaration, as was the epigraph from Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*: 'Kiss the earth and love, ceaselessly, insatiably, love all people, love everything, seek the ecstasy and frenzy of this.'¹⁰ In the first poem, Bal'mont described the poet's task as an ascent up a high, wavering flight of steps to catch at 'vanishing shadows'. He makes it sound dangerous: 'I vse vyshe ia shel, i drozhali stupeni, / I drozhali stupeni pod nogoi u menia' ('And ever higher I climbed, and the steps trembled, / And the steps trembled under my foot'). The poem echoes Merezhkovsky's 'We are steps over the abyss', quoted above, and implies that Bal'mont had ventured further up the same perilous ladder.¹¹ Such echoes from one poet to another are a feature of the Symbolist school and

* 'Lilies of the valley, buttercups. Lovers' caresses. / Swallow's chatter. Sunbeams' kisses. / Forest growing green. Meadow coming into flower. / Light, free, gurgling stream. [...] / The dying sigh of evening wind. / The changeable face of the full moon. / Mad joy. Incomprehensible sadness. / The moment of the impossible. The moment of happiness.'

the perilous aerial stairway or ladder of ascent is a recurring image in Briusov's early work and in Blok's.

Bal'mont's poetry, more richly orchestrated, less painfully individual than that of Hippius or Sologub, soon gained him a wider readership. Though full of reminiscences of Fet and Polonsky, Shelley and Blake, whom he called the forefather of the Symbolists,¹² the sombre ardours of Spain, the splendid boreal visions of Ibsen and the cosmic immensities of German *Naturphilosophie*, the poems were not consciously derivative. Bal'mont drifted with his inspiration: over the marshes and the steppes, down to the bottom of the sea, across wide waters to hear the song of the dying swan, into the mountains to see the clouds spun and the sun rise, on to magic islands. The dreams of other artists of other times and lands he appropriated effortlessly for himself and his own time.

It was perhaps El Greco to whom he was closest in spirit. Bal'mont gave the painter his own simile of the aerial stair:

На картине Греко вытянулись тени.
Длинные, восходят. Неба не достать.
'Где же нам найти воздушные ступени?
Как же нам пути небесные создать?'¹³

Of the many poets with whom Bal'mont communed in his poetry, it was Shelley whom he saw as a brother, an *alter ego*:

И я, как ты, люблю равнины
Безбрежных стонущих морей,
И я с душою андрогины,
Нежней, чем лилия долины,
Живу, как тень среди людей.†¹⁴

Bal'mont's third book, *Tishina* (Silence, 1898), is a collection of cycles and longer poems (*poemy*) and is consciously innovative in form. The *poema*, by its nature, is an objective genre. It tells a story (Pushkin's *Evgenii Onegin*, Lermontov's *Demon*) or uses some device such as the description of a journey or quest to paint a wide panorama of the state of society (Nekrasov's *Komu na Rusi zhit' khorosho?* (Who Lives Well in Russia?)). The genre allows for variations and modifications: the famous lyrical digressions (*liricheskie otstupeniia*) in *Onegin*; the lyrical undertones of the Romantic poem which often introduces a concealed spiritual

* 'On Greco's picture shadows stretch. / Tall, they strive upwards. Heaven is out of reach. / "Where are we to find the aerial stairway? / How are we to build roads in the sky?"'

† 'And I, like you, love the expanses / Of boundless, groaning seas, / And I too, with my androgynous soul / More tender than the lily of the valley, / Live like a shadow among people.' (It is typical of Bal'mont that he should use – and get away with – an anglicism in this poem about an English poet. The 'lily of the valley' in Russian is 'landysh', but Bal'mont chooses to translate literally from the English.)

self-portrait, as in *Demon* or *Mtsyri* (The Novice); even the introduction of incidental, extraneous material such as folk song in Nekrasov's famous poem. Symbolist poetry, however, with its extreme subjectivity, its concentration on the reverberations of the moment and its sceptical attitude to sequentiality, is ill-adapted to narrative. The Symbolist *poema* tends to consist entirely of variations and modifications. It is held together not by plot or chronology, as a novel is, but by an underlying structure more nearly comparable to architecture or music.

It seems probable that both Briusov and Bal'mont were alerted to the possibility of grouping short lyric poems in such a way as to form a coherent whole by Urusov's study of the 'secret architecture' of Baudelaire's *Les Fleurs du mal*,¹⁵ which perceived the collection as not just a rag-bag of lyrics but an *arrangement of poems*. After the appearance of this study and of Bal'mont's *Tishina*, collections of verse were considered as an organic whole, lyric poems were more often presented in cycles, and the *poema* came to be seen as an architectural or symphonic construct rather than as a straightforward narrative in verse. Such a construct allowed for parts of varying size and importance and for variations of form (metre and rhyme scheme) within the overall framework.

What Bal'mont gives us in his *poemy* in the collection *Tishina* is a succession of 'movements' or word-pictures often scarcely to be distinguished from his verse cycles such as 'Moments of Truth' or 'Nightmares', groups of poems which, though they gain from being read in a certain order, do not attempt to tell a story. The long poem *Mertvye korabli* (The Dead Ships) does, however, describe a progression of moods inspired by a real subject. The point of departure is a story of adventure which had captured the imagination of the whole world: that of Fridtjof Nansen who, in 1893, had rammed his ship *Fram* into the pack ice to drift, as he hoped, towards the North Pole. Bal'mont tells the story in terms of a spiritual pilgrimage for which the *fait du jour* provides only the material images. In fact, *Fram* (and Nansen) reappeared three years later, in 1896, off Franz Joseph Land. But Bal'mont's poem was conceived during the period when they were assumed lost and, to the poet, Nansen's attempt to reach the Pole must have seemed another doomed attempt to storm the heavens, to climb the 'aerial stairway'.

The theme of a spiritual pilgrimage is taken up again, more tenuously, in other poems in this 1898 collection. *Vozdushno-belye* (The Aethereally-White) is a celebration of the aspiring soul who, like the seekers after the Pole, leaves the homely earth, where once the daisies bloomed for his pleasure and he shared the sorrows of his fellow men, to strive after total emancipation from the common lot, eventually attaining the elemental insubstantiality of the wind: 'Ia vol'nyi veter, ia vechno veiu' ('I am the

free wind, I waft for ever'). In *Zvezda pustyni* (The Desert Star) there is the same apotheosis of restlessness when the lyrical hero rebels against a seemingly callous and unapproachable deity and strikes out into the desert in search of enlightenment.

The predominant theme of Bal'mont's first three books is mutability. His virtuosity goes into depicting transient things like snowflakes: 'My v'emisia, bezhim, propadaem, / I letaem, i taem, vdali ...' ('We weave, run, vanish / And fly, and melt in the distance'). Or words of love: 'Vsegda drobias', povsiudu tsel'ny, / Kak svet, kak vozdukh, bespredel'ny, / Legki, kak vspleski v trostnikakh'. ('Ever shattering, everywhere whole, / Like light, like air, unconfined, / Light as splashings in the reeds').¹⁶

The young poet's splendid yet somehow facile aspirations are perhaps best summed up in the concluding poem of *V bezbrezhnosti*:

За пределы предельного
К безднам светлой безбрежности!

В ненасытной мятежности,
В жажде счастья цельного,

Мы, воздушные, летим
И помедлить не хотим
И едва качаем крыльями.*

Already, the proud concept of the Superman was beginning to infiltrate Bal'mont's poetry. El Greco's monks are not just elongated shadows trying vainly to reach the heavens. They are contrasted to ordinary monks – 'hunched shadows', 'dark hosts of slaves' – and it is not to God they aspire, but rather to some higher gnosis: 'Litsa ikh strannye, mezhdru drugikh – udlinennye, / S zhadnost'iu tianutsia k vysshei razgadke mirov' ('Their faces are strange, amongst the others they are elongated, / They stretch out with avidity towards a higher understanding of the spheres').¹⁷ The poem 'Za predely predel'nogo', too, continues fortissimo: 'Vse zakhvatim, vse voz'mem, / Zhadnym chuvstvom oboimem!' ('We will seize on everything, take everything, / Embrace all things with avid empathy').¹⁸ These dynamic, self-assertive motifs were to dominate Bal'mont's poetry from 1899 to 1905, losing him some old friends, including Urusov, but attracting many new ones. In essence, the later work (which we shall look at in context), is the same melody replayed in a

* 'Beyond the bounds of the bounded / To abysses of radiant Boundlessness! // In insatiable rebelliousness, / In search of undivided happiness, // We winged ones soar / And will not wait or stay // And scarcely wave our wings.'

major key. Euphoria replaces discouragement. The frail wings spread and soar on favourable updrafts.

The key to Bal'mont's strength as to his weakness is the fact that he acknowledged no discipline, belonged to no school; he sung for himself alone. The result is self-indulgent, claustrophobic, disturbing as the incessant babbling of a maniac who has no sense of contact with the outside world. Images and sound-groups breed incessantly, incestuously. Occasionally, a line stands out, or a verse, a poem even, but they are swamped by floods of euphony, buried by avalanches of adjectives. Very rarely does anything *happen* in Bal'mont's poetry, and when it does we do not much care, because it happens at one remove: an allegorical event, a legend retold. Why? Because something caught his wandering fancy, seemed to him to express some facet of himself or to offer a new mask that he would try on for a moment, admire and cast away. Yet precisely because he took no thought to express the spirit of his time he did express it most fully. Behind the bewildering succession of poses is a lost child telling himself stories:

Месяца не видно. Светит Млечный путь!
 Голову седую свесивши на грудь,
 Спит ямщик усталый. Кони чуть идут.
 Звезды меж собою разговор ведут.
 Звезды золотые блещут без конца.
 Звезды прославляют Господа Творца.
 'Господи' — спросонок прошептал ямщик,
 И, крестясь, зевает, и опять поник,
 И опять склонил он голову на грудь.
 И скрипят полозья. Убегает путь.*¹⁹

At its best, as here, Bal'mont's poetry conveys a child's-eye view of the natural world, full of wonder and beauty. Here is his account of how he wrote his poems:

Рождается внезапная строка,
 За ней встает немедленно другая,
 Мелькает третья, ей издалека
 Четвертая смеется, набегая.
 И пятая, и после, и потом,
 Откуда, сколько, я и сам не знаю,

* 'The moon is nowhere to be seen. The Milky Way is shining! / His grey head drooping on his chest, / The weary coachman sleeps. The horses are hardly moving. / The stars are talking to one another. / The golden stars sparkle without end. / The stars glorify the Lord their Maker. / "Lord", mumbled the coachman, half asleep, / And, crossing himself, yawns, and again droops / And again his head sinks to his chest. / And the runners creak. The road leads on and away.'

Но я не размышляю над стихом
И, право, никогда — не сочиняю.*²⁰

Putting away childish things, Bal'mont absorbed whole museums, libraries, landscapes, civilisations and made them a part of his own inner world – of which he was a prisoner. Every new door he opens leads on to a mirror. As Bely said of him, he was 'able to jump out of the window – never out of himself'.²¹ Bal'mont was a brilliant *littérateur* and a refined artist – but something more of a maniac than most. To his own generation, however, this was the hallmark of genius, the sacred passivity of the sibyl, and it was generally agreed he 'could not be measured by the common yardstick'.

Bal'mont did not himself seek out Symbolists or 'Decadents', but was helped on his way by the ever-benevolent Populist writer Vladimir Korolenko, who began advising him as early as February 1886 and in 1891 introduced him to M. N. Al'bov of *Severnnyi Vestnik*, before Volynsky became literary editor. During his first troubled years in Moscow, Bal'mont was supported by the old revolutionary P. F. Nikolaev and the learned professor of literature N. I. Storozhenko as well as by the refined Westerniser Urusov. The young poet sought literary friendship wherever it was offered: by the Populist *Russkoe Bogatstvo*, by the *Severnnyi Vestnik* authors in Petersburg, by Urusov in Moscow, by Maxim Gor'ky who (still then writing in the *Nizhegorodskii Listok* (The Nizhegorod Pamphlet)) defended Bal'mont's poetry against the more impenetrably insensitive criticisms of the liberal press.²² He attached himself to Chekhov, with whom he afterwards remained on friendly terms, accompanying the playwright to pay his respects to Lev Tolstoy in Yalta. Afterwards Bal'mont went to see Tolstoy on his estate and subjected him to a reading of poems from his fifth book *Goriashchie zdaniia* (Burning Buildings, 1900). Predictably, 'the greatest genius now on earth', as Bal'mont called him, dismissed such whimsical synaesthesia as 'The scent of the Sun' ('Aromat solntsa') as 'nonsense', but the poet was courteously received.²³

In spite of these wider connections, Bal'mont, this 'pure poet', so ready to sacrifice life to art, was drawn into the Symbolist camp and made a considerable contribution to it, not least by the example of his lifestyle, his almost total identification of himself with the lyrical persona of his

* 'Suddenly a line is born, / Immediately another arises behind it, / A third is glimpsed, and from far away / A fourth is laughing at it as it comes running. // And a fifth, and after that, and then, / From where, so many – I don't know myself, / But I do not meditate on my poetry / And, truly, I never force anything.' (The last verb, 'Sochiniat', can mean 'to compose' or 'to make up'. The expression 'force anything', though sadly unpoetical, was the nearest I could get to suggesting both meanings.)

poetry. The decisive encounter between the poet and Symbolism as a literary movement took place at the Moscow 'Students' Society of Lovers of Western Literature' (Obshchestvo liubitelei zapadnoi literatury) on 28 September 1894.²⁴ Here Bal'mont met Briusov and immediately entered into an ecstatic poetic friendship with him, which Bal'mont was later to describe as a love/hate relationship.

Valerii Iakovlevich Briusov, a student at Moscow University, was six years Bal'mont's junior and, in almost every sense, his opposite: a townsman, a merchant's son with a logical, detached mind, a strong will, a formidable business sense and capacity for organised work and, as far as other people's talent was concerned, the predatory grasp of the born impresario. In one of his more Nietzschean moments, in 1899, Bal'mont wrote a poem about the piratical habits of the albatross, clearly identifying with the mighty sea-robber who snatches the prey of the poor boobies who get their fish from the sea:

Морской и воздушный разбойник, тебе я слагаю свой стих,
Тебя я люблю за бесстыдство пиратских порывов твоих.
Вы, глупые птицы, спешите, ловите сверкающих рыб,
чтоб метким захватистым клювом он в воздухе их перешиб.*²⁵

Probably the contrast here intended is that between the poet and the scholar, but whatever the intention, the predatory image tells us much more about the merchant's son Briusov than about the effete nobleman Bal'mont.

This is not to say that Briusov was in any sense a plagiarist. Rather, he was artistically acquisitive, an avid student of poetry in search of inspiration, instruction and allies. Within seven years of their first meeting he had relieved both himself and Bal'mont of the necessity of publishing at their own expense, and within a dozen years was declaring the older poet's unchallenged reign over Russian poetry finally at an end: 'We have gone on far ahead, he has remained in the same place.'²⁶

'I was not young in youth', Briusov wrote. Certainly he was not young in the childish, spontaneous manner of Bal'mont. Already by the time of their first meeting Briusov had, with the publication of volumes I and II of *Russkie simvolisty* (Russian Symbolists, 1894) introduced himself to the reading public as the committed leader of a literary movement. True, the movement existed for the time being largely in his imagination. He had, in an extraordinarily original tactical move, made a deliberately scandalous

* 'Robber of sea and air, for you I make my verse, / I love you for the shamelessness of your piratical instincts. / You stupid birds, hurry, catch the glittering fish, / So that with his well-aimed, predatory beak he might knock them from your grasp in mid-air.'

début not as a young poet but as a young school of poetry, in itself a prematurely ageing experience. Nevertheless, though far from childish, Briusov was youthful: still very unsure of himself and already desperately embattled against a solid front of literary disapproval. The meeting with Bal'mont at that particular time was providential and Briusov knew it: 'I was one person until I met Bal'mont and became another as a result of my acquaintanceship with him.'²⁷

Unlike any of his predecessors in their groping search for a 'new poetry', Briusov was quite certain – certain before he had published a single line of verse – of his direction and of his affinities in the world of art. His ambition as a little boy had been to become an inventor or a discoverer. At school, he 'discovered' poetry and began to write. His first models were Lermontov, Nekrasov, the inevitable Nadson and – somewhat later but more lastingly – Pushkin, Tiutchev, Fet. His early enthusiasm for the last two poets may well reflect the excellence of the school, the Polivanov *gimnaziia*, which, on a par with the Tenishev school in St Petersburg, provided an oasis of stimulating teaching in the bureaucratic desert of Russian secondary education at that time. Briusov's attitude to poetry, however, was uniquely his own. As he informed himself in his diary before entering the arena of public life:

Talent, genius even, if used honestly leads only slowly to success, if at all. That is not enough. Not enough for me! It is necessary to choose something else . . . To find a guiding star in the mist. And I see it: it is decadence: Yes! You can say what you like, that it's false, comic, but it is advancing, developing, and the future will belong to it, especially when it has found a worthy leader. And that leader will be I. Yes, I!²⁸

Briusov, while still a schoolboy, had discovered French 'decadence' via an article in *Vestnik Evropy* No. 9 (1892), Zinaida Vengerova's 'Poetry simvolisty vo Frantsii' ('Symbolist poets in France'). Undoubtedly, he was attracted by the scandalous amorality and unashamed aestheticism of Baudelaire and Leconte de Lisle and by their challenge to accepted values in the name of pure art, as Vengerova recorded it. Her principal subjects, however, were Verlaine, Mallarmé, Rimbaud, Laforgue and Moréas.²⁹ First-hand acquaintance with some original works by the first three poets, and with the plays of Maeterlinck, convinced Briusov that their kind of writing was, in some way he did not immediately understand, better suited than the native Russian tradition to his own experience of life: the life of a great city where poverty rubbed shoulders with indifference, class barriers were eroded, natural rhythms broken, and where the prevalent norm of behaviour was 'every man for himself'.

In St Petersburg, in the anxious voice of the isolated drunkard Konstantin Mikhailovich Fofanov, the very title of whose collection, *Teni i*

tainy (*Shadows and Secrets*, 1892),³⁰ suggested an unfulfilled affinity with the new impressionism of the city, and in Merezhkovsky's *Simvoly* (published in the same year as Vengerova's article), there did appear to be some stirrings of interest in the same direction, and this was soon confirmed by the debates of the Petersburg press, particularly in the columns of *Severnyi Vestnik*.

Although Briusov followed these with interest, he elected to take his 'decadence' from France. A friend at school, Aleksandr Lang, the son of a Moscow bookseller, was his first ally. Together, they ransacked the Lang bookshop and no doubt others along the Kuznetskii Most, for works by the French Symbolist poets, and there and then set about translating, analysing and imitating Verlaine and Mallarmé. Briusov's first attempts to publish his translations in established journals having failed, he enlisted the help of Lang, who wrote under the pseudonym Miropol'sky, and by the autumn of 1893 the two of them had ready a slender volume of translations and original verses in the 'new manner', programmatically entitled *Russkie simvolisty*, vol. I. Having virtually invented a movement, it was child's play to invent a publisher capable of writing a moderately-phrased introduction explaining the need for the new poetry. In this hypostasis, Briusov called himself V. A. Maslov, a tribute to a young lady, Elena Maslova, who had romantically put herself for ever beyond his reach by dying that same spring.

Among the eighteen poems by Briusov – 'Miropol'sky' managed only two, together with a few pages of poetic prose – there were a number of translations of Verlaine and two poems 'in the style of' Mallarmé and Maeterlinck respectively. Briusov's aim, a curious mixture of didactics and strategy, was to provide models of the new poetic form – presumably 'pour encourager les autres' – and to impress the literary world with the sensational notion that somewhere, in the unplumbed depth of the old capital of all the Russias, was living and working a group of youthful *poètes maudits*.³¹

To some extent, the venture was successful. The publication was noticed (and indeed pilloried) by the press. Even the philosopher-poet Vladimir Solov'ev, whom Briusov himself regarded, not without reason, as a precursor, chose to deflate the pretensions of the Moscow Symbolists. He suggested facetious interpretations of their mysterious verses and, as *Russkie simvolisty*, vol. I was followed by vols. II and III, engaged in a running battle of wits and parody which has itself become a part of the literature of the Symbolist movement.³² Probably thanks to all this brouhaha, *Russkie simvolisty* vol. I was also noticed by enough enthusiastic amateurs to ensure a second volume within the year, this time boasting seven or eight new contributors; a number of these were Briusov himself,

writing under several pseudonyms. This and the fact that he was the only contributor courageous enough to appear at all under his own name must have given him cause for reflection. In the summer of 1894 Briusov also published his own very tolerable translations of Verlaine's *Romances sans paroles*.³³

On the look-out for new recruits, Briusov was delighted when a Petersburg schoolboy, Aleksandr Dobroliubov (1876–1944) and his friend Vladimir Hippius (1876–1941) actually sought him out in his home in Moscow. Hippius was a younger cousin several times removed of Zinaida, who refers to both young men at this time as having just appeared on the fringes of literature. It was Dobroliubov who impressed Briusov, both by his extensive knowledge of the Symbolist movement in France and by his convincingly decadent personality.

Born in Warsaw, Dobroliubov had been brought up an ardent Populist. His sister Mariia, more true to family tradition, went as a nurse to the front during the Russo-Japanese war, became, in 1905, a heroine of the Revolutionary movement, and died a martyr's death in prison in 1906. Aleksandr, a 'fresh-faced youth who in the 1890s sported a white gardenia in imitation of Oscar Wilde'³⁴ and who was capable of sitting through an evening party without removing his soft black gloves, brought the same kind of dedication to a very different cause: the Schopenhauerian worldview which he acquired at school in St Petersburg. If life and the struggle for existence were evils, then he would preach the cult of Beauty, dream and death. At university he draped his room in black velvet and took to advocating suicide, smoking opium and writing 'decadent' verse, which he understood as an esoteric means of communication between kindred spirits, a way of 'speaking incomprehensively of the incomprehensible'.³⁵

For Briusov, the idea of poetry as a way of life was at this time, before his meeting with Bal'mont, at once new and impressive. Dobroliubov's emphasis on 'musique', too, was something to which Briusov himself had given little attention and which now appeared to him as perhaps of cardinal importance. Where the Moscow poet was still only really familiar with the work of Verlaine and Mallarmé, these students from Petersburg turned out to be well versed also in Rimbaud, Laforgue and Vielé-Griffin, and to have a clearer perception than Briusov of the importance of the 'forerunners': Baudelaire, Gautier and the Parnassiens, particularly of the part they had played in the emancipation of poetry from morality and politics.

The young men considered the possibility of a literary alliance. Dobroliubov and Hippius looked over the material Briusov had ready for *Russkie simvolisty*, vol. II with such critical acumen and alarming purity of intention that their host felt his control slipping. He had no intention of

ceding the helm and, for the time being, Moscow and Petersburg went their separate ways, but the first link was established and Briusov did not lose touch with these new allies.

Dobroliubov's poetry Briusov found 'weak', but was 'enchanted' by his personality, his literary taste, knowledge, extremism. After the Petersburg poet's departure Briusov noted ruefully that he had not succeeded in 'charming' him, but still felt drawn to him.³⁶ Indeed, Briusov appears to have looked on Dobroliubov rather as the strong-willed but non-charismatic Verkhovensky looked on Stavrogin: as a useful figurehead, a possible 'Ivan Tsarevich' for his movement. The extraordinary course of Dobroliubov's later development at once confirmed this attitude and frustrated its practical implementation.

Meanwhile, Briusov concentrated on the second volume of *Russkie simvolisty*, which he brought out with an introduction – over his own name rather than that of the fictitious Maslov – in which he defined Symbolism as the poetry of suggestion, designed to create a mood and to awaken a response by means of music, coded references to exotic subjects, often considered outside the compass of poetry, and by the use of symbols and 'correspondences', or associative thinking. Undoubtedly, some of the ideas Briusov advanced in this introduction and later in two 'interviews' for the Moscow newspaper *Novosti Dnia* were the fruit of his meetings with Hippius and Dobroliubov, though it was an absurd piece of school-boy pomposity on their part to write him a letter complaining that he had appropriated Dobroliubov's ideas without due acknowledgement.

The publication of *Russkie simvolisty*, vol. II provoked not only a renewed storm of abuse and ridicule, but a letter from the Merezhkovskys' friend and publisher, P. P. Pertsov inviting its chief author to submit a poem for inclusion in the forthcoming anthology *Molodaia russkaia poeziia*. Though a slender enough token of appreciation from a world which had shown itself almost uniformly hostile, this did provide the first tenuous link between Briusov and the more established 'decadent' writers of his day.³⁷

Against this background it is easy to understand Briusov's delight in his meeting, that same autumn of 1894, with Konstantin Bal'mont, a poet who had the entrée to the periodical press, had just brought out the highly successful *Pod severnym nebom* and was already an established literary translator. Bal'mont was quite devoid of the petty pride of the obscure beginner and, perhaps most important of all to Briusov at this stage, was a man in love with poetry for its own sake and signally indifferent to the 'politics' of 'literature'. Not even his worst enemy could accuse Briusov of complacency and he must have been aware that, in his absorption with

the 'means' of establishing himself as a literary figure, he was in serious danger of losing the 'end' of poetry itself. Bal'mont gave him back a sense of disinterested enthusiasm.

Briusov, although not unaffected by the poisons of his time, was not a 'natural' decadent in sensibility or psychology. He was not, like Bal'mont, a representative of a class which had outlived its historical function, but an acutely contemporary figure, looking with excitement towards the future, assertive and vigorous with regard to the present, yet touched by forebodings of doom and by the despair of a generation which did not control its own destiny. As Aleksandr Dobroliubov said, they were all 'Bednye deti bol'shikh gorodov' ('poor children of the great cities').³⁸ Briusov, however, was an exception in that he had never known any other home *but* the city. His background, again in contradistinction to Bal'mont's, was prosaic. His grandfather was a freed serf who had established himself so successfully as a cork merchant in Moscow that *his* son, Briusov's father, had been able to live on the income from his investments. Iakov Kuz'mich was an atheist rationalist, an admirer of Pisarev. His wife appears to have shared his convictions. Life in the solid, sprawling Briusov home was, by all accounts, graceless and undemonstrative. The only concession the aspiring poet made to family affection was to help his little sister with her lessons and to indulge his parents in an after-dinner game of cards. Yet this conventional family home, unrelieved by creative play and unilluminated by any single idea bigger than itself, where culture was something to be acquired and prized and polished like a solid Edwardian wardrobe, provided Briusov with a security he never learnt to do without.

Even in his marriage at the age of twenty-four, in 1897, Briusov looked no further than the parental home, wedding the governess of his younger brothers and sisters, Ioanna Matveevna Runt, in the sober awareness that 'there is no call to throw away a lamp just because it is not the sun'. The union, in fact, brought a brief glow of happiness to his lonely youth and his wife is among the few women on Briusov's carefully-graded Don Juan's list whom 'he thought he loved'. Yet before the century was out he was writing: 'Oh abomination! I wish for crime, poison, even a fatal illness; to go away on a pilgrimage, to go away to Cairo *but* not with my wife, even something childish, even something foolish . . .'³⁹

He did none of these things. Briusov was neither a childish nor a foolish man. It was therefore only natural that Bal'mont, who was both, should have proved in that autumn of 1894, and for years to come, a source of fresh inspiration and, through all the ups and downs of their relationship, an object of veneration.⁴⁰

Thanks in large part to the bracing effect of this new friendship, in the

third volume of *Russkie simvolisty*, entitled simply *Leto 1895* (Summer 1895), Briusov made fewer concessions to public taste. There were only three new, quite unimportant contributors. Besides a great many translations from Mallarmé, Rimbaud, Maeterlinck and others which, this time, took up two-thirds of the volume, interest was now centred on Briusov's own new poems, signed with his own name and calculated to shock – which they did.

Struck by a remark of Bal'mont's that 'for that one line the other fifteen were written', Briusov had discussed with him the merits of stopping at that, citing the practice of 'one-line poems' in the Latin.⁴¹ Boldly, proudly set out on an otherwise virgin page, he published the notorious 'O zakroi svoi blednye nogi' ('Oh, cover thy pale legs'). This piece of hooliganism (in the eyes of the literary establishment, at least), together with the necrophilic and near-pornographic overtones of the erotic poetry he was to publish later that year in his first collection *Chefs d'œuvre*, resulted in even 'friendly' journals such as *Mir Iskusstva* and *Novyi Put'* fighting shy of Briusov's poetry well into the next century.

In the introduction to the third volume of *Russkie simvolisty* Briusov made a spirited polemical defence of his earlier efforts and of the principles of Symbolist art as he then understood them. He laid about him with the contempt most of his opponents deserved, deploying only against Vladimir Solov'ev what was to become a favourite tactic of the modernists when faced with an enemy they would like to have had on their side: the disassociation of hostile theory from sympathetic practice. Briusov pointed out that, however the philosopher might mock, he was himself a Symbolist poet, as witness his poem 'Zachem slova?' ('Why words?'). Solov'ev was unimpressed, responding with three parodies which, he said, would show Briusov how he *would* have written if he *had* adhered to the tenets of Symbolism. One of these parodies makes fun of Baudelairean 'correspondences' with talk of 'chocolate skies', whereas another, aping the Symbolist addiction to animating emotions, invokes the hyena of suspicion, the bream of anguish, the elephants of circumspection and a whole menagerie of allegorical birds and beasts to tell a simple tale of adultery.⁴² The unexplained reflection of the chandelier in the heavens at the end of this parody is pure Briusov, reminiscent of the rising of 'Naked Luna by the light of the blue moon' in one of the best poems in *Russkie simvolisty*, vol. III – 'Tvorchestvo' (Creativity).

Meanwhile, Briusov himself was going on to bigger and better things. As he explained in the preface to his first book of verse, *Chefs d'œuvre*, though he hoped to write 'even more significant pieces' in the future, he had no doubt that what he was now publishing were masterpieces in the context of contemporary poetry. Coming from a young man of twenty-

one who had never published anything at all other than at his own expense, this was not just provocative: it was downright hard-nosed. To make sure that no-one should think he seriously required recognition from his contemporaries, Briusov dedicated his book 'to eternity and art'!

He was trying out a new tack. 'Symbolism' had not taken – not for the moment, not in his interpretation – and Briusov, in *Chefs d'œuvre*, was now consciously offering *himself*, the best of his work so far, with comparatively little regard for whether or not it fitted the Symbolist manner. Some poems, indeed, are sharply observant, earthy and realistic. Many, particularly in the section 'Meditations' (which the author insisted should be read consecutively as a 'pilgrimage of the spirit'), owe more to a natural succession of Russian influences – Tiutchev, Fet, Sologub and Merezhkovsky – than to their author's study of 'Symbolist' models from abroad.

The book does, however, represent a self-conscious if not altogether successful attempt at coherent form. Briusov insisted that it should be read from beginning to end 'from the foreword to the table of contents inclusively'.⁴³ Not wholly consonant with this recommendation was the inclusion of two longer poems, one conventionally narrative in form and the other in the style of Bal'mont. The clusters of shorter lyrics already showed a marked tendency to become cycles. This tendency towards 'variations on a theme' was a device dear to the French Symbolists and was not unknown in earlier Russian poetry. The Symbolists, though, by grouping individual lyrics in cycles, sought not so much to illustrate a thought as to communicate a succession of moods unified by the sentient subject. Although, by 1895, these ideas were 'in the air', it was Bal'mont and Briusov who together not only established cyclisation as a feature of Symbolist poetry but extended the principle to the *poema*. In doing so, they set the direction in which the twentieth-century Russian long poem was to develop, up to and including Blok's *Dvenadtsat'* (The Twelve) and Akhmatova's *Poema bez geroia* (Poem Without a Hero).⁴⁴

Another innovation in Russian poetry – more Parnassian than Symbolist – was the use Briusov made of the exotic, revelling in alien sounds and curious comparisons: 'How strange and wonderful foreign words sound, especially in rhyme!'⁴⁵ In one section of his book, entitled 'Cryptomeria' after a rare Asiatic tree, the fascination of foreign place names and non-Russian flora and fauna is particularly evident. Briusov, of course, was not a 'poets' poet'; a contemporary of Gauguin and Stevenson as well as a latter day admirer of Leconte de Lisle and Hérédia, he read widely and took a lively interest in exploration and discovery. At this stage, however, neither his rushing river Godaveri, 'yellow lions', lianas and

bananas, nor the 'cryptomeria' themselves were drawn from 'despicable reality' – or even, as Bal'mont's exotic turns of phrase undoubtedly were, from a living knowledge of other tongues and faraway places. The Briusov of *Chefs d'œuvre* considered, a priori, that nature was in every sense inferior to art.

Another, more obviously 'symbolist', or rather 'impressionist', feature which Briusov tried to introduce here against the grain of his natural talent, sometimes with comic results, is the dematerialisation of the surrounding world. This is achieved by the deliberate use of the transferred epithet, by attribution of emotions to inanimate objects – the 'hesitant' turn of the street, for instance, and the 'hungry maws' of the houses – and associating properties such as colour with emotions or objects to which they could not properly belong: the notorious 'fioletovye ruki' and 'atlasnye sady' ('violet hands' and 'satin gardens') are cases in point. *Chefs d'œuvre* provides many examples of the juxtaposition of naturalistic description, for which Briusov had an undoubted gift, with attempts to disintegrate matter. In the first stanza of 'Teni' (Shadows), Briusov describes a torrid love-scene, shadowy in the most literal sense of the word because observed by candle-light:

Наклоняются груди, сгибаются спины, веет жгучий, тягучий,
глухой аромат.
И, без силы подняться, без воли прижаться и вдавить свои
пальцы в округлости плеч,
Точно труп наблюдаю бесстыдные тени в раздражающем блеске
куращихся свеч. . . *

whereas in the second stanza he speaks of:

Это утро за ночью, за мигом признания, перломутрово-чистое
утро любви,
Это утро, и воздух, и солнце, и чайки, и везде — точно отблеск —
улыбки твои. †⁴⁶

Chefs d'œuvre is a laboratory of a book. Briusov is constantly experimenting: now with rhyme, both full, exotic and light, approximate rhymes in the style of Verlaine; now with variations of metre; now with startling subject matter. Each poem is a set-piece. All his life, Briusov set himself – and his pupils – tasks to fulfil. 'Can I not embody in a lyric poem moods

* 'Breasts hang down, backs bend, the air is heavy with a hot, stifling aroma. / I, without power to rise, without the will to press myself against you and sink my fingers into the curve of the shoulders, / Like a corpse observe the shameless shadows in the maddening glimmer of the smoking candles . . .'

† 'This morning after the night, after the moment of declaration, this mother-of-pearl-pure morning of love, / This is morning, and air, and sun, and seagulls, and everywhere – like reflected light – your smiles.'

completely alien to me and, even more, thoughts which are not mine?' he wrote in some surprise at the critical reactions to his more way-out subjects and statements.⁴⁷

There is, however, one sphere in which the Briusov of *Chefs d'œuvre* is both very much himself *and* an innovator. This is in his urban poems, whether they describe his antimacassared, potted-plant background, or the indifferent street where the eternal outsider seeks escape from vacuity in imaginary horrors:

Чтоб меня не видел никто,
На прогулках я прячусь, как трус.
Приподняв воротник у пальто
И на брови надвинув картуз.

Я встречаю нагие тела,
Посинелые в рыхлом снегу.
Я минуту убийств стерегу
И смеюсь беспощадно с угла

[...]

А потом, отряхнувши пальто,
Принадвинув картуз на глаза.
Я бегу в неживые леса...
И не гонится сзади никто!*⁴⁸

These poems, modern in feel and often powerful in execution, look back to Dostoevsky and forward to Blok, but they have a raw toughness which is peculiarly Briusov's.

Perhaps the most striking feature of this early urbanism is the confident way in which Briusov mixed styles. He can, for instance, introduce into an exquisite evocation of first snow, so reminiscent of Fet as to be almost plagiaristic, such prosaic words as 'ekipazhi', 'peshekhody' ('vehicles', 'pedestrians'). In a sense, Briusov is here reversing the process of 'dematerialisation'; he is proving that 'art' is roomy enough to absorb words and concepts more often met with in council by-laws than in high poetry.

Vladislav Khodasevich, a younger poet and critic whose formative years were spent sitting at the feet of the Symbolists, describes his disappointment at first meeting Briusov who, he said, looked like a draper's assistant:

* 'So that no-one should see me / When I go for walks I hide like a coward, / Raising the collar of my coat / And pulling my cap over my eyes. // I come upon naked bodies, / That have turned blue in the loose-packed snow, / I watch for moments of murder / And laugh from my corner without compassion [...] // And then, casting off my overcoat, / Pulling my cap down over my eyes, / I run into the lifeless forests ... / And no-one pursues me, no-one.'

Afterward, remembering the young Briusov, I felt that the main acuity of his verses at this time lay precisely in this combination of decadent exoticism and the most open-hearted Muscovite petty-bourgeois manners. [...] To this day the 'unknown, mocked and strange' author of *Chefs d'œuvre* is much more to my liking than the later, far more admired Briusov. I like the fact that this impatient youth, who is prepared in passing to drop remarks like:

'I hate the motherland, —'

at the same time turns out to be capable of picking up a mangy little kitten on the street and taking the utmost care of it, carrying it in his pocket when he goes to take exams.

It was this Briusov who dreamt up the extraordinary comparison of a dishevelled, sleepy Moscow with a broody ostrich:

Дремлет Москва, словно самка спящего страуса,
Грязные крылья по темной почве раскинуты,
Кругло-тяжелые веки безжизненно сдвинуты,
Тянется шея — беззвучная, черная Яуза.*⁴⁹

In a sense, *Chefs d'œuvre* was Briusov's second bid for leadership, in this case, not of the 'movement' invented and created by himself, but of the far wider and more amorphous movement which already existed. To his chagrin, the bid failed. Within a few days of the book's publication in August 1895 he was noting a flop – not so much in the wider world of literature, which responded with predictable indignation, though also with a few doubtless galling words of encouragement, but precisely amongst those people whose opinion he most valued. With characteristic spirit, he prepared and published in the spring of the following year a second, fuller and more outrageous edition, in the preface to which he declared himself deprived of even the faintest glimmering of his former hopes that his poems would find genuine readers ... and sent copies to friends he considered had failed him with inscriptions such as: 'To one of those whose opinion I once valued'.⁵⁰ Predictably, this gesture, too, passed virtually unremarked.

Undoubtedly, Briusov's perturbation was heightened by the speed with which the Symbolist movement was gathering momentum all around him. The year 1895 was, according to his Petersburg correspondent Pertsov, a year which 'changed literature'. Symbolism was 'advancing'. Towards the end of the year Briusov confided to Pertsov:

... two years ago I believed in other schools, I would have liked to see them all growing up together like sisters, in other words, I wanted Symbolism to emerge as

* 'Moscow dozes, like a mother ostrich sleeping, / Dirty wings spread over the dark earth. / Heavy, round eyelids lifelessly closed, / The neck stretched out is the silent, black river lauza.'

an ingredient of poetry pure and simple, but now I think, I believe, I know, that Symbolism, and it alone, is poetry; just as without the Orthodox Catholic Church there is no Salvation, even so without Symbolism there is no poetry.⁵¹

Pertsov's *Molodaia poeziia*, including the single poem he had requested from Briusov, was more of a summing-up of what had gone immediately before than a step ahead, but as such it was important. The bold titles of Briusov's *Chefs d'œuvre* and Bal'mont's *V bezbrezhnosti* were bids for attention and established the right to extravagant gesture, a right promptly abused by Briusov's 'double', the undistinguished poet Z. Emel'anov-Kokhansky, whose collection *Obnazhennye nervy* (Raw Nerves, 1895) was dedicated to 'Myself and the Empress Cleopatra' and contained, according to Briusov, a number of his own poems which he had decided against publishing, including a 'Hymn to syphilis' and 'The rape of the corpse'! Another bid for attention was the resounding Latin title of Dobroliubov's first collection *Natura naturans. Natura naturata*, 1895. This was a disappointing book, lacking that very element of 'musique' which was one of its author's cardinal principles, excessively esoteric. The fact that its author was sincerely committed to a lifelong battle to rise above the 'three-dimensional visible world' and to penetrate the secrets of the 'Book of the Invisible', did not become evident until two years later.⁵²

Another landmark of the year 1895 was the serialisation of Merezhkovsky's 'drama of the soul' *Otverzhenyi*, and of Sologub's *Tiazhelye sny*, in *Severnyi Vestnik*, so that it now became possible to speak not only of 'decadent poetry' but of the 'decadent novel'. It was in March 1895 that Volynsky, as we have seen, risked publishing Hippus's 'Posviashchenie'; 'Pesnia', her 'poem without metre', as Briusov admiringly called it⁵³ was in the December number, and in October there was her short story, 'Miss May', a refined, impressionistic depiction of the contemporary 'soul'. The fact that these publications were but a selection from a mature corpus of work was underlined by the appearance, just before the New Year of 1896, of *Novye liudi* (The New People), her first collection of prose and verse. Sologub, over the same period, brought out two collections, one – *Teni* (Shadows) – of short stories and the other, modestly entitled *Stikhi – kniga pervaiia* (Poems – Book One) of poetry. Here again, it was evident that both prose and verse were the work of a mature master in both genres, an artist with full control over his narrow but profoundly contemporary range.

It may also have appeared to Briusov that Merezhkovsky still had a part to play in the development of Symbolist poetry. In the December 1894 number, *Severnyi Vestnik* had published his 'Pesnia Vakhkantov' (Bacchantes' song), a declaration that this connoisseur and translator of

ancient Greek literature was coming out on the side of Nietzsche in advocating a more exciting, barbarous, Dionysian approach. The Nietzschean element was also strongly to be felt in Merezhkovsky's *Novye stikhotvoreniia*, written between 1891 and 1895, which contained much of his best poetry, including 'Leda', before which Briusov declared himself 'prepared to fall to his knees'. In 'Meditations', Briusov pictures the pilgrim-poet entering a decaying temple (presumably recently vacated by Merezhkovsky himself on the completion of *Otverzhenyi*) where there is a faded fresco painting of two demons embracing: Good and Evil. The older poet, however, had already gone further in his new, vitalistic amorality:

Люблю я смрад земных утех,
 Когда в устах к Тебе моления, —
 Люблю я зло, люблю я грех,
 Люблю я дерзость преступленья*

Coming from the bookish, fastidious Merezhkovsky, who 'never wrote at night', such declarations tended to amuse rather than to impress. Certainly there was nothing exciting in the form of this particular poem. Nevertheless, *Novye stikhotvoreniia* was an advance on *Simvoly* and, although Briusov now felt he had little to learn from Merezhkovsky, he was impressed by the older poet's call to 'break all laws' and 'transgress all boundaries' in the name of a 'New Beauty'.⁵⁴

In the realm of theory, too, Pertsov caused a furore in 1896 with his *Filosofskie techeniia v russkoi poezii*, an anthology of critical reassessments of Russian classical poetry. By close examination of the work of individual writers, Pertsov's authors sought to establish the poet's ability to express thought in a way entirely different from that of the scholar or scientist: through intuition and image rather than through discursive logic. The book, itself moderate and scholarly in style, provoked howls of derision from the critical establishment. Skabichevsky dismissed the whole concept of Pertsov's title:

... in Pushkin, in Maikov, it is despite everything possible to dredge up some kind of thoughts, however commonplace, though God alone knows why it should be called philosophy, but just imagine the effort of attempting to define the philosophy of a Tiutchev, a Fet! Why, one might as well try to get blood from a stone!⁵⁵

To cap it all, 1895 was the year in which Volynsky fired his final broadside into the midst of the Populist camp by bringing out his *Russkie kritiki* in book form.

* 'I love the stench of earthly pleasures, / When prayers to Thee are on my lips, / I love evil, I love sin, / I love the audacity of transgression.'

Briusov saw all too clearly that Symbolist work was being written and published by people who, with the exception of Bal'mont, were virtually unaware of his contribution. Although interest in the new movement was still confined to a tiny esoteric minority, even within that minority Briusov now found himself running with the tide – not, as he had envisaged, standing at the helm of the flagship. His reaction was a healthy revulsion against his own haste and exhibitionism. 'A poet must be reborn', he admonished himself, recalling Pushkin. 'He must meet an angel at the crossroads, who will cut open his breast with a sword and give him in place of a heart a flaming coal. Until that happens you'll just have to go dragging along through the "wilderness".'⁵⁶

Several weeks in hospital over the winter of 1895–6 and a journey to the Caucasus to recover his health gave Briusov the solitude he required for such a venture into 'the wilderness'. His next book, *Me eum esse*, written largely while convalescing in the mountains, is restrained, ascetic even, in comparison with *Chefs d'œuvre*. It is of all his books the most personal and 'single-stringed'. The poems tell the story of the young poet's temporary discouragement, explicitly depicting the feeling of being suspended between two stages of development: the old manner of writing which no longer satisfied him and the new, which he had as yet failed to define. Under the influence of Bal'mont's personality and, in part, of Poe's prose, but also of Schopenhauer and Leibniz whom he had been reading with great attention that winter, Briusov had come to the conclusion that to achieve true contemporaneity the artist must first learn to withdraw himself, aware that he is the whole and only source of his own creativity. Pondering this, Briusov wrote that 'In the book I am writing [*Me eum esse* – 'This is I'], I hope to reduce reality to the role of a mere artist's model; I hope to create poetry that will be alien to life, to embody structures which life itself can not give.'⁵⁷

These sentiments are somewhat differently expressed in the striking 'Iunomu poetu' ('To a young poet') which opens the first section:

Юноша бледный со взором горящим,
Ныне даю я тебе три завета:
Первый прими: не живи настоящим,
Только грядущее — область поэта.

Помни второй: никому не сочувствуй,
Сам же себя полюби беспредельно.

Третий храни: поклоняйся искусству,
Только ему, безраздумно, бесцельно.*⁵⁸

* 'Oh, pale youth with burning look, / This day I impart to you three commandments: / Accept the first: do not live in the present, / The future alone is the sphere of the poet. //

The magisterial tone of these 'Commandments' may have been in part occasioned by the fact that Briusov was playing with the idea of an early death. The 'pleasures of death', as a poetic theme, as sung by Zinaida Hippus, Dobroliubov and Sologub, could not but have been uppermost in his mind. Bal'mont, too, with his enthusiastic advocacy of Poe and his growing enthusiasm for oriental creeds, had been urging on Briusov the superior wisdom of despair: 'Zabud' o svetlykh snakh. Zabud'. Nadezhdy net / [...] / Ty ne naidesh' nigde Strany Obetovannoi,' ('Forget bright dreams. Forget. There is no hope. / [...] / Nowhere will you find the Promised Land').⁵⁹ It is possible that there were biographical reasons for Briusov's flirtation with death, but equally possible that he was planning a new literary mystification, intending to kill off one of his pseudonyms from the *Russkie simvolisty* period, the outrageous 'Darov', and to ascribe *Me eum esse* to him. If this was so, Briusov must eventually have come to the conclusion that to put his plan into effect would be a waste of good poetry; he jettisoned the version which he had prepared for 'posthumous publication'.

Be that as it may, the book does have a distinctly other-worldly feel to it. The ascetic ideal which imbues *Me eum esse* appears to point towards death, seen not as a cessation of individual being but rather as a logical conclusion of the cult of art: the essential leap (not unlike that envisaged by Dostoevsky's Kirillov) out of time into another state of supreme freedom in which it will be possible to find everlasting, unsullied beauty. The experience of the Caucasus provided the symbolic backdrop. Yet even the Caucasian peaks are challenged as impermanent:

Есть что-то позорное в мощи природы,
 Немая вражда к лучам красоты:
 Над миром скал проносятся годы,
 Но вечен только мир мечты.*⁶⁰

Many poems in *Me eum esse* are devoted to overcoming temptation, and in one of these Briusov succeeded in presenting an image of himself which was apt enough, appropriate enough to his poetry, to remain fixed for the next generation of poets, to cross even from his poetry into theirs: 'Zastyvshii mag, slozhivshii ruki, / Prorok bezvremennoi vesni ...' ('A sorcerer, stock still with folded arms, / The prophet of a timeless spring ...'). So he was to appear in a poem by Andrei Bely and through Bely, to

Heed the second: have no fellow-feeling for anyone, / Rather learn to love yourself without limit. / Observe the third: bow down to art / To art alone, without reflection, without aim.'

* 'There is something shameful in the power of nature, / A dumb enmity towards the rays of beauty: / Years will pass by over the world of rocks, / But only the world of dreams is eternal.'

his friends Sergei Solov'ev and Blok. In the Briusov poem which engendered this image, the protagonist pictures himself surrounded by occult temptations, but: 'Menia okhraniaet / Magicheskii krug. // I, tainye znaki / Svershaia zhezlom, / Stoiu ia vo mrake / Besstrastnym volkhvom' ('I am preserved / By a magic circle, // And, making occult signs, / With my sceptre, / I stand in the dark / An impassive sorcerer').⁶¹ Although, at the time, only Sologub reacted positively to the rather pallid, other-worldly message of *Me eum esse*, this creation of a distinctive 'lyrical hero', a Master of Poetry and dedicated high priest of the Muse, was a considerable achievement for a poet as naturally outgoing and eclectic as Briusov.

From the point of view of form, also, the book represented a distinct advance. Not only was it more even in quality, but it marked the beginning of Briusov's most interesting metrical innovations. Although the bulk of his verse is in classic syllabo-tonic metres, Briusov began in *Me eum esse* to make effective use of the *dol'nik*.⁶²

During the years between the appearance of *Me eum esse* in 1897 and his next collection, *Tertia vigilia*, in 1900, the study of prosody was one of Briusov's chief preoccupations. Alerted to the possibility of developing traditional rhythms (the Russian saga or *bylina*, the folk song and the 'spiritual song' or *dukhovnaia pesn'*) by the occasional successful adaptation in the works of nineteenth-century Russian poets, Briusov delved back to the seventeenth century and beyond to examine the tonic metres. 'Studying our popular poetry', he wrote in 1899, '[...] I have come to the conclusion that the German syllabo-tonic line is not suitable to the Russian language [...] We handle it much more timidly and observe its rules much more exactly than do the Germans and the English, to whom it is native. As far as I am concerned, I would like to bring my verse close to the truly Russian ...'⁶³

This tendency to go back to native roots, not from nostalgic nationalism but in order to discover new perspectives for the modernisation of Russian prosody, is demonstrated in Briusov's growing interest in street songs and jingles over the same period. In 1895 he actually began to note down and analyse such songs. The first poem in which he makes a deliberate use of 'collage', inserting lines from a begging song, was 'Na novyi kolokol' ('For the new bell'), later entitled 'Sborshchikov' (The collectors).

Пожертуйте благодетели,
 На новый колокол —
 Глас господень
 Звон колокольный,
 С напевом ангельским
 Дивно сходен.

[...]
 Наш звон православный
 Напевом ангельским
 Поет и трубит... *64

The poem, or 'song', as Briusov later classified it, actually suggested a peal of bells, individual bells contributing heavy or lighter strokes (the accented syllables) with reverberations of varying length (the unaccented), the whole effect one of insistent organising rhythm, a purposeful cacophony.

Briusov's interest in popular verse, though scholarly, as were all his new departures, was not aroused by books alone. In July 1898, he had been deeply impressed by a visit from Aleksandr Dobroliubov, no longer the ultra-decadent, black-gloved student, but a holy 'strannik' or wanderer in peasant dress, fresh from the forests of northern Russia and armed with a new repertoire of folk songs, invocations, laments and tales. Dobroliubov, as deeply absorbed in his new discoveries as he had been formerly in French Symbolism, spent much of his visit reciting to Briusov, both from his collection of folk-poetry and from his own imitations. Even in this short time, his speech had become rougher, more Russian, and he would occasionally break off, saying simply and comfortably: 'Nu, brat, pomolchim!' ('Come now, brother, let us be silent').

After a brief stay he went his way, only to return in a few weeks' time to deposit a bundle of manuscripts. Briusov was deeply impressed by Dobroliubov's maximalism, his total identification with the poetic persona of his new poetry. True to his image of himself as 'leader', he not only kept and studied all that Dobroliubov brought him but, as soon as he was able, published two further books.⁶⁵

Meanwhile, Dobroliubov disappeared once more. For a short time he became a novice in one of the far northern monasteries on the Solovetskie islands, but his thought was too eclectic and too much of this world for an Orthodox monk. When involvement in peasant rebellion led to his arrest, his family saved him from a prison sentence by having him declared temporarily insane. After this he drifted off to live with the people, earning his bread by doing manual labour for the poorest peasants, learning and teaching, wandering from place to place in search of enlightenment. Gifted with greater power as preacher than as poet, within a few years he had acquired a following and founded a sect, the Dobroliu-

* 'Give generously, benefactors, / Towards a new bell - / The voice of the Lord, / The chime of bells / Wondrously resembles / The chanting of angels / [...] / Our Orthodox chimes / Like angels chanting / Sings and trumpets.'

bovtsy ... 'May the "âme slave" forgive me, it seemed to me just another form of decadence', wrote Zinaida Hippus. However, she added: 'Dm. Seg. [Dmitry Sergeevich] did not agree with me. Dobroliubov interested him and he went on enquiring about him until he finally disappeared from view.'⁶⁶

That Briusov himself did not pursue the experiment with Russian prosody and with introducing popular motifs in his own poetry is probably best explained by the sheer scope of his interests and the still extremely green and unsettled state of his opinions. He had rushed into print and courted notoriety at an age when most aspiring poets are still contributing to school journals. Now he was paying the price. Even before the publication of *Me eum esse* in the spring of 1897 he had been in a state of crisis and promised himself in his diary to 'abstain from literary activity for two years'. Like the majority of writers towards the closing years of the century, Briusov was beginning to feel that it was not enough to be 'splendidly dead and sad', as – he felt – Bal'mont wished him to be, as he had tried to be in the poems of his second book, and that it was time to 'come alive'.⁶⁷

In search of a world-view which would provide an escape from the dominance of Schopenhauer, he embarked on an eclectic and extensive course of reading. Although undoubtedly touched by the upsurge of interest in Nietzsche, Briusov, as befitted an isolated individualist, found his own, idiosyncratic intellectual path down the mountain of petrified isolation. His reading of Leibniz and Poe's 'Eureka' suggested the possibility of mysterious links between man and man, man's fate and the 'movement of far stars', conscious thought and dark, inexpressible drives of the subconscious, and between (why not? for the interplay of influences is not to be measured according to the normal laws of time and space) the past and the future, the living and the dead. This line of thought led him to an exploration of the occult. He plunged into the study of medieval manuals on the Black Arts. He also read Western European works on spiritualism and began to attend séances. Khodasevich recalls attending a séance with him as late as 1905 when, on leaving, Briusov remarked: 'In time, spirit powers will be subjected to thorough study and may even find some technical application like steam and electricity.'⁶⁸ In one thing, however, he differed from late twentieth-century students of the 'paranormal', as he differed from all scholars, by remaining true to his own device: 'Vse v zhizni lish' sredstvo / Dlia iarko pevuchikh stikhov' ('Everything in life is but a means / For vividly singing verses').

Neither in his studies of Russian prosody, nor in his wide-ranging reading in philosophy and science, was Briusov attempting to push back the frontiers of knowledge or to construct a system. He was prospecting

for *power*, fuel for art, new subjects, new inspiration, new techniques. For him, academic work always had a 'technical application' the end-product of which was literature. He cannibalised rather than analysed his material, appropriating what could be of use in the service of art 'besrazdumno, beztsel'no' – without other reason or aim.⁶⁹

A zealot's interpretation of this essential difference between poet and scholar is offered by Ivan Oreus, literary pseudonym Konevskoi, a Petersburg poet whom Briusov and Bal'mont 'discovered' in 1898. He wrote:

Who says to the world 'Let there be', 'May it be so', who breathes 'a living soul' into the lump of clay, moulding and imagining it in his own image? Is it not the poet, who was named after the act of creation and not after the act of knowledge? For the latter is directly opposite to the creative act . . .⁷⁰

Konevskoi saw art as creative sorcery, the weaving of enchantments and casting of spells. He used the language of legend more literally than Briusov would have done. For him, as for Dobroliubov, poetry overflowed into life, whereas Briusov, who loved and admired such attitudes, did not share them and practised his 'rough magic' in the sphere of art alone. He did not believe, as Konevskoi did, that the artist could breathe life into 'dead matter', only into songs and statues, poems and pictures.

Briusov's next publication after *Me eum esse*, the pamphlet *O iskusstve* (About Art), was printed again at his own expense in an edition of 500 copies, at the end of 1898. It was a polemic against no less a figure than Lev Tolstoy, whose *What is Art?* had appeared in the bi-monthly *Voprosy Filosofii i Psikhologii* (Questions of Philosophy and Psychology) over the winter 1897–8. The first part of this work struck Briusov as strikingly similar in conception to his own introduction to *Russkie simvolisty*, vol. II and he even wrote to the great man asking him to point this out in print, a letter Tolstoy filed under 'no reply'. But when Briusov came to read the second half of the treatise, with its iconoclastic debunking of aesthetic conventions and strong emphasis on didactic clarity and the moral function of art, he disagreed with it as heartily as he had agreed with the first: 'Both Tolstoy and I consider art as a means of communication . . .', he declared, 'we start from a common position but go on to draw opposite conclusions'.⁷¹

In fact, Briusov was soon to renounce even this initial common ground and was thoroughly dissatisfied with his piece. By the autumn of 1902, he was adding to a letter in which he stresses this about-face:

And what above all I would have changed in my book is the language and method: dry, castrated language, sentences like butterflies on pins, and the method: revolting, discursive, rationalistic, not proving anything but putting everything in its place like a patrol of policemen.⁷²

Briusov, post factum, was often his own harshest critic but the pamphlet and his subsequent volte-face on style and content indicates the immaturity of this 'leader of decadence' three years on from 1895, the year in which the face of Russian literature was first changed! His scandalous reputation, however, ensured him a reading.

Merezhkovsky, never distinguished by a sense of proportion, took the polemic against Tolstoy at face value and was curious to meet its author. In December 1898, Bal'mont undertook to introduce his Moscow friend to literary St Petersburg. Briusov's diary – pawky, humorous, self-conscious in the extreme and, according to his wife, conveying to a nicety the tone of his voice ('I hear his intonations, see his gestures, remember his smile ...') – has preserved this account of his first visit to the Merezhkovsky's on 9 December:

First Zinaida Hippus gave us tea in the dark, grubby dining-room. She made no effort to be pleasant and was soon giving me a good deal of cheek. I replied in kind and know that some shafts went home. For instance, she was slighting about Dobroliubov. I said with the most innocent air: 'And do you know, it seemed to me that you imitate him in your poetry?'

Then we were admitted for a quarter of an hour to Merezhkovsky. He lay on his bed in *déshabille*. Immediately he began to speak of my book and to abuse it soundly.

'There's not even anything to condemn, there's nothing in it at all. I agree with almost everything, but without pleasure. When I read Nietzsche I tremble from head to foot, but here I don't even know why I go on reading.'

Zinaida tried to stop him.

'No, let me go on, Zina. I speak frankly, from the heart, and you keep quiet and then sting like a snake, that's worse.'

And it's true, he was speaking from the heart, quite disinterestedly, inveighing against Tolstoy more than against me, rolling about on the bed and shouting: 'A Leviathan! A Leviathan of philistinism!'

Next day, Bal'mont invited Sologub and Minsky to meet Briusov. Minsky reminded Briusov of a spider and offended him first by failing to grasp the importance of his attempt to introduce folk rhythms into high poetry and, secondly, by remarking merrily of *O iskusstve*: 'One expects spirits and apparitions, and all that happens is that a little man pops out and says: "How-de-do?"'. Sologub, being familiar with Dobroliubov from the black-gloved days and ever distrustful of the 'repentant nobleman', tried to disillusion Briusov about his friend's dramatic conversion: 'I recognise him! He's just the same snake he always was, hypnotic, but deeply false!'

At Sologub's, on 12 December, Briusov was very taken with the young student, Ivan Oreus, whose recitation was, for him, the high point of the evening. Two days later he and Bal'mont paid this new acquaintance a morning call, and Briusov described him as '... a sickly youth with a

nervous tic; rather reminds me of Dobroliubov in the old days, but less attractive. Up to his neck in the latest French poets, Vielé-Griffin, Regnier, Verhaeren', adding, 'We didn't quite hit it off. I took some manuscripts by A. Dobroliubov from him.'⁷³ Dobroliubov's and Konevskoi's names were linked from then on, although in fact they never met.

Konevskoi would scarcely have been at ease at a first meeting with Briusov, though he greatly admired his poetry. A general's son, a lover of horses and the great outdoors, he was a very different social animal. His father served for forty years as director of the War Historical and Topographical Museum in Petersburg. Ivan was his only child and, especially after the mother's death when the boy was fourteen years old, their relationship had been exceptionally close. Happy at home, Ivan made few friends, although he did frequent the circle of Ia. I. Erlich and was an active member of a students' literary 'Kruzhok' (circle). The excellent first impression his poetry had made on Briusov was, however, confirmed within a few weeks by the appearance of Bal'mont in Moscow in January 1899 with three exercise-books of poems which the two poets 'read and re-read, copied out, learnt by heart'. Bal'mont had conceived the idea of an anthology: he, Briusov, Konevskoi and some other Petersburg poets. Hippisus and Sologub, however, who were to have contributed, had backed out, 'worried at the thought of appearing alongside me and Oreus', as Briusov probably rightly assumed.⁷⁴

And who could blame them? Two students of virtually amateur status, one notorious, the other unknown ... Nevertheless, it was an error in judgement. Briusov, justly or unjustly, was to eclipse both older poets in his own right ... and to launch the despised Dobroliubov and Oreus-Konevskoi into the mainstream of Symbolist literature, publishing the former's work with a preface by the latter, and Konevskoi's posthumous *Stikhi i proza* (Verses and Prose, 1904) with his own foreword entitled 'Mudroe ditia' ('The wise child').

Unlike Dobroliubov and Bal'mont, Konevskoi was never a role model for Briusov. He was a theorist, an intellectual, but, unlike Briusov, not a littérateur at heart. For him poetry was a means through which the poet might clarify his own thoughts and feelings to himself, and this Briusov appreciated, writing in 'Mudroe ditia' of how 'Wandering self-absorbed through life, the youth Konevskoi paused at every turn, astonished by each new day and encounter, deeply moved by the revelations of morning and evening, always striving to comprehend what abyss lay in wait behind every passing moment. This striving he turned into poetry.'⁷⁵

It was a poetry of 'striving'. His was a harsh, breaking voice, which one critic likened to the screeching of an eagle, quoting the poet's own lines:

Внемли, внемли,
Кликам внемли.
Грозная юность ярость земли.

... отовсюду
Стекаются былые чудеса
К живому, истому, земному чуду
Все ближе, ближе плещут голоса.*⁷⁶

'Like all his coevals, proclaimers of the new art', wrote Briusov, 'Konevskoi was looking for two things: freedom and power', but added:

... Whereas others sought them by 'transgression of boundaries', by permitting themselves everything that for one reason or another is considered forbidden, whether in the sphere of morality or simply that of prosody, Konevskoi took the question at a deeper level. He saw that man's enslavement and weakness is not a matter of the accepted norms of social behaviour, but of those relations with the exterior world imposed upon us from the beginning, with which we enter into existence: that they are rooted in the power of heredity, in the laws governing our sensibility and our thought, in the dependence of spirit on matter.⁷⁷

Here, Briusov put his finger on the knot of tension which kept Konevskoi's lines vibrantly taut. This sturdy, bearded son of a Baltic soldier was proud of his Viking forebears, yet felt himself 'a hundred times' wiser than they in the strength of the accumulated wisdom of intermediate generations. In full rebellion against heredity, against the love of women, against anything that infringed on the integrity of the individual, he opposed the individual spirit to the cyclical renewal of the flesh – whether in nature or in the family:

В согласи древнем мощь животная
С великодушной страстью дел.
И род летит: он плоть бесплотная.
Но хочет личный дух быть цел.

Ах, личность жаждет целомудрия,
Средь пышных рощ, холмов, лугов,
Молюсь на облачные кудри я,
На сомны вечные богов.†⁷⁸

Nevertheless, Konevskoi felt acutely the sensuous power and beauty of nature, and few if any modern poets have been able to convey with such

* 'Hear, hear, / Hear the calls. / Menacing youth the fury of earth. [. . .] / From all sides / The miracles of old converge / Towards the living, the sober, the earthly miracle / Ever closer, closer the voices are plashing.'

† 'Animal strength is in ancient concord / With the generous passion of deeds. / And heredity flies: it is fleshless flesh. / But the individual spirit desires to be intact. // Ah, personality hungers to be complete and chaste. / Among luxuriant groves, hills, meadows / I pray to curling strands of cloud / And to the eternal hosts of gods.'

immediacy the sense of being at one with the elements: 'V menia vnedriaisia ty, o svet proslavlenniy, gornii' ('Enter into me, oh glorious, lofty light!') he exclaims in one poem and, in another, sees himself as a last Viking of the spirit: 'Dyshu odnim bezumnym, dikim bredom, / Za dukha chest' v bestsel'nyi boi idu . . .' ('I breathe a single, mad, wild delirium, / I go into battle without aim, for the honour of the spirit'). Yet at the same time, he knew that art cannot thrive without the sensuous image, that the spirit, however trammelled it may feel, needs the body. He speaks of the 'flesh' paradoxically as 'creator' and 'opponent', 'tvorets i borets moi'.⁷⁹

For all his romantic originality, his Russian maximalism and Wagnerian temperament, Konevskoi, like Dobroliubov, was essentially a Petersburg poet and a product of his generation's enthusiasm for the French. Here he is, a young man with a hangover after one of those very Russian evenings reading poetry and drinking wine, looking out of the window and, clearly, still haunted by the chanson grise:

Резво вихрятся думы над белыми крышами.
Я внимаю их песне, все ими томимый,
И все утро плывут они, мне только слышимы
Думы, думы!
[. . .]
Здравствуй, бледное утро в простых одеяниях
Вейтесь, вольно мечтательны, думы седые!
Я пред вами во прахе, в немых покаяниях
Нет, не мы, а вы—молодые.*⁸⁰

Konevskoi uses innovatory devices, not as a matter of course, but to increase the expressionistic power of his thought. Metre is his servant. The poetry is strongly rhythmic but retains snatches of regular metre as modern music quotes snatches of familiar tunes. This, and the fact that, in his syntax, Konevskoi eschewed the Gallicised flow of post-Karamzinian Russian and adopted an almost eighteenth-century complexity, made his poetry seem difficult, indeed inept, to many contemporaries, and his first privately printed collection, *Mechty i dumy* (Dreams and Thoughts, 1900) was to have no success. Yet he anticipated many of the innovations of Blok and Ivanov – even of Mandel'shtam and of Khlebnikov.⁸¹ Thanks to these later poets, it is easier now to appreciate the quality of his enigmatic muse.

At the age of twenty-four, in 1901, Konevskoi, who on previous

* 'Friskily wisps of smoke rise from the white roofs. / I listen to their songs, I am all in torment from them. / And all morning they float, heard by me alone / Wisps of smoke, wisps of smoke! [. . .] / Greetings, pale morning in your simple dress, / Drift, freely dreaming, grey-haired wisps of smoke! / I am in ashes before you, in dumb penitence: / No it is not we, but you who are young.'

vacations from University had walked through half Germany, Switzerland and northern Italy, set out alone on holiday to explore his native Baltic shores. His friend Makovsky, on his way to Sweden by boat, met him by chance:

I remained alone on deck . . . Suddenly I saw a figure making its way slowly towards me. The head thrown back, the steps hesitant, muttering something. I recognised him some way off: of course, it was Oreus! [. . .] Naturally, we immediately began talking poetry, and he began to recite [. . .]. Dreamily gazing out over the mother-of-pearl calm of the gulf, he spoke his 'water' poems in a sing-song voice – I mean, poems addressed to the sea and to the sky and wind [. . .]

С душой, насыщенной веками размышлений,
С чужими образами, красками в уме,
Которыми я жил в стенах, в домашнем плене,
И брезжил бледный свет в привычной полутьме,
Тебя почуял я и обнял взором, море!
Ты обдало меня, взяло и понесло,
И легок я, как луч, как искра в метеоре,
И жизнь моя — вода, в ней сумрачно-светло.
Все ветер да вода. . . И ясно все и смутно.
Где умозрений ткань? Молчит, но явен мир
И вьются помыслы, так резво и безумно,
Туда, за даль, где мысли — вечный мир.*⁸²

Makovsky continued on his way to Sweden. His friend got off the boat at Riga to wander on through the Baltic summer. A few days later his body was found in the river Aa by fishermen. The swimming was dangerous, there was no known reason why Konevskoi should have put an end to his life, but it was not easy to dismiss the rumours that this was a romantic, ecstatic death: that this latter-day Euphorion had simply swum on and on until he lost consciousness.

Briusov was to make it his business to look after Konevskoi's poems and visited his forest grave more than once. When they first met in 1898, however, Konevskoi had yet to acquire the romantic aura and could count himself fortunate to appear in an anthology with Bal'mont and Briusov. For these two the book, which they called *Kniga razdumii* (A Book of Meditations, 1899), was something of a poetic duel. For Konevskoi, it was his first serious publication. Modest Durnov, a deriva-

* 'With soul satisfied by centuries of thought, / A mind full of alien images and colours, / On which I fed behind walls, in the captivity of home, / And a pale light began to glimmer in the familiar murk, / I sensed you and embraced you with my gaze, sea! / You broke over me, took me and bore me away, / And I am light as a ray of light, as a spark in a meteor, / And my life is water; it is full of dusky light. / All wind and water . . . And all is clear and dim. / Where is the warp and woof of speculation? It is silent, but the world is revealed, / And thoughts and plans eddy so sportively and deliriously, / Away, beyond the distance, to where thoughts are eternal peace.'

tive artist and undistinguished poet but one who, as Bal'mont declared in the dedication of his most famous book, *Budem kak solntse* (Let Us Be Like the Sun, 1903), had 'made a poem of his personality', was the fourth contributor. What makes *Kniga razdumii* a milestone in the history of Symbolism is that it was, with the exception of Konevskoi's own *Mechty i dumy*, the last 'slim volume' to be published at the authors' expense.⁸³ The turn of the century was to see the foundation of the first journal wholeheartedly devoted to propagating the work of the Russian Symbolists – *Mir Iskusstva* in St Petersburg – and of the publishing firm of Skorpion in Moscow. It was also to see a change of atmosphere, an inrush of hope.

Part 2

Collective creation

4 The foundation of *Mir Iskusstva*

Надо идти напролом. Надо поражать и не бояться этого, надо выступать сразу, показать себя целиком, со всеми качествами и недостатками своей национальности.

С. П. Дягилев*

It was not critics or poets but painters, musicians and men enamoured of the performing arts who finally found the confidence to break out from the art of the cell and to launch the first Russian modernist journal: *Mir Iskusstva* (The World of Art, 1898–1904). Nor was it, primarily, the new middle class of Moscow of which Briusov was so striking a representative, but a cosmopolitan group of Petersburg amateurs of the fine arts, closely linked by blood and patronage to the *dvorianstvo*† and the court, who undertook to bring ‘Russian art to the notice of the West, to make it big and known’, and who were bold enough to put the question: ‘Are we capable of saying something new in European art or is it our lot to trail along behind?’¹ Before the century was out, however, the three forces – the lonely poets and thinkers, the Petersburg aesthetes and the new Moscow bourgeoisie – were allied. Their subsequent disintegration, which began after 1905 and which culminated in the 1910 crisis of Symbolism, was in new directions.

The prehistory of *Mir Iskusstva* began in Petersburg, where a group calling themselves the ‘Nevsky Pickwickians’ originated within a nucleus

* ‘We must go for a break-through. We must amaze people and not be afraid to do so, we must make our entrance at once, reveal our whole selves with all the good and bad qualities of our nationality.’ Sergei Diaghilev.

† The *dvorianstvo* was the class of ‘serving nobility’ created by Peter I and his successors both to counter the power of the old feudal nobility (with whom the *dvorianstvo* later began to intermarry and merge) and to provide an educated upper class loyal to the crown. Rewarded throughout the eighteenth century by land and serfs, they acquired considerable independence and, in spite of the etymology of the word ‘dvorianin’, which suggests ‘courtier’, became comparable to landed gentry and upper-middle-class professionals.

of friends at a private school run by the Hoffmannesque German pedagogue, Karl Ivanovich May. This sprightly seventy-five-year-old with dyed black hair, a sharp pink nose and jet-black Uncle Sam beard, encouraged his largely German-speaking staff to allow his young gentlemen to 'develop their personalities'.² Not that Aleksandr Benois, Walter Nouvel, Dmitrii Filosofov or Konstantin Somov required much encouragement. Their home life abutted directly on the cosmopolitan theatrical and artistic world of St Petersburg and 'the world of art' was their birthright. Somov's father was an art historian and keeper of one of the world's richest museums and picture galleries: the Hermitage. Filosofov's was a high-ranking government official and his mother, Anna Pavlovna (*née* Diagileva), a pioneer of higher education for women and a renowned society hostess; her 'salon', before she was politely exiled for aiding and abetting terrorists, had provided both Turgenev and Dostoevsky with models of various social types throughout the 1860s and 1870s. Nouvel and Benois were products of the 'nemetskaia sloboda', Petersburg foreigners whose people had made their home in Russia for several generations and who, without losing residual ties of language and religion with the lands of their origin, had yet acquired an open-heartedness and passionate appetite for world culture more characteristic of their adopted country. Nouvel's father, who died when he was at school, leaving the family in straitened circumstances, was a banker, whereas Benois's ancestors represented a picturesque hotch-potch of courtly traditions from Venetian opera and French architecture – though, as an unashamed romantic snob, Benois preferred to imagine himself as a descendant of Doges and refugee aristocrats, and was mortified when Filosofov exposed him to their classmates as the cousin of his own family's piano teacher! Community of interests, however, overcame residual class barriers, and the friendship of these four young men proved enduring.

It was common practice in Russia at the time for schoolboys to form circles for self-education. In 1887, Benois and his friends did form such a circle, not to discuss political economy or assassination as Bal'mont's revolutionary group at Shuia had done, but to study the history of art. These scions of Peter the Great, who affected to admire not only the mighty Westerniser but also the arch-Slavophile Alexander III, laid a foundation for their studies with Otto Henn am Rhyn's richly illustrated *History of German Culture* and the latest journals on art and architecture from England, Germany and France, all available in abundance at the Benois home. Aleksandr Benois would deliver carefully prepared papers on Dürer, Holbein, Cranach and French artists at the time of Napoleon.

It was he and Nouvel who set the pace, imparting their passion for the theatre and reproducing *ex-prompte* whole scenes from operas they had attended (the smugglers' march from *Carmen* across the school benches and desks must have been spectacular!), while the baby-faced Somov and the exquisite sixteen-year-old Filosofov giggled and whispered conspiratorially, refusing to take part.

Somov had already left school, two years before his friends, to enter the Academy of Art, when Benois became a frequent visitor at the home of Filosofov. For the young man from the *nemetskaia sloboda* it was an interesting experience to be on visiting terms with a family which could trace its origins back to Russia's conversion to Christianity. Benois saw them as living embodiments of a 'dead' way of life:

This was the class from which came the heroes and heroines of the novels of Pushkin, Lermontov, Turgenev and Tolstoy. This was the class that had produced everything in Russian life that was calm, dignified, stable, that appeared to have been established for ever. It had created the very tempo of Russian life, its self-awareness and the whole system of relationships between members of a single family clan. All the subtleties of Russian psychology, the twists and turns so typical of the Russian sense of morality sprouted and ripened in this milieu. Becoming a regular guest of the Filosofovs, I was filled with a special respect for all this peculiar world that I had known before only through books ...³

The Filosofov family, rooted in the soil, spoke often and lovingly of their country estate, 'Bogdanovskoe'. Somov, when staying at this estate in the spring of 1889, described the gardens in a letter to his sister:

The first part is the most noble, remains of former splendour. A system of ponds with islands and islets joined by tiny bridges, with alleys of firs clipped back to resemble truncated sugar cones, with avenues of special lime trees, interlacing overhead to form covered walks. All that, of course, is neglected, for to keep it up you would need too much money ...⁴

Such ruinous artificial landscapes are the stuff of Somov's art. He peopled them with *fêtes galantes*, ironically perceived: 'an almost demonic atmosphere of deathly sportiveness, automatised eroticism'.⁵ Watteau was important to Somov, Aubrey Beardsley still more so. Yet his fireworks and rainbows, his figures from times past or from the *commedia dell' arte*, were conjured up to people a real landscape, the disintegrating estates of his friends such as the Filosofovs' Bogdanovskoe or Oskochnoe in the Kursk district, his charcoal and watercolour sketches of which were to prove such a success at the 'Blanc et noir' exhibition in 1897.

Another source of inspiration to both Somov and Benois were the royal

parks and palaces around Petersburg. How these first combined with fantasy is to be seen in Somov's delectable portrait of Benois's young wife in fancy dress in the grounds of Oranienbaum: this picture, to the indignation of his teacher, the great realist Il'ia Repin, was invaded by imaginary figures, also in early nineteenth-century costume, wandering down the real garden walks behind the real sitter. Benois shared Somov's passion for conjuring spectres from the past, and is perhaps best known still for his watercolours of a wintry Versailles, made *in situ* in that same year of 1897. Benois ascribes the intimate familiarity of his treatment of the dead French palace to his earlier love of its Russian counterparts: Tsarskoe Selo, Peterhof, Pavlovsk, Oranienbaum. It was as though, as one critic later wrote of Somov, the two friends had 'appeared on the fortieth day to say a mass for the soul of a dead way of life'.⁶ Certainly it was the still living memory of such a past way of life preserved in the Filosofov family which attracted Benois, who recalled: 'It seems to me that the main reason why I became friendly with Dima and through him with Serezha Diagilev was precisely this atmosphere, through which I thought to discover the fabled "Russian soul".'⁷

Sergei Pavlovich Diagilev, came to Petersburg in the summer of 1890 from his family estate near Penza, where his father, a military man with a passion for music and a fine singing voice, had for some years been living in semi-retirement, retrenching financially after an extravagant Petersburg youth. Thrown on their own resources, the Diagilev family were, it is said, capable of casting and performing an entire Glinka opera. Nevertheless, in the Filosofov household Serezha [diminutive familiar form for Sergei] figured from the outset as a country cousin, invited to companion Dima on his travels abroad and through his first years at university. As Benois remembered him: 'This cousin bore no resemblance whatsoever to the slender, pale Dima. He astonished us by his air of rude health. He had round, red cheeks and gleaming, white teeth, which showed in two even rows between his vividly red lips.'⁸

Naturally, as Dima's cousin, Serezha was accepted into the circle, although he appeared to have few enough 'qualifications'. True, he was a keen musician, but Benois and Nouvel had already outlived their school-boy craze for Italian opera. After Neimann brought an 'exact replica' of the Bayreuth production of the *Ring* to Petersburg in the spring of 1889, they had become passionate Wagnerians, and feared that Serezha's taste might prove insufficiently advanced. Their misgivings proved groundless. Although he did not share their enthusiasm for Wagner, Diagilev had been reared on Glinka and was, like his new friends, in the throes of 'discovering' Russian music: Borodin, Chaikovsky and, somewhat later, Mussorgsky. Diagilev's knowledge, moreover, far exceeded what might

have been expected of a provincial dilettante. He nursed ambitions to become a professional singer and was soon taking lessons in the art of composition from no less a luminary than Rimsky-Korsakov. Although Serezha's new friends found his singing too florid and his attempts at composition too Italianate, the ability to read a score and reproduce a tune was in itself an asset in those days before the advent of canned music. Also, as Benois recollected: 'Our example brought Serezha to a more thoughtful, less sensuous and emotional attitude to music; in turn, he was useful to us thanks to his elemental instinct, gradually purified and matured, and also to the extent that he was, in part, a professional musician.'⁹

In some ways, however, Diaghilev still did not 'fit in'. Always a doer, he was bored by his friends' appetite for abstract discussion. The Pickwickians, infected by Benois's enthusiasm for the theatre, first sparked by the visit to Petersburg of the Meiningen troupe (the model, incidentally, for the Moscow Arts Theatre founded in 1897 by Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko), would attend every worthwhile first night the capital had to offer. So would Serezha but, to their astonishment, he completely ignored them on such occasions, saving his smiles and bows – in the most blatant fashion – for the influential, the wealthy, the celebrities. Though later of inestimable value to the common cause, at the time this instinct of his for cultivating important people positively repelled Diaghilev's less enterprising friends. That he was aware of this and resented it is clear from his later letters to Benois. It was a long time before he ceased to fear their ridicule, especially the deflatory sallies of the sharp-tongued Nouvel. It was, after all, Benois who first infected Diaghilev with an enthusiasm for the ballet, and the post-mortems to which the group subjected each new production, ranging over décor, costume and choreography, in a way quite unfamiliar to a society which still thought in terms of stars, '*emploi*', and 'props', were to have a lasting influence on the future impresario's approach to the performing arts.

It was during the winter season of 1890–1 that the Petersburg premières of Borodin's *Prince Igor* and Chaikovsky's *Queen of Spades*, completed the group's conversion to Russian music. For Benois, in particular, these operas were a revelation which changed his whole attitude to the past of his family's adopted country. *Prince Igor* suggested to him a proud concept of Christian chivalry, where before the Russian Middle Ages had appeared a barbarous wasteland in which culture had been paralysed beneath the Tartar yoke. As to the nostalgic neo-Romantic evocation of eighteenth-century Petersburg to which the director had seen fit to remove Chaikovsky's setting of Pushkin's story, it opened his eyes to the uncanny beauty of his own city and inspired him with that cult of the past 'which

was afterwards reflected in all the artistic activity of our group – in our periodical publications, in *Mir Iskusstva* and *Khudozhestvennye Sokrovishcha Rossii* and, later in *Starye Gody*; and it was also reflected in our books – in Diagilev's monograph on Levitsky, in my monograph on Tsarskoe Selo.¹⁰

As a result of trips abroad in the company of his cousin and later, in 1895, on his own, Diagilev's interest in the visual arts also became rapidly more informed. He made the acquaintance of a number of famous foreign writers and artists and began, on a modest scale, to collect pictures. The original master–pupil relationship with Benois gave way to a stimulating rivalry. Though at first reluctant to relinquish his position as mentor to the little group, Benois – studiously absorbed in his painting and soon to become a devoted husband and father – would eventually outgrow his youthful need to instruct and influence others, whereas Diagilev, who was not to find fulfilment as an artist or in family life, continued to channel intellect, emotion and all his tremendous vitality into stimulating, organising, bullying and financing his more 'creative' friends – and into marshalling a loose-knit wider circle of 'geniuses' to form a new cultural force. Benois recalls:

If he wanted anything it was almost impossible to withstand the pressure he exerted, more often than not the most affectionate and gentle of pressures [...] founded on his astonishing ability to read people, on his empathy not just with their superficial traits and weaknesses but with their most hidden thoughts, tastes, wishes and dreams.¹¹

Under the leadership of this almost frighteningly strong-willed and perceptive man, the introvert 'Nevsky Pickwickians' became the extrovert 'World of Art'. The legacy of their youthful friendship, however, remained. They never lost what Benois called their essential '*bon humeur*', their buoyant capacity for in-jokes and for making and taking critical assessments of one another's work, their Platonic devotion to one another and to Beauty in all its manifestations. These were not sexually explicit times. Benois, for instance, was not, to judge by his memoirs, even aware until much later of what lay behind the girlish *Schwärmerei* of Filosofov's affection for Somov or of the later intimacy between the cousins, nor did he interpret the young Diagilev's taste for horse-play and physical aggression as anything other than symptoms of provincial heartiness and the 'will to power'. The word 'Platonic', therefore, is used advisedly here, to describe a community of questing minds and open hearts enamoured of beauty, talent, and even of the 'art of arts' – philosophy.

Not that the circle was, even in those days, immune to the decadent 'poisons' of the time. There were serpents aplenty in their Eden. One of

the most self-consciously Mephistophelian was Alfred Pavlovich Nurok, who became a constant member of the group from the end of 1892, and who was, like Diaghilev and Nouvel, a devotee of contemporary music, but also an ardent propagandist for the new moral freedoms. An admirer of de Sade, he was seldom seen without a work by the notorious Marquis, or by Choderlos de Laclos or Oscar Wilde, protruding from his jacket pocket. For all this, Benois tells us that Nurok was the kindest of men.

The Gallic influence was communicated through the polygot Nurok and through Charles Birlet, a very junior functionary at the French Embassy in St Petersburg. Birlet became friendly with the group in the autumn of 1891 and supplied them with 'forbidden' literature from Paris. He was an adept of the new poetry. More importantly for the artists, he introduced them to the Impressionists. Until the arrival of Birlet, the group's interest in French art had been confined to the neo-Romantic fantasies of Gustave Moreau, for which they had been well prepared by long-standing admiration of the Berlin and Munich 'Secession' and by the mythical idylls of Boecklin – whom Benois considered the Wagner of visual art. Also of interest to them was the mystic neo-Catholicism of Puvis de Chavannes which, according to Filosofov, who was religiously inclined, paralleled the 'neo-Byzantine' tendencies of such Russian artists as Nesterov and Vrubel'.

As the first numbers of the journal *Mir Iskusstva* bear witness, Birlet did not succeed in weaning his young Russian friends from these early enthusiasms overnight, but he did introduce them to the idea that art is, above all, an expression of the artists' personality. It was, according to Benois, a new ploy of the galleries to insist that an artist should be accepted or rejected '*en bloc*' for his indwelling genius rather than for the comparative worth of this or that picture, a point of view which the professionals of the Petersburg group at first resisted, but which was enthusiastically embraced by Diaghilev – always more interested in the creative personality than in the end product. 'A work of art', he was to declare in one of the first numbers of *Mir Iskusstva*, 'is important not in itself, but as an expression of the personality of the artist.'¹²

Of the group's practising artists, the most admired and, initially, the most professional was Leon Bakst. Bakst, whose real name was Lev Rozenberg, became friendly with Benois through a circle of water-colourists organised by the latter's elder brother, Albert. Although Bakst had little or no French, he got on well with Birlet, a keen amateur water-colour painter, and soon became a popular member of the group. His was a soothing presence, comfortable and self-mocking. Under the influence of his new friends Bakst swiftly grew out of the conventional socio-politi-

cal opinions (Populist with a strong flavour of Jewish nationalism) which had characterised his early art, and developed a sensuous, unmistakably *'fin-de-siècle'* artistic personality of his own. It was Bakst who was to introduce sinuous line and a near-oriental flair for flat patterning and rich colour into the more tenuous world of garlands, gardens, flying draperies and architectural prospects so dear to the imaginations of Somov and Benois, and of Benois's nephews, the brothers Evgenii and Nikolai Lanceray.

Bakst was entirely at ease in that world between the sensual and the ideal which was the spiritual home of his new friends. Unlike them, however, he had to support his family, a widowed mother and numerous siblings, and was thus always on the lookout for commissions or tutorial posts. He became drawing master to the children of Grand Prince Vladimir and, in 1892, received a royal commission to visit Paris and there depict 'The Reception for the Russian Sailors'. In this way, Bakst laid the first foundations of a cosmopolitan career and began to acquire the extra polish and experience of western Europe already bestowed on other members of the circle by benevolent parents, ready and willing to finance educational trips abroad.

At least as important for the future of *Mir Iskusstva*, however, were the hours Bakst spent with Benois behind the scenes of the Mariinsky theatre in St Petersburg, a rare privilege granted, thanks to a fortunate acquaintanceship with Genady Petrovich Kondrat'ev, the operatic director. On these occasions the two young artists discovered the fascination of backstage mechanics and first felt the stirrings of a sense of vocation.

As so often happens, it was a venture abroad which gave the group sufficient status at home to attract a wider circle of practising Russian artists. In 1893, Benois and his friends had taken out subscriptions to Muther's *Geschichte der Malerei im XIX Jahrhundert*, which began to appear in instalments in February of that year. The prospectus announced that Polish and Scandinavian numbers would be published, but made no mention whatsoever of Russian art. Benois was so offended that, uncharacteristically, he risked a rebuff by writing off to Muther, to point out the lacuna and to offer assistance in providing information and reproductions. To his astonishment – and trepidation – he received, by return of post, a commission to write a chapter on Russian art himself . . . Aided by his young Russo-German wife and in strict secrecy from his friends, Benois set to work; and, to the unbounded delight of them all, an instalment on Russian art appeared in October 'with the co-operation of Alexander Benois'.

Although Muther had published the beginner's essay with additions

and cuts, ruthlessly excising his encomiums on younger artists of the apolitical, so-called 'Moscow' school, Benois's championship of Russian art in the international arena served a dual purpose. Firstly, his modest achievement inspired Filosofov and Diaghilev with the conviction that it was up to their circle and to no-one else to present Russian art to Europe and vice versa and, secondly, it aroused German interest in exhibiting contemporary Russian artists. Diaghilev, spurred on by Benois's success, actually took to writing art criticism himself for the newspaper *Novosti i Birzhevye Vedomosti* (News and Stock Exchange Records), stronghold of the nationalist critic Vladimir Stasov. Stasov defended much the same opinions in art and music as did N. K. Mikhailovsky in literature, and wielded equal authority. Diaghilev at first treated him with exaggerated respect, rather like that Hippus and Merezhkovsky accorded the old Populist critic.

Benois, whom Diaghilev saw fit to consult over his first effort, commented with some surprise: 'I had not expected such initiative and daring from that one of my friends in whom I had originally placed least hopes. However, having read these notes, I was astonished by a certain maturity and could not but approve them, making only the most trifling alterations of a primarily stylistic nature.'¹³ Diaghilev's articles, though somewhat brash in style, were full of assurance and written without fear or favour. He introduced such unusual words of praise as 'a bold, unfinished quality', 'a mystic mood which permeates even the more simple, everyday subjects', and showed an informed interest in light and colour *per se* which was distinctly new in Russian criticism at the time. In the very first article, the young critic showed that schoolboy wit for which *Mir Iskusstva* was to be notorious. Having duly commended the work of those artists who did interest him, Diaghilev wrote off those who did not with the dismissive phrase: 'The rest are not worth discussing. This is a dead art, and *de mortuis aut bene, aut nihil*.'¹⁴

An immediate result of Benois's article for Muther was an invitation, received in the summer of 1895 from Adolf Paulus, organiser of the Munich Secession,¹⁵ to select and dispatch contributions from 'the Russian Mystical school' to the Secession's 1896 exhibition. This provided Benois with the perfect pretext to make the acquaintance of the artists whose work he most admired or who, like Viktor Vasnetsov, he considered particularly typical of the 'neo-Russian' movement amongst the prestigious Society of 'Peredvizhniki' (Ambulants) founded in 1878 by survivors of the heroic group of thirteen, who broke away from the Petersburg Academy in 1863. Many of the younger members of this Moscow-based society were now tending to ignore their ideologue Stasov's requirement that pictures should convey a social message. Of

these only four artists – I. I. Levitan, Apolinarii Vasnetsov, V. V. Perepletchikov and V. A. Serov – actually got around to sending work to Germany. As Benois was the first to admit, however, ‘such undertakings do not arrange themselves without constant reminders and urgings on the part of the organiser, and for this I had neither the temperament nor the staying power.’¹⁶

Diagilev, reviewing their contributions to the Munich venue, was pleased with Benois’s selection of artists but not with the end result. He strongly condemned the failure of the Moscow artists to respond to the challenge. Not only had they missed an opportunity to propagate Russian art, but their lackadaisical attitude had deprived Europe of that ‘new word so eagerly expected from the powerful and fresh nationality’ of the ‘uniquely interesting, nascent Moscow school’. It was, Diagilev insisted, an ‘enormous responsibility’ to introduce ‘Europe to our art, which has yet to make a way for itself in the West’, for ‘to capture popularity is a difficult task and one that must be approached with great care and tact’.¹⁷

It was in this article that Diagilev first indicated his understanding of and passion for the vocation of entrepreneur. As for Benois, he had been made painfully aware of his own limitations, but at the same time had the satisfaction of having forged the first links between his own circle (whose works he had been too modest even to submit for consideration to the Munich jury) and the more established artists of the Moscow school: notably Serov, the brothers Vasnetsov, Nesterov and Korovin.

From that moment [Benois wrote] personal relationships developed which were to influence our subsequent activities and, in part, the direction our own work was to take. Indeed, it could also be said that, thanks to their acquaintanceship with us, these kindred spirits became more aware of their own place in the world of art and began to develop a clearer idea of their calling, their ‘mission’.¹⁸

Whereas the young Pickwickians were as yet distinguished only by their burning sense of mission, these happy-go-lucky colleagues of theirs from the Moscow school, secure in the patronage of men like the merchant Pavel Tretiakov, had not yet geared their ambitions to the international scene. The nucleus of the Moscow or Abramtsevo circle was formed abroad in the 1870s when a group of homesick Russian artists (Il’ia Repin, V. Polenov, the sculptor M. Antokolsky and others) had found comfort and material support in the company of the wealthy Savva Mamontov and his intelligent, enthusiastic wife, Stanislavsky’s aunt, Elizaveta (née Alekseeva). The Mamontovs, cultivated representatives of Moscow’s burgeoning *nouveaux riches*,¹⁹ had recently acquired the estate of Abramtsevo not far from the great monastery of St Sergius, to the north of Moscow. Abramtsevo had formerly belonged to the Aksakov

family and the Mamontovs respected the Slavophile traditions of the place even to keeping on the Aksakovs' agent, a living link with the times when Gogol' had been a frequent visitor.

Mamontov, a larger-than-life personality, and a talented dilettante, decided to make his new estate the centre of a 'Russian renaissance'. He constructed a large studio-workshop and several smaller buildings in the '*style russe*' (the Russian equivalent of Scottish baronial or stock-broker's Tudor) and encouraged his artist friends to bring their friends to make use of these facilities. The notion took. Artists returning from abroad chose to reside in the old capital of Moscow rather than in St Petersburg and to foregather at and around Abramtsevo in the summer months. Antokol'sky, Repin, the brothers Vasnetsov, V. D. and E. D. Polenov, Serov, Korovin, Levitan, Ostroukhov, Nesterov and Vrubel', all, at one time or another, formed part of the Abramtsevo circle and painted not only the Mamontov family and every corner of their estate, but even the Slavonic equivalent of the obligatory Edwardian 'fairies at the bottom of the garden', peopling the gentle Russian landscape with figures from legend and history. In the park, there was a 'house on chicken's legs', the traditional dwelling of the witch Baba-Iaga, and a tiny *style-russe* church, quaintly dwarfed by the surrounding trees, both designed by Viktor Vasnetsov. In Vasnetsov's pictures Ivan-Tsarevich gallops on wolf-back through the Abramtsevo woodland and the folk-heroine Alenushka sits wistfully upon the shore of the reedy pond. From the Abramtsevo landscape of mixed forest, meadows and winding river, Nesterov, an almost 'Pre-Raphaelite' painter of great delicacy, conjured the shade of St Sergius. Polenova abstracted bold pattern from flower and leaf for her fairy-tale illustrations, in many ways akin to the decorative peasant crafts which were also encouraged on the estate. Other artists such as Levitan, Benois's friend Perepletchikov, Apolinarii Vasnetsov and Ostroukhov contented themselves with exact observation of nature: the corner of a summer meadow, the edge of a forest, the boundary between high-standing harvest field and bare earth . . .

Although most of the Abramtsevo artists exhibited with the Society of Ambulants, they eschewed the techniques of nineteenth-century social realism, and avoided political caricature and anecdote, exploring the possibilities of a new kind of art, 'national' in form rather than in content. On the one hand, in Russia as in Europe, competition from the camera was forcing artists to attempt to convey the subjective view that was still considered beyond the reach of the photographer. On the other hand, there was everywhere a new interest in myth, dream and symbol. Imagination was highly valued, and even those artists who confined themselves to depicting what they actually saw sought to suggest 'the beyond', 'to

make the world transparent'. This new generation, like Briusov in poetry, were prepared to learn *from* the art-forms of the people. The divisions between art and craft were being eroded no less vigorously than the divisions between poetry and philosophy, dance and theology, music and painting.

At Abramtsevo, Korovin and Vrubel' used the kiln and woodcarving facilities provided by Mamontov to make subtly coloured tiles or ceramic figures and woodcarvings from Russian mythology and legend. Vrubel', in particular, who understood how these figures had first formed in the popular imagination, emerging from the gnarled shapes of trees, the crouching potency of stone and boulder and the play of light and air on tossing blossom or running water, produced haunting works of art which were destined to outshine and outlast many of those of his contemporaries. Like them, however, he owed much to Abramtsevo and what Viktor Vasnetsov designated as the absorption of those who frequented it in 'our Russian nature and human types, our present life, our past, our fantasies, dreams and faith'.²⁰ Indeed Vrubel''s art is unthinkable without the ferment of Abramtsevo, where the artist would one day design backdrops and costumes for Mamontov's fabulous private opera and the next a set of dining-room chairs or a Russian stove; where, in work and at table, Vrubel' and his wife, an opera singer, rubbed shoulders with musician and artisan, actor and author; where discussion of Pre-Raphaelite theory and Impressionist practice went hand in hand with the rediscovery of the Russian fresco and icon.

The 'aesthetic' and 'historic' nationalism of the Moscow school was thus not unconnected with, but was gradually evolving away from, the touchy, dogmatic nationalism of such critics as Stasov, who could champion the 'Russian' music of the 'mighty five'* while pillorying the no-less-Russian Chaikovsky for spending too much time in Europe and kow-towing to western taste. The younger artists, more self-confident, were neither protectionist nor defensive. In fact, the 'Moscow School' of the mid 1890s was precisely the kind of movement Benois and Diaghilev needed to export to a Europe grown weary of its own refinement, hungry for new colour and fresh vision. So it came about that it was among the younger artists of this school, particularly the aloof Serov and the exuberant Korovin, that Diaghilev found ready allies worthy to further the

* A. P. Borodin, N. A. Rimsky-Korsakov, M. P. Musorgsky, M. A. Balakirev and C. A. Cui. The Russian term 'moguchaia kuchka' (here translated as the 'mighty five') was coined for these composers by the critic V. V. Stasov in an article of 1867. Like the Ambulants, whom Stasov also favoured, they wished to free their art of foreign academic influence and be free to incorporate Russian subject matter, particularly, in the case of the composers, folk melodies and Eastern motifs.

cause of Russian art abroad. Serov especially, an exquisite neo-Impressionist with a musical background and a biting wit, proved to have much in common with the Petersburg group and soon became a formidable ally and, eventually, a close associate of *Mir Iskusstva*.

The foundation of a society and a journal bearing this name was the natural outcome of the growing sense of vocation among the Nevsky Pickwickians. Benois was to make one more major practical contribution to the birth of the journal when, after Princess Mariia Tenisheva appointed him curator of her collection, a position which enabled him to travel and live abroad in order to make purchases on her behalf, he was to open the way for Diagilev to solicit her patronage.²¹ At the same time, the appointment distanced Benois from the hurly-burly of Petersburg. He moved his young family to Paris, where they lived from the autumn of 1896 to the summer of 1899 and kept open house for their old friends Somov, Bakst and Evgenii Lanceray, all of whom visited the French capital for considerable periods. Together, they attended concerts, deplored the debased state of French ballet and haunted the 'gods' at the Comédie Française, the Opéra Comique and the Opéra.

Diagilev's visits were different. He passed through rather than stayed in Paris, met more distinguished people and, in general, affected a very different lifestyle. Nevertheless, the old schoolboy intimacy persisted, and Benois recalls one occasion on which Diagilev invited him to a performance of *Die Walküre*, insisting on full evening dress and the front stalls. Benois's well-worn dress trousers let him down and, just as the transports of the Magic Fire music were about to engulf them, there was a snort of laughter as Diagilev noted a dramatic split, followed by tremors of mirth every time the bulky young dandy looked down to observe his friend's strategic positioning of his collapsible opera hat. Diagilev and his friends were still little more than boys, happily in love with Paris, and Benois's account of street singers and criers, the battle of confetti at Mardi Gras and the huge Polichinelle who presided over the Christmas fare at the Bon Marché to the sound of tinkling musical boxes reads like a scenario for one of their festive ballets.

Such everyday sights and sounds, at this time, made more impression, on Benois at least, than did the still rather strange and exclusive world of the art galleries. The better established Impressionists, although their works were still confined to one or two venues, were already beyond even Princess Tenisheva's pocket. Gauguin was in Tahiti. Cézanne, though already 'a name', was not yet on the market, nor did he live in Paris. Van Gogh and Seurat were still widely dismissed as 'insane' . . . The artists with whom Benois actually associated were the young Pierre Bonnard,

Maurice Denis, Felix Vallotton, the interiorist Vuillard, and various struggling young painters of his own age. In a modest way, Benois continued to work as a go-between, promoting Denis's work with Russian patrons and returning temporarily to St Petersburg in the winter of 1896–7 to arrange an exhibition of water-colours and drawings from Tenisheva's collection and to support Diaghilev in his first exhibition of English and German water-colours at the Stieglitz Museum in February 1897.

Diaghilev's choice of pictures for this exhibition was remarkable for the importance he now accorded to spontaneity, for the sketchy, 'unfinished' quality of some of the most effective exhibits, and for the bold new combinations of charcoal, water-colours, Indian ink and coloured pencil. The worst thing Diaghilev could now say about a picture was that it was 'dry', and at this exhibition there was already a strong sense that the nineteenth century was on its way out and with it the concept of a picture as a solid, carefully worked artefact capable of depicting reality and conveying civic ideas. As, in literature, the poets were reaching out towards pure music, so, in art, the quality most in demand had become 'poetry'. The important thing was to encapsulate the moment, to convey a mood ...

It was not easy to promote such notions in Russia in 1897, especially through exhibitions featuring foreign artists. Stasov dismissed Diaghilev's choice of water-colours as 'without subject, without content'.²² At the official Seventeenth Exhibition of Russian Water-Colourists in St Petersburg that same year, foreign works were excluded altogether. It was in his review of this exhibition that Diaghilev, for the first time, launched an open attack on the artistic establishment:

A new generation is coming with demands of its own and it will make itself heard and say what it has to say. Your panic fear of the West, of everything that is new and talented, is the beginning of your divorce from your public, your dying sigh. The opposition is growing and you sense this, but you will have to change your tactics, change yourselves, otherwise you will be defeated.²³

In order to make sure 'the opposition' went on 'growing', Diaghilev followed up Benois's initiative and set about wooing those artists of the Moscow school who had kept their allegiance to the Ambulants. In his review of the exhibition held in Petersburg that same winter of 1897 to mark the quarter-centenary of the foundation of their once radical Society, he singled out 'a handful of people' from whom 'we are awaiting the development of that trend which will win us a place in European art'.²⁴ At the same time, Diaghilev avoided direct confrontation with old-established Ambulant 'nationalism' by identifying its residual tenden-

tiousness with the *German* sentimentalism fashionable when the society was first founded twenty-five years before. The public no longer *wanted* journalistic, illustrative art, he maintained, and the emergence of the Moscow school within the Society was proof that the Ambulants were in fact well able to adapt to changing tastes. Tactfully, the review singles out for serious consideration, though not for fulsome praise, individual artists who Diagilev felt would add distinction to the new society he was already planning: Levitan, the brothers Vasnetsov, Nesterov, Polenov, Serov and Korovin. He cast his net wide and, in a review of the Academy exhibition that same year, singled out Repin's temperamental young pupil Maliavin. On later visits to Moscow, Diagilev made the acquaintance of other artists and enlisted the cooperation of Golovin, Maliutin and, most importantly, though at the time most controversially, of Mikhail Vrubel'.

Clearly, Diagilev was emerging as a bolder and more active promoter of the kind of art (Russian and west European) calculated to satisfy the tastes of a cosmopolitan élite than the over-scrupulous Benois would ever be. Used to sailing against the wind, acutely conscious that only success could insure him against the ridicule of society, Diagilev had plenty of nerve to take on the world at large – but he needed his friends. As he wrote to Benois in April 1897:

I have a brazen streak in my nature and have become quite accustomed to spitting in people's eyes, which though not always easy, is almost invariably salutary, but further I cannot go. There is for me a very, very small group of people before whom I lose all self-confidence, whose judgement I await with bowed head. They are Dima [Filosofov], you, occasionally Valichka [Nouvel] and, in certain practical matters Sasha Rat'kov. In your presence I become a man without will or freedom of action.

It even seems to me that all that I do, I do precisely for your sakes, or rather, because of you: as you decide, so it will be²⁵

He had, he wrote, obtained the enthusiastic co-operation of the Muscovites and several Finnish artists and had booked the same elegant venue as for his first exhibition, the Stieglitz rooms, from 15 January to 15 February 1898. Given this *fait accompli*, he was taking for granted the co-operation of his Petersburg friends and those he now terms the 'Russian Parisians': Iakunchikova, Fedor Botkin, Somov and Benois himself.

This letter was followed on 20 May by an official circular in which, alternating the pronouns 'I' and 'we', 'my' and 'our', Diagilev asked the artists' permission to visit their studios and select work 'which seems suitable to us both' for the forthcoming exhibition, took the preliminary expenses on himself and offered an equal share of any profits made to those taking part.²⁶

In his next letter to Benois, Diaghilev blamed Bakst and Serov for landing him with all this expense and trouble. Benois, happily rusticated in Brittany, was reluctant to co-operate and it took a visit from Diaghilev in person (on his way to meet Oscar Wilde and Aubrey Beardsley in Dieppe) to win his co-operation. The bond was sealed and the reversal of roles almost completed when Diaghilev, after a visit to Benois's Paris studio in his absence, wrote his friend an enthusiastic letter about the works he had selected for his 'Exhibition of Russian and Finnish Artists'. 'This praise from Serezha was extremely agreeable to me,' Benois notes, 'which proves, among other things, what authority my "pupil of yesterday" had acquired in the eyes of his ex-mentor.'²⁷

Nevertheless, Diaghilev was going too fast for him. No sooner were arrangements for the exhibition fairly under way than a host of other projects, 'one more grandiose than the other', sprang from it:

Now I am making plans for this journal in which I mean to unite all our artistic life: that is, to put real painting in the illustrated section, to say openly what I think in the articles and to organise annual exhibitions in the name of the journal and, finally, to enlist the new enterprise in the field of commercial art that is developing in Moscow and in Finland. In a word, I see the future through a magnifying glass . . .

wrote Diaghilev on 8/20 October 1897.²⁸

Predictably, the exhibition of Russian and Finnish painting met with a mixed reception. The liberal and, more particularly, the Populist press took exception to Diaghilev's style: a brilliant preview with a full orchestra and hot-house flowers, attended by royalty. To everyone's surprise, the Grand Duke Vladimir Aleksandrovich actually purchased a small painting by Somov – who was second only to Vrubel' as an object of execration by the old guard. Led by the redoubtable Stasov and the caricaturist P. E. Shcherbov (Old Judge), who depicted Diaghilev as a market-woman persuasively selling off a limp canvas (Vrubel's notorious 'Green panel') to Princess Tenisheva, these last raised a positive outcry against the exhibition as a whole and its organiser in particular. It suddenly became clear to Stasov that the scrupulously polite, if odiously dandified, 'nephew of Anna Pavlovna Filosofov' was guilty of poaching on his preserves. Diaghilev had deliberately – or so it seemed to Stasov – set out not only to challenge the Chernyshevsky-based aesthetics of the Society of Ambulants but to seduce their best artists, exhibiting them together with his own Petersburg friends and with out-and-out decadents such as Vrubel', in whose work the ageing critic could see 'nothing but madness and monstrosity, anti-art and repulsiveness'. As to Diaghilev, Stasov insinuated with deceptive reasonableness:

I think that, had it not been always one and the same person who took it upon himself to think for all the rest, something better and more significant would have emerged than the unbelievable chaos which reigns at this exhibition [...] Mr Diagilev presides over all this decadent rubbish like some kind of decadent prefect: collecting, discovering, 'inviting' and conveyancing to us here in Petersburg from all points of the compass ...²⁹

The note of desperation is understandable in view of the fact that some other critics were more favourably impressed. As one of these wrote, there *was* a real need for an alternative organisation of young artists who 'do not look at painting from the point of view of the novelist or the historian, who do not consider it a means but an art, something which has a right to an independent existence.'³⁰

This point of view was vigorously expressed by Diagilev himself in a restrained, close-reasoned reply to Stasov – which O. K. Notovich, editor of *Novosti i Birzhevye Vedomosti*, which had up till then accommodated both critics, refused to print. The lines of battle were drawn. Diagilev was no longer *persona grata* with the Populist and liberal press, and was reduced to defending his undertaking anonymously in the supplement of the despised *Novoe Vremia* (New Times), a newspaper which was regarded by the Intelligentsia of the time as corrupt, sycophantic and vulgar.

Trouble at home, however, was richly compensated for by success abroad and Diagilev, instead of wasting time on self-defence, had only to publicise the reaction to 'his' Russian artists at the German Secession. The cream of the exhibition was dispatched to Paulus in Munich where it was so well received after the opening in May 1898 that it continued to tour throughout the summer, showing at venues in Düsseldorf, Cologne and Berlin. 'Never', Diagilev had the satisfaction of quoting from the *Münchener neueste Nachrichten*, 'have Russian and Finnish artists been so coherently and brilliantly represented'. The paper went on to contrast the 1898 Russian contribution with the 'poor pictures' sent the previous year 'which told us so little about the country which they purported to depict'. As Diagilev had foreseen, it was the Russianness of the Russians that captivated their European audience: the melancholy of Levitan, the masterly simplicity of Serov's portraits; snow scenes; ornamental peasant motifs; the religious 'Russian types' of Nesterov. It had all been there, waiting, but it had taken a Diagilev to win from the European press an acknowledgement that, at last, Russia was producing a visual art 'to match its great literature and fine music'. His own friends, too, the modest representatives of 'Russian Paris', came in for their share of praise: Somov's humour, Benois's evocations of Versailles and Iakunchikova's water-colours all received appreciative mention from the German press.³¹

As Nesterov gleefully informed a friend in a private letter: 'In Munich we Russians are enjoying a resounding success, we are hot news, we are being called "the province of genius".' This did not stop Stasov from asserting that in Germany the 'Russian and Finnish artists', 'apes of the worst Europe has to offer', had met only with the indifference they deserved. In fact, as Benois recalls ruefully in his memoirs, 'the same accusations which were being levelled at that time at the young Russian poetry were now being aimed at us artists.'³²

It was natural, in view of this, that poets and prose-writers of the Petersburg school – Merezhkovsky, Hippius, Sologub and Minsky, and such lesser lights as P. P. Pertsov and Vl. Hippius – should, from the outset, have taken a keen interest in Diagilev's next venture: the founding of a journal 'to unite all our artistic life'. The Merezhkovskys were introduced to Diagilev's circle by Benois and Filosofov.

Benois, seeking an explanation for Merezhkovsky's influence over himself and his friends, quotes a youthful letter from Nouvel who, Benois remembered, was growing increasingly unhappy and cynical as he became aware of and yielded to his 'inclination to seek out Eros in a sphere not subject to Aphrodite'. Nouvel wrote:

[...] I do see something truly good and beautiful in our former enthusiasms. There you have these words which, at the moment, we seem to react to only with irony. Yet, when all's said and done, truth, goodness and beauty were the foundation, a solid foundation, and on what do we take our stand now? And do we – *take a stand*? I, for instance, can't even call my condition 'irren', because that word implies a quest. I am simply un jouet du flux et du reflux. I despise the state that I am in but accept it as something unavoidable, fated ... Yet I do still have hopes for better times and I am convinced that some day we shall come to believe in something.³³

It was this nostalgia for youthful innocence and idealism, this hollow, passive yearning for belief, exclusively intimate and personal, which led the founders of *Mir Iskusstva* to seek out and welcome the collaboration of teachers and 'philosophers' who had given time and thought to the continuing significance of truth, goodness and beauty in a world which had lost its moral bearings. Merezhkovsky and Hippius, particularly, suited their style. Serious 'seekers', they yet appeared the epitome of cosmopolitan refinement. *She*, with her passion for friendship, for bold, creative discussion, talking the world and the heavens to rights as she rested her slender limbs on the settee and puffed at her scented cigarettes, held the young men spellbound by a combination of sophistication and sincerity, drawing, outrageous wit and a genuine compulsion to follow an argument through to the conclusion. *He* interested them as one who

perceived culture in terms of man's search for God. When Benois and Filosofov first sought him out – typically, perhaps, unbeknownst to one another – he was beginning to emerge from the dualism displayed in the poem 'The Pantheon' and other early works, including the first two volumes of his prose trilogy, into an evergrowing *love* of Christ; Hippius says 'plenenie Khristom', a state of being 'captivated' by Christ. Merezhkovsky himself describes this development in the preface, written in 1911, to his *Compete Works*:

When I began the trilogy *Christ and Antichrist* it seemed to me that there were two truths: Christianity, the truth about heaven, and paganism – the truth about the Earth, and that in the future merging of these two truths would be all the fullness of religious truth. But as I was finishing it I already knew that the merging of Christ and Antichrist is a blasphemous lie; I knew that both truths – about the heaven and the earth, were already united in Jesus Christ . . .³⁴

He was approaching this stage of his development, having just finished work on the second volume of the trilogy, when, in 1898, he was drawn into the circle of Filosofov's friends; naturally, he brought writers of his own acquaintance such as Sologub and Minsky and Pertsov's latest 'discovery', Vasilii Rozanov, in tow. After his quarrel with Volynsky and *Severnyi Vestnik*, Merezhkovsky was in search of an outlet for both his original work and his literary criticism. He and his wife, moreover, felt an immediate affinity with the *Mir Iskusstva* circle. They, in their turn, were drawn into the couple's quest for a new approach to religion that would include, would even be based upon, secular culture. At the same time, the androgynous, affected charm of Zinaida Hippius, 'kind as a cobra and sincerely religious', as Mstislav Dobuzhinsky, a younger artist of the group who first encountered her in their company in 1901, was later to remember, corresponded to something in their own flippant yet idealistic natures. She took to the Pickwickians immediately and effortlessly and thoroughly enjoyed being the only woman (with the exception of Diagilev's old nanny, who poured the tea, and – somewhat later – the artist Ostroumova-Lebedeva) admitted to the lively Wednesday receptions at which all the talk now was of the new journal, which it had been decided to call *Mir Iskusstva* (The World of Art).³⁵

Nevertheless, once Filosofov, who was to be literary editor, had secured their co-operation, the Merezhkovskys did not involve themselves actively in the Herculean task of getting the new project off the ground. From the summer of 1899, they were away in Italy, Sicily and Germany. It was Filosofov who took on the day-to-day grind, not only organising the literary section but choosing the luxury paper and the elegant eighteenth-century typeface, seeing to the reproduction of pictures, planning the lay-out of the first numbers and attending to the massive correspondence which the new project entailed. And it was

Diagilev who raised the money from Benois's patron Princess Tenisheva and from Savva Mamontov, the master of Abramtsevo, and who undertook the delicate negotiations necessary to safeguard the interests of these new patrons without compromising those of his own 'Petersburg' group.

To some extent these interests did conflict. Although the applied arts were fashionable in Europe (William Morris, Charles Rennie Mackintosh, Lalique), the dawn of the entrepreneurial age in Russia, with its encouragement of artists' design and revival of peasant handicrafts, still seemed embarrassingly provincial to the 'Russian Parisians' such as Benois and Somov, whereas to Mamontov and Tenisheva it was all-important. Diagilev and Filosofov circumvented this problem by romanticising both industry and native, neo-primitive form. The place for the new art, it was maintained, was not in museums but out in the street for all to see: in the design and decoration of the new railway stations, in mosaics adorning the walls of new public buildings and in church frescoes. If, moreover, the *nouveaux riches* wished to imprint their personalities on their surroundings by building richly ornamental mansions with artist-designed furniture, this could be seen as an implementation of the *Mir Iskusstva* slogan that 'we seek only the individual and believe only in ourselves'.³⁶

Although Diagilev maintained a certain independence from his patrons – not hesitating, for instance, to turn down Tenisheva's cover design for the new journal – there had also to be some compromise. Possibly under the influence of Filosofov, Mamontov's taste was accommodated by devoting much of the first number to the heavy-handed nationalist painter Viktor Vasnetsov, not one of the new generation but a contemporary of Repin and the historical painter Surikov. Diagilev – with some difficulty – obtained many of the artist's best works for reproduction from under the nose of a rival journal. This was N. P. Sobko's *Iskusstvo i Khudozhestvennaia Promyshlennost'* (Art and Artefacts) which published an extensive serialised article on Vasnetsov by Diagilev's old enemy Stasov in its first three numbers beginning, virtually neck and neck with *Mir Iskusstva*, in October 1898.³⁷

For the Russian Parisians, however, this was no triumph. Vasnetsov was emphatically *not* the artist they would have chosen to dominate the first number of a young, cosmopolitan journal. To add to this, they were somewhat unnerved by the *succès de scandale* of Diagilev's exhibition and, not realising the extent of the polarisation which had taken place between the new and the old artistic establishments, heartily disapproved of the malicious, challenging tone now favoured by 'Dima' and 'Serezha', ably abetted by Nouvel and Nurok.³⁸ From Paris, Benois wrote despondently, enumerating these doubts. Diagilev, who still regarded his friend

as the principal architect of the whole project, felt badly let down and replied accordingly, likening himself – in a famous letter – to a builder's foreman:

... just as you have come crawling out from under the scaffolding all covered with dust and sweat, your architect chooses this moment to inform you that he does not really feel up to building the house and – in general – what's the point of building a house at all, is it really necessary and so forth. And only then do you suddenly become aware of the filth of the bricks, the stink of the wallpaper and the glue, the inefficiency of the workmen.

That's how your letter made me feel. If even Valechka has got off his arse, then for heaven's sake that should be a sign to you that he has understood what is at stake, what it's all about. And there you are having doubts as to whether the journal will serve its purpose, whether the old men and Vasnetsov are really worth writing about, whether or not we should risk falling out with people. I cannot and never will be able to ask my parents to love me and in the same way I cannot bring myself to beg you to feel for me and to help, not just by giving your blessing and moral support but directly, categorically and fruitfully, by your work. In a word, I can neither persuade nor beg you to do anything and, as for giving you a good shake, I haven't the time and if I had I would most likely break your neck. That's all, and I hope that the sincere and friendly tone of my cursing will have its effect and that you'll stop acting like a stranger on the sidelines, put on your dirty overalls and join the rest of us in mixing this burning quicklime.³⁹

The tone of this letter speaks volumes both for the unique atmosphere of *Mir Iskusstva* and for the genuine sense of mission which was to make it not just the first luxuriously-produced fine arts journal in Russia but, for several years to come, an ongoing crusade.

'And now the first number of *Mir Iskusstva* has come out', wrote Anna Pavlovna Filosofov after the celebratory party in November 1898, which had seemed to her a feast in time of plague, for it was held when cholera and famine were devastating the provinces of Penza and Kazan':

All that they preach is very fine and, of course, the cult of beauty and the implanting of the love of art in the masses and the crowd is a good thing, but not yet, not here, in much-suffering and starving Russia [...]. They say, that the time has come to change *charité* for *justice* ...⁴⁰

Here we have, in a more sharply personalised, domestic form, precisely the same reaction as that evinced by Mikhailovksy in his review of Merezhkovsky's 'On the New Trends ...' some six years earlier. The 'parents', the people of the 1860s, to whom, as to Anna Pavlovna, the day of 19 February 1861, when the Russian serfs had been granted emancipation, had been a day of 'moral renewal',⁴¹ still felt bound to 'serve' the peasantry from the security of their own enlightenment – almost invari-

ably the corollary of privilege. The 'sons', products of life in the great cities, had lost this security. For them, Nietzsche had discredited 'charité' – and Marx had established that it was not individuals who moved history, but the inexorable dialectic ('justice'). The historical process could therefore, it appeared, be left to itself. It was in *Mir Iskusstva* that Minsky first made his provocative statement: 'The real aim of the socialist workman and the capitalist dandy are one and the same.' Merezhkovsky shared the view that Marxism emancipates art from social concern and wrote, in the second number of Diaghilev's journal: 'In politics, the fathers are "populists", the children "marxists", in art "realists" and "decadents", in philosophy "positivists" and "mystics".'⁴²

Filosofov, as literary editor of *Mir Iskusstva*, was primarily interested in establishing the *autonomy* of art, a 'freedom for the sake of freedom' 'not to be guarded by any exterior, conservative or liberal force'. 'The genius', he declared, quoting Merezhkovsky, may 'break all laws, transgress all boundaries'. In the programmatic first editorial, signed by Diaghilev but most probably written in conjunction with Filosofov, the young editors dismissed the critical police of Populism with unprecedented robustness as '... decadents of realism, boring enemies, still boasting of the vigour of their flabby muscles and of the seasonableness of their mouldering truths'.⁴³

From the outset, *Mir Iskusstva* combined the psychology of a waning class with the buoyant expansionism of a waxing nation. Set up at the end of a brilliant century on borrowed time and borrowed money, at once elegiac and self-confident, decadent and vigorous, it glowed like a celebratory Somov rainbow against the looming storm clouds of social turmoil. The original 'Pickwickian' contribution of youthful high spirits, the shouts of laughter over the collective composition of the notoriously teasing 'Chronicle', amidst much ringing of the order-bell round Diaghilev's tea-table, even the mutual infatuations, jealousies and heartbreak gave the journal a quality of light-heartedness quite different from that of its gloomier, more 'grown-up' post-1905 successors, the no less luxuriously-produced *Zolotoe Runo* (The Golden Fleece, 1906–8) and the elegant *Apollon* (Apollo, 1910–17).

Not even its worst enemies were altogether proof against the charm of *Mir Iskusstva*. Burenin, the redoubtable *feuilletonist* of *Novoe Vremia* whose attacks on the 'decadents' were virulent enough to make Briusov dream of physical retaliation and the more choleric Diaghilev actually resort to it, wrote of the first number: 'Its gaze is fixed ahead and though what it sees there is utter balderdash, at least it enjoys the contemplation thereof with immense enthusiasm.'⁴⁴

The Janus-faced quality of *Mir Iskusstva*, looking not only forward but

backward, beyond the nearer past of its own culture to far antiquity, though always with this quality of 'immense enthusiasm', reflected not only the social mix of the journal (the half-aristocratic, half-bourgeois patronage; the courtly Petersburg cosmopolitan background of some contributors and the *petit-bourgeois* provincialism of others), but also the individual tastes and interests of its members. Benois, who soon responded to Diaghilev's exhortation and came round to full and active co-operation, tells us that there were splits within the inner circle of the movement: the 'conservatives' (in the sense of those primarily interested in the art of the past and simply in excellence *per se*) were himself, Evgenii Lanceray, Iaremich, Merezhkovsky and, sometimes, Serov, whereas the 'radicals' were Nurok, Nouvel, Bakst, Zinaida Hippus (here firmly ranged against her husband), Minsky and, sometimes, Serov. Diaghilev and Filosofov held the balance. Often, their disagreements were fought out in the pages of the journal itself. In general, it was the stated policy of this most individual and eclectic of publications to give each contributor complete freedom to state his or her point of view in whatever way, and at whatever length, he or she deemed appropriate.

From the beginning, this freedom led to a revolution in literary as well as in artistic taste. *Mir Iskusstva* not only opened the eyes of its readers to the classic beauty of Petersburg and its surrounding palaces, to the romantic elegance of the reigns of Paul and Alexander I and to the unsuspected wonders of medieval architecture and the Russian icon; it also directed their minds to the contemporary significance of past civilizations and beliefs and to a serious reconsideration of their own literary heritage. Where the Populist press had run down Pushkin as the intellectual inferior of the Decembrists, attacked Dostoevsky for the Slavophile 'obscurantist' views expressed in his *Diary of a Writer*, valued Gogol' as a critical realist and Tolstoy as a moral teacher, *Mir Iskusstva* consistently advocated a very different approach.

An entire number (No. 13–14 for 1899) was devoted to Pushkin.⁴⁵ D. S. Merezhkovsky's seminal study of Tolstoy and Dostoevsky was serialised from the first number for 1901 into the second for 1902, and was followed by Lev Shestov's highly controversial 'Dostoevsky i Nitsche. Filosofii tragedii' (Dostoevsky and Nietzsche. The philosophy of tragedy). Rozanov contributed important articles on Lermontov, Gogol' and Vladimir Solov'ev. These profoundly subjective critical responses to familiar classics gradually won over the reader to the idea that works of literature, like other works of art, affect us and express the author as much through form as through content.

Rozanov formulated the new attitude to thought and poetry, philosophy and aesthetics, when he wrote:

Tiutchev was right a thousand times that everything expressible is untrue and everything true is inexpressible; it is so with philosophy: there is sometimes a temptation to say that philosophers in prose are, by reason of the imperfection of their instrument, carpenters. And that poets are also philosophers, but are rather jewel-smiths by virtue of the refinement and iridescence of their material.⁴⁶

Although differences were soon to emerge between the ‘thinkers’ and the ‘aesthetes’ of *Mir Iskusstva*, it was, at the outset, inconceivable that this small band of people, whose approach to art was radically different from the explicit rationalism of the majority of their fellow-countrymen, should not have felt some affinity with one another, should not have clubbed together in the face of attack and ridicule: ‘Hence’, wrote Hippus, ‘the closeness of one circle to another, the natural crisscrossing of ways, albeit for a brief moment, after which there would often be a regrouping and the appearance of new people in all the groups.’⁴⁷

Forces of disintegration *were* at work in the *Mir Iskusstva* group from the outset. Every advance successfully accomplished, every Establishment bastion conquered and occupied by ‘decadent’ artists or writers, served to erode a solidarity which, in those closing years of the nineteenth century, had been both an exciting meeting of minds and a tactical necessity in the face of a multitude of common foes.

In the autumn of 1899, *Mir Iskusstva* faced and overcame its first serious financial crisis. Benois, on receiving a small independent income on the death of his father, left the service of Princess Tenisheva, perhaps with more haste than courtesy. This ‘betrayal’, the last in a series of public and private snubs – from the Tsar’s refusal of her collection for the newly-founded Russian Museum to ‘Old Judge’s’ depiction of her as a cow being milked by a ruddy-cheeked, be-aproned Diaghilev while Bakst, a perky cockerel, pecked around in a large, freshly-deposited pile of dung – finally lost *Mir Iskusstva* the support of the wealthy Princess. Mamontov had to withdraw his subsidy that same autumn because of involvement in the stock-exchange scandal which led to his arrest and financial ruin. All this happened within the year of his generous contribution to the birth of *Mir Iskusstva* and to ‘a whole new era in Russian musical theatre’ with the presentation, at the St Petersburg Conservatoire, of the Abramtsevo production of Chaikovsky’s *Pskovianka* (‘The Maid of Pskov’) with decorations and costumes by Korovin, and with Shaliapin, also a Mamontov discovery, scoring his first triumph in the new capital in the role of Ivan the Terrible.⁴⁸

After several months of racking uncertainty and vain appeals to, among others, Stanislavsky’s patron, the merchant Savva Morozov, the journal was saved by help from a most unexpected and august quarter.

Serov, while painting a portrait of Nicholas II, confided his worries about *Mir Iskusstva's* future to the Tsar, who volunteered a subsidy from the 'privy purse'. Once this got about, the support of other patrons and the financial future of the journal were assured and the interests of its founders free to diversify.

The return to St Petersburg of Benois ensured competent and sustained editorial help and Diaghilev's entrepreneurial energies immediately found a new outlet. On the retirement of the old director of the imperial theatres, I. A. Vsevolozhsky, and his replacement by the young Prince Sergei Volkonsky, who was favourably disposed to the *Mir Iskusstva* group, Diaghilev was offered the post of 'chinovnik osobykh poruchenii' – a kind of personal attaché to the new director. At the same time, Filosofov accepted a place on the repertory committee of the Aleksandriinskii Theatre. In the wake of the cousins, artists and authors of 'decadent' complexion began to infiltrate the imperial stage. By the turn of the century, it seemed as though the vast resources of the imperial theatre would soon be at the disposal of *Mir Iskusstva*. Diaghilev was entrusted with the editorship of the *Annual of the Imperial Theatres for 1899–1900* and, naturally, enlisted the help of his friends. The resulting transformation of a white paper on theatrical repertoire and subsidies into a graceful, evocative tribute to the architecture, actors and retiring director of the imperial theatres delighted the Tsar and confirmed Diaghilev's standing in his new job and at court.

In the summer of 1900, Benois was offered the post of secretary to the imperial 'Obshchestvo pooshchreniia khudozhestv' (Society for the Encouragement of the Arts), and the editorship of its journal. To complement *Mir Iskusstva*, Benois transformed this second journal, which he called *Khudozhestvennye Sokrovishcha Rossii* (Art Treasures of Russia), into an exercise in the education of public taste, publishing reproductions and photographs of the national cultural heritage with purely factual annotation. To Benois, also, fell the task of reporting in *Mir Iskusstva* the success of his countrymen at the Universal Exhibition in Paris in 1901, where thanks almost entirely to artists associated with the wider *Mir Iskusstva* group, the Russian pavilion won extraordinary acclaim.

The influence and pedagogic role of the group appeared to be growing, as in Russian fairy-stories, 'not by the day but by the hour'. Diaghilev, however, was not cut out to be a civil servant, and with some encouragement in high places he embarked on a series of intrigues directed against his patron Volkonsky. This led in 1901 to his sudden dismissal and public disgrace, just as plans were going forward to stage the first *Mir Iskusstva* ballet: Delibes's *Sylvia*. Temporarily devastated by this set-back, Diaghilev confined his activities for the next few months to the journal and to his

book on the eighteenth-century portrait painter D. G. Levitsky, which he completed and published before the year was out. This serious, scholarly work, together with Benois's revised and extended *History of Russian Art*, lent the group a new aura of almost academic respectability.⁴⁹ In spite of Diaghilev's failure to keep his head on his first giddy rise to power, he and Benois were already, at least for a substantial, cultivated minority, acknowledged arbiters of taste.

Even the set-back to the *Mir Iskusstva* group's advancement on the imperial stage was to prove temporary, as, within the year, V. A. Teliakovsky had replaced Prince Volkonsky and brought with him from Moscow the *Mir Iskusstva* artists Korovin and Golovin. He also enlisted Bakst and Benois to work on operas and ballets – though he flatly refused to re-open the door to Diaghilev. It was through Teliakovsky that Bakst received the commission to design the sets and costumes for Merezhkovsky's translation of *Hippolytus*, at the Aleksandrinskii Theatre. Bakst was also asked to design a ballet, and Benois was offered the irresistible bait of a Wagner opera: *Götterdämmerung*. That both these old friends were given state commissions but could do nothing to restore Diaghilev to a position of influence was not easy for him.

Neither was the appearance in Petersburg of a new rival. *Mir Iskusstva*'s Munich correspondent, Igor Grabar', a painter and art historian, had the backing of a wealthy patron, Sergei Aleksandrovich Shcherbatov, and, to the suspicious Diaghilev, appeared to have joined their councils with the firm intention of 'taking over' his own position. The newcomer was fiercely resented by Nurok and Nouvel who – as was becoming increasingly apparent – had no creative life of their own outside the old 'Pickwickian' nucleus. Serov, Benois and Filosofov, though they found Grabar' exasperatingly didactic and humourless, were, for various reasons, prepared to tolerate him. Certainly, there was room for his energy and scholarship in the wider movement of rediscovery begun by the *Mir Iskusstva* group. It is to Grabar', more than to any other single scholar, that Russia owes the rediscovery of her icons.⁵⁰

Nevertheless, Diaghilev's suspicions that Grabar' might undermine his already somewhat weakened hegemony were not unfounded. Within the year, Grabar', with the aid of Shcherbatov and another wealthy Muscovite, Von Mekk, had founded his own, albeit 'allied', society: 'Sovremennoe iskusstvo' (Contemporary Art), the shop window of which was an entire flat in the centre of St Petersburg, decorated and designed by artists from *Mir Iskusstva*. The project smacked of a commercialism which shocked the crusading spirit of some of the journal's old hands. Hippus wondered, in an article on this project, what had happened to the time, 'such a short time ago it seemed to us, when the way of contemporary art

appeared as a way out into the infinite', when 'we still expected something from it, hoped for something.' All her visit to the flat had aroused, however, were delicious daydreams of disposing of the enormous sums of money necessary 'so that the artists should be at my service', and of herself sitting writing at Korovin's slender, silvery table, dressed in Von Mekk's cobweb gown . . . Under no circumstances, she added, could one do anything so inelegant as to *die* in a flat designed, as this one was '*solely* for living.' After all, she decides, she preferred her own grubby, inartistic room with the icon in the corner.⁵¹

Mir Iskusstva's own art exhibitions were also a worldly success, which led to proliferation and the formation of splinter groups among the artists. In 1899, Diagilev had realised his cherished dream of bringing to St Petersburg a truly international exhibition, where forty-two European artists, including Boecklin, Moreau, Whistler, Puvis de Chavannes, Degas and Monet were shown alongside Russians of his choosing. In February 1900, however, Diagilev's diktat gave way to a committee comprising himself, Benois and Serov for *Mir Iskusstva* and, for associates of the Moscow school, Roehrich, Golovin, Golubkina (a sculptor), and the philosopher Prince Trubetskoi. A splendid exhibition was arranged under the auspices of *Mir Iskusstva* at the Petersburg Academy of Arts in 1901, but many of the artists who showed there, including Diagilev's closest associates, Bakst, Benois and Somov, elected to participate in a second, broader-based 'Exhibition of Thirty-six Artists' at the Stroganov Institute in Moscow that same year.

Although it took place with the formal blessing of Diagilev who, together with Benois and Serov, attended the opening, he regarded this bid for independence on the part of Moscow with apprehension. Before the decisive breakaway from Diagilev's authority in November 1903, however, two further *Mir Iskusstva* exhibitions were held in St Petersburg* and one in Moscow. Each was an event in its own way, organised according to Diagilev's principle that an exhibition is not just a collection of pictures but a work of art in itself.

Herculean efforts by Diagilev to outdo 'the Thirty-six' made his only exhibition to be held in Moscow (end of 1902–beginning of 1903) an important event. An obscure student in the Natural Science Faculty of Moscow University, Boris Bugaev, who was still concealing his authorship of *Vtoraia (Dramaticheskaiia) Simfoniia* (The Second (Dramatic)

* It was on the morning of the 1902 exhibition in a cul-de-sac known as Passazh off the Nevsky Prospect, that Vrubel' was discovered, beside himself, with an empty champagne bottle, having – or so legend has it – spent the entire night retouching his visionary canvas of the *Demon Cast Down*, a long, grey, broken figure lying crushed amidst a tangle of peacock feathers and a cruel landscape of blue, brown and violet rock.

Symphony, 1902) a sensationally innovative and decadent first book, under the pen-name Andrei Bely,⁵² attended the preview of this exhibition. Bely-Bugaev was a protégé of the Merezhkovskys, and his highly-slanted but vivid account of the occasion reflects the atmosphere of widening schism within the *Mir Iskusstva* camp. ‘The Petersburg group’, Bely recalls, ‘had split between the snob-artists and the writers; in *Mir Iskusstva* there had been a friendly review of my book; soon I became a contributor to *Mir Iskusstva*: quite unexpectedly.’

His account of how this happened gives us an unusual picture, or caricature (Bely’s pictures, like Gogol’s, always verged on caricature) of a beleaguered, suspicious Diaghilev who, having lost his job at court and being in the process of losing control of his own group of artists, was not yet – quite – the established international impresario. ‘... the *Mir Iskusstva* exhibition was opening in Moscow’, Bely remembered, ‘I went to all the exhibitions and so of course I went to this one’:

almost empty; chic, well-bred people glided silently over the carpets amongst the canvases by Vrubel’, Somov, Bakst; they all knew one another; but I was a stranger amongst them; the figure of Diaghilev, most splendid from the point of view of colour and outline, stood out; I recognised him from the portrait by the coquettishly upswept whoosh of hair with the silver streak amongst the black growth and by the pink, arrogantly clean-shaven face, well-risen like a rich bun – a very ‘pugnacious’ face* ready to butter you with charm or to freeze in the icy, insolent expression of a *vicomte* [...] either Nero in a black dinner jacket surveying Rome in flames or, possibly, the head footman about to slam the palace door?

Nevertheless, Bely introduced himself: ‘Bugaev’.

At once, with a twitch, the insolent set of the jutting lip gave way to a style ‘enfant’, or rather a full-lipped, full-cheeked cherub (in the style of Borromini, seventeenth-century) [...] ‘Ah, delighted! The other day we talked such a lot *about you!*’

From then on Bely began to get letters from Filosofov, ‘with a request to send anything I liked; so the fact of friendship with D. S. Merezhkovsky made a name for me among the artists of *Mir Iskusstva*’.⁵³

In Petersburg, another debutant poet interested in Bely and the Merezhkovskys, who had as yet no publications to his credit, wrote to his uncle Mikhail Sergeevich Solov’ev, about Bely’s first contribution to ‘that cold, disintegrating *Mir Iskusstva*. Now finally the latest number has shown clearly and cynically how ceremoniously our Diaghilevs, Benois etc. click their heels and how, from the other side, from yours, with what shuddering terror “flowers the heart” of Andrei Bely.’⁵⁴

These comments by a new generation, attracted by the ‘thinkers’ of *Mir*

* In the Russian ‘ochen’ “morda”.

Iskusstva but repelled by the 'aesthetes', reflected the in-fighting already going on within the editorial office. Although they were in fact a prelude to diversification and new successes, the quarrels did mark the beginning of the end of the first joyous impulse, the golden youth of the movement. Overtones of weariness were to be observed at the next *Mir Iskusstva* exhibition, hosted by Benois in his headquarters at the Petersburg Society for the Encouragement of the Arts in February–March 1903. At the post-mortem meeting afterwards, the vote went against Diaghilev and it was decided to amalgamate with the 'Moscow Thirty-six' and form a new society which would be called: 'The Union of Russian Artists'. Filosofov probably voiced the feelings of most of the group: 'Thank God,' he is reported to have said, 'that is it – the end.'

For Filosofov, it was the end, but not, of course, for Diaghilev. Having seen Vrubel' rise from opprobrium to fame and artists like Sapunov, Kuznetsov and Dobuzhinsky make their début under his auspices, Diaghilev was to organise a final farewell *Mir Iskusstva* exhibition two years after the demise of the journal in 1904, and just before his own departure for the 'Russian seasons' in Paris. This exhibition, held in Petersburg in February–March 1906, assembled before an appreciative public a veritable flowering of visual art for which all *Mir Iskusstva*'s previous work had prepared a most clement climate. All the old *Mir Iskusstva* stalwarts were represented, together with important selections from the works of Vrubel' and (posthumously) of Viktor Borisov-Musatov – more painterly, more mysterious, more truly 'Symbolist' than the majority of pictures which had aroused such an outcry at home and enjoyed such success abroad less than a decade earlier. Kuznetsov's *Blue Fountain* and *Birth of Spring*, too, were redolent of a new manner, 'the breath of the unspoken' as one critic defined it, as were the latest canvases of Sapunov and Milioti.⁵⁵ New names for Petersburg were Feofilaktov, Ulianov, Sar'ian, Jawlensky (Iavlensky) and Larionov. The interest in and respect for form and material, assiduously cultivated over the years by *Mir Iskusstva*, were burgeoning as rapidly as a garden in midsummer, and it was only fitting that, after this, Diaghilev should set out to find new worlds to conquer beyond the borders of his own country.⁵⁶

By this time, however, there was little left of the old alliances based on boyhood friendship and shared idealism. This was not simply a reflection of divisions between writers, and artists. The nucleus of the movement, the flat shared by Filosofov and Diaghilev from which *Mir Iskusstva* was edited, had, as we have seen, shown a marked tendency to self-destruct from the moment outside pressures began to weaken. In 1901, the cousins threw the unfortunate Bakst bodily down the stairs for passing on secrets

of the imperial stage, to which Diaghilev had been privy during his brief period in office, to a brother who wrote a gossip column. Bakst came back, but Somov was so indignant for him that, for some time, he broke off all relations with Diaghilev and never really forgave him the incident.

That same year, Benois publicly fell out with Filosofov, in a polemic printed in *Mir Iskusstva* on the 'Russian religious renaissance' in the visual arts. Benois and Filosofov were both concerned with problems of art and religion and were, to a greater or lesser extent, followers of Merezhkovsky, but this polemic showed up the deepening cleft between the essentially 'literary' approach of Filosofov and the purely aesthetic criteria of Benois. With hindsight, Benois claims in his memoirs that Filosofov was then already finding work on the journal wearisome, was having to 'play a part' in order to hide a certain contempt for the artists, and was happier in the company of the 'philosophers', notably of the Merezhkovskys, with whom, on a personal as well as a religious basis, he was becoming more and more deeply involved.

By 1902, Filosofov and Diaghilev, also, were clearly pulling different ways. The reason for this was their different attitudes to 'the new religious consciousness' which, though it had in a sense been born from the meeting of minds between the Merezhkovskys and the *Mir Iskusstva* group, had never particularly interested Diaghilev. Now this interest in Christianity which had once seemed a characteristically Russian contributory ingredient to the new, 'mystic' art, which was enjoying such success in Europe, was being transformed under his very eyes into a broad-based, socially active movement, a kind of new 'going to the people'. This time, however, the Intelligentsia were not going out into the countryside as teachers, they had engaged in an earnest, passionate and public debate with the Russian Orthodox Church. For Dmitrii Filosofov, with his 'repentant nobleman' background and a naturally strong, if hitherto dormant, social conscience, this new venture was of greater moment than any number of art exhibitions or new theatrical productions.

5 From *Mir Iskusstva* to *Novyi Put'*

Мечтать ли нам о повтореньях?
Иной мы жаждем высоты.
Для нас в слияньях и сплетеньях
Есть откровенья простоты.
Отдайся новым созерцаньям,
О том, что было — не грусти,
И к вере истинной — со знаньем —
Ищи бесстрашного пути.

Зинаида Гиппиус*

The only point on which there had ever been true consensus among all the 'seekers' of the Silver Age was that the way ahead – for them at least – led through their own creative intuition, through art. To provide such a way, they further agreed, art must be absolutely free, not only of political censorship but of all set tasks and foregone conclusions. Every answer must come from the artist's own, subjective experience. For a few brief years, such freedom was granted, incongruous though it might seem, in the eclectically hospitable pages of *Mir Iskusstva*. Here the interests of thinkers and artists developed together, then began to diverge. It was Merezhkovsky, who, thanks perhaps in part to his own limitations as a writer, transformed what had been a multiplicity of private quests into a public enquiry and thereby focused the attention of a wider stratum of society not only on 'the new religious consciousness' but on 'the new aesthetic' as well.

I

Dmitrii Merezhkovsky, as is clear from his poetry, was a man still heavily trammelled by his positivist nineteenth-century upbringing, an essentially transitional author. It is typical of his religious thought, for instance, that

* 'Is it for us to dream of repetitions? / It is for different heights that we thirst. / For us the revelations of simplicity / Are to be found in mergings, in intertwinings. / Surrender to new meditations, / Do not grieve for that which used to be, / And seek the fearless way / To true faith – with knowledge'. Zinaida Hippus

he looked upon the 'blindness' of history to the life of Christ on earth as the innate *inability* of the man-made discipline of history to find room for the intrusion of Eternity.¹ He saw Tolstoy's rejection of the outward forms of the Christian Church as the rejection of a sacred vessel which 'contains' truth, and Dostoevsky's acceptance of the people's faith he likened to the taking up of a rag 'cast aside by the proud aristocrat Tolstoy', from which Dostoevsky 'fashioned a garment for his God'. To Merezhkovsky, it was the vessel, the garment, which were essentials. 'We have not yet the new wine', he says in his study of the religion of Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, 'but already we are bringing the vessels'.² It was this search for 'vessels' to contain eternal truths which led Merezhkovsky to explore myth and history in his trilogy (*Khristos i antikhris* (Christ and Antichrist, 1896–1905), to ransack other men's minds in his many critical works and eventually to investigate the Russian Orthodox Church. The approach was roundabout. In the eyes of posterity, Merezhkovsky's importance as a literary critic has tended to eclipse his purely local reputation as a poet and has outlived his international fame as a novelist.³ Merezhkovsky himself, however, regarded his own literary criticism (with the possible exception of his work on Tolstoy and Dostoevsky and his *Gogol' i chort* (Gogol and the Devil, 1906), which were crucial to the elaboration of his thought) as less important than his poetry and creative prose, and it was with some difficulty that Pertsov had persuaded him, in 1897, to permit the collection and republication of the best of his literary essays under the title *Vechnye sputniki* (Eternal Companions). Yet this is arguably his best book and one which exercised considerable influence through what Rozanov called Merezhkovsky's genius for the creative adaptation of other men's ideas.⁴

One example of such 'creative adaptation' during the period of his closest association with *Mir Iskusstva* was his speech 'On the new significance of ancient tragedy' at the first night of *Hippolytus* at the Aleksandriinski Theatre, one of the first public pronouncements to awaken the minds of a wider Russian audience to the contemporary significance of the Greeks.⁵ Merezhkovsky had been profoundly influenced by his reading of Nietzsche's *Birth of Tragedy from the Spirit of Music* but, like his contemporaries Inokentii Annensky and Viacheslav Ivanov, he was well grounded in ancient languages and literatures and had his own ideas to contribute. *Hippolytus* was staged almost as a religious rite, a concept the translator explained in his speech. The chorus spoke in a measured chant and its movements were choreographed to complement Bakst's exotic costumes and décor. A smoking altar *avant-scène* completed the visual illustration of Merezhkovsky's concept. The production as a whole failed to cohere because of the star system, still entrenched at the Aleks-

andriinski; the principal actors, disregarding the director's careful work with the chorus, ranted through their speeches and flounced about the stage in their customary manner, striking poses and playing for applause. Nevertheless, the very idea that a new translation of a Greek tragedy could be staged in a modern theatre was a major reversal of public taste.

In a sense, the staging of *Hippolytus* was a public gesture in support of the notion – so fashionable throughout Europe at this time⁶ – that the mysteries of the ancient world were still of importance to contemporary man and should be regarded with a certain veneration. It served to confirm the impression, already made by the first two volumes of the *Christ and Antichrist* trilogy, that Merezhkovsky yearned 'to awaken the old gods'. In fact, he was changing, becoming more and more absorbed in his rediscovery of Christianity. His closest associates – Hippus, Filosofov, Pertsov and Rozanov, later also Berdiaev – understood this. To the wider reading public, however, and more particularly to the traditionally Orthodox with whom, over the years 1901–5, he was to try so hard for a rapprochement, he had difficulty in communicating this change of heart.⁷

In 1903, Briusov wrote (somewhat hyperbolically, to be sure) of Merezhkovsky as the 'generally accepted first author in Russia'.⁸ Had he added 'abroad' and 'among the advocates of artistic renewal' after 'generally accepted' he would not have been far wrong. In England, France and Germany, Merezhkovsky was spoken of in one breath with Chekhov and Gor'ky. In Russia, however, he never enjoyed anything approaching their popularity. Vasili Rozanov, indeed, compared him in the pages of *Novyi Put'* to a wealthy Englishman rumoured to have died of exposure on the streets of St Petersburg because he could not explain his comparatively simple requirements to the natives.⁹ The clear statement made in the translator's preface to the first 1901 edition in English of *The Death of the Gods* (Julian the Apostate) – to cite but one example – would seem to have been comprehensible only to the initiate in turn-of-the-century Russia: 'The historical novel, pure and simple, exists no longer. Writers of genius who seem to write historical novels are in reality only transferring to the stage of the world a drama which is being played out in their own souls. They transfer that drama in order to show us that the struggle which is now going on in us is eternal.'¹⁰

To the majority of Russian critics, it seemed rather that Merezhkovsky was committing a grave psychological anachronism by introducing Nietzschean ideas into his account of a period which could have had no knowledge of them. They did not hear, as did their 'decadent' colleagues, who had read their Maeterlinck, echoes of 'the uncertain, dolorous footsteps of the human being, as he approaches or wanders from his truth, his beauty, or his God'.¹¹ Merezhkovsky's novels were not understood

precisely because they were innovatory, but they did help to introduce to Russian literature that peculiarly intense feeling for history as a dimension only just beneath the surface of everyday reality which characterised the poetry and prose of the Symbolists and their successors in the run-up to the 1917 Revolution. In writing them, Merezhkovsky came to his own understanding of the contemporary world.

Artistically, the trilogy forms not so much a bridge as a series of stepping-stones from the realist novel of the nineteenth century, with its fully-rounded characters and sequential plot, to the shifting, kaleidoscopic techniques of modernist prose. These works are not yet, in the full sense of the word, 'Symbolist' novels, for in prose as in poetry, the symbol itself, which, for later writers like Bely was the 'goal of the creative process',¹² eludes Merezhkovsky. As a result, he never approaches the borderline between the creation of symbol and its natural predicate, myth. Yet he was among the first writers in Russia to remind his readers, in accessible fictional form, of the existence of ready-made myths, of their deeper meanings, their lasting power over the minds of men.

Properly speaking, then, the trilogy, *Christ and Antichrist*, though not a sequence of historical novels or dramas in the sense of a Walter Scott, is Symbolist in intention rather than in fact. It is a work of sustained and wide-ranging research into the cultural history of Christian Europe and the interaction between human beings and the myths they themselves have created. At the same time, Merezhkovsky did deliberately introduce a number of new devices. The links between the novels are not the rational links of cause and effect, but are pictorial, musical and poetic. Merezhkovsky works and thinks through the medium of art alone. Beauty in itself was not so much his conscious aim as his touchstone. What was not beautiful could be neither true nor good. In this, he was at one with the artists of *Mir Iskusstva*, who, though proclaiming themselves 'aesthetes', always denied hotly that they stood for 'art for art's sake'. Beauty was the gateway to Truth. Merezhkovsky's pictorial style – even hard-pressed Christians in the catacombs 'group themselves' around their teacher – could not but have appealed to men like Benois and Filosofov, who argued out their own view of religion in terms of the relative merits of the pictures of Ivanov and Viktor Vasnetsov.¹³

As important as the visual images, and still more in the operatic, balletic spirit of *Mir Iskusstva*, is Merezhkovsky's use of contrasting sound: *leitmotifs* of panpipes and church bells; the clink of chains and the merry strains of a Renaissance pastorelle; the schismatic's chant about wooden coffins and the Last Trump mingling with a baroque dance-tune; a water-borne Neapolitan love-song and the serf-girl Afros'ka's strident

rendering of a Russian jingle celebrating the wooden walls of a peasant cottage: 'Akh, vy seni moi, seni, seni novye moi . . .'

The dramatis personae of the trilogy are perceived from without, whether by the traditionally omniscient and unobtrusive author or by some other character in the book, using devices such as the diary, the letter, the gossipy discussion. Occasionally, a more personal note is introduced through a sustained flashback, as a character recalls his youth. This use of multiple viewpoints, involving a plethora of secondary, tertiary and purely episodic characters, detracts from whatever sequential tension does occasionally begin to build up around the principals, continually halting the forward movement of the narrative and substituting panoramic sweep for plot in the conventional sense. The suspense, such as it is, lies in the central enigma of the quest, taken up by one protagonist after another and played out through the ages.

To read the trilogy, therefore, is not so much to be told a story as to work with the author on a series of huge, well-crafted jigsaw puzzles. A multitude of characters, a myriad artefacts, documents, songs, glimpses of landscape, Greek statues and mosaics, Italian costumes and pictures, Russian icons and townscapes all form part of a general panorama which will, we feel, when completed, add up to something more than the sum total of its visible parts.

To an age such as our own with little concern for the Greek and Latin classics and a dwindling knowledge of the Scriptures, Merezhkovsky's preoccupation with 'life-affirming' pagan humanism and 'life-denying' Christianity may appear somewhat scholastic. At the turn of the century, however, the looming figure of Antichrist awoke an immediate and far from 'bookish' response. In Russia, the ground for work towards a reconciliation of Christianity and humanist Enlightenment had been well-ploughed by Dostoevsky and Vladimir Solov'ev, but it was the tremendous impact of Nietzsche's thought on a mind deeply enamoured of the ancient world which gave Merezhkovsky's quest for a synthesis its particular and essentially pan-European appeal.

In the very process of writing the trilogy, however, the determination to achieve a generally applicable synthesis, albeit against the grain of his art, led Merezhkovsky to forget what, as an artist, he had once instinctively known; that 'the most precious fruits of human trial and struggle [...] are *those rare moments when the two worlds attain an albeit unconscious and incomplete reconciliation, an albeit fragile equilibrium.*'¹⁴ Although often obscured by wordy attempts to formulate a more solid 'synthesis', such 'rare moments' still do – very occasionally – occur in the trilogy.

One of these is the passage in which the thousand-year time-gap

between Julian and Leonardo is bridged by a motif of mingled music which we *think of* as discord but *feel* as harmony:

Meanwhile, the trireme was slowly rounding the cape [...] in the sky, on the earth and over the sea, all was still. And in that stillness there suddenly rang out the slow sounds of church chanting: it was the venerable hermits in the bow of the ship at evensong.

At that very moment over the still surface of the sea floated other sounds: it was the shepherd boy playing an evening hymn to the God Pan on his flute. [...]

'Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven', sang the monks.

And high up to the very gates of heaven rose the pure sounds of the shepherd's pipe, mingling with the words of the Lord's prayer.¹⁵

The trireme is bearing a statue of Aphrodite from Greece to Italy. When the story opens, she is still in place in her temple, where the boy Julian swears eternal love to the 'pure Aphrodite-Urania'.¹⁶ At the beginning of *Voskresshie bogi* (The Resurrection of the Gods), the same statue is disinterred eleven centuries later. In a near-farcical scene, a cupidinous rustic leads a collector of antiquities to the place where he has already found a broken-off arm of the goddess – which his mother has been using with some success as a cure for colic in cows. As the goddess is disinterred, there is a reprise of the harmony heard as she was borne to Italy from her native Greece. 'The shepherd's pipe was playing in the fields [...] and far off over Florence the gentle voices of bells ringing for matins called to one another.'¹⁷ Almost at once, however, the recovered statue is destroyed by a superstitious mob and with it the continuity of the trilogy.

Aphrodite from now on recedes into the realm of allegory or psychology. The statue of her that is imported (in the third volume) by Peter to his new capital is just a statue – borne in his arms as the admiring crowd murmur the baroque 'kumpliment': 'Mars and Venus'. Peter has to defend her from the familiarities of his soldiers, and then to set a guard over her; we last see her rising – a surreal piece of bric-a-brac – from the Styx-like waters of the Neva in flood.

In *Voskresshie bogi*, the sublime marble goddess is replaced by Mona Cassandra, whose function is all too clearly to demonstrate the degradation of 'the flesh', perceived by the pagan mind as glorious and unashamed, but seen throughout the Middle Ages as demonic, shameless. The final degradation of the Aphrodite image occurs in the third volume, in the mind of Peter's son, Tsarevich Aleksei, who identifies the white body of the marble Venus installed in St Petersburg by his father with that of his 'goat-faced' mistress Afros'ka, a serf whose virginity he took by force, who despises and eventually betrays him.

This degradation of the ideal of the Holy Flesh is matched by Merezhkovsky's ebbing affinity with the larger-than-life central figures of the

later volumes. He had been able (to some extent) to identify with his Apostate, Julian. but both his 'Forerunner' and his 'Antichrist', Leonardo and Peter the Great, are Titans rather than human beings.

Pursuing the concept of the superman down the labyrinths of history, Merezhkovsky had lost the essential lyrical subjectivity which the new art demanded of its practitioners. Bal'mont was one of the first to feel this and to protest – in a poem called 'To my distant neighbours' ('Dalekim blizkim'): 'Mne chuzhdy vashi rassuzhdeniia / "Khristos", "Antikhris", "D'iavol", "Bog" [...] / Vy razdeliaete, slivaete, / Ne dokhodia do bytiia. / No nikogda vy ne uznaete, / Kak bezrazdel'no tselen ia' ('Alien to me are your calculations: / "Christ", "Antichrist", "Devil", "God" / [...] You divide and combine, / Never reaching essential being. / But you will never discover / How indivisibly whole I am').¹⁸

Here Bal'mont, for all his poetic bombast, defines Merezhkovsky's weakness as artist: a cold duality, the inability to create true symbols out of the fusion of the object perceived with the individual sensibility of the perceiving subject, the artist. The trilogy has many merits, but its ultimate failure is the sum of its author's failure to create spontaneously, from his own inner self, rather than to compare and compile.

To do Merezhkovsky justice, it must be said that this work of compilation was undertaken with extraordinary thoroughness, and in the third volume of the trilogy, *Antikhris Petr i Aleksei* (Antichrist. Peter and Alexis, 1905), this brought its own reward. In the process of studying documents and artefacts of the eighteenth century, of visiting the Old Believers and the sectarians on the shores of Svetloe Ozero, the Bright Lake,¹⁹ and of seeking to obtain some response to his questions from the Russian Orthodox Church of his own time, Merezhkovsky not only reopened the Petrine era to imaginative literature (much as *Mir Iskusstva*, both through the creative fantasy of its artists and through the antiquarian activities of its editors, was resurrecting it for the visual arts), but succeeded in delving below the surface of history and exposing to his contemporaries the roots of the cultural divide. He also recalled to the modern mind the parallel myths of Petersburg and Kitezh which were to play an elusive but quintessential part in the prose and poetry of the next two decades.

Antikhris has not infrequently been adjudged inferior to *Otverzhennyi* and *Voskresshie bogi*. When viewed as the concluding volume of the trilogy *Christ and Antichrist*, it is. Merezhkovsky, who had embarked on his quest with a heavy bias in favour of paganism and a romantic concept of Antichrist, introduced suspense and paradox by adherence to the old alchemical principle that every element contains something of its opposite. At the heart of the Arian basilica with its gloomy wailing and

gnashing of teeth is the image of the Good Shepherd, in the 'joyous and simple' household of the keeper of Aphrodite's temple is the child Psyche, who slips away from her father's home to attend the Christian services. In Leonardo's pictures, John the Baptist, the Forerunner, and Dionysos wear the same mysterious smile. In the story of Peter and Alexis, this balance is lost. Antichrist, perceived at close quarters incarnate on the soil of the author's own Russia, loses his ambiguous charm. Hippus recalls that, in the first draft of the novel, Merezhkovsky's dislike of Peter showed through so strongly that she had to persuade her husband to present a fairer picture.²⁰ In the course of writing, unexpectedly for the author, Antichrist was totally rejected and with him all the romantic 'masks' – Mephistopheles, Cain, Prometheus, Lucifer, the Superman – all dismissed as 'magnificent masks, the masks in which this eternal impostor, this ape of God has appeared in different centuries to different peoples'.²¹

In the third volume, then, we are left with a feeling of anticlimax, as though the author had set a puzzle and then become inexpressibly bored with his own attempts to solve it and, like the Irish in *1066 and All That*, had 'changed the question'. Having shown the relevance of Byzantium and Renaissance Italy to the modern crisis of faith, Merezhkovsky switches his attention to the convulsive traumas of the Petrine age and the birthpangs of his native city. It is the rediscovery of Russia's 'collective unconscious', not the search for a synthesis between paganism and Christianity, which is the true subject of the third volume. Nevertheless, without this first twentieth-century Petersburg novel, it is hard to imagine either the robust realism of Aleksei Tolstoy's *Petr I* (Peter the First, 1929) or the phantasmagorical vision of Bely's *Peterburg* (Petersburg 1916). This achievement seems to have come about without Merezhkovsky's willing it. The attempt to reset the old Pagan-Christian confrontation in Russia in the comparatively recent past had simply brought to the fore a multiplicity of other problems: Russia's historical destiny between East and West; the cultural rift between the people and the Intelligentsia; the dichotomy between the requirements of an embattled state and the rights of the individual; the relationship between state and church, politics and conscience, father and son, God and man. These questions had a contemporary relevance, a harsh immediacy which invades Merezhkovsky's text like the Neva in flood, even as the author (still dutifully seeking for the Christ-Antichrist synthesis he no longer believed possible) continues to shift the pieces of his jigsaw puzzle. It seems fitting that the naked, pagan gods have to be nailed up in new wooden coffins to protect them from the savagery of the Russian winter – packed away by Peter the Antichrist himself, after a brief baroque resurrection.

The same weariness is to be felt in the second part of the genuinely remarkable critical study of Tolstoy and Dostoevsky. Merezhkovsky seems to have felt he could advance no further and, though he was in fact to write many more books, working his way industriously through much of world history and myth, he had already begun to repeat himself. The same phrases and quotations reappear again and again, from one work to the next. In *L. Tolstoy and Dostoevsky* (1901–2), for instance, he quotes Hippius's poem 'Elektrichestvo' eight times. It was, perhaps, an unconscious realisation that he himself had little more to say 'in art' which led him to announce, at the end of this study, the *end* of Russian literature. The time had come, he declared, 'to act'.²² The immediate result of this resolution was the initiative to convene the 'Religious-Philosophical Meetings' (1901–3) and – to report on their debates and to serve as a tribune for the new aesthetic religious consciousness – the foundation of a new journal, *Novyi Put'* (1903–4).

II

However important Merezhkovsky may have been to them, such an unexpected conclusion to the work of one of St Petersburg's leading aesthetes was little to the taste of many of his former allies. Some of them, understandably, preferred the more life-affirming creed of a very different philosopher. Vasilii Vasilievich Rozanov was a curious person to find among the sophisticated Petersburg artists and literati who formed the nucleus of *Mir Iskusstva*. Unprepossessing in appearance, small, gingery and, as the Russians say, with a nose like a potato, he was considerably older than the rest of the group, even than Merezhkovsky who, at the time he made the acquaintance of Diaghilev's circle, was approaching his mid-thirties. A provincial and a professional journalist, Rozanov had been introduced to modernist literature by Pertsov, who had admired his analysis of Dostoevsky's parable of the Grand Inquisitor, and had invited him to contribute to his *Filosofskie techeniia v russkoi poezii* (1896). Thus, as Rozanov wrote to a friend: 'Someone (the Merezhkovskys) came and introduced me to *Mir Iskusstva* and to *Novyi Put'*, to which I became a contributor quite "by chance" as far as my own development was concerned (i.e. in the sequence of events in my inner life "I did not foresee it yesterday" nor "seek it out the evening before").'²³

This 'by chance' is in itself an indication of the way in which kindred spirits, 'decadents' as they still called themselves, were one by one bobbing up to the surface of Russian life as the apparently still cauldron came slowly, inexorably to the boil. As Georgii Chulkov, a minor poet who in 1904 became secretary to *Novyi Put'*, recalled in his memoir of the period:

In one of the last articles he wrote N.K. Mikhailovsky expressed the most sincere astonishment as to how and why decadents had appeared in our midst. There in the West, he thought, the appearance of decadence was in the order of things; it was the fruit of an old, weary culture that had outlived its own usefulness. But here at home: were we not just beginning to live? . . . yet still decadents *had* appeared and the very fact of their existence was in itself evidence that we were not newcomers to history. You could not dream up such decadents if you tried.²⁴

Certainly you could not 'dream up' Vasilii Rozanov. Reared in poverty in Kostroma, a dignified old town on the Volga and a byword for the most profound provincialism, Rozanov held a degree in philosophy from the University of Moscow and had worked for thirteen years, until 1893, as a schoolmaster in his home province, publishing occasional articles on philosophy, literature and the state of Russian education. A growing reputation for a persuasive pen and a first literary, then personal friendship with the influential Slavophile N.N. Strakhov had emboldened him to move to Petersburg, to a lowly post found for him by Strakhov as 'civil servant of the seventh grade'. From this uncongenial, Gogolian drudgery he was relieved by the offer of regular employment on the newspaper *Novoe Vremia*.

It was not, however, as a journalist that Rozanov had forged his ambiguous yet growing reputation, but as a thinker, albeit one who had early succeeded in falling foul of the two moral giants of the age: Lev Tolstoy and Vladimir Solov'ev.²⁵ On graduating from Moscow University, Rozanov produced (and, in 1886, had published privately in 600 copies) a 737-page sub-Hegelian philosophical treatise *O Ponimani* (On Understanding). To the layman, this laboured work is virtually unreadable, yet – thanks, perhaps, to the reflected interest of its author's later writing – it was to become the 'bedside book' of at least one distinguished admirer, the liberal theologian A.I. Uspensky. One sees more clearly what Uspensky's trained mind had found so interesting on reading the letter Rozanov wrote in 1918, the year before his death, to his biographer Gollerbach, a letter which sums up his whole philosophy as well as the contents of his first book:

All of my *On Understanding* is permeated by the relationship of the seed and the tree which grows from it, or, in essence, quite simply by growth, living growth. 'It is growing' – and that's all there is to it. When, as I was packing my pipe, this idea suddenly came to me: why the hell does J.S. Mill have to postulate, invent some kind of 'goal for a man to set himself' when I am 'a growing thing' and I don't need to know in what direction I am growing or what I am growing into (the tree), and it's quite unnecessary for me to set myself the task of turning myself into anything ('an artefact', 'a wooden stool').

All of a sudden – bells, chimes. 'Easter' – 'Eureka, eureka'. There is a word for it: – potential ('seed') . . .

Rozanov even wanted to write a second treatise to be called 'On Potential' but, fortunately, perhaps, in the course of having to earn a living for an ever-increasing family, stumbled on his own intimate, throw-away style and never got round to it. How he escaped discursive logic and approached 'Symbolism' is told in the continuation of the same letter:

The essence is precisely [...] in the discovery of things invisible, or rather and still better: in the covering, the 'vesting' of things invisible. Everything is 'vested' in robes and history itself is the enrobement of invisible, divine plans.²⁶

This Romantic view of the purpose of history, not unlike that implied in Merezhkovsky's trilogy, is warmed, softened and rendered more mysterious by the rejection of the dramatic, often tragic collisions of the dialectic in favour of the idea of Growth: of gradual, divinely intended metamorphosis, Transfiguration.

This view of changing shapes as the 'enrobement' of divine purpose has connotations for literature, for communication. Words cannot be assigned an exact meaning . . . they, too, have 'potential'. To write as the child plays, using whatever small things come to hand, is to start off a process of growth and change. To this essentially Symbolist feeling for literature Rozanov came gradually, by his own theory and practice through the years, and eventually fashioned from it a style uniquely suited to convey the essence of his 'philosophical' musings.

After *On Understanding*, Rozanov's next work of literary importance was the study of 'The Legend of the Grand Inquisitor'. Originally published as an article in 1891, it was a precursor of the new wave of interest in Dostoevsky which rose to a crest at the turn of the century with the publication, in *Mir Iskusstva*, of the studies by Merezhkovsky and Shestov. These critics, however, are primarily interested in the *boldness* of Dostoevsky's thought and the anticipation of Nietzsche's challenge to Christian meekness in such characters as Kirillov, Raskol'nikov and Ivan Karamazov. They dismiss Dostoevsky's Christian characters, particularly Ivan's younger brother, the novice Alesha Karamazov, as ineffectual (according to Shestov a 'bleating infant').²⁷ Rozanov, on the contrary, perceives a great *strength* in the attentive silence of the auditor of the Legend. 'But you simply do not believe in God.' 'How are you going to go on living?': to Rozanov, these few disjointed, concerned replies – Alesha's only comment on his brother's powerful parable – are the natural and profound reaction of a life-affirming believer. The Grand Inquisitor, Rozanov maintains, in taking it upon himself to champion the cause of those who, on the Day of Judgement, will not be justified, has quite simply forgotten about those who will be forgiven.

The beautiful simplicity of this conclusion suggests a serenity which

Rozanov as a writer did not possess. The contradictions which, in Merezhkovsky's books, are a matter for argument, are submerged in Rozanov's protean ability to appear wholeheartedly for an idea at any given moment and against it at the next, leaving the eventual reconciliation of his multitudinous 'truths' to the process of growth and change. It has even been suggested that Rozanov used different 'voices' to convey opposing ideas in his philosophical works, just as Dostoevsky does in his 'polyphonous' novels – a stylistic ploy arising naturally from Jung's concept of the 'unconscious' in which each relatively independent part of the soul takes on the character of a 'persona' as soon as it achieves self-expression.²⁸

It was said of Rozanov that he always wanted to know and 'to touch with his hands', you felt he 'really had time for you as a person'.²⁹ The personal quality of his obsession with Dostoevsky went beyond literature and led Rozanov into an early marriage with Apollinaria Suslova, Dostoevsky's one-time mistress and the prototype of such 'demonic' heroines as Nastas'ia Filippovna in *The Idiot* and Paulina in *The Gambler*. Predictably, the marriage was a disaster.

Rozanov, in the course of a hard childhood – he never knew his father, disliked and feared his stepfather, did not remember that his mother had ever laughed and was early left an orphan – had known little or no 'happiness'. Suslova was as tormenting a character in fact as the characters she inspired in Dostoevsky's fiction. When her husband discovered, in the family of another woman, Varvara Rudneva, a kind of mutual consideration and shared merriment, a simple human decency which he had not realised was possible, she refused him a divorce, although they were already formally separated. His ensuing, life-long, 'common-law' union with the woman he called 'my friend', the daughter of a priest, was responsible, in part at least, for Rozanov's contradictory attitude to the Russian church. On the one hand, he was actively opposed to the strict legislation which decreed that their children should grow up with the stigma of illegitimacy and which, for a long time, held them excommunicate. On the other, he was warmly, humanly grateful to the clergy, many of whom agreed with him on the need for reform and relaxation of the divorce laws and almost all of whom were personally tactful and sympathetic to his 'friend' and family. Indeed, Rozanov loved the priesthood, but what he required from it in his family life was not tolerance, or even the blessing extended privately by a friendly priest, but celebration. Something in Christianity itself, he felt, prevented this; something in Christ Himself, Whose unattainable beauty seemed to turn to bitterness the sweetest fruits of natural life.

Rozanov's love-hatred of Russian Orthodox Christianity, to which he opposed not the fading shrines of Olympus but the older, 'warmer' religions of ancient Egypt and, more particularly, of the Old Testament, was of great interest to Merezhkovsky, especially when he began to extend the line of his enquiries beyond the church in history to the church in his own day. Both writers attacked the 'ascetic ideal'. Both were accused by the church of 'pantheism', but they wore their pantheism with a difference. Whereas Merezhkovsky wished to 'hallow' science, culture, society and beauty in all its aspects, including the erotic, albeit in sublimated, Platonic form, Rozanov was out to wrest a blessing for domestic life and procreation, for his whole concept of natural religion, which he saw as growing, literally, from the seed, the sperm of man. He could not or would not understand the church's emphasis on the need to overcome the world (*God's* world) and was blind and deaf to the idea of original sin, the Fall, the need for redemption.

Unlike Merezhkovsky, Rozanov, on occasion, attacked not just the mores of the Christian church but Christianity itself, not just the church but its Founder. In one book, *Temnyi Lik* (The Dark Face, 1911), the Son is virtually accused of rebellion against the Father Who made all things well and, in another, *Apokalipsis nashego vremeni* (The Apocalypse of our Time, 1917–18), the Church is indicted for complicity in the materialist anarchy which engulfed Russia after the 1917 Revolution because of its failure through the ages to 'hallow' daily life. In 1898, however, when Rozanov was first introduced to the *Mir Iskusstva* group, this more explicitly anti-Christian aspect of his thought, possibly because of strict censorship, had yet to be formulated in print.

What Benois, Bakst and their friends saw in Rozanov was a writer who spoke out with boldness and originality on the same themes as Solov'ev, Merezhkovsky and, to some extent – or so Merezhkovsky, at least, maintained – as Nietzsche. He was also of interest to them as a man who had corresponded with and admired the enigmatic Konstantin Leontiev, an aesthete whose harsh religious maximalism and pessimistic but colourful view of the flowering and fading of civilisations had adumbrated their own disillusion with Populist utopianism, their own nostalgia for lost certainties and some of their darkest forebodings.³⁰ As Benois recalled of the 'philosophical' section of *Mir Iskusstva*:

It would be a mistake to consider [...] that this section did not correspond to the spiritual requirements of a great many of us, including myself, Bakst and Nouvel. In those years we were all of us painfully interested in the mystery of being and were seeking an answer in religion and in the company of people who had devoted

their lives to similar quests. This is how we came to engage the cooperation on our journal of people like the Merezhkovskys, Minsky, Pertsov, Shestov, Ternavtsev and, particularly, Rozanov . . .³¹

Bakst, troubled by the renunciation of his Jewish faith, found comfort in Rozanov's unorthodox 'Judaising' Christian Orthodoxy. He painted the philosopher's portrait and was probably more deeply influenced by him than any other member of the original Diagilev group, including Filosofov, who was closer to the Merezhkovskys. Only Diagilev found this lower-middle-class 'guru' little to his taste. For the others, Rozanov was interesting (almost exotic), precisely because he associated as a matter of course with devout, Orthodox Russians, eating the same food, drinking the same endless cups of tea, wearing the same dowdy clothes. It was he who introduced the Merezhkovskys to V.A. Ternavtsev, an official of the Holy Synod. Another 'conservative' friend of his was I.F. Romanov who wrote for both *Mir Iskusstva* and *Novyi Put'* under the pseudonym Rtsy and whom Rozanov considered more original and more talented than himself, albeit incurably indolent.

Where the 'Mir Iskussniki' were cosmopolitan, Rozanov was a true product of the 'province of genius'. 'You look at a Russian with your sharp little eye', he once remarked, 'and he looks back at you with a sharp little eye, and everything is understood. There is no need for words. That is just what you can't do *with foreigners*.'³² 'He was no good at general conversation', Hippus recalls, 'all he was good at was talking to people, whoever they might be, on intimate terms, and there was no getting on intimate terms with Sologub'.³³ Sologub's background was, of course, not dissimilar from Rozanov's own, but the poet preferred to disguise his provenance behind the aristocratic pseudonym first bestowed on him by the editors of *Severnyi Vestnik* and a forbidding silence. So shadowy, indeed, was Sologub's presence at the *Mir Iskusstva* gatherings that there is a story that Rozanov once almost sat on him by mistake, only to step back in alarm to find 'a great, white fish' rising suddenly from what he had taken to be an empty chair.

In spite of the incongruity of his appearance among the exquisites of *Mir Iskusstva*, Rozanov's ruminative meditations sat well in its spacious pages.³⁴ Beneath the surface, they had, after all, much in common. Brought up on Greek and Roman myths edited by 'dear old Grube', Rozanov was steeped in the culture of antiquity, collected old coins and, though not particularly interested in painting or, for that matter, contemporary literature, loved things made with hands and *old* books. A dreamer and an idealist, he began by qualifying himself as 'a psychopath' and then, 'before we had heard of Briusov and before A. Bely (the writer, not the man) had even been born', as a 'decadent'. He was, from the

beginning, a profound subjectivist. A collection of articles published in book form in 1899 is dedicated, not defiantly in the spirit of Briusov or Kokhansky 'to myself', but in deprecating Rozanov style: 'to the little temple of my own being, to the small chapel of my own self'.³⁵

Rozanov's mature prose is an extension *ne plus ultra* of the intimate style adumbrated by Dostoevsky in *Notes from Underground* and *The Diary of a Writer*: aphoristic, throw-away, take it or leave it. The opening passage of the aptly-named *Solitaria* (*Uedinennoe*, 1912) suggests the very essence of style and content:

The wind sighs at midnight, bearing leaves . . . Just as life in the swift current of time tears from our soul exclamations, sighs, half-thoughts, half-feelings, which, mere tatters of sound that they are, are meaningful in that they 'fall' straight from the soul, without reworking, without aim, without intention, without anything extraneous . . . it is simply that 'the soul is alive' . . . that it 'lived' and 'breathed' . . .³⁶

The style Rozanov finally found in his *Solitaria* and *Fallen Leaves* was one towards which he had been working throughout his co-operation with *Mir Iskusstva* and, particularly, perhaps, with *Novyi Put'*. Both journals gave their authors autonomy from editorial restraint, but for *Mir Iskusstva* Rozanov wrote proper articles, whereas in his 'own corner' in *Novyi Put'* he could simply be himself, think aloud.

The form Rozanov found, was not, as has been suggested, an attempt to imitate novelties from the West: the prophetic sayings of Zarathustra bear scant resemblance to the Russian thinker's intimate scribblings, and the polished aphorisms of Oscar Wilde are in a sense their antithesis. Rozanov's *public*, however, had read Nietzsche and Wilde and had become accustomed to catch thoughts on the wing, impatient of logical exposition. This was the age of Nietzsche and the turn of the century marked the culmination of the German philosopher's acknowledged influence on the thought and creative work of the Russian modernists. As the editors of *Mir Iskusstva* stated in their obituary for the great German iconoclast: 'Whether we are for him or against him, we are of necessity together with him, akin to him . . .'.³⁷ Rozanov shared this kinship. No more. Attempts to read Nietzsche's actual works, he maintained, came to nothing because for him they lacked that quality of 'charm' which, he insists, was necessary to hold his attention.³⁸

If Merezhkovsky labelled Rozanov 'a Russian Nietzsche', it was because of his opposition to the ideal of 'Godmanhood' which Vladimir Solov'ev had contrasted with the Nietzschean Superman, an ideal to which Merezhkovsky himself, following his own road and Dostoevsky,

was very close after his acceptance of Christianity. Rozanov, with his cult of natural growth and procreation, does not see man, as Nietzsche and Solov'ev did in their different ways, as something that must be overcome. Antichrist was not for him (as for Solov'ev) 'the most successful of Christians'. To the 'will to power', Rozanov opposes power itself, the idea not only of 'potential' but of 'potency' – irreconcilable, he maintained, with 'Him who was crucified under Pontius Pilate', but 'equally divine', the force with which – he believed – Lermontov had communed when he wrote of how 'the yellowing harvest-field is ruffled' and how 'star speaks to star'.³⁹ This vitalism, at once vegetable and cosmic, has no more room for the pride of the Superman than for the pride of the martyr.

Rozanov's quarrel with Christ was personal and intimate and continued, with brief periods of uneasy truce and briefer periods of profound, poetic reconciliation, until his death. It was not, however, Christian compassion to which he was opposed, but the message he felt to be inherent in Christ's life and teaching to 'take no care for the things of this world'.

By the 'things of this world' Rozanov meant sex. 'I myself may be untalented', he once wrote, 'but my theme is one of genius.' Certainly, it was a theme which riveted the attention of his contemporaries, from the married priesthood to the largely homosexual Mir Iskussniki, from Merzhkovsky to D.H. Lawrence, who claimed to have found Rozanov 'the first Russian, as far as I am concerned, who has ever said anything to me'.⁴⁰

Quietly, as though talking to himself, Rozanov wrote and spoke explicitly and reverently of subjects which even now, almost a century later, after Freud and the sexual revolution, are not normally discussed in public or in print, certainly not in the intimate, confiding tone adopted by this curious thinker. It may, he suggests, have been his experience as a small boy helping his mother to use a medicinal douche which first filled him with fascinated reverence for the genital organs. He was lastingly grateful to his landlady who, after his mother's death, took him into her bed in early puberty (aged twelve). He always wrote with his hand on his penis. He devoted whole articles to the religious significance of the Bar Mitzvah and circumcision, with emphasis on the lack of such rites in Christianity, and discussed at length and in intimate detail the problems of the sexually underprivileged such as widowed priests, the regular army and university students in modern Russia. Sex was at the very heart of the idea of 'potentiality' and Rozanov wanted to see it back at the heart of his country's religion. In history, he was concerned not with heroes and men of genius, but with childbearing and rearing, marriage and fertility rites, the physical continuance of mankind, the divine commandment to multi-

ply and, in religion, with the amorous relationship between the people of Israel and the Old Testament Jehovah rather than with the awesome friendship of Christ and the Apostles. The Platonic eroticism of such ideal concepts as the Eternal Feminine he left to Solov'ev and his followers. The Merezhkovskys with their cult of 'vliublennost'' (the state of being in love) and their near-sectarian inner circle, he designated 'the moonlight people'.⁴¹

The reception of Rozanov's thought by Russian society as a whole was mixed. Within the confines of physiology, custom and law, the Russian church allowed him extraordinary leeway. It seemed to the Orthodox clergy that, despite his deviations towards Judaism and pantheism, he was, in some sense in which the Merezhkovskys were *not*, a genuine Christian reformer, and they read him attentively and responsively.⁴²

As to the younger writers and artists of Rozanov's acquaintance, they, for the time being, at least, were undismayed by that inconsistency which, to his own generation, often appeared irresponsible. It was, of course, an open scandal that Rozanov wrote regularly for the anti-Semitic *Novoe Vremia* under his own name and for the liberal *Russkoe Slovo* under the pseudonym Varvarin.⁴³ On the whole, though, his friends in *Mir Iskusstva*, themselves eclectic and explicitly non-political, tended, like his friends in the church, to take him as he came: inconsistent, yet sincere.

As an artist in practice, as a thinker in principle, Rozanov made absolutely no attempt to win free of that 'indefinite multiplicity' which, according to the Fathers of the Church, *is* the state of original sin. His work provides insights, not solutions. Yet it is precisely his skill in mirroring the lap and ripple of these insights in all their mutability which made him – long before Briusov formulated the principle of the multiplicity of truth and the artist's right to inconsistency in an article-manifesto of 1903⁴⁴ – one of the supreme practitioners of Symbolist prose.

III

If Rozanov found a way forward for the art of self-expression, it was Lev Shestov who gave vigorous impetus to the development of *thought*, working his own way, through voracious reading, at first of literature and subsequently of philosophy, towards a late discovery (via Husserl) of Kierkegaard, the right to unresolved paradox and his own astringent, *de profundis* Existentialism. Shestov, a Jew (real name Ieguda Leib Shvartsman), in sharp contrast to the Judaising Christian Rozanov, was wounded to the depths of his soul by the evil of the world, the *need* for redemption. A true knight of the spirit, he devoted a lifetime to tilting

against the gigantic systems which mankind has constructed to protect itself from this radical need, his only weapons: mockery, invective, a categorical 'no' to all the imperatives of reason. Aleksei Remizov tells us that Rozanov described Shestov as 'benightedly brilliant', but adds, for his own part 'and abysmally kind-hearted'.⁴⁵

The eldest son of a successful, self-made clothier, Shestov was the first and most original of a *pléiade* of influential thinkers, men of revolutionary temperament who conceived a loathing for Marx, to emerge from the Ukrainian capital of Kiev.⁴⁶ His father, though known for an irreverent wit, which the son inherited in full measure, had Zionist connections and attended the synagogue. The only person in the Shvartsman household who kept the Sabbath, however, was an elderly poor relation whose 'simple faith' enchanted the boy – as did the beauty of the Orthodox Church services which, as a child, he secretly preferred. Nevertheless when, in 1897, he fell in love and set up house with a Russian Orthodox woman, Anna Eliseevna Berezovskaia, a medical student whom he met in Rome during a two-year sojourn abroad for his health, Shestov concealed the fact from his family for ten years, perhaps remembering how his father had broken off relations with his elder sister Dora in 1878 when she married a 'Goy' and became active in the revolutionary movement.

In other words, Shestov, though loyal and considerate to his Jewish family, was at the same time a typical enough 'Russian Intelligent', brought up in a household where the embers of faith still glowed but fitfully in kitchen and nursery, a 'revolutionary from the age of eight' until the advent of 'scientific Marxist socialism' which he strongly opposed.⁴⁷

Though raised in a well-to-do household, Shestov had one experience which could not but have opened his eyes to harsh reality. At the age of twelve he was kidnapped by anarchists and held to ransom (his father either would not or was not allowed to pay) for six months, after which he was returned home 'exhausted and very thin'. After a prolonged education at the Universities of Moscow, Berlin and Kiev, where he completed a dissertation on Russian labour legislation subsequently confiscated by the Moscow Censor, Shestov joined the army – one way in which Jews could emancipate themselves from restrictive legislation – and served for two years, 1890–1. On his demobilisation, the young man devilled for a lawyer in Moscow, then returned to Kiev, where he devoted five years to straightening out his father's business, which had failed to adapt to changing supply and demand. The work was responsible and uncongenial. It was during these rather lonely years, having finally reconciled himself to the fact that he was not going to make a career as a singer, a poet or a writer of short stories, all of which he had at one time or another attempted, and that he had no real interest either in business or

the law, that Shestov plunged into the study of literature and philosophy, which were to complement one another in his own writings and thought from then on.

Curiously, he claims Shakespeare as his first teacher of philosophy and it is true that the first article to appear in a Kiev journal over the initials 'L. Sh.' in 1895 and his first book, published at his own expense in Petersburg three years later, were both devoted to Shakespeare. *Shekspir i ego kritik Brandes* (Shakespeare and his critic Brandes, 1898) contained a ferocious polemic against the critic's bland, 'positivist' reaction to the great tragedies. Behind Brandes, Shestov was attacking Taine, his 'geometrical philosophy' and definition of art as a mere 'flowering on the surface' of the majestic natural order of cause and effect. Behind Taine again was Spinoza, whose parable of the falling stone which, were it but sentient of the mighty law of gravity that attracted it to the earth would hymn the natural order even as it fell, particularly enraged the young Shestov. He was unimpressed by the natural order. If the stone happened to fall on a man and cripple him, he asked, as was the way of things in Shakespeare's tragedies, surely the pertinent question was not: 'why did it fall?' but 'why did it fall on that particular man?'⁴⁸

When he was still at school, Russian literature from Pushkin to Nekrasov had imbued Shestov with the desire to improve society, to serve in what he then imagined to be the ever-increasing army of the good in its inexorable advance upon evil. This ambition had been in no way discouraged by an early acquaintance with German literature, particularly Goethe. It was the combination of the impact of the tragedies with a nervous breakdown which opened his mind.⁴⁹ While writing his first book, though already aware that 'the time was out of joint', Shestov was still firmly convinced that he, among others, had been born to 'set it right' – and that this, given faith in man rather than systems, the heart rather than the head, was still possible. After Shakespeare, he plunged into the study of Kant, who 'in his *Critique of Practical Reason* and by his famous postulates tried', as Shestov maintained, 'to plaster over and for centuries succeeded in plastering over the crack in our being discovered by his own *Critique of Pure Reason*. But Kant could not answer my questions. It was then I began to look in another direction, to the scriptures.'⁵⁰

At about this time Shestov, perhaps owing to his acquaintanceship with the author of the influential 1892 article on the French Symbolists, Zinaida Vengerova, began to think seriously about Symbolism and wrote an article 'The Idealism and Symbolism of *Severnii Vestnik*', showing remarkable critical acumen for one who as yet stood far removed from the literary scene in the capital.⁵¹ Praising Hippius's 'Pesnia' as 'a true pearl' he dismissed the poetry of Minsky and Merezhkovsky and, predictably,

polemicalised vigorously with the neo-Kantian Volynsky. This article still bears traces of Shestov's schoolboy devotion to the critics of the 1860s and admiration for the moral teaching of Lev Tolstoy – attitudes soon to be reversed. Together with this new interest in, if not acceptance of, the Russian 'decadents' whose 'problems' he considered to have been 'pre-empted' by his own teacher Shakespeare, Shestov discovered the French: Baudelaire, Verlaine, Maeterlinck, and Alfred de Musset. But it was Nietzsche who finally turned his world upside down. If Shakespeare had deprived him of sleep – and Shestov's temperamental first book, written during his wanderings through Germany and Austria in 1896, derived in the first place from a feeling of wrath that Brandes had lost not a wink of sleep over the great tragedies – Nietzsche stripped him of all residual belief in 'the moral law within', leaving him without bearings in the 'chaotic realm of tragedy' where 'there cannot be anything but eternal darkness and chaos ...'⁵²

This came about gradually, in part owing to the very novelty of the aphoristic form of Nietzsche's writings, which Shestov's legally and mathematically-trained mind at first found difficult. He began reading the German philosopher in the early 1890s and borrowed Zarathustra's phrase 'Ich hasse die lesenden Müssiggänger' as an epigraph to his first book. At the age of twenty-eight, he had attempted *Beyond Good and Evil*, but it was *The Genealogy of Morals*, read while working on *Shakespeare and his Critic Brandes*, that truly struck home:

Of course, Nature is cruel, indifferent. Without doubt she destroys in cold blood, implacably. But thought, after all, is not nature. There are no reasons for it to wish to kill the weak, to give them a push; why should we help Nature in her terrible work? I was beside myself ... At that time I did not know anything at all about Nietzsche: I did not know anything about his life. Later on I happened to come across – in Brockhaus, I think – a biographical note, and read it through. He was one of those with whom Nature had dealt cruelly, implacably. She found him weak and pushed him. That day I understood.⁵³

The natural outcome of such a shock to one who had hitherto opposed Nietzsche's amorality, albeit in the adulterated form adopted by Brandes, and who had admired Tolstoy, was the comparative study *Dobro v uchenii Grafa Tolstogo i Fridrikha Nitche* (The Good in the Teaching of Count Tolstoy and Friedrich Nietzsche, 1900). The comparison was by no means new, even in 1897 when Shestov embarked upon it, but his vigorous style attracted the attention of the reading public and even of Tolstoy himself – who, however, was rather amused by the still virtually unknown critic's cheeky assessment of his own work. 'I like cynics as long as they are sincere', Tolstoy is reported to have commented mischievously, and, finding the place where Shestov had written 'Tolstoy, Dostoevsky,

Nietzsche could not live without an answer to their questions, and for them any answer was better than none', he burst out laughing and said, 'You see what a bold hairdresser, he just goes ahead and writes straight out that I deceived myself, meaning that I deceived other people too. It's the obvious conclusion.' When asked why a 'hairdresser', Tolstoy replied thoughtfully, 'It just came into my head, he's modish, chic ...'⁵⁴

In his early works, Shestov did in fact lay himself open to being considered a lightweight. Writing abroad, on the move, he did not always check the quotations with which his texts are invariably peppered, and he was accused of 'Shestovising' his authors. He himself later ascribed this to the fact that he was an autodidact in philosophy and so approached his subject with exceptional freedom, catching not at phrases normally accepted as expressing the essence of this or that school of thought, but at those which struck him personally as he read and which were often unfamiliar to the reader. In later works he was careful always to quote in the original language to avoid the accusation of adapting other men's thought to illustrate his own.

Be that as it may, Shestov was at all times less interested in the pros and cons of abstract argument than in the relevance of those arguments to his own life and the disjointed time. His thought was, from the beginning, existential and anthropocentric. Berdiaev, who described Shestov as 'one of the most remarkable and best men I have met in all my life', wrote of this peculiar quality: 'Lev Shestov was a philosopher who philosophised with his whole being, for whom philosophy was not an academic speciality, but a matter of life and death.'⁵⁵

Shestov's book on Tolstoy and Nietzsche was emotionally fuelled not only by his reading but, quite literally, by life and death: the after-effects of his breakdown and the beauty of Rome and the Bay of Naples where he was convalescing during most of the year he wrote it; the radical break with family tradition; the joy of his union with Anna Eliseevna; and, by contrast, the agony of the slow and painful death from tuberculosis ('just like Ivan Il'ich') of his friend Rabotnikov, who was sharing a house with them. 'You know that I cannot conceive that the Absurd should have power over that miracle that is called man,' he wrote, 'If you fear death, life is not liveable. That is one of the hushed-up truths. And hushed-up truths, as Nietzsche once said, *fester*.'⁵⁶

The book on Tolstoy and Nietzsche was completed in Switzerland in December 1898. If Shestov was to make his mark in literature, he had now to make some effort to enter the literary world and, with the express intention of doing just this, he returned to Russia.

For a few months at the beginning of 1899 he lived in St Petersburg

with a cousin, who was privy to the secret of his family abroad, and her husband, the musician German Lovtsky, who was studying composition under Rimsky-Korsakov. Here, the manuscript of 'Tolstoy and Nietzsche' did the rounds of the 'fat journals' and was refused everywhere. So ferocious was Shestov's lancing of the festering 'hidden truths' behind what now seemed to him Tolstoy's attempt to 'cover up' his own fear of life and death by the doctrine of goodness and compassion, that Vladimir Solov'ev informed a mutual friend 'he would not take it on his conscience' to accept the study for *Vestnik Evropy* and advised the author against rushing into print: 'He is sure to regret it.' Nevertheless, Solov'ev was sufficiently impressed to help Shestov publish the book himself, 'on tick', with the reputable printer Stasiulevich. Mikhailovsky, who had refused the study for *Russkoe Bogatstvo*, mentioned it in a review as 'strange' but 'beautifully written', and this attracted the attention of other writers. Pertsov, as always interested in the overlap of literature and philosophy, wrote about it for *Mir Iskusstva* and this, in its turn, brought the book to the notice not of Filosofov, as might have been expected, but of Diagilev.⁵⁷ Diagilev wrote to Shestov, who by this time had gone abroad again to embark on his next work, inviting him to contribute to his journal. Shestov dispatched the manuscript of *Dostoevskii i Nitche: filofosfia tragedii* (Dostoevsky and Nietzsche: the Philosophy of Tragedy, 1903) which he had just completed, and Diagilev, delighted, sent him an advance payment. He had to explain, however, that Shestov's 'Dostoevsky' must wait on the termination of Merezhkovsky's serial work on the same subject, and asked Shestov to review the first part of the latter as printed in *Mir Iskusstva*. Shestov wrote a favourable review. When he was next in St Petersburg, in 1902, he was taken under Merezhkovsky's wing, and even introduced to his friends as 'our best writer on Nietzsche', but later, in 1903, he forfeited the elder critic's good opinion by a sharply negative reaction to the more doctrinaire and schematic 'Religion of Lev Tolstoy and Dostoevsky'.⁵⁸ According to Shestov, Merezhkovsky's decision to write about his authors' religion was inspired by the conclusion of his own *Tolstoy and Nietzsche*: 'Goodness – brotherly love – we know now from the experience of Nietzsche, is not God. Woe to those who love but have nothing higher to offer than compassion. Nietzsche has opened up the way. What is needed is to look for something that is above compassion, above good. It is necessary to look for God.'⁵⁹

In making this claim, that it was he who directed Merezhkovsky's thought towards religion, Shestov, who was not normally given to boasting, displays his ignorance of the Petersburg literary scene in 1901. Possibly it was Shestov's concisely formulated 'Nuzhno iskat' Boga', that gave the whole movement the *name* of 'Bogoiskateli' (God-seekers), by

which they were later distinguished from the 'Bogostroiteli' (God-builders), Bogdanov, Lunacharsky, and Gor'ky; but it was not Shestov who began the 'search'. On the contrary, he appeared in St Petersburg at the moment when interest in 'the new religious consciousness' was at its height. Hence, possibly, Tolstoy's gibe that he was 'modish' . . . This, too, was unjust. Shestov was following his own road which happened, for a few years at least, from about 1900 to 1905, to coincide with the way others were going. At the time he first met Merezhkovsky, however, he was so innocent of the undercurrents around *Mir Iskusstva* that he was genuinely apprehensive that Diaghilev, in 1903, might refuse to print his second, adverse review of Merezhkovsky's work.

Shestov's own study of Dostoevsky and Nietzsche appeared in the journal from No.2 to No.9/10 of 1902. In book form in the following year, *The Philosophy of Tragedy* sold well and was widely and, on the whole, sympathetically reviewed. It went through more editions than any other work by Shestov and has been translated into eight languages. The young philosopher's style contrasted favourably with Merezhkovsky's polished rhetoric, Minsky's prosaic reasoning and, for some tastes, the amorphous waywardness of Rozanov. Naturally, not everybody approved of Shestov's abrasive treatment of the two great idols of the age but, on the whole, his reputation was enhanced rather than harmed by the boldness of his ideas, his assertion, for instance, that Dostoevsky was the first writer 'to envy the moral strength of the criminal', a writer who 'struggling to overcome evil had produced such arguments in its defence as it had never dared to dream of'. What ensured the success of the book was Shestov's elevation of the 'man from underground' to tragic heights. It was not nihilism that was behind Shestov's apparent advocacy of moral anarchy, but genuine wrath against every exclusive fortress of the spirit. It was only in the chaotic realm of tragedy, he maintained, that the man from underground is, perhaps, 'of equal worth with all the rest of the world'. When Shestov, the lawyer, weighed the evidence, he used not the scales of Justice but the balances of Job – on which individual anguish is preponderant against all other considerations.⁶⁰

Shestov's contacts with the *Mir Iskusstva* philosophers did not so much influence him as give him confidence, a yardstick against which to measure his own talent, which he was sufficiently modest to feel was somewhat overshadowed by his customary spiritual companions: Shakespeare, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Kant – and the Bible.⁶¹ *Mir Iskusstva* also, of course, provided him with an outlet for his writing and this in its turn opened the doors of *Novyi Put'*, and of the ensuing journals and almanacs associated with Russian Symbolism such as *Voprosy Zhizni* (1905), the 'mystic-anarchist' *Fakely* (1906–8) and P. Struve's *Russkaia Mysl'*

(1910–18). Although convinced of the need for Symbolism, even in philosophy,⁶² Shestov never became absorbed in the life of any particular circle and remained coolly aware that the problems which, in 1903–4, were of such vital interest to him touched only a tiny minority of his fellow citizens.

He remained an ‘outsider’ not only because of his originality and independence, but also owing to the circumstances of his life, divided between Kiev, where he again took up work in his father’s business from 1903 to 1908 in order to support his still ‘secret’ family in Switzerland, and the prolonged ‘sabbaticals’ abroad which he organised with some difficulty in order to spend time with his wife and daughters (the younger, his future biographer Natalia, was born in November 1901) and to concentrate on his writing. In Switzerland, Shestov spent long hours, alone and with his friend Lovtsky, walking the glaciers and exploring the mountains. Here, on one memorable and frightening occasion, the friends temporarily lost their way, having taken a path between cliff-face and sheer drop marked ‘Nur für die Schwindelfreien’ (‘Only for those with a head for heights’) – a warning which Shestov took as an epigraph for a section of his next book, *Apofeoz bespochvennosti* (The Apotheosis of Groundlessness).⁶³

In his book on Shakespeare and Brandes, Shestov had made a scathing attack on positivism and the ‘categorical imperative’. His next two books were devoted to demolishing philosophical idealism. Now, with no more windmills to tilt at, he was left face to face with despair and with a strong feeling that his success had been the easy triumph of a false prophet.

Taking off, this time, from his reading of Chekhov and Turgenev, Shestov relentlessly pursued the vertiginous path on which he had embarked in his earlier books. The more he read, however, not just of the Russian classics but of the philosophers whom he was all the time discovering for himself and against whose thought he measured literature, the more strongly he felt the absurdity of dismissing the very foundations of philosophy, i.e. reason, in a philosophical treatise. From Chekhov, he said, he had learnt that ‘the most contradictory spiritual states do exist. So it appears we ought to ask what the devil is the use of consistency and whether contradictions are not a condition of truthfulness.’⁶⁴

In 1904, Shestov scrapped all he had written the previous year, threw out Turgenev, postponed Chekhov, and put together an entirely new book in the form of 168 aphorisms, an introduction and, oddly, in the form of an appendix, two previously published articles which he evidently felt were necessary clues to the development of his thought: ‘Vlast’ idei’ (The power of ideas) and ‘Iulii Tzesar’ Shekspira’ (Shakespeare’s Julius Caesar).⁶⁵ In the latter article, he had, to the confusion of his friends,

turned his destructive mind on the humanist moralism of his own first work and blown it sky-high, even as, in the aphorisms, he exploded every other comforting dogma or noble synthesis which had happened to come his way over the last five years.

Like Rozanov, like the majority of Silver-Age writers, Shestov was doubtful of the possibility of communication, acutely aware that new ideas required new form. In the same year in which Briusov announced that 'the word was first invented not for communication between people but for the clarification of one's own thought to oneself', Shestov wrote: 'There is no greater mistake, widespread among the Russian public, than that the writer exists for the reader. On the contrary – the reader exists for the writer.'⁶⁶

On this occasion, the reader repaid him in kind. *Apofeoz bespochvennosti* caused a great deal of talk, but it was not immediately understood. Those who thought of Shestov primarily as a literary critic felt that the absence of conclusions in this new book showed him ill-equipped to deal with philosophy. The flippant took his quips and sallies against the great writers and the great moral systems at face value, as a cynical challenge to all accepted values, the signal for a jolly, nihilistic, free-for-all. The serious, on the contrary, regretted that the author whose 'philosophy of tragedy' they had so admired appeared now to have become reconciled to anarchy, satisfied with scepticism. We didn't expect it of him, his friends said, he must be tired. It's not like Lev Shestov to play games, but this is a game – no more. Even the reactions of his personal friends seemed to Shestov to pass over the all important fact that he had sought to express his thought as much through the fragmented form as through the astringent content of this new book. Berdiaev, full of admiration for *The Philosophy of Tragedy*, accorded the new work no more than a cursory mention in the long article he devoted to its author in *Voprosy Zhizni*. Remizov reacted with quirky, lyrical enthusiasm in a short article which several people, including its subject, thought to be more about Remizov than about the actual book. Thirty years later, however, Shestov still gratefully remembered this as the only positive review.⁶⁷

Curiously it was Minsky, for whom Shestov had scant respect, who perhaps came nearest at the time to perceiving the significance, the *timeliness* of the new book – not, it is true, in print but in an impromptu monologue at a literary reception. The monologue was recorded by his host:

'In our philosophical literature Shestov has taken upon himself an original *emploi*: that of a philosopher who rejects philosophy', said our poet visitor, waving Shestov's yellow book: 'In these days when painters are rejecting drawing and perspective, composers – melody and harmony, poets – rhythm and rhyme, why should there not be a philosopher who rejects reason?'

This outburst led to a lively discussion of the book, many older guests professing complete bewilderment. The young Boris Pasternak, however, listened wide-eyed and confided to the memoirist: 'You wouldn't understand! But I'm shaking all over'.⁶⁸

Shestov's apotheosis of groundlessness, his venture into the absurd, was to find readers and, indeed, followers amongst creative writers such as Pasternak and Remizov, who were then on the threshold of their careers. Only after the horrors which overspread Russia and Europe in the mid-twentieth century did he become comprehensible to a wider public. Of all the turn-of-the-century Russian thinkers, he has perhaps had most influence, though not fame, abroad: Malraux and Camus both acknowledged his importance to them, albeit in passing; Ionesco spoke of him as that 'great forgotten thinker' and Hugh MacDiarmid incorporated whole paragraphs from Shestov into his philosophical lyrics, calling him: 'my great master', 'my favourite philosopher'. Thus, although the immediate fruit of the *Apotheosis* was a crop of false disciples, fellow travellers of decadence who had simply heard 'that someone, for some reason, had rebelled against logic, against morality, and imagined that he had launched this rebellion in support of their cause', Shestov was to meet with a generous creative response from these later admirers. Thinking of his constant battle to free the 'deeper flood' of 'instincts, intuitions, religion, art' from the dominance of reason by means of reason, MacDiarmid wrote:

But who reason well know all too well
That the unseen tide now and again
Lifts into consciousness far greater truths
Than reason can itself attain.⁶⁹

Shestov, who had tried but failed to write poetry, would surely have appreciated this.

He was not, however, an obvious model for the literary world of his own day. After 1905 he wrote more of philosophy and religion than of literature. The titles of the works are expressive in themselves: *Kontsy i nachala* (Beginnings and Endings, 1908); *Velikie kanuni* (Great Vigils, 1910); *Sola fide* (written 1913, first published posthumously in 1966); *Potestas clavium* (1923); *Na vesakh Iova* (In Job's Balances, 1929); *Afny i Ierusalim* (Athens and Jerusalem, in his own estimation his most important work, originally published in French in 1935, posthumously published in Russian in 1951), and various articles on Kierkegaard, Existentialism, Parmenides and Plotinus, and about his friends Husserl and Martin Buber.

Shestov differed from the Symbolists proper in that he was not a

myth-maker. Remizov, who loved him and who also liked to 'decompose', to 'get to the bottom of things', found his 'by faith alone' hard to take. 'Shestov's misfortune', he wrote, 'was that his eyes and heart were closed to all that world of stories and tales and his words left one with a feeling of sorrow, as did his eyes.'⁷⁰

Zinaida Hippus, who, if we are to believe her biographer Zlobin, most emphatically did *not* have a head for heights and relied all her life on the protection of Merezhkovsky's constructive synthesising thought, seems actually to have feared Shestov's caustic talent:

... since he is a skilled destroyer, talented and with a great will to destroy, my 'I won't' to him is very strong. He can walk the brink, say things you can't help agreeing with [...].⁷¹

This was the fear of a kindred, but weaker, spirit. Not only was Shestov, by chance, as it seems, one of the first to appreciate Hippus's debut as a Symbolist poet, her 'Mne nuzhno to, chego net na svete' ('What I need is something not found on earth'), but he used as the lodestar of his thought the same expression from Plotinus ('the most important thing', 'that which matters most', in Russian '*glavnoe*', in Greek τὸ κυριώτατον) by which she had long designated the innermost sanctum of her own spirit.⁷²

Yet Hippus, with her abstract theories, spun out by Merezhkovsky into 'the religion of the Trinity', her voluntarism and the social activity into which she launched with the founding of the Religious-Philosophical Meetings, overstrained her voice in literature just as Shestov had once overstrained his singing voice. The result was that she was beginning to close doors where the greater artists of her day left them open. Not only in Shestov, but in Hippus also, as in all their generation, there was much nihilism, a 'fatal emptiness' of which Blok wrote in 1918: 'This is either something very great, and in that case we should not reproach one another with it; it is not for us to judge; or it is something very small, our own, private, 'decadent' – in which case there is no point in discussing it in the face of the events which are already overtaking us.'⁷³

The questions Shestov asks out of his 'emptiness' are prescient, destructive only of false comfort, not nihilist in intent. They are questions about how to escape the various 'prisons' of rationality, common consciousness, cause and effect, Plato's cave, Dostoevsky's 'underground'. Beyond the 'Why hast Thou forsaken me?' he seeks always 'to strive again towards God, Whom we have forgotten'. Essentially this was what the 'New Religious Consciousness' of the Russian Silver Age was all about: the attempt to re-establish contact, to demand an answer: 'I, too, have been unable to overcome this difficulty', Shestov told his friend and chronicler

Benjamin Fondane not long before his death. 'All I have done is to struggle.'⁷⁴

IV

It is scarcely surprising that *Mir Iskusstva* – given the vigour of its commitment to the arts and the boldness of its search for truth – very soon began to explode like a seed-bag, scattering ideas and projects that were to take root and burgeon luxuriously far beyond the bounds of its native city and its native land: even beyond the world of art itself.

For some time before the idea of involving the Church and a wider circle of the public in their religious quest first came to the Merezhkovskys, they had been fretting at the abstract and claustrophobic nature of their discussions with aesthete friends who, like Nouvel, genuinely, but at the same time rather cautiously and non-committally, hoped that 'some day they would come to believe in something'. Increasingly, Merezhkovsky had come to feel that Christianity was the beginning and end of their quest. At the same time, he was aware that he and his circle knew very little about the Orthodox faith of their own people and what they did know was seldom compatible with their commitment to culture. Yet it was this culture which had now brought them, hesitating, to the threshold of the Church.

Merezhkovsky had reached a spiritual impasse. He needed help. 'I do not say go there; I say: if you are going my way, then let's go together,' he wrote. 'I know that where I am going you cannot arrive alone. To emerge from "the underground", to overcome isolation, that is the task before us ...' His concept of Christianity as essentially dynamic and in the process of revelation, perceived more through the works of the great writers and their interpreters than through the church, seemed to his contemporaries to open up boundless possibilities, as did his dictum that 'Christ is not only a truth made manifest in perfection but a truth that is eternally in the process of manifesting itself, of growing.'⁷⁵

This dynamic concept was particularly attractive to the *Mir Iskusstva* circle, who came from the most various religious backgrounds and had all, like the majority of educated men of their time and class, grown away from residual traditional observance, whether Roman Catholic as in the case of Benois, Judaic – for Bakst – or Russian Orthodox for Filosofov and Merezhkovsky himself. It was Hippus who took it upon herself to analyse, in the pages of *Mir Iskusstva*, the attitude of her generation to their received faith:

The church? We are christened, written down in a book; we do not remember our christening, it might never have taken place. Then there is religious instruction

[*Zakon Bozhii*] at school; that is, instruction received together with other subjects of general education which not only has no connection with those other subjects, but does not even have any apparent relevance to that domestic, childhood God with whom some of us, the lucky ones, grew up in the family before going to school.

Where, she asks, having traced the irrelevance of 'ascetic religion' to career and marriage, has the children's God gone? Left behind, it appears, in the nursery – irrelevant to grown-up life, culture, art: 'But we have grown up.'⁷⁶

It was Hippius, also, who, on holiday in the country in the summer of 1901, suggested a direct approach to the church, not as individuals but as a group and in such a way as to attract the participation of a wide swathe of society. Merezhkovsky, struggling to write about the Orthodox Church in history, required, she thought, 'first-hand information'. At the same time, they both needed some 'real undertaking', 'so that it would all be public and bring *different* people together who would otherwise never have met, and . . .' Dmitrii Sergeevich jumped up, brought his fist crashing down on the table – they were having lunch when the idea was first mooted – and shouted: 'Quite right!'

They cut short their holiday and hastened back to town to see what could be done to form an official society for free discussion of questions about the church and about culture – a quixotic notion in a country where there was freedom neither of speech nor of assembly and where public meetings were normally monitored by a policeman in whose discretion it lay to interrupt any speaker and to close down the proceedings.

Once underway, the resulting meetings, which were spared the policeman, became known as the only refuge of free speech in all the Russias;⁷⁷ the very fact that they could be held at all was, politically and socially, an event. Merezhkovsky's reputation amongst the wider public, soared. With those who had admired him and Hippius as esoteric but dedicated artists, it began to dwindle; yet the sheer novelty of what they were attempting had a fascination of its own, apart from and beyond the personalities involved. It was an attempt to put into practice the cherished notion that art and artists could be a real force for change and, at the same time, an attempt to bridge the rift between Russia's 'two cultures'.

Rozanov and his friend from the Holy Synod, Ternavtsev, provided invaluable assistance in getting the project off the ground. Ternavtsev arranged a private audience with Konstantin Pobedonostsev for Merezhkovsky – *persona grata* with the authorities for the time being because he appeared at least to have understood the Church's excommunication of Tolstoy that February and was undergoing a brief period of enthusiasm for the concept of autocracy – and for the well-connected Filosofov.

Pobedonostsev – at that time Procurator of the Holy Synod – declared himself not against the idea and dispatched the two men to obtain the blessing of the Church itself in the person of Metropolitan Antonii (Vadkovsky) of St Petersburg. Benoï, who joined this second delegation, recalled that even the Orthodox members were uncertain how to conduct themselves, whether or not to kiss the Archbishop's hand or ask his blessing. His account of this awkward interview, which also had a favourable outcome, chimes with Hippus's vivid description of the opening of the debate – in the Hall of the St Petersburg Geographical Society on 29 November 1901 – as a meeting of 'two different worlds [. . .] I am not even speaking about fundamental differences, but simply about habits, customs, about language itself [. . .] almost another culture'.⁷⁸

It was, indeed, these apparently superficial differences, particularly 'of language', which slowed down the often passionate debate between the Intelligentsia and the clergy, the 'teaching Church', and which led many of the artists to drop out because they found the priests 'boring'.⁷⁹ The minutes of the meetings, published in book form in 1906 (during the period of freedom of the press) and in a more restricted version in *Novyi Put'*, the journal founded by the Merezhkovskys in 1903 for precisely that purpose, are far from boring. They ranged from purely literary-ecclesiastical questions such as Tolstoy's excommunication and Gogol's burning of the last part of *Dead Souls* under the influence of his spiritual advisor, to such broader social issues as the persecution of religious minorities, the censorship, the church's attitude to marriage, the meaning of the words 'Thy Kingdom come, on Earth as it is in heaven' and their implication for the other-worldly stance of the Orthodox Church, and the perceived subservience of the church to the state. They even touched on the possibility of new dogma . . . There were passionate, occasionally abusive arguments and tearful reconciliations, some superb, well-thought-out set speeches, curious short-lived alliances between opposing sides and sharp clashes between allies which bear witness to the genuine spontaneity of the debate. There were also, of course, as is probably inevitable in large gatherings not always attended by the same people, wearisome repetitions and tiresome, endemic misunderstandings of terminology on both sides.

The Meetings eventually changed the attitudes of significant minorities in the church *and* amongst the Intelligentsia, but the depth and breadth of their long-term results had not yet become apparent when, on 5 April 1903, they were closed down by the state. 'Pobedonostev just lost patience', was Hippus's conjecture. Certainly some of the debates, particularly those involving civic issues, were very hard-hitting.

To begin with, though, these meetings were 'expressive of some kind of community of desires when we were still naïve enough to think that, from one moment to the next, something real would happen'. The opening session was attended not only by the 'philosophers' but also by Marxists, Populists and Liberals from far beyond the rarefied sphere of the world of art, 'behaving with reserve, but with curiosity'. The 'aesthetes, the whole of *Mir Iskusstva* including Diagilev' turned out in force to hear how the Orthodox hierarchy, under the firm but tactful chairmanship of Bishop Sergii of Iamburg, the Rector of the St Petersburg Theological Academy, would respond to the secular free-thinkers. There was much hope, much good will on both sides, and many participants, recalling the Meetings in later life, saw them as a unique occasion. In the short term, however, they were but exchanges of words: 'It was then', Aleksandr Blok recalled in 1920, 'that Merezhkovsky came to his definitive slogan: "it is time to stop talking and to act"'. And began to talk . . .'⁸⁰

For some, he talked too much. 'Dmitrii Sergeevich says that there is a schism in *Mir Iskusstva*, for the literary department is already clearly religious, whereas the artistic is still purely aesthetic', Briusov noted (somewhat misleadingly) in his diary account of a visit which Merezhkovsky and his wife paid to Moscow in December 1901, shortly after the first Religious-Philosophical Meeting. They had come in part to enlist Briusov's energy and enterprise for their project for a journal, and his account of their visit gives a nicely ironic view of the affectations (and fascinations) of Zinaida Nikolaevna and of her husband's vigorous proselytizing. Already, Briusov noted, they were 'against decadence, for religion', and Merezhkovsky was citing as a terrible warning the fates of Dobroliubov (declared mad), Konevskoi (drowned), and the young philosopher Erlich (genuinely insane). 'Taking leave of me', Briusov's account ends, 'Merezhkovsky patted me on the back and said: "he's still stuck-in-the-mud, you see, but he'll come over to us"'. The following February, on a visit to St Petersburg, the Moscow poet was left cold when shown a full-length portrait of Hippus in her new role of refined priestess, holding bread and wine. Merezhkovsky asked him straight out whether or not he believed in Christ and Briusov noted: 'Given the question was put as directly as that, I answered – no. He was in despair . . .'

Whether or not he 'believed', Briusov was nevertheless impressed by the sincerity and ardour of Merezhkovsky's effort to come to grips with the church. The rift with *Mir Iskusstva* was not immediately apparent. Briusov attended one Meeting of the Religious-Philosophical Society at which both Benois and Nouvel were present. Afterwards, he went on to talk till four in the morning with 'Zinochka' and Pertsov (Merezhkovsky,

as was his wont, went early to bed). With some surprise, Briusov decided that 'Zinochka', in spite of her ironic view of herself as an 'ex-decadent neo-Christian' making social calls on the Almighty in a white gown ('my skin can't *bear* any other colour'), was also sincere in her fashion. Nevertheless, when the couple returned his visit in Moscow later that month, Briusov's resistance had hardened. He sped Hippius on her way with the words: 'You've converted me to nothing, but you've put me off certain things for ever.' This time, however, the Merezhkovskys did acquire a temporary convert in Andrei Bely. This did not lessen their need for Briusov's industry and acumen and, together with Pertsov, who was to edit and help finance the journal which they had now decided to call *Novyi Put'* (The New Way) they instigated a concentrated campaign to persuade him to move to St Petersburg and act as secretary to the editors.

Briusov was clearly intrigued. The Merezhkovskys still held the keys to *Mir Iskusstva* and literary and artistic Petersburg. Their cause, even if he did not believe in it, fascinated him. He was not, however, so enthusiastic about the role envisaged for him personally – as an organiser and contributor in prose rather than in poetry. Nor was he convinced by the neo-Populist ethic of the journal which required contributors not only to give their works *gratis* but to curb their own aestheticism and to modify the way they expressed their opinions in order the better to 'merge with society'. On his next visit to St Petersburg, in November 1902, Briusov noted that he 'breathed more freely' in the atmosphere of *Mir Iskusstva* than at the Merezhkovskys'. The editorial 'Tuesday' he attended on this occasion discussed whether or not to close down the 'literary section'. Briusov, who had but recently had an article on contemporary poetry accepted by them, advised strongly against this and had the satisfaction of being begged to go on contributing. 'Diagilev I liked less than Filosofov, he is so very much "Serezhen'ka"'. Whereas Filosofov is an astonishingly "sensitive person"',⁸¹ he noted.

'Sensitive' or not, Filosofov was already clearly involved in the Merezhkovskys' inner councils concerning *Novyi Put'*: before the *Mir Iskusstva* meeting, Briusov had spent till five in the morning arguing with him, Hippius and Pertsov as to who should or should not be invited to contribute. He felt they were opening the journal to too many well-meaning writers of no aesthetic distinction – among others, Vladimir Solov'ev's sister Poliksena, a friend of Hippius's who wrote under the pseudonym Allegro – and his aesthetic sensibilities received a further shock when Pertsov turned down as unsuitable a delightful project for a cover-design by Bakst. Merezhkovsky, however, actually begged Briusov 'on his knees' to participate in the journal, and it is clear from the diaries of the Moscow poet that he was deeply impressed by the older man's

idiosyncratic love of Christ, who seemed to him now at once Superman and Good Shepherd. 'Quite sincerely I told Merezhkovsky that this was his apotheosis. Everything that he says is fine,' Briusov noted on this visit, and records a strange conversation in which he, the unbeliever, defended the reality of Christ's miracles, whereas Merezhkovsky maintained: 'Some works of art are like breakthroughs into another world. The *Mona Lisa* is one. Christ was such a breakthrough. And it *seemed* to everyone that everything around Him was miraculous, that the dead rose, the blind saw, that He Himself walked on the waters ...'⁸²

Briusov was back in St Petersburg at the beginning of 1903, for the launch of *Novyi Put'*. He was impressed that the new journal had already assembled 1,700 subscribers with twenty to thirty more coming in every day (more than *Mir Iskusstva*, though undoubtedly many more people read than subscribed to this beautiful but expensive journal). However, Briusov was by now extremely busy with his own literary affairs in Moscow and, in October 1903, permission came through for *Vesy* (The Balance, 1904–9), a literary journal which Briusov was to plan and edit for the publishing house Skorpion '– and that finally divorced us from *Novyi Put'*'.⁸³

Novyi Put', the first number of which came out in a modest lilac cover at the beginning of 1903, was thus altogether a product of the extraordinary atmosphere engendered by the Religious-Philosophical Meetings, an atmosphere which rose like a heady mist above the interaction of contrasting cultural forces – the cosmopolitan, light-as-air individualists of the Intelligentsia and the heavily shackled yet authoritative corporate Body of Christ in Russia.

Novyi Put', however many lapses of tact and mistakes it may have contained, was nevertheless born of inspiration and enters the ranks of traditional journalism like one inspired. You can deny it what you will, even common sense, but there is one thing that no one could deny [...] We love what we say, and we believe in what we say ...⁸⁴

So wrote Vasilii Rozanov in an answer to the expected storm of indignation – from liberals and conservatives alike – which greeted the first number.

Novyi Put' lasted two years and, in spite of the squabbling between it and *Mir Iskusstva*, the two journals never forgot their common origin. There were attempts to effect a merger, then to 'win back' Filosofov who eventually took over the editorship of *Novyi Put'* from Pertsov. He, however, was deeply involved in the Merezhkovskys' private group for prayer and, early in 1904, he moved into their flat to become the third

member of the family, a relationship that was to last for the next sixteen years. There was also a certain amount of literary in-fighting, with Diagilev inserting the unsuspecting Shestov's critique of Merezhkovsky in Filosofov's literary section of *Mir Iskusstva* and even attempting to enlist Chekhov as a counterweight to the 'mystics'. It was too late, however, to change the face of the older journal. Chekhov refused to 'come in under the same roof as Merezhkovsky', writing to Diagilev: '... of the educated part of our society it must be said that it has departed from religion and is going further and further away from it, whatever they may say and whatever philosophical-religious societies may foregather.'⁸⁵

Diagilev had neither the knowledge of the literary scene nor the will to pursue this line of action further. He did, however, succeed in delaying the final rapprochement between Filosofov and the Merezhkovskys for almost a year, telling Chekhov in a letter of 26 July 1903 that it had been decided that *Mir Iskusstva* in its present form would cease publication and that either he and Filosofov would go abroad together or they would found a new journal, quite different from *Novyi Put'*, with the help of Chekhov and the 'Moscow writers':

As far as your disagreement of principle with Merezhkovsky and *Novyi Put'* goes, I can assure you that I myself am too great an adept of aestheticism to accept the views of the apologists of the new mystic movement. I have to tell you that I always regarded Merezhkovsky, Rozanov and the others from a purely aesthetic point of view, but in this respect I consider them valuable and talented people.⁸⁶

To how much of Diagilev's manoeuvring Filosofov was privy is not clear but, throughout 1903, the intensely personal tone of the persistent bickering between the cousins became an embarrassment to the old Pickwickians. The joy was gone out of the undertaking and the literary section was all but moribund.

It was a relief when Benois, later that year, broke with his journal *Khudozhestvennye Sokrovishcha Rossii*, and so became free to relieve Diagilev of half the burden of editorial work on *Mir Iskusstva*. It was decided that, throughout 1904, they would edit alternate numbers, Diagilev's devoted to contemporary art and Benois's to retrospectives, for which he was well prepared by the portfolio on the reign of Peter the Great and the treasures of the Royal Palaces round St Petersburg which he had accumulated for *Khudozhestvennye Sokrovishcha* but not had time to publish there. Inevitably, there was a certain loss of cohesion, but the arrangement worked well enough until the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War, after which the Royal subsidy was discontinued. The friends made a half-hearted attempt to renew the old alliance with Princess Tenisheva, but were almost relieved to call it a day. This was no

defeat. *Mir Iskusstva* had accomplished what it had set out to do. It had begun to change the taste of society – irreversibly, for many years: ‘It is no longer we, “the decadents” speaking from our own “camp”, it is something resembling the *vox populi*.’⁸⁷

Novyi Put' folded in the same year, partly for financial reasons and partly because it, too, had been overtaken by events. The closing down of the Religious-Philosophical Meetings in April 1903 had led to a momentary set-back at the very beginning of the life of the journal, when it had been forbidden to fulfil its primary function, the publication of their verbatim reports. This was a severe blow, but they rode out the crisis and permission to resume printing accounts of the Meetings was granted at the beginning of 1904. Merezhkovsky presented *Novyi Put'* with his *Antikhrisť*; the religious-philosophical chronicle, conducted by the young theologians V.V. Uspensky and A.V. Kartashev under the pseudonyms Bartenev and Romansky, continued to plead the cause of the ‘new religious consciousness’ and to illumine, in the light of modern aestheticism, the musty but rich and fascinating tapestry of ecclesiastical thought, responding to criticism and comment in the theological journals. Rozanov, ‘in his own corner’ (‘V svoem uglu’) published his correspondence with the clergy and others and ruminated on his own themes in his own inimitable way. A wider circle of contributors, including the new arrivals and representatives of the so-called ‘second generation’ of Symbolists, graced its pages with fresh creative vitality.

It was in *Novyi Put'* that Aleksandr Blok made his literary debut in March 1903 with a cycle of poems to the ‘Most beautiful lady’. Throughout 1904, Viacheslav Ivanov contributed poetry and a series of articles on ‘The religion of the suffering God’, a reversal of Nietzsche’s idea that Dionysos was a mask for Antichrist: Ivanov, on the contrary, saw him as a Forerunner of Christ. Merezhkovsky mediated tirelessly between his poets, the Lay and Ecclesiastical Censors (to both of which the journal was subject), and the practising Orthodox (priests and laity) who constituted the bulk of his subscribers, coming in for much criticism, deserved and undeserved, from every side. Between them, he and Hippus succeeded in piloting their extraordinary journal through the initial doldrums, in instituting and maintaining a lively dialogue with the church and even in publishing a good deal of exciting literature and literary criticism.

In spite of the comparatively large number of subscribers and the fact that only the most indigent contributors received any honorarium for their work, *Novyi Put'* never achieved financial security. The Merezhkovskys had not the business flair of a Diagilev or a Briusov, and their attempt to boost the initial assistance they had had from Suvorin and to

obtain a subsidy from a Moscow merchant, F.V. Khludov, led nowhere. They were temperamentally unfitted for the day-to-day business of running a journal and, when the Russo-Japanese War broke out and the first rumblings of revolution were heard, it was not hard for Filosofov to persuade them that new editors with a firmer grasp of current affairs were called for.

Novyi Put' entered into negotiations with the Marxists-turned-Idealists Sergei Bulgakov and Nikolai Berdiaev. Briusov, when Pertsov had first asked his opinion on the advisability of an alliance between the authors of *Problemy idealizma* (Problems of Idealism, 1902) and *Novyi Put'* (before the appearance of the first number), had advised against any such move. *Novyi Put'*, he told Pertsov, was religious, mystic and had affiliations with the established church, whereas Berdiaev and Bulgakov were revolutionaries and dogmatic idealists. He made the interesting suggestion that Shestov, the most coherent enemy of philosophical idealism in the modernist camp, should be asked to 'vet' the newcomers from the point of view of their philosophical beliefs.⁸⁸ Since Shestov had by then fallen out with Merezhkovsky and was a firm personal friend, albeit a vigorous ideological opponent, of Berdiaev, nothing came of this. The merger did not go ahead, however, until the autumn of 1904, when the need for political expertise became paramount.

Merezhkovsky had hoped for a more *earthy* approach, murmuring to himself the words of Dostoevsky about 'our mother the moist earth' in the same breath as he advocated the invitation to the ex-Marxists. What he got, however, was a more *sociological* approach. *Novyi Put'* changed character and began to resemble a nineteenth-century 'fat' journal. Bewildered by the strange atmosphere they had called down on themselves, the Merezhkovskys soon lost interest and, from the beginning of 1905, Bulgakov and Berdiaev took over completely and continued publication of what was already, *de facto*, a different periodical under the new title *Voprosy Zhizni* (Questions of Life). The reaction of the readers, even those such as 'Starodum' of *Russkie Vedomosti*, who had lost no opportunity to mock and defame the Merezhkovskys' initiative, was one of regret: '*Novyi Put'*, under the editorship of Mr Pertsov, represented a genuine novelty in our periodical press', he wrote; 'true, that novelty was a pattern of every sort of indecency and licence, but still it was unique of its kind.' Andrei Bely, writing in Briusov's fledgling *Vesy*, which had already crossed swords with *Novyi Put'* from the point of view of the aesthetes, mourned the passing of 'the most alive journal' immediately after the October 1904 number (still *Novyi Put'* in name), had appeared under the aegis of the 'renewed editorship'.⁸⁹

Anna Pavlovna Filosofova, the great lady of Populist sympathies who

had greeted the first number of *Mir Iskusstva* with such reservations only six years earlier, penned a motherly lament for both journals:

And now *Mir Iskusstva* and its brother *Novyi Put'* are passing into eternity! . . . This is very melancholy and inexpressibly sad and I have shed many tears; because of this our dear boys are going about thoroughly down-in-the-mouth, but I must say that they have worked hard and that this work will not be in vain; other times will come, other people, and will reap the harvest that they have sown.⁹⁰

6 Russian Symbolism comes of age

Романтизм, реализм, символизм — это три стадии в борьбе за свободу. Они свергли наконец цепи рабствования разным случайным целям. Ныне искусство наконец свободно . . .*

Валерий Брюсов.

In a sense, the creative writers of St Petersburg could afford to let *Mir Iskusstva* and *Novyi Put'* slip from their control because of the new publishing opportunities, provided by the publishing house Skorpion. The establishment of this venture in 1900 led to the regular appearance, from 1901 to 1905, of the 'decadent' almanac *Severnye Tsvety*, called after Pushkin's *Northern Flowers*†, and, from 1904 to 1909, of the periodical *Vesy*. 'Skorpion' was a Moscow initiative run by literati of the Moscow school and financed by Moscow money. The prime organiser was Briusov, but the original impulse came from Bal'mont.

In 1899, Bal'mont, having cemented his public association with Briusov by the publication of *Kniga razdumii* – in which the two poets had debated, in an antiphonal exchange of poems, their differing views on art and life – spent the summer as a guest on the country estate of Sergei Aleksandrovich Poliakov in pursuit of inspiration and the female poet Nina Lohvitskaia. Here, enraptured by the company, the beauty of nature and the fashionable craze for Nietzschean self-assertion, Bal'mont wrote his most immediately successful body of poetry, which was to form the bulk of a new collection under the suitably vivid and catastrophic title *Goriashchie zdaniia* (Burning Buildings, the Lyric Poetry of a Contemporary Soul).¹ The first Symbolist publishing house was born from the spontaneous combustion of Bal'mont's poetry and his friendship with Poliakov.

In the course of the summer, the poet had conceived a tender, *exalté* attachment to his host, a quiet young man of means with a passion for

* 'Romanticism, realism, symbolism – these are three stages in the struggle for freedom. They have finally cast off the chains of enslavement to various fortuitous aims. Now art is free at last . . .' Valerii Briusov

† One additional number of the almanac was published after a long interval in 1911.

languages, a genuine love of books and a keen interest in the new literature at home and abroad. Apart from the main European languages, Poliakov translated from Polish, Swedish and Norwegian – and went on to make a study of Sanskrit, Chinese, Persian, Georgian and Yakut. He was, Bal'mont declared in the dedication of *Goriashchie zdaniia*, possessed of 'a soul sensitive as mimosa'. Certainly, the image left to posterity by this man of the merchant class, who through his connections was to fund Symbolist publishing for years to come, was very different from Bely's description of the *nouveau riche* Morozov as 'a good-natured sea-centaur who has enjoyed full citizenship since the time of Boecklin', but who used, not so long ago, 'to snort and dive amidst the waves', or of Vrubel's remarkable portrait of Mamontov as an unpredictable if genial bully who appears to tower almost threateningly above the artist. Poliakov, on the contrary, was generally acknowledged one of 'the most enlightened and sensitive of the Moscow art patrons'.²

Another member of the house party that summer was a university friend of Poliakov's who, in 1898, one year later than his host, had graduated from the Department of Physics and Mathematics at Moscow University, but who, again like his host, was more interested in philosophy and poetry and was collaborating with him on a translation of Ibsen's *When We Dead Awaken*. Jurgis Kazimirovich Baltrušaitis was a Lithuanian who had received his higher education in Russia, made his début as a Russian poet in 1899 and was to continue to write in Russian until, in his old age, in occupied Paris, an exile from both his 'motherlands', he attempted, in a final burst of poetry and prayer, to return to his native language. It is, however, as a Russian poet and an important contributor to the development of Russian Symbolism through his service to Skorpton and *Vesy* that this 'rock-like man', who was to serve from 1920 to 1939 as Lithuanian ambassador to the Soviet Union, is remembered today.³ This is only fitting, for Baltrušaitis, though a true polyglot with even more languages to his credit than Poliakov, was essentially a man of Russian culture and the primary pre-Symbolist influences on his verse were Russian nineteenth-century poetry and the philosophy of Vladimir Solov'ev.

Baltrušaitis was a minor poet in the tradition of Baratynsky and Tiutchev, deep and narrow, philosophical and religious, with a streak of pantheistic mysticism and a feeling for space and light. At the same time, his poetry was clearly of the early twentieth century, both in its apocalyptic forebodings and in its emphasis on their optimistic corollary: theurgy, the religious idea through which Solov'ev and Russian 'neo-Christianity' as a whole met and to some extent 'overcame' Russian Nietzscheanism, the acceptance of the need to change man, but within religion, by 'doing

the work of God'. The idea was 'in the air', and Baltrušaitis came to it by his own road. He was a friend and admirer of the Symbolist composer Skriabin, who, in his thought and poetry, combined Nietzschean ideas with theosophy and attempted to give voice to them through the 'dionysian' medium of music. Baltrušaitis was close to the composer's interpretation of Nietzsche's 'pessimism of strength' as 'optimism', albeit arrived at through the 'experience and conquest of despair'. He also shared Skriabin's conviction that the artist-creator – as microcosm – can in some way affect the macrocosm of the body politic, society, the world at large. To be sure, the Lithuanian poet kept out of politics as such, wisely confining them to the 'things that are Caesar's'. Yet he spoke of art in Wagnerian terms as of a power to change the world: 'a transfiguring, transcending and emancipating power'.⁴

Briusov, in a poem dedicated to Baltrušaitis dated December 1900, sees him as an elemental creature who once knew only sky, distance and depths, lured into the world of art and artifice by the power of music:

Вот с нами ты, бывшее позабыв.

Но взор твой видит всюду — только вечность,
В твоих словах — прибой быстротечность,
А голос твой — как коршуна призыв.*⁵

Indeed, in the early poetry of Baltrušaitis the gusty cadences of the sea wind still sound and there is a sense of northern granite underfoot – as though the years of his boyhood when he had worked as a swineherd and was much alone with the elements were still present to his mind:

Когда, неожиданно, вьюга задымится
И в снежном поле вихри побегут,
Пошли упорство верить и стремиться,
Свершить, не дрогнув, тайный жизни труд,
Назначенный Тобой.†⁶

Yet Baltrušaitis was very much a man of his time. In his poetry, there is frequent interaction with the works of fellow poets and musicians of the Silver Age. He called his first collection of verse, which did not come out until 1911 – for he wrote sparingly and was a self-effacing and disinterested publisher – *Zemnye stupeni* (Earthly Stairs), as if in direct challenge to Bal'mont's 'Vozdushnye stupeni' ('Aerial stairs'). The flippant Mir

* 'And here you are with us, having forgotten the past. // Yet your gaze sees everywhere eternity alone, / In your words is the rapid rush of the rising tide, / And your voice is like the call of the kite.'

† 'When, suddenly, the snowstorm billows up / And whirling blizzards blow about the field, / Give stubborn strength to keep faith and press on, / To perform, without a tremor, the secret work of life / Ordained by Thee.'

Iskussniki found him too Nordic for their taste and christened him 'Also sprach Baltruschaitis', though Briusov, it is true, insists Zinaida Hippus made this up.⁷ In Moscow, however, the Lithuanian's cool, constructive detachment complemented Bal'mont's fiery lyricism to a nicety, just as his restrained manner and placatory temperament were to complement the Mephistophelean, albeit efficient, persona cultivated by Briusov in his dealings with colleagues at the editorial offices of Skorpion, *Severnye Tsvety* and, later, *Vesy*.

Briusov records his first meeting with Poliakov and Baltrušaitis in his diary for July–August 1899: 'Then Bal'mont arrived and immediately my life was out of its rut. He turned up *à trois* with a certain Poliakov and the Lithuanian poet Jurgis Baltrušaitis.'⁸ Bal'mont impressed Briusov with his new, paradoxical, barbaric self-image:

О да, я Избранный, я Мудрый, Посвященный,
Сын солнца, я — поэт, сын разума, я — царь!
Но — предки за спиной, и дух мой искаженный —
Татуированный своим отцом дикарь.*

Man the god, Bal'mont declared, and man the barbarian struggle for mastery 'mortally wounded by reason'⁹ ... On this occasion, the barbarian won and the evening ended in the rather doubtful pleasure park, 'The Aquarium'.

A few weeks later, Bal'mont and Poliakov descended on Briusov once more and hustled him off to play the part of 'schaffer'† at Baltrušaitis' wedding. The following day, Bal'mont announced they would visit Sergei Poliakov's brother Aleksandr at his home situated near the family factory, an hour's train journey from Moscow. The two poets arrived at midnight and woke their host who, with true Moscow hospitality, welcomed them with open arms and sat with them till 3 a.m. before showing them to their rooms. Sergei joined them towards evening the next day and Briusov discovered he was not just 'a certain Poliakov' but a man who shared his own passion for Verlaine, Verhaeren and Régnier and a qualified mathematician with whom, on the return train journey, it was possible to enjoy an absorbing discussion about infinitely small and infinitely large measurements.

After Bal'mont left for Paris that autumn, Briusov's friendship with Poliakov and Baltrušaitis continued. They sought to convert the Moscow

* 'Oh yes, I am elect, I am Wise and Initiate, / The son of the sun, I am a poet, the son of reason – a king. / But behind me are ancestors, and my misshapen spirit / Is a savage tattooed by its father.'

† *Schaffer*: roughly the 'best man' at an Orthodox wedding; one of two who hold the crowns over the heads of the bride and groom at the ceremony.

poet to Strindberg; Briusov recited his new poems; together they undertook various jaunts to the environs of Moscow and together watched a performance of the folk-play *Tsar Maximilian* by the workers of the Poliakov factory – a performance which caught Briusov ‘by the heart’. The pleasing summer-night’s dream of founding a proper publishing house became a reality. It was Bal’mont who provided the name ‘Skorpion’. Among the poems he had written during his stay on the Poliakov estate was a sonnet about the Scorpion who, according to legend, when surrounded by a ring of flame, will inject itself with its own poison. Bal’mont, who had a truly ‘decadent’ weakness for every kind of monster, not only identified with the toxic creature, but set him up as an object of admiration; ‘Ia gibnu. Pust’. Ia vyzov shliu sud’be. / Ia smert’ svoiu nashel v samom sebe. / Ia gibnu skorpionom – gordym, vol’nym.’ (‘I perish. Let it be so. I challenge fate. / I have found my death in my own self. / I perish as a scorpion – proud and free.’)¹⁰ Max Nordau might well have perceived as peculiarly apt the connection between this glorification of self-destruction and the foundation of a ‘decadent’ publishing house on the corner of the Il’inka and Iushkov Lane at the heart of industrial, middle-class Moscow. Here the new art was still an object of ridicule and the heroes of the day were Maxim Gor’ky and the writers gathered about the sensibly-named co-operative publishing house, Znanie (Knowledge).

Nevertheless, Skorpion’s first publication, the Poliakov–Baltrušaitis translation of Ibsen’s *When We Dead Awaken*, which appeared in March 1900, did well. It was staged by the Moscow Arts Theatre and ran to a second edition, the only Skorpion publication to do so. Briusov, relegating his own output to second place, followed up this initial success that April with Aleksandr Dobroliubov’s *Collected Works* with a preface by Ivan Konevskoi, which, all things considered, was also well received. As always, it was the organisation, the *movement* as a whole that was important to Briusov, and now he entered into his element. In his autobiography he recalls, with every justification:

Skorpion was soon to become the centre which united all those active in the ‘new art’ and which, in particular, brought together the Moscow group (me, Bal’mont and Andrei Bely who joined us soon after) with the group of older artists, the Petersburg writers, who had at one time gathered about *Severnii Vestnik* (Merezhkovsky, Hippus, Sologub, Minsky and others). This unification was attested by the publication of the almanac *Severnii Tsvety*, where, for the first time, the whole group of ‘Moscow Symbolists’ appeared together with most of the contributors to *Severnii Vestnik*.¹¹

This claim was a valid one. In Petersburg, the only ‘publisher’ friendly to the new art had been Pertsov, who worked alone, using his own limited means. Various projects to found a journal specifically devoted to the new

writing had collapsed for want of money and elementary solidarity. Skorpion, it must be said, by providing a modest sufficiency of the first, ensured the second. The backing of solid merchant families like the Poliakovs, the Filipovs and the Morozovs guaranteed the financial *bona fides* of the enterprise. Zinaida Hippus – who had withheld her ‘new poems’ from Pertsov’s *Molodaia poeziia* in 1895 because she did not want to be associated with old fogies like Fofanov and Minsky, yet had considered it beneath her dignity to co-operate with her cousin Vladimir and his friend Aleksandr Dobroliubov on *their* project for a poetry journal the following year, or with Briusov, Bal’mont, Konevskoi and Durnov in their *Kniga razdumii* – was impressed by Skorpion. When Briusov, and Sergei Poliakov with his sister Nadia, an active helper in his editorial work, visited the Merezhkovskys in their home in November 1900 to secure their cooperation, they were graciously received. ‘Do you hear that, Dmitrii?’ Hippus drawled. ‘They a-actually *pay!*’ Whereupon Merezhkovsky, to Briusov’s somewhat cynical amusement, launched into an enthusiastic disquisition on the subject of the time of unity having come, declaring ‘that all those who were seeking new ways ought to unite’.¹²

Delighted to have enlisted the elusive and prestigious Merezhkovskys, Briusov happily accepted two contributions from Hippus: *Sviataia krov'* (Sacred Blood), a play rejected by *Mir Iskusstva*, which dealt somewhat luridly with the theme of blood sacrifice, and the story ‘Slishkom rannie’ (‘Those who came too early’), a conversation-piece about the isolation of people of the ‘new awareness’ in the spiritually inert society of their time.

Both Merezhkovskys, it seemed, were now warming to Briusov’s poetry and, as he was leaving, he was genuinely gratified when Hippus declaimed the last two lines from an 1898 poem of his, which he was to include the following year in his first Skorpion collection *Tertia Vigilia*. The poem, had it but appeared ten years later, might have served as a slogan verse for the Acmeist movement. It was already vintage Briusov:

Люблю я линий верность,
Люблю в мечтах предел.
Меня страшит безмерность
И чудо Божьих дел.

Люблю дома, не скалы.
Ах, книги краше роз!
— Но милы мне кристаллы
И жало тонких ос.*

* ‘I love the trueness of straight lines, / In dreams I like there to be a limit. / I am cowed by the immeasurable / And the wonder of God’s acts. // I love houses, not cliffs. / Ah, books

'No mily mne kristally i zhalo tonkikh os' – Hippus savoured the persuasive labials, the alliteration, and added 'Eto khorosho!' ('That's good').¹³ Possibly the compliment was narcissistic. Andrei Bely's first impression of Hippus herself was that she was 'like a wasp' and Briusov, at the time she was most hopefully in love with Filosofov and most deeply absorbed in religious matters, wrote – not without regret – that 'It's as if someone had drawn her sting'.¹⁴

Be that as it may, the embassy to St Petersburg was so successful that, by 23 January 1901, Briusov was able to inform Minsky, who had promised but failed to send new verses for *Severnye Tsvety*:

The almanac is already in the press, but there is always the possibility of slipping in a few poems. The list of contributors is now definitely as follows: Sluchevsky, Fofanov, Bal'mont, F. Sologub, P. Pertsov, Z. Hippus, Vl. Hippus, Oreus [Konevskoi], Baltrušaitis, I myself and, in the retrospective section: Fet, Carolina Pavlova, Vl. Solov'ev, A.I. Urusov.¹⁵

It took not only the financial backing and moral support provided by Poliakov, but all Briusov's knowledge of the literary scene and 'plodding, oxlike patience' to assemble under one cover such a diverse collection of touchy individualists.¹⁶ There were failures. Briusov tried for and eventually got Chekhov, albeit a single story unlikely to pass the censors. Gor'ky wrote with some regret that he had nothing ready, although he would have enjoyed the annoyance caused to his public had he published with the 'pariah' (*otverzhennyi*) Briusov, but followed this up with a resounding refusal. Briusov had to be content with Bunin, who, to Gor'ky's indignation, published with both *Znanie* and *Skorpion* and showed no sign of wishing to sharpen the 'beautiful dull silver' of his talent into a knife 'to make a stab in the right direction'.¹⁷ Nevertheless, or perhaps even because of this failure to include all the best contemporary writing, the first *Severnye Tsvety* album, published by *Skorpion* in 1901, was the first broadly representative collection of the consciously experimental modernist tendency. For young poets like Aleksandr Blok it was a milestone, and his copy, read from cover to cover and marked throughout with slanting crosses against pieces that had made a particular impression on him, was among the books he did not sell when starvation threatened during the period of war communism. The almanacs were the nucleus around which the 'decadents' were to adhere, imperceptibly shed their pejorative label, and – gradually – achieve a certain respectability as 'Symbolists'.

are more beautiful than roses! / But I have a taste for crystals / And the sting of slender wasps.'

Briusov's publishing programme at Skorpion up to and including the year 1905 showed the same determination to unite established names such as Hippius, Sologub, himself and Bal'mont with his own enthusiasms: Dobroliubov, Konevskoi and his old friend Miropol'sky. He also introduced the newcomers of the 'second generation': Bely, Viacheslav Ivanov's wife Lidiia Zinov'eva-Annibal, and indeed, Ivanov himself, whose first collection was published independently in St Petersburg but whose second, *Prozrachnost'* (Transparency), Briusov obtained for Skorpion. Blok made his literary debut virtually simultaneously in St Petersburg and Moscow, in the second number of *Novyi Put'* for 1903 and in the Skorpion annual *Severnnye Tsvety* for the same year, though his first book, *Stikhi o Prekrasnoi Dame* (The Verses about the Most Beautiful Lady, 1905), came out with the less prestigious Grif, and he had to wait until 1907 and his second collection, *Nechaiannaia radost'* (Joy Unexpected), for his one and only Skorpion publication.¹⁸

Modern European literature was also well represented in Skorpion publications. Poliakov and Baltrušaitis went on from Ibsen to Nietzsche, Przybyszewski, Knut Hamsun, Hauptmann, Strindberg and others. M. Semenov, Poliakov's brother-in-law, a journalist and translator of considerable experience who was to emerge as an active member of the editorial board of *Vesy*, also contributed to the translations, and Briusov, in 1906, produced a book of Verhaeren's poetry.¹⁹ An ambitious project to translate the complete works of Nietzsche, for which Briusov had hoped to enlist Viacheslav Ivanov, came to nothing. Skorpion was not an academic publisher. Neither was it a commercial success. Editions were small and sales were counted in tens rather than hundreds. Nevertheless, the steady patter of slim volumes, with their elegant vignettes and lovingly designed *style-moderne* covers, made Symbolism an established fact of literary and artistic life in Russia. Skorpion used several *Mir Iskusstva* artists, particularly Bakst and Somov, but also favoured Bal'mont's friend Durnov, Briusov's favourite Feofilaktov and other Muscovites of the 'Blue Rose' school such as Borisov-Musatov. Such elegance was a novelty in the world of books at the time and Skorpion publications are now collectors' items.

So Briusov marshalled Russian Symbolism into a single literary movement, expending immense effort, enduring many rebuffs. His own reputation as a poet grew slowly at first, though it increased with each new collection. Yet even after the foundation of Skorpion and the success of his third collection *Tertia Vigilia* and the first *Severnnye Tsvety*, he could not altogether shake off the scandalous aura which still clung to his name even amongst his fellow Symbolists. *Mir Iskusstva* was slow to begin

printing his work and appeared, initially, to have thought of him more as a critic than as a poet. Hippisus frankly warned Pertsov not to let Briusov 'foist his decadent verses on to *Novyi Put'*' and the Merezhkovskys' courtship of him for their journal was based on admiration for his organising ability and very considerable culture. He actually wrote for them on such curious subjects as 'Socialism' and 'The papacy' and, even here, the editors were so fearful that his ideas might offend conventional liberal opinion that he eventually withdrew his co-operation.

Yet it was in part by 'playing the field' and continuing his association with the Petersburg journals that Briusov finally managed to galvanise Poliakov into going one step further and organising a regular Skorpion journal. From St Petersburg in January 1903, Briusov wrote to him of *Novyi Put'*'s initial success, adding: 'How often have I tried to persuade you to publish a journal. Those 1,217 subscribers would have been ours!'²⁰ This was not strictly true. *Novyi Put'*, which by the end of its first year had doubled the number of subscribers cited by Briusov, set out to appeal to a wider public than the tiny literary elite interested in the theory and practice of Russian Symbolism, and, when Briusov and Poliakov finally succeeded in launching their journal a year later, they could assemble a mere 670.²¹ The important thing, however, was that Briusov's persistence had its effect and, by mid-1903, on 3 July, Poliakov applied for permission to publish 'a monthly scholarly literary and critico-bibliographical journal, *Vesy*'. The name, *Vesy*, 'The Balance', was chosen simply as the next sign of the zodiac to the Scorpion.

The rather forbidding description of the journal as 'scholarly' and 'critico-bibliographical' corresponded precisely to the intention of the editors. In 1903, *Mir Iskusstva* still appeared, from the outside at least, to be in the best of health; indeed, it had only just succeeded in ironing out all the technical difficulties and obtaining optimum quality in reproduction, photographic work, paper, etc. *Novyi Put'* had just begun publication. *Vesy* had at first no intention of competing with either – or indeed with Skorpion's almanac *Severnye Tsvety*, which carried poetry and short stories. The new journal was to be different: 'slim' and austere, devoted to expounding, not to presenting, the new literature. There would be up-to-the-minute reviews, discussions, surveys and theoretical articles setting out the basic philosophical and aesthetic tenets of the Symbolist movement in Russia and abroad. Given the natural bent of contributors like Bal'mont, articles were bound to verge on the poetical essay, but this, after all, was in the spirit of the Symbolist concept of what critical or 'philosophical' prose should be.

Every encouragement would be given to young writers, both as contributors and through discussion of their works. One such young writer,

Andrei Bely, was on the editorial board from the beginning and was to become – in spite of an explosive personal relationship – Briusov's closest literary ally during the lifetime of the journal. Briusov was more impressed with Bely than he had been even with Dobroliubov or Konevskoi and described him more than once in his diaries as the most interesting man in Moscow. At the same time, he was constantly on the look-out for new talent, sifting through new publications, seeking out authors of promise and drawing them into co-operation with *Vesy* and Skorpion.

One important but not so young contributor Briusov found in Viacheslav Ivanov, whose first book of poetry he had reviewed for *Novyi Put'* and whom he met in Paris in April 1903. Ivanov's lecture on Dionysos, part of a hugely successful course which the Russian poet was giving at the 'Ecole Russe', Briusov had found deeply fascinating, in spite of certain reservations as to Ivanov's total, reverential commitment to his subject. Walking down the street after the lecture, the two became so absorbed in a discussion of verse technique that they were almost run over by a cab.²² A correspondence ensued, and Viacheslav Ivanov was in on the birth of *Vesy* when, on a short winter visit to Moscow in 1903–4, he spent much time with Briusov, Bal'mont and Baltrušaitis planning the new journal. Briusov tried to persuade Poliakov to tempt Ivanov back from Geneva, where he was resident, with the offer of an editorship on *Vesy*, but this came to nothing.

Briusov also involved Maksimilian Aleksandrovich Kirienko-Voloshin, better known as Max Voloshin, a gifted young poet and painter with a wide range of cultural interests who, having had difficulties with the police as a result of student unrest at Moscow University in the spring of 1901, spent much of his time over the next five years or so in Paris, where he acted as unofficial ambassador for *Vesy*.

Besides Bely and Briusov, the permanent members of the editorial board were Bal'mont, Poliakov, Baltrušaitis and M.N. Semenov. Much of the practical work such as proofreading was done in the early days of the journal by Briusov's immediate family: his sister Nadia, his sister-in-law and a younger brother. The other editors spent much time abroad, which was good for the journal's international *renommé* but hard on Briusov.

There was a sense, though, in which Briusov was a victim of his own self-will. He not only refused to overload the journal with translations but vigorously defended the austere and sharply polemical nature of *Vesy* from the more inclusive approach of Poliakov. As a result, contributions to the early numbers of the journal are still all too often, as in *Russkie*

Simvolisty, by Briusov himself writing under various pseudonyms. His letters, like Diaghilev's, are full of complaints about the indifference or absence of his helpers and, particularly, of his fellow-editors. 'I am agonisingly and uselessly busy as always with *Vesy*', he grumbled at the end of the summer of 1904, 'where I am literally on my own. The summer numbers I not only wrote (under a dozen or so pseudonyms) but also edited and proofread . . . all I didn't do was actually set the type.'²³

Indeed, it was Briusov's will to power and sheer industry which, in the end, gave such authority to *Skorpion* and *Vesy* that for many years these undertakings have tended to eclipse the 'pre-history' of Russian Symbolism. It seemed to younger contemporaries and later critics alike that the whole movement was indeed invented and organised virtually by Briusov alone, along the lines of French Symbolism. His letters and reviews of this period abound in diatribes against the benighted backwardness of Russia, particularly in matters of prosody, and in fierce advocacy of foreign models.²⁴ Yet this was, like all Briusov's attitudes, something of a pose. In fact, although the world of literature is by its nature more cloistered, less sensational than the world of art, the editor of *Vesy* was, in his way, working towards the same kind of interchange of literary ideas on equal terms with Europe as Diaghilev had begun to achieve for the visual arts through the activities of *Mir Iskusstva*.

In this, the members of his editorial board were well-qualified to help him. Albeit on a narrow front, Briusov himself had prepared the way for *Vesy* in England by undertaking, from 1902, to take over from Bal'mont surveys of contemporary Russian literature for *The Athenaeum*. Both Bal'mont and Baltrušaitis, during the lifetime of the journal, were in England for considerable periods of time and provided news of the literary scene. Bal'mont, too, sent occasional articles on literature and colourful essays from his travels in the United States, Mexico and South America.²⁵

In Germany, the journal was well represented by Maximilian Schick, a young 'Russian German' friendly with Briusov and the other Moscow Symbolists, who began propagating the new literature in German translation from the age of sixteen and who, from the inception of *Vesy* in 1904, worked as their Berlin correspondent, writing for them on the poetry of George, Rilke and Hofmannsthal and on the activities of the Secession. Later, Schick was followed by other Germans interested in Russian poetry, such as the translator Eliasberg and the scholar Arthur Luther. It was Baltrušaitis who introduced the Italians Panini, Amendola and Vannicola to *Vesy* and there was also a connection with contemporary Greek literature through M.F. Likiardopoulo, who later became secretary to the journal. The Nordic interests of Poliakov and Baltrušaitis

naturally assured information on Scandinavia and the Baltic countries and there was constant coming and going between Skorpion and Poland.

Most important to Briusov, however, was France, where he was ably represented by the expansively sociable Voloshin, who not only contributed his own 'Letters from Paris' but enlisted the help of various artists, mainly from the 'Nabi' group founded by Paul Serusier and including such friends of Benois as Vallotton, Vuillard, Maurice Denis and Pierre Bonnard, admirers of Puvis de Chavannes and Odilon Redon, all closely associated with the French Symbolist movement. It was Voloshin, also, who first approached René Ghil. A poet then accounted of the 'second generation' of French Symbolists, Ghil offered to provide the Russian journal with a history of French Symbolism 'before the French had one themselves'.²⁶ Over the years, he was to prove an almost embarrassingly prolific contributor but, fortunately, Briusov was genuinely interested in the French poet's *poésie scientifique* and himself wrote two articles on Ghil's role in this movement.²⁷ Voloshin's other 'find' for *Vesy* was Van Bevers, the secretary of the *Mercure de France*, a journal which, in its turn, showed a friendly interest in the Russian literary scene and welcomed 'correspondences' from and about the Russian Symbolists.

It is curious, however, that Briusov appears to have been well satisfied by these contacts from the world of '*littérature*' and actively to have resisted pressure from M. Semenov to involve greater names from the sphere of '*poésie*'. Semenov wanted Poliakov to ask Knut Hamsun to contribute articles to *Vesy* about Norwegian literature and himself offered to enlist the co-operation of Rémy de Gourmont, Maeterlinck, Huysmans and Hofmannsthal. Briusov was reluctant and commented on Semenov's suggestions: 'We must not forget that *Vesy* is a Russian journal. What is so fine in the idea that more than half our articles will be translated, albeit from manuscript? As it is we are lumbered with Ghil.'²⁸

It was Briusov's own translations from Maeterlinck which eventually, in mid-1905, broke the ban on poetry and imaginative prose in *Vesy*. On principle, however, the Moscow impresario was clearly reluctant to enlist foreign literary stars of the first magnitude. It was, after all, *Russian Symbolism* that Briusov was working to create . . . He liked to feel in command of the situation when he approached foreigners, as in his correspondence with Verhaeren, whom he was able to impress and intrigue from the outset with the information that *Vesy* had already, by 1906, devoted three articles to his work. The formal reason for Briusov's approach to the Belgian poet, moreover, was to obtain authorial permission to publish with Skorpion a book of Verhaeren's poetry in his own translation. The authorisation was promptly given and Briusov was in a

position to present his book, announcing in his next letter: 'Le voici pour la première fois un livre des traductions russes de Verhaeren.'²⁹

This sense of occasion and desire to impress is to be felt in all Briusov's dealings with the outside world. Often, particularly in the early days, it had backfired on him. One instance of this, a story Briusov tells against himself, was during what he called the 'battle for the new art' in February/March 1903, led by Skorpion, in conjunction with its new ally and rival Grif. This last, a second, less academically sound and less reputable Symbolist publisher, was set up that same year by Sergei Aleksandrovich Sokolov (literary pseudonym: Krechetov), in imitation of Skorpion and with its own almanac to accommodate the ever-increasing flow of Symbolist verse and prose. 'Bal'mont and I', Briusov recalled, 'were in the forefront, as "established writers" (or that's what the newspapers called us), and in our wake there marched a whole troop of youths, young decadents avid for fame: Gofman, Roslavlev, three Koiranskys, Schick, Sokolov, Khesin . . . and M. Voloshin and Bugaev [Bely] to boot.'³⁰ At a series of rowdy public meetings, lectures and recitals the 'decadents' fought their corner against the voices of philistinism and common sense. The newspapers had a field day.

On one of these occasions, at an 'Evening of the New Art', Briusov, 'wanting to read something challenging', delivered himself of his ballad *The Slave*. The poem begins: 'Ia – rab, i byl rabom pokornym / Prekrasneishei iz vsekhs tsarits' (I am a slave and was a submissive slave / To the most beautiful of all queens'). The slave, however, dares to raise his eyes to his mistress's beauty. His 'dry and passionate gaze' offends her and she has him chained like a dog to her bed while she first disrobes before him then entertains her lover:

И падали ее одежды
 До ткани, бывшей на груди . . .
 И в ужасе сомкнул я вежды . . .
 Но голос мне шепнул: гляди!
 [. . .]
 И вплоть до дня впивался взглядом, —
 Прикован к ложу их, как пес.
 Вот сослан я в каменоломню,
 Дроблю гранит, стирая кровь.
 Но эту ночь я помню! помню!
 О, если б пережить все — вновь!*

* 'And her garments fell / Down to the weave that covered her breast . . . / And in horror I lowered my eyelids . . . / But a voice whispered to me: look! // [. . .] / And until day came my eyes feasted on them / As I crouched bound to their bed like a dog. // Now I am exiled to the quarriers, / I hack the granite, wiping away the blood. / But that night I remember! I remember! / Ah, would that I could live through it all anew!'

'The public', he records, 'did not appreciate the "challenge" and laughed. True, my admirers gave me an ovation, but it is unpleasant to be laughed at.'³¹

As editor of *Vesny*, Briusov created an atmosphere in which no such unpleasantness was likely to recur – as formal and repressive as his own famous buttoned-up town suit. The office, together with that of Skorpion which had outgrown its original modest accommodation, was situated in a prestigious, central part of Moscow close to the Bolshoi Theatre, behind what was then the new and much-discussed art-nouveau building of the Hotel Metropole. Contemporaries contrasted the *Vesny* 'Tuesdays' with the inspirational, informal sessions around Diaghilev's elegant table in St Petersburg: 'Neither wine, nor tea was in the order of things; there was no joking or laughter, all humour was channelled into articles.'³²

A large portrait of Nietzsche, eyes lowered in inspiration and backed by a mighty eagle, dominated the entrance. On Briusov's desk, legs dangling, a small concession to eccentric informality, sat a plaster-cast nymph. If the collaborators felt the need for refreshment, they would repair to the Café Grec on the Tverskoi Boulevard, but even here Briusov would be diligently making the rounds, 'with his notebook and stub of pencil, organising young poets into a literary party, going drily about the work of enlisting contributors and editors for his journal, laying down the law and scolding, encouraging . . .'³³

So, in the end, it was the reliable Briusov, not his *exalté* Petersburg colleagues, who succeeded in establishing Symbolism as a respected trend in Russian literature and in ensuring a place for a new generation. True, he had not the unerring touch of a Diaghilev in spotting new talent. He was slow to accept Blok; he condemned – albeit in a private letter to Pertsov, not in print – Annensky's addiction to 'poor rhymes' (later considered such an important innovation in Russian prosody); he refused Sologub's single most successful prose-work *Melkii bes* for Skorpion, wrote off the young Remizov in his diary as a 'graphomaniac', and was lukewarm over the poetic début of Marina Tsvetaeva who, according to Khodasevich, made the mistake of entering literature without first seeking his help and approval. Khodasevich himself Briusov did encourage, and he remained impressively loyal to his own discoveries: Dobroliubov and Konevskoi. Over the years, he took the trouble to make the acquaintance of promising youngsters such as Sergei Gorodetsky, Mikhail Kuzmin, Boris Sadovskoi and Nikolai Gumilev. He was, as Khodasevich was later to recall, like a ship's captain impelled not only by a naturally authoritarian bent, but by genuine concern for the fate of his ship.³⁴

During the early years of his work for Skorpion and *Vesny*, Briusov was at his zenith as a poet. The influence on Blok and Bely of his fourth book of

poetry, *Urbi et orbi* (1903), was second only to that of Vladimir Solov'ev and, formally at least, was for a short time the more powerful. It was in his preface to this book that Briusov finally formulated the idea he had first put into practice in 1897 in his second collection, *Me eum esse*, writing, in words immediately taken up by Blok, and quoted in the lead paragraph of his review of *Urbi et orbi* for *Novyi Put'*:

A book of poems should not be a chance *collection* of verses of various provenance but a *book* in the precise sense of the word, a whole complete in itself, united by a single thought. Like a novel, like a treatise, the book of poems reveals its content consistently from the first page to the last . . . The sections of a book of poems are neither more nor less than chapters which explain one another and which cannot be arbitrarily reshuffled.

This formulation was not only of cardinal importance to Blok in the structuring of his own poetry but must be regarded as the seminal statement of the importance of the lyric cycle – the ‘chapter’ to which Briusov here refers – in the practice of Symbolist and indeed post-Symbolist poetry.³⁵

By the time *Stephanos* (dedicated to Viacheslav Ivanov and – though very different in content from that poet's work – similar in its choice of themes) was published in 1905, Briusov's reputation was so firmly established that he wrote ruefully to an old friend that it must be his worst book to date, since there had been not one negative review.³⁶ He had, by this time, clearly overtaken Bal'mont both as teacher and practitioner, a fact comprehensively and dispassionately demonstrated in his own reviews of his ex-idol's poetry.

These assessments of Bal'mont, like all Briusov's reviews, deal with *method* rather than *theory* and are correspondingly more interesting than his general theoretical statements. The last, entitled ‘Afterword’ and written in 1911, is an object lesson in humane killing. The older poet, Briusov informs us, had nothing more to contribute to the treasury of Russian verse. Unsparing of himself, he had shown how deeply lyric poetry can plumb the soul of the artist; he had demonstrated the power of the lyric to catch the moment, ‘to keep it alive together with all the vibrations of light, with the floating, enveloping aroma, with the first spark of nascent feeling’ . . . He had transformed and recreated the old Russian metres and enriched them with new techniques ‘often borrowed from our Western brothers’ and refined them to the point ‘where the word is already at the point of vanishing, and it seems we catch the sound of singing from some other sphere’. However, ‘. . . As a writer, as a distinctive contributor to our literature Bal'mont has, of course, said all he has to say.’³⁷

As a reviewer, Briusov was in his element, giving careful and exact

attention to the text of other men's work, extrapolating philosophical content, sounding out mood, analysing form and showing, by judicious quotation, to what extent form *per se* can express the thought and personality of the individual poet. His criteria were literary but, like all the Symbolists, he was acutely aware that tired ideas produced tired words, whereas 'new sensibility', 'new attunement of soul' must, sooner or later, oblige any genuine artist to seek new means of expression. Keeping a firm hold on the text as he felt and reasoned his way into each new book, Briusov seems to have laid aside his 'masks' and worked without malice and without favour to assess the efforts of beginners and to monitor the progress of older writers in relation to their position within the Symbolist movement.

To Khodasevich Briusov seemed dry and formal when discussing other people's poetry at his regular Wednesday receptions, but his genuine passion for literature and his didactic style was appreciated by Bely, who recalls in his memoirs his first lesson from the Master. Briusov, having made a most flattering assessment of one of Bely's early poems and accepted it for *Severnnye Tsvety*, asked him home: 'I'll never forget the day: there was nothing left of that poem. Seizing my manuscript with his prehensile fingers, arching his back over it, legs crossed, like one in a trance he sat drinking in the lines, lips parted, brow wrinkled, tossing his shock of hair, repulsion rising as he drank, as at some rotten taste.' Picking out banal rhymes and expressions he considered over-worked, Briusov 'flung himself back, slamming the manuscript down on the table, bringing his elbows together, jutting out his wrists, all angles', and pronounced "'an epithet lives, fades, then is resurrected again; what you have here is a pathetic repetition; it's a refusal to work at words: you should be ashamed!'" . . . I was annihilated', Bely recalled, but when he summoned up courage to ask Briusov why he had accepted the poem in the first place, all he at first elicited was 'a snort, a twitch, a throwing out of the hands; a screwing of them together again on his knees, as if in doubt, as if to say: "I don't know myself" – then suddenly, alogically, with childish charm: "Well anyway . . . it's a good poem . . . Nobody else has a dwarf blowing out his thin cheeks; and then: there's something strange about the rhythm.'" ³⁸

When Briusov said 'nobody else has' you could be reasonably certain that you had found something genuinely new. One of his maxims was: 'Writers read in order to find out what not to write, what has already been written.'³⁹ He would turn against thoughts and sentiment which he himself or his closest associates had been the first to propagate (the hegemony of the 'moment', the idea that 'all the world is within me', the cult of '*vliubliennost'*') just as soon as, for him, they ceased to express 'that

“shiver of the new” (*novyi trepet*) which is the supreme justification of any newcomer to poetry’.⁴⁰

Briusov’s general articles on Symbolism, the leading articles with which he opened *Severnnye Tsvety* and the first numbers of *Vesy* for 1904 and 1905, are not ‘new’ in this sense. ‘Istiny’ (‘Truths’), ‘Kliuchi tain’ (‘The keys to the mysteries’) and ‘Sviashchennaia zhertva’ (‘The holy sacrifice’) are literary manifestos, eclectic formulations of the ‘collective consciousness’ of Russian Symbolism. Precisely because of this, precisely because Briusov used well-worn quotations, appealed to well-established authorities and delivered himself of sentiments that were already ‘in the air’, tending to include anything of interest blowing up from the ‘thinkers’ of *Mir Iskusstva*, the religious aestheticism of the new religious consciousness, the apocalyptic forebodings of the Solov’ev camp or Viacheslav Ivanov’s cult of Dionysos as the Suffering God, these ‘manifestos’, which spoke to each in his own language, were hugely influential. They did not so much express Briusov’s own opinions as formulate and propagate the new perception of literature, presenting, in digest form, the upshot of the many-sided debates of recent years. Whenever Symbolism was reconsidered, they were exhumed and reverentially quoted.⁴¹

Briusov’s technique was to launch his subject according to all the rules of learned literary controversy, weighing the pros and cons of opposing aesthetic theories, citing the most varied authorities, occasionally permitting himself a flash of paradox, a dry academic smile. As he warmed to his theme, however, his voice would take on greater resonance and he would deliver the positive side of the new aesthetic with all the authority he had once assumed, as it were from beyond the grave, in his lines ‘To a young poet’.

In ‘Istiny’ (‘Truths’), the programmatic statement which launched *Severnnye Tsvety* in 1901, Briusov was concerned to hammer home the right to pluralism, the freedom of the poet to follow whatever seems true to him at the time, the emancipation of art from all utilitarian aims. After the usual eclectic but impressively dispassionate preamble, he proceeded to resolve his perception of the multiplicity of truth with resounding ease: ‘There are no base feelings and there are no false ones. What is within me is true. Not man is the measure of things, but the moment. The truth is what I recognise [as truth], recognise now, today, at this moment.’⁴²

The point was made again in a much quoted poem, polemically dedicated to Hippisus and written during the Merezhkovskys’ proselytising visit to Moscow in December that same year:

Неколебимой истине
Не верю я давно,

И все моря, все пристани
Люблю, люблю равно.

Хочу, чтоб всюду плавала
Свободная ладья,
И Господа, и Дьявола
Хочу прославить я.*⁴³

Two years later and at considerably greater length, in 'Kliuchi tain', Briusov used the same method to stake out a more far-reaching, positive claim for art and the artist. Beginning with Torquato Tasso, he traced the development of various concepts of the function of poetry from the merely pleasurable to the ennobling. With deceptive docility, he agrees that art is a pleasure, can be instructive or ennobling or even an organising force, but argues that none of these functions explain why the artist sets out to make the work of art in the first place or how that work has the effect it does on the public. Should one, then, advocate art for art's sake, art as something distinct from life, and is the sole and all-important aim of art to create 'beauty'? This Parnassian idea he dismisses on the grounds that 'In art there is an immutability and immortality that is not present in beauty.' Indeed, he detects some power in art which is able to change our perception of beauty itself, and refers his readers to the vogue for Japanese art – a profoundly alien aesthetic – then current in Europe. Perhaps though, he continues, art can be explained in terms of science, anthropology or history? He rejects all these disciplines, however, on the grounds that, while they can analyse, dissect, weigh and measure, they cannot tell us about the essence of being.

At this stage Briusov appears to have hesitated: should he base his further exposition on Potebnia's down-to-earth assertion that the word had first been created not to further communication but for the clarification of one's own thought to oneself, and that art, also, is *essentially* a way of understanding, a means to *cognition*? He had already used this argument to good effect some three years earlier, but for so important a general statement it may have struck him as too low-keyed or too obscure. As Andrei Bely remarked, Briusov had begun reading Potebnia 'before anyone else'.⁴⁴ In the context, he plumped rather for the well-established authority of Schopenhauer, delivering himself of the mystic and hieratic formulation that art is 'the understanding of the world by other, irrational means. Art is that which, in other spheres, we call revelation. The work of art is the opening of a door onto Eternity.'

* 'In unshakeable truth / I have not believed for a long time / And all seas, all harbours / I love, I love equally. // I would that the free boat / Might sail everywhere, / And I would glorify both / The Lord and the Devil.'

And so to those confined in the 'pale-blue prison' (as Fet had called the confines of cognition) the 'gates of beauty' (an image Briusov borrowed from Schiller) offer 'ways out to freedom, glimpses of light'. This spate of half-familiar poetic images (who amongst the younger Symbolists had not read Fet and Schiller, who was not familiar, albeit at second hand, with the doctrine of Schopenhauer?), backed up by the impressively dry rebuttal of preceding theories, made a lasting impression on Briusov's readers. Blok was haunted by the images of 'the gates of beauty' and the 'pale-blue prison'. Bely, too, accepted the prison-image whole-heartedly and raved of the need for a way out, a glimpse of light (in his vivid parlance a '*fortochka*', a 'little window'). So, as Briusov rose to his peroration, he seems, momentarily at least, to have swept along in his wake a whole generation:

Art, perhaps, is the greatest force man has at his command. At the very time when all the pickaxes of science and sociology are unable to break down the doors and walls which hem us in, art secretes in itself a terrible dynamite that will break down these walls and, more than this – it is that 'sesame' before which the doors will swing wide of themselves. Then let the artists of today deliberately forge their works in the form of keys to the mysteries, in the form of mystical keys which will open up to humanity the doors of its 'pale-blue prison' on to eternal freedom.⁴⁵

In 'Sviaschennaia zhertva' ('The holy sacrifice') the leading article in the first number of *Vesy* for 1905, Briusov appeared in a still more hierophantic, this time ancient and tragic mask. True to his usual technique of starting from far off, he begins by pondering Pushkin's deprecating lines about the 'ordinariness' of the poet in everyday life, at all times when he is not called upon to make 'holy sacrifices' on the altar of Apollo. Wary of actually attacking Pushkin (who, after all, together with poetry as a whole, had only recently been rescued from Pisarev), Briusov explains that it was classic restraint, very proper for his pre-Realist time, which led Russia's great poet to consider many aspects of his life as improper subjects for poetry:

Only realism alone gave back to art the whole world in all its manifestations, great and small, beautiful and hideous. In realism art found emancipation from all restrictive, clearly defined boundaries. After that it was enough for the thought that *all the world is within me* to penetrate deep into our consciousness, and already our own, contemporary concept of art was born. Like the realists, we recognise that the only object which art should body forth is life – but whereas they sought life outside themselves, we turn our regard inwards [. . .] To express one's own experiences, which are the only reality accessible to our awareness: this has become the task of the artist.

In this situation, Briusov went on, 'symbols became essential in order to clothe the inner reality in outer form' but, at the same time, 'it became

clear that creative work is but a reflection of life, and nothing more'. Since it is the inner world the work reflects, the poet becomes his own subject and the contemporary poet should know no hesitation in projecting his *whole* self, including his darkest impulses: 'We know only one commandment to the artist: sincerity, extreme, final sincerity. There are no special moments when a poet becomes a poet: he is either always a poet, or never.'

So far, so good: the modern poet reflects himself reflecting the world according to the realist canon – 'warts and all'. No mask, no mysticism. From this point, however, Briusov 'takes off'. 'We', he says (perhaps the pronoun is important? perhaps he was speaking *ex-cathedra* as from the 'Symbolist Party?'),

We demand of the poet that he should constantly offer up his 'holy sacrifices', not only through his poetry but through every hour of his life, every feeling: his love, his hatred, his achievements and his falls. Let the poet create not his books, but his life. Let him keep the altar flame unquenched like the Vestal fire, let him make it burn like a mighty bonfire having no fear that his own life may be consumed with it. On the altar of our divinity we fling – ourselves. Only the sacrificial knife, even as it lays bare the heart, gives the right to the name of poet.⁴⁶

Given the general awareness that the symbol is more than a neo-classical poetic conceit, this trumpet-call to the creation of 'not books, but life' was no mere extension of Pushkin's dead metaphor about the 'holy sacrifice' to 'Apollo'. Briusov might not believe in Dionysos any more than Pushkin 'believed' in the sun god, but his feeling for words was quite different from Pushkin's. The Symbolists had awakened the old gods from their neo-classical slumber and the tag about it being impossible to call upon Dionysos with impunity was common currency in their writing at this time. In 1905 Briusov had not forgotten the death of Konevskoi, the renunciation of Dobroliubov. He had always before him the example of Bal'mont, whom he regarded as a willing victim of his own inspiration. The older generation also – Zinaida Hippus in her play *Sviataia Krov'* (The Holy Blood) and Sologub in 'Baranchik' ('The little lamb') and other stories, Merezhkovsky in his treatment of the Abraham–Isaac relationship between Peter and Alexis, Rozanov in his articles on blood sacrifice in the ancient cults – were all writing of the acceptable sacrifice, although they were perhaps as concerned with life as with art. Given Briusov's cynicism and his own admission that he was 'incapable, by nature, of becoming a sacrifice',⁴⁷ it has been suggested that he was carried away – in this article – by the religious élan of Bely and/or Ivanov. At that time, however, though Briusov admired and occasionally envied Bely, he undoubtedly regarded him more as a disciple than a model. He also perceived him – perhaps unjustly – as too intellectual and too reserved to be capable of the kind of sacrifice of which he was writing.

Viacheslav Ivanov, on the other hand, had by this time achieved a certain ascendancy over Briusov's mind by right of age and superior erudition. Ivanov had used the Pushkin poem which gave the title 'Sviashchennaia zhertva' for Briusov's manifesto in an article of his own for *Vesy* but, in answer to a letter from Briusov approving the article, had replied: 'A difference in our opinions there is nevertheless, inward and fundamental. "Kliuchi tain" assumes the mystery to be some truth that is capable of being an object of cognition. Myth-making imposes its own truth [...] It gives material form to postulates of knowledge and, by affirming, creates. That is why art, for me, is first and foremost a creative act [...], an act and not a means of cognition.'⁴⁸ Later, this fundamental disagreement, which boils down to the fact that for Ivanov art was a celebration of faith whereas for Briusov it was an aim in itself, was to lead to open schism. The fact that Ivanov pointed it out before the publication of Briusov's 'Sviashchennaia zhertva' would appear to discount any profound influence over the mind of the younger poet, though Briusov was undoubtedly fired by the perspective opened up in Ivanov's works on to the world of myth and by his lofty, hieratic vocabulary.

Throughout 1903 and 1904, however, the two poets were at one in their exasperated opposition to *Novyi Put'*'s readiness to subordinate art to the propagation and popularisation of ideas. Art, for them, was not primarily a means of communication and its autonomy was sacrosanct. It is thus not surprising that the younger poets accepted Briusov's 'manifestos' in their entirety and felt that he was, in a sense, speaking for them all; speaking moreover out of the unique Symbolist atmosphere of 'collective creation' when thoughts, dreams and images slipped from mind to mind, almost, it seemed, without having to be formulated in words.

Part 3

Gleams of paradise

7 The turn of the century

А в последних днях улетающего столетия я написал последнюю фразу Северной Симфонии, повернутой к новому веку: 'Ударил серебрянный колокол'. Для одних шелкала пробка шампанского как в прошлом; другие слышали удар колокола; и гадали, о чем удар ...

Андрей Белый*

There was a distinct change of atmosphere at the turn of the century and the writers who appeared on the literary scene at that time, the so-called 'second generation' of Russian Symbolists, were distinctly different. No longer voices crying in the wilderness, they came with a message – or a hope, or a warning – and they came with a rush. Where the forerunners had fought their way inch by inch, the breach they had made in public acceptance was suddenly filled by an exuberant brotherhood consecrated to change – not only in literature, but in culture, in life itself.

These newcomers had grown up, like the first generation, in the stuffy confinement of a complacent age, but windows had been opened, rays of light and drafts of air admitted, escapes prepared. There was an exciting period of conspiracy, skirmishes and battle – during which an exceptional solidarity and sympathy grew up among the rebels, a commitment to the common cause only equalled by the weighty inertia of the opposition.

This solidarity was of a different pattern from the usual friendships within literary movements. The Pushkin *pléiade*, for instance, drank and laughed together, exchanged charming letters in verse and prose, mourned their exiled and executed friends, loved one another, even; but all in the awareness that – however severe and stupid their rulers might be – they themselves were the flower of an expanding, growing society. Later, in the isolation of the older Pushkin and the alienation of the young Lermontov, we see the first ominous signs of change. The poet becomes

* 'But in the last days of the departing century I wrote the concluding phrase of the Northern Symphony, turned towards the new age: "The silver bell struck". For some the champagne cork popped just like last year; others heard the stroke of the bell; and sought to divine why it had struck ...' Andrei Bely.

estranged from society and even, as in *A Hero of our Time*, from himself. The theme of alienation is pursued, stripped of residual Romanticism, by Dostoevsky's 'man from underground', with whose pariah-status the first generation of Symbolists – Merezhkovsky, Hippius, and Shestov quite explicitly – were brave enough to identify. The second generation, conspirators who were breaking out from the underground thanks in part to the discovery that it was shared territory, were united by the discovery of a common language: symbolism; myth. This was the language to be used by Freud and Jung to describe the individual unconscious, but at the same time it was the language of the universal unconscious. This solidarity, then, was due not to the awareness of being an élite: rather to the certainty of belonging to a disregarded and despised 'underground'.

After all – everything was going so well. Liberal society admitted the need for reform, but did not envisage altering its way of life and, as the champagne corks of the mighty empires continued to pop across the world from Port Arthur to Delhi, from St Petersburg to Vienna, Paris, London ... it was only the few, still isolated and estranged – the odd historian like Viacheslav Ivanov's teacher Mommsen, the survivors and followers of Nordau's 'degenerates' – who caught the sweet, warning chime of Bely's 'silver bell'.

For these few, there was a premonition of battle ahead: for culture? for the survival of the human spirit? No-one quite knew where the light lay or from whence the darkness would come. From Western 'civilisation' or from the 'barbaric' threat from the East, or simply from social disintegration, the West and the East 'within us'? The 'conspirators' of the Silver Age recalled old tales of Atlantis and Babylon; they looked back to Athens, Rome, Alexandria and the old Russian cities with their great cathedrals, dedicated, like St Sophia in the thousand-year Christian capital of Byzantium, to the Divine Wisdom – and felt something had been lost which, for want of a better word, they called 'culture': the organic connection between society and cult. Children of a scientific age, some were aware of impending change in mathematics and physics. They did not reject science but disliked the trivialisation of its application.

All this, however, was far from clear. In their lives as in their books, the younger Symbolists sought to create a grand scenario within the framework of which they could communicate imponderables. It was a work of collective imagination and many and bitter were the quarrels and misunderstandings among the collaborators – but all were involved in the same drama, the same production. Had they not been, there would have been nothing to do but sit and wait on events – prayerfully, as saints, or despairingly, as pessimists. As artists, full of talent, vigour and the self-confidence of a young nation, this was not their road ...

Later, taking stock, each of the main participants was to retreat

somewhat from the joyous facility in which – in the first years of the century – he indulged his imagination when dealing with matters of great depth and solemnity, a facility which sometimes bordered on the blasphemous, always on the foolhardy. The Symbolist utopia, the idea of ‘theurgy’, the notion that art could actually alter life, was eventually to become – to a greater or lesser degree – suspect to them all.

Of the idea of his youth that Symbolism would pass into some form of ‘action, either active creation or destruction’, Bely was to recall, in the late 1920s: ‘there was no getting away from it that I had set myself a task that I was not capable of fulfilling, neither I, nor my time, nor the next few generations . . .’¹

Blok, from 1906 on, began to differentiate, in his mind and diary at least, between mysticism and religion, though it took him until 1910 to call publicly for ‘sobriety and spiritual diet’ and to state that the time had come to stop turning life into art. Viacheslav Ivanov, whose call for a return to the spirit of the Greek mysteries, for ‘*sobornoe deistvo*’, was so nearly realised by the Symbolists themselves in these years of ‘collective creation’, admitted that society as a whole was not ready and eventually subjected thought and imagination to the discipline of the Roman Church, perceiving the ‘royal road’ of the creative artist to be incompatible with that of the saint who would change the world, but holding fast to that road – for himself – to the end.

At the *time*, however, the Symbolist myth of theurgy and spiritual knight-errantry had a very definite artistic function. It was psychologically liberating and it helped create a common language: the dumb spoke. Silent or tongue-tied boys like Blok and Bely found words which moved the hearts of generations and changed literature. Ivanov, a scholar absorbed in a Latin dissertation on the Roman tax system for a German university, abandoned academic writing to launch out into a lifetime of song and praise.

Because the chief players were very vivid, very talented – Ivanov with his impressive erudition and his passion for ‘bringing out’ artistic talent; Bely with his brilliant mind and dancing eloquence; Blok with his tragic beauty, compelling imagination and quiet humour – their ‘performance’, once truly under way, attracted a flurry of ecstatic amateurs, aesthetes who came for the thrill, fashionable busy-bodies who came for the novelty, curious professionals like Briusov who joined – in part, at least – for the experience or just to see ‘how it was done’.

I

Viacheslav Ivanovich Ivanov was fourteen years senior to Bely and Blok. He made his *début* in Russia as a mature artist, a scholar of great range

and ability, and his first book, *Kormchie zvezdy* (Guiding Stars, 1903), whose title Vladimir Solov'ev had immediately recognised as stemming from the Orthodox *Nomocanon* (popular devotional reading in Russia under the title *Kormchaia kniga*), was intended as precisely that, a guide: 'Vse pesnoplevtsam ot Muz: I nastavnichii zhezl, i, s tsevnitsei – / Strogii uchitel'nyi stikh – mednaia mysli skrizhal'. ('Everything is bestowed upon singers by the Muses, the staff of the spiritual guide and – together with the reed pipe / Stern didactic verse, the bronze tablet of thought').²

Ivanov, no less than his Russian mentor Solov'ev or his German teacher Mommsen, was acutely aware of the expendability of European culture, the threat of disintegration. The message with which he returned to Russia after almost twenty years of study in Germany, Paris, London, Rome and Athens, began with the acknowledgement of disintegration (the word he used was 'razluka' – 'separation') and was concerned always and at all levels with the cure.

Art and poetry, for instance, had been 'separated' from their source, the people. Yet the cure was not to bring poetry down to the level of prose, not to popularise, but to press on alone, back into the common past, however recondite and incomprehensible this might seem to the reader, to delve deep into the folk-memory towards things forgotten by the uneducated and despised by the enlightened, ever deeper towards the roots of language and the origins of cult, back to the beginnings, where 'Kak bylo drevle – glub' zapovednaia / Zachatii zhdet, i dukh nad nei kruzhit' ('As it was of old – the hallowed depths / Awaits conceptions and the spirit hovers above it').³

In the article 'Poet i chern' ('The poet and the mob'), published in *Vesy* No.3, 1904, Ivanov points to Pushkin's poems 'Chern' ('The mob') and 'Poet' ('The poet') as a clear statement of the separation 'between the rhapsode and the crowd, the protagonist of the dithyramb and the chorus, which are unthinkable in division'. Pushkin calls upon the poet not to kowtow to those who insist art should be useful, not to exchange his priestly staff for a broom to sweep the temple floor, but to *leave* the profane crowd for the 'wide-whispering groves' and 'shores lapped by desolate waves'. In olden days, Ivanov claimed, the crowd would gladly have followed the singer to the sacred groves and shores to celebrate the mysteries of a shared cult; now he can do no more than seek out the same solitudes and await its return. If this was Pushkin's message to the poet, Tiutchev's acceptance of isolation, according to Ivanov, amounts to a commandment: 'Molchi, skryvaisia i tai' ('Be silent, hide and keep your secret').⁴

It was from Tiutchev that Ivanov was later to trace the birth of Russian Symbolism as he understood it, strongly repudiating the idea that the

Symbolists were merely 'commercial travellers in Western *frissons nouveaux*'.⁵ In Tiutchev's poetry, in his positive acceptance of loneliness, Ivanov heard the first stirrings 'of the ineffable (*neskazannaia*) music of the spirit'.⁶ With the knowledge that the 'spoken thought' has become a lie came the conscious awareness that the word (*any* word) is 'no more than sign, no more than hint, no more than symbol'; yet, precisely here lies the way back from isolation to community. This way leads through traditional symbols 'implanted from the beginning by the people in the souls of its singers, but capable of expressing new insights precisely because they spring from the eternal forms'. This prescription for the reintegration of rhapsode and chorus, artist and people, individual and community, came as a revelation to many of the younger poets, and Blok took Ivanov up at once, writing of rediscovering lost unity 'along forgotten ways of spring and death'.⁷

Poetry, Ivanov believed, should not vie with prose: it should be hierophantic, incantatory, solemn. The ancient Greeks, he maintained, for whom poetry was an essential rather than an ornamental part of their culture, *expected* their poets to use a higher language far removed from that of everyday speech, fully comprehensible only to the initiate, yet awakening a response in all men through music and memory: 'Puskai nevniatno budet miru, / O chem poiui! / Zvonchatuiu on slyshit liru' ('Let it be obscure to the world, / The subject of my song! / It hears the sonorous lyre').⁸

At home in the dead languages, Ivanov adapted the rhythms of their poetry to the Russian tongue with masterly firmness. He also borrowed liberally from Western European prosody, reviving archaic form or – more rarely – experimenting with the new. In an age which preferred freer forms, he was master of the sonnet, even of the crown of sonnets. He could make Russian poetry in the tonic metres of the *dukhovnyi stikh*, the old 'spiritual songs', and could write prose using devices and constructions from the ecclesiastical chronicles. He was, however, a lover not only of antiquity and of the Middle Ages but of the Baroque. Thus, though he drew on the whole European tradition, Ivanov's poetry is closest in many ways to that transitional period in his country's literature: the eighteenth century. Like some eighteenth-century Russian poets struggling to remould an essentially medieval language to convey new concepts and unfamiliar points of reference, Ivanov occasionally (though, according to Briusov's review of his first book, not often enough) appends explanations to the more obscure classical references in his poems.⁹ Also following the practice of the eighteenth century, he uses Baroque references to Slavic deities (for instance, the Thunder-God Perun), the kind of reference which brought the *Lay of the Host of Igor* under suspicion of

being an eighteenth-century, Ossian-type forgery. By the end of the nineteenth century, the Russian ear was no longer accustomed to such references except in historical ballads of the type written by Aleksei Tolstoy or in comic verse.

Add to this that Ivanov made liberal use of grammatical forms which, though virtually impossible in everyday speech, were allowed in eighteenth-century poetry, but had been considered archaic ever since the triumph of the easy-flowing Frenchified syntax favoured by *Arzamas* at the turn of the eighteenth / nineteenth centuries. He also uses the compound epithet, not euphoniously, as Bely does, but in a way that conjures visions of sculptural groupings or the *tableaux vivants* of an Elizabethan masque. 'Solntsedospeshnaia Zarnitsa' ('Dawn-armoured in the sun'); 'izlom plamennostvol'nykh kopii' ('the refraction of flame-hafted spears'); 'pyshnostennyi grad' ('the luxuriously-walled city') are just three examples from one poem of sixteen lines selected virtually at random from Ivanov's first collection. He presents us, too, with curious genitive plurals such as 'Slav' (of glories) and 'utr' (of mornings) and makes liberal use of slavonicisms.¹⁰

Ivanov's mother had strong connections with the priesthood and brought up her beloved and only son in a spirit of poetic Orthodox piety, reading the New Testament daily, consulting the Psalter opened at random when seeking an oracle, making small 'pilgrimages' to various Moscow churches; but though his intimate knowledge of the Gospels and genuine zeal – of all the Symbolist poets his was probably the most instinctive and consistent *anima religiosa* – may well have stemmed from these early impressions, Ivanov's slavonicisms are purely literary. Together with the substitution of 'chto' for 'kotoryi', the predominance of nouns, often monosyllabic, and the unusual prominence of masculine rhymes in his poetry, these slavonicisms at times produce a quite 'un-Russian' sound. There are fewer vowels, fewer unstressed syllables, fewer verbs, less flow and euphony than we are accustomed to find in Russian verse. Reading his poetry is rather like mounting the slippery marble slabs to the Parthenon.

Certainly his contemporaries found it hard going. Although Ivanov's articles were read with respect and intense interest, his first two collections of verse, *Kormchie zvezdy* and *Prozrachnost'* (Transparency, 1904), left even his fellow Symbolists non-plussed. Briusov, though deeply impressed by Ivanov's learning and technical virtuosity, warned in his review of the first book of the *effort* required to understand the new poet. Another would-be reviewer recalls in his memoirs how he was not up to assessing the book, because there were too many references he simply did not understand and because of its 'impossible style'. Remizov found

Ivanov's eighteenth-century sonority irresistibly funny, although, when the *poeta doctus* gave a reading, '... since his poetry was full of wisdom and not jests it was really inappropriate to laugh at the time, we all had our laugh out afterwards ...' Had one of his audience lost control, Remizov continues, Ivanov would have been too carried away to notice: 'In an almost falsetto voice, chanting, intoning, he would produce line after line, no one understanding anything and not at all because of the Church-Slavonic bugaboos but [because], as Kartykov [. . .] very properly put it: "all of us are of merely average culture, whereas Vjac. Ivanov is highly cultured"' Blok, reviewing *Prozrachnost'* for *Novyi Put'* a year after Briusov had introduced *Kormchie zvezdy*, though full of admiration, at first found the poetry 'more remarkable for laboriousness than for creativity', 'learned' and 'philosophical'. Nevertheless, the virtuosity of Ivanov's control touched off dreams of an ever more perfect prosody able 'to contain what has hitherto seemed un-encompassable'.¹¹

The direct impact of this poetry seems, as so often happens, to have skipped a generation. There is a line to be traced from Viacheslav Ivanov to Velimir Khlebnikov and Osip Mandel'shtam, both of whom began their careers under the spell of Ivanov who, however much they may have polemicised with him on the way, led them back towards the roots of language, ever further towards a primal and expectant silence where ... 'v bezdrevnosti kruzhilis'ia listy' ('Where leaves circled in a world without trees').¹² Like Ivanov, with whose poetry their own sometimes enters into a direct dialogue, these two very different poets, the Futurist and the Acmeist, the advocate of the word as *zaum'* (trans-sense) and the advocate of the word as *logos*, both insisted on the right of poetry to be polyvalent and incantatory, to 'renounce the spectre of the particular everyday situation and in place of this self-evident lie to construct a twilight of stars'.¹³ It is their poetry which has accustomed us to read riddles and, in a sense, prepared the way for a revival of interest in the almost forgotten poetic heritage of their first mentor. Khlebnikov and the computer between them have left us the language of mathematics for everyday communication, and poetry, in this most prosaic of worlds, is once more, albeit nervously, fluttering at the gates of the here and now.

In the meantime, however, while Viacheslav Ivanov's personality and his famous 'Wednesdays' in the Tower – as the flat he took in St Petersburg after his return to Russia in 1905 was called by the literary élite – dominate memoirs of the time and while he has long been regarded as one of the chief, if not *the* chief theorist of Russian Symbolism, his poetry fell into almost complete neglect ... even during his lifetime. Ivanov's last collection to be published in his own country was *Nezhnaia taina* (The Tender Secret) in 1912. His next, *Svet vechernii* (Evening Light) (or

Vespertine Light, as it has also been translated to point the connection with the hymn 'O gentle light' sung during Orthodox Vespers), he prepared for publication after the Second World War, before his death in 1949. It finally came out in Oxford in 1962.¹⁴ Three years after it appeared Anna Akhmatova informed Nikita Struve that 'Voloshin, Kuzmin, Viacheslav Ivanov – have ceased to exist for us. Not long ago I tried *Cor ardens* and found it unreadable [...] It's surprising really, such an all-embracing mind, but now it is hard to read him'.¹⁵ She did, however, make an exception for the 'Zimnie sonety' ('Winter sonnets'), written 'de profundis' in 1918, and it is possible she did not know *Svet vechernii*.

In 1973, a modest volume of Viacheslav Ivanov's *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy* was published in Leningrad, followed by the *Collected Works* still in process of publication in Brussels. This last was the true turning point. Since then critical studies, translations and conferences have proliferated and readers have found – many to their surprise – that Ivanov's poetry not only continues to exist for us today, but that it is arguably the most interesting and rewarding section of his work.¹⁶

Viacheslav Ivanov's poetry, though not free from the decorative encrustations and steamy excesses of his period, is, to the mind trained on the classics and the Scriptures, remarkably coherent, intellectually satisfying. To the ear accustomed to hear poetry as essentially different from prose, it has the ring of celebration. Superb sound effects, known to Derzhavin and Lomonosov but lost to the smoother cadences of later Russian verse, echo through what has been aptly described as the closed, vaulted system of Ivanov's symbols.¹⁷

So as not to take on all the difficulties at once, we may enter this system not from ancient Russia or classical Greece but from the wintry shores of north Cornwall, where Ivanov and Lidiia Zinov'eva-Annibal spent a few grey months late in 1899, convalescing from pneumonia and the loss of their first child. Typically, in the poem 'Mgla' ('Darkness'), Ivanov takes not only his images from the rough country before him, but his metre and internal rhyme-scheme from an English poem on a similar theme: earth, water and sky.

Снежный саван пал на обрывы скал,
И по тернам нагорным — снег.
И в безднах из мглы чуть брезжут валы
Опenea незримый брег.

И глубинная мгла до Земли досягла,
И Твердь низошла к земле.
И, как остов — один меж безликих пучин, —
Он тонет в единой мгле.

Океан и Твердь — как рождение и смерть,
 И Земля — о, горький сон!
 И ветра вой, — и в безднах прибой, —
 И по тернам нагорным — стон . . .
 И реет порой, как духов рой,
 Стая чаек чрез туман,
 И садится на брег, и — как священный снег —
 На родимый падет Океан.*¹⁸

Shelley, in 'The cloud', has two feminine, four masculine rhymes in the first stanza:

I am the daughter of Earth and Water,
 And the nursling of the Sky;
 I pass through the pores of the ocean and shores;
 I change, but I cannot die.

In the Russian, where the natural tendency is toward feminine or dactylic rhyme and in which there are normally many more polysyllabic words than in English, Ivanov contrives to use masculine rhyme *only*. More often than not, moreover, he places words of one syllable in the rhyming position which, given that two lines out of four have internal rhyming, is quite obtrusive. The effect is further enhanced by contractions: 'breg' for 'bereg' (twice); 'mez' for 'mezhd'; 'chrez' for 'cherez'. Verbs are used with economy: two in the first stanza (one past-perfect, establishing the present scene, one, in the present tense, introducing a faint glimpse of movement: 'brezzhut'); three in the second (two past-perfect, informing us of what has already happened and one present, again introducing movement: 'tonet'); none in the third stanza, which establishes the paradigm of an eternal truth; and three in the last (two in the present, one in the future). The fact that all these verbs suggest either upward or downward movement, except for the indeterminate 'glimmer' and 'hover' ('brezzhut'; 'reet'), is typical of Ivanov's 'vertical' symbolic world, in which the primary images are those of 'descent' ('niskhozhdenie') and 'ascent' ('voskhozhdenie'): the god descending from Heaven to Earth to the dark underworld, and humanity — dead and alive — rising, not just

* 'A snowy shroud has fallen on the precipices of the cliffs / And over the hillside thorns — snow. / And in the abysses of the dark the waves barely glimmer / Foaming over the invisible shore. // And deepest dark has risen to engulf the Earth, / And the Firmament has descended over the Earth. / And, like an island — solitary among the featureless billows, — / It drowns in all-enveloping dark. // The Ocean and the Firmament — like birth and death; / And the Earth — oh, bitter dream! / And the howl of the wind, — and the breakers in the abyss, — / And over the hillside thorns — a moan . . . // And now and again, like a swarm of spirits, soars / A flock of seagulls through the mist, / And alights on the shore. and — like scattered snow — / Will fall back to its native Ocean.'

drawn upwards in the wake of the Divine but ascending by participation – through understanding, love, catharsis.

This poem, however, does not emphasise the stately Byzantine choreography of Ivanov's symbolic system. It reminds us rather of the Anglo-Saxon tale of the king who watched a sparrow fly through his fire-lit hall – in out of the night at one window, out into the night at the other – and compared its brief trajectory through the lighted room to the life of man. Symbols, after all, are given by reality and, according to Ivanov, by folk-memory, and this poem takes off from the bluff Cornish cliffs, the writhen thorn-trees (or gorse?) above them, and the seagulls, tossed on the wind and falling back on to the sea like the snow.

What could such a scene suggest? To impose arbitrary interpretations would be to use the scene as an allegory, as Tiutchev does in his famous 'More i utes' ('The sea and the cliff'), where the cliff stands for the state, the sea for the people. Ivanov was explicit on the difference between symbol and allegory: 'Allegory is a lesson; the symbol – an omen. Allegory is a parallel; the symbol – a pointer. Allegory is logically limited and internally static; the symbol has a soul and inner development, it lives and evolves.'¹⁹

In this poem the real winter sea-scape points, evolves and lives. First, the poet conjures up a vision of the solid Earth, the dry land, threatened by the shifting darkness of sea and sky. Before our eyes, as it were, the outlines of the Cornish coast blur and the dry land becomes an island in the darkness of space, sinking. From this picture arises another association with the 'bitter dream' of human life, that looms up from the darkness of pre-existence (*rozhdenie*, birth) and dissolves again into the darkness of death. The dream of human life suggests, in its turn, the dream of human history, the brief span of the Earth itself in the immensity of a dark universe. Only the seagulls, thronging spirits at home in all three elements, earth, sky and water, bring us back to the original reality of the scene and, at the same time, introduce hope that life in some form will survive the spatial and temporal ambiguities of chaos. 'Symbols are experiences of the forgotten and lost heritage of the soul of the people'.²⁰

More often Ivanov sought to awaken memories from the heritage of older nations than the British – of Greece, Rome, Egypt and Palestine – or to reorchestrate melodies from the past of his own country. Symbols of the 'forgotten and the lost' he rediscovered in the architecture and landscape of those southern lands which he knew at first hand: he had fallen off a camel in Egypt, contracted typhus in Jerusalem, spent a year studying in Athens, got married (twice) in Livorno, and looked on Rome as his second home – all long before his eventual emigration to Italy in 1924, where, after seven years teaching in Padua, he eventually settled till

his death in the Eternal City. The literatures of the ancient world, as well as their geographical locations, were a rich source, and Ivanov loved to take epigraphs for his poems from the Greek and Latin, weaving the old names into the old metres in his own, comparatively youthful, 'barbaric' tongue. We may see how he does this and how one symbol sets others echoing and vibrating from the ending of the poem 'Zemlia', the last in the key section 'To Dionysos' in *Kormchie zvezdy*. This poem is about the ultimate 'separation' – death – and about its healing – resurrection, but it is also about the 'separation' of the poet from the people.

Матерь зовет в сени дремлющей дуба;
 Вещий, зашепчет древний дуб —
 Вздропчет она и вздохнет над вами:
 'Жив ли мой Бог?' Кто жив — живит!

'Ах, не Земля, дети, вам мать — Голгофа
 С одного дня, как умер Он!
 С Ним умерла, дети, Земля! О, дети!
 Жив ли мой Бог?' Кто жив — живит!

[. . .]
 Братья! Тогда лоно земли лобзайте,
 Плачьте над ней: 'О, мать, живи! . . .'
 — 'Бог твой воскрес!' благовестить дерзайте:
 'Бог твой живет — и ты живи! . . .'^{*21}

The symbolism of this poem stems from pagan Greece, the Bible and the religious poetry of Byzantium. The Earth, (Gaia, Ceres, the bearer of gods and men) is designated, in the first stanza quoted here, by the high word for Mother, *Mater*, which survives in modern Russian only in the oblique cases of the more usual word *mat* and in poetic invocations to the Theotokos, 'Bogoroditsa' – 'the Mother of God'. The Earth-mother, then, weary of 'many' Golgothas, is calling out to the truant poet from beneath the oak, a potent symbol in itself which recalls at once the tree of life Ygdrasil in Norse mythology, Pushkin's oak on the grassy shore around which fairy-tales and songs are spun,²² and the tree of Salvation from which Noah fashioned his Ark and some anonymous hand fashioned the Cross. In this poem, the oak-tree is given the adjective 'veshchii' ('far-sighted') and its rustling crown has begun to 'whisper', to foretell speech and the Word that is destined to become the good tidings

* 'The Mother calls beneath the impenetrable shade of the oak; / Fore-sighted, the ancient oak will begin to whisper. / She will murmur and sigh over you: / "Does my God live?" Who lives – gives life! // "Ah! Not the Earth is your mother, children, your mother is Golgotha / Since that day, when He died! / Together with Him, children, the Earth died! O, children! / Does my God live?" Who lives – gives life! [. . .] // Brothers! Kiss then the womb of the Earth, / Weep over it: "O, mother, live! . . ." / "Your God is risen!" Dare to give the good news: / "Your God liveth – and you, too, live."'

(‘blagovestit’). The Earth, engrossed in her lament, does not listen to the murmuring of the leaves, for no one will tell her clearly whether her God yet lives and, since the day He died, her children are children of the grave and the Earth herself is but a tomb.

The final stanza begins, as does the first, with the invocation: ‘Brothers!’ We may assume that it is again his brother poets whom Ivanov is addressing in this last verse of the poem, since the opening lines contain a clear echo of Pushkin’s invocation to his brother-poets to fly ‘na berega pustynnykh voln / V shirokoshumnye dubrovy’ (‘To the shores of the desolate waves, / to the wide whispering groves’); in Ivanov’s poem: ‘V sumrak dubrav sviashchennyi, / Na berega pustynnykh voln’ (‘To the holy twilight of the groves, / to the shores of the desolate waves’). Now that the poet has obeyed the first call into the wilderness and has harkened to the lament of the Earth over the suffering God, the message changes. It is no longer Pushkin, but Dostoevsky’s Elder Zosima of whom we are reminded by the call to kiss the earth and to weep over her. The poet emerges from isolation through communion with the suffering Earth. Reborn not from the Earth but from Golgotha, not from the womb but from the tomb, he will find the words to comfort both the Earth-mother and the earth-born people from whom he has been so long estranged and to proclaim to them the Gospel of Resurrection: ‘Bog tvoi zhivet – i ty zhivi!’

‘Zemlia’ is a key poem for Viacheslav Ivanov. The refrain ‘kto zhiv – zhivit’ (‘who lives gives life’) echoes on through his poetry right through to the last book *Svet vecherni*, where, in the poem ‘Schast’e’ (‘Happiness’), we find the same formula and the same joy, extrapolated, as it were, from myth:

Солнце, сияя, теплом излучается!
 Счастливо сердце, когда расточается,
 [...]
 Будто со всем он живым обручается,
 Счастлив, кто жив и живит.*²³

Indeed, after the Revolution of 1917 it is as though Ivanov had come back to his poetic beginnings. The sonnet ‘Iazyk’ (‘Language’), written ten years after ‘Schast’e’, on 10 February 1927, to commemorate the death of Pushkin,²⁴ brings into play the same imagery of the whispering groves and the Earth-mother as ‘Zemlia’. Here, however, the poem begins with the definite statement: ‘Rodnaia rech’ pevtsu zemlia rodnaia’ (‘To the singer, the native language is the native earth’). All the ‘unconvertible wealth’ of

* ‘The sun, shining, beams out warmth: / Happy the heart, when it spends itself, / [...] / As though it were entering upon a betrothal with all living things, / Happy is he who lives and gives life.’

the poet's forebears is buried in the linguistic subsoil, but the tops of the trees which grow out of this Earth/Language are in the free air and murmur songs learnt from heaven as well as from their roots. As of old, Earth and Language await the revivifying spirit which infuses its darkest depths with sunlight, turning words to poetry, coal to diamond. Earth and language await the poet, 'the forerunner'.

The use of the word 'Predtecha', 'forerunner', at the end of the poem 'Iazyk' suggests that poetry is not an end in itself. To Ivanov, poetry was a creative act and thus a part of, a kind of liturgical re-enactment of, Creation itself, a preparation of the heart and mind for the understanding of God's work. In this he differed radically from Merezhkovsky who, he considered, had abandoned the whispering groves of high poetry, and 'the holy language of silence' (Ivanov, like Blok, went through quite long periods when he wrote no poetry) for argument, verbosity, propaganda. Indeed, Merezhkovsky's impassioned disquisitions at the Religious-Philosophical Meetings and elsewhere were constantly misunderstood, precisely because of his failure to establish a common language with listeners and readers. Such a language, in Ivanov's view, was the first step towards the re-establishment of 'sobornost', that community of spirit and of feeling which Ivanov wished to see in culture as well as in 'cult'.²⁵

Only in poetry, Ivanov believed, where music could come to the aid of words, where the unsaid and unsayable could be sensed in the rhythm of the line, the orchestration of sound, the pregnant image, the significant pause, was there any hope of reuniting the people and the artist, the soul and the intelligent will, the earth and the treetops: meanwhile, true, universal 'culture' was impossible in the present state of 'separation'. Ivanov looked therefore on Merezhkovsky's attempt to effect an alliance between the church and the Intelligentsia through prosaic discussion as an activity worthy in itself but doomed to failure. It would also, he considered, sooner or later, disqualify Merezhkovsky as an artist. The function of poetry, Ivanov wrote towards the end of his life, was not to impart doctrine but to recall forgotten knowledge: 'I poet chemu-to uchit, / No ne mudrost' iu svoei [. . .] / Uchit on – vospominat'' ('The poet, too, has something to teach / But not by his wisdom: / [. . .] / What he teaches is – to remember').²⁶

The fact that Ivanov himself, a proven scholar and direct disciple of Vladimir Solov'ev, had abandoned philosophy and history for poetry, gave him the authority to treat the most solemn themes playfully. Taking as his text the lines from Proverbs 8:30–1, 'Ludens coram Eo omni tempore, ludens in orbe terrarum et deliciae meae esse cum filiis hominum'. he wrote:

Коль правда, что душа пред тем,
 Как в мир сойти, на мир иной взирала,
 Поэтом тот родится, с кем
 София вечная играла.*²⁷

This playful element, this lightness of touch, was something of an embarrassment to the editors of *Novyi Put'*, who already stood accused by their ecclesiastical critics of pantheism. In his very first letter to Viacheslav Ivanov in Paris in March 1903, inviting him to contribute to his journal, Merezhkovsky had explained:

We would only ask one thing of you: to be as comprehensible as possible, as simple, as naïve! Our main task *is that it should be impossible not to understand us*, [...] to use a banal formula; we are once more 'going to the people', but, of course, with a different message from that of our predecessors'.²⁸

It was natural that the author of *Khristos i Antikhris*t should have been enchanted by Ivanov's idea of the Hellenic religion as a pagan Old Testament 'revealed to the dark darkly', 'purified and baptised in the New Testament Jordan together with all the earth'.²⁹ It was equally natural that, as it became increasingly clear that Ivanov had no intention of simplifying this message for *Novyi Put'*, Merezhkovsky should have sought to distance himself somewhat from his new author and incidentally from his own past.

In the friendly polemical article 'Za ili protiv?' ('For or against?'), Merezhkovsky asked Ivanov just as he had once asked Briusov face to face: did he or did he not truly believe in Christ? Why Dionysos of the many masks when the true Face had already been revealed? To this Ivanov replied with an *ad hoc* poem 'Litso ili maska' ('Face or mask') that makes a nonsense of the question. Christ is the same, the poet declares, whether unrecognised on the road to Emmaus or perceived in the breaking of bread; by the lakeside laying the fire to cook the disciples' fish; in the garden, taken for the gardener, then recognised by Mary Magdalene; coming in Power and Glory with a face that outshines the sun ... or begging a cup of water, a thirsty traveller, a poor prisoner.

Ты суший, — не всегда ль и, Тайный — не везде ли, —
 И в гроздьях жертвенных, и в белом сне лилей?
 Ты — глас улыбчивый младенческой свирели;
 Ты — скалы движущий Орфей.†³⁰

* 'If it is true that the soul / Before descending into the world, has looked upon another world, / The born poet is the one with whom / Eternal Sophia played.'

† 'Thou Who art, — art Thou not always and is it not everywhere that Thou art in secret, — / In the sacrificial clusters of grapes and in the white sleep of the lilies? / Thou art the smiling voice of the infant flute, / Thou art Orpheus who moves rocks.'

This beautiful poem – itself a justification of Ivanov’s oracular approach to language – was placed by Merezhkovsky himself in the next number of *Novyi Put’* after ‘*Za ili protiv?*’ So elegant a riposte demonstrates the sheer impossibility of pinning down a poet whose vocation it was to bring harmony out of discord and, having reconciled the irreconcilable, to celebrate the wholeness of the world. In the poem ‘*Dryads*’, one of the first he published in *Novyi Put’*, Ivanov even succeeded in soothing Bal’mont’s doubts about the divisive, abstract dualism of the ‘new religious consciousness’ with the lines:

Глядятся Жизнь и Смерть очами всех огней
 В озера Вечности двуликой:
 И корни — свет ветвей, и ветви — сон корней,
 И все одержит ствол великий, —
 Одна душа горит душами всех огней.*

‘*Viacheslav!*’, Bal’mont is said to have exclaimed, ‘that’s about *it*, the most important thing . . .’, and later, at a moment of disagreement: ‘But those “*Dryads*” of yours, *Viacheslav*, bring tears to my eyes every time I read them, though what it is we have in common I don’t know.’ Ivanov believed they shared a sense of ‘universal separation’ and ‘universal accord’ and that, for both, it was natural to praise.³¹ Bal’mont’s genius, though, was fiercely individualistic, whereas Ivanov never lost sight of his desire for ‘*sobornoe deistvo*’, community of action.

The germ of future alliances – which were not, however, to be concluded for several years to come – is evident in the interaction of Bely, Ivanov and Blok within their differing concepts of poetry. What Ivanov had in common with his fellows of the second generation of Symbolists was a feeling of dedication, derived primarily from Vladimir Solov’ev, to a corporate effort to give some kind of material form to the ideal. All three were destined to share this dedication in their art, and they considered neither sacrificing art itself to reach a wider public as Merezhkovsky had done, nor elevating it to the status of an end in itself, as Briusov and Bal’mont tended to do. To be a Symbolist, for them, was to make the real world ‘transparent’. Nevertheless, within the all-encompassing Salvation-myth, within those ‘postulates of the mind’ which, to use Ivanov’s term, they each sought to ‘embody’,³² their attitudes to art were essentially, existentially different. For Ivanov, art was a temple or sacred grove of the spirit to which the poets, a chosen company,

* ‘Life and Death gaze with the eyes of all the lamps / Into the lakes of two-faced Eternity; / And the roots are the light of the branches, and the branches are the dream of the roots / And all are contained in the great tree-trunk. / One soul burns with the souls of all the lamps.’

should be drawn to celebrate half-forgotten gods – a sanctuary of recollection to which, one day, all people would follow. For Bely, art was but one flank, albeit a most important one, of the intellectual army he was mustering for the redemption of all culture. There were times when he perceived Ivanov as an enemy in this struggle – others when they were in alliance. For Blok, art like life itself was a hell which must be traversed in order to emerge – somewhere beyond art – into the unimaginable light of a new Eden, a New Life . . . a hell into which he hesitated to plunge and on the brink of which Bely, the ‘son of light’, struggled desperately to hold him back; whereas Ivanov – always mindful of Dante’s pilgrimage and oblivious, at first, of Blok’s self-destructive maximalism – blessed him on his way.

II

Andrei Bely (Boris Nikolaevich Bugaev) was the first of the ‘younger generation’ to emerge as a force in the development of Russian Symbolism. His début – *Simfonia (2-aia, dramaticheskaiia)* (Symphony (the 2nd, Dramatic)), 1902 – was extraordinary in that it represented an entirely new genre, a ‘symphony’ in rhythmic prose, complete with movements, counterpoint and *leitmotifs*. Bely composed the *Dramatic Symphony*, the most successful of four at which he was to work off and on for the next six years, by way of relaxation, standing at the piano, improvising excuriatingly, when his parents were safely out of their summer home at Serebrianyi Kolodez’. ‘About the form I didn’t think, but it came out as “my own”’.³³

In the preface, however, dated Moscow 26 September 1901, Bely does offer some post-factum explanation. The work, he claims, has three levels of meaning: musical, satirical and, beyond these, the ‘ideal-symbolical’.³⁴ Here, in this preface to his first published work, Bely emphasises his closeness to Vladimir Solov’ev without mentioning his name, simply by explaining the interpenetration of the mystic and satirical levels, harmonised, as they were not in Solov’ev’s work, by ‘music’. What Bely does not mention, perhaps because at this stage he was less conscious of this aspect of his gift, is the ‘fourth level’ of real – or grotesque? – description which situates the Symphony in space as well as in time: the cruel kaleidoscope of city life; the ‘hopeless expanses’ of the Russian countryside; the aimless jollity of life on the estate ‘Griazishchi’ (a thoroughly Gogolian name suggesting ‘much mud’); the whirlwind, infernal dazzle of the Shrovetide fair, the Kafkaesque basement room – and the lyrical evocation of Moscow on Whit Monday, golden, drowsy, full of the scent of white lilac and the friendly spirits of the dead . . .

The writer Bely, he later maintained, merely described 'naturalistically' what Boris Nikolaevich Bugaev actually saw, '... and if new words or new combinations of words were needed, then that is no caprice of "Bely"'s ...'³⁵ So he wrote later of the totally unprecedented novella, *Kotik Letaev* (1922), about his own infancy and childhood, which traces – as he asserted, from memory – the formation of individual awareness from the mythical sub-strata of being and from pre-existence in the womb. The presence of the child prodigy 'Boren'ka' is to be felt throughout Bely's work: even in the driest, most abstract, most intellectually acrobatic of his theoretical articles, certainly throughout the ornate complexity of the great 'historical' novel *Peterburg* (and not only in the autobiographical sub-text), certainly in the *Dramatic Symphony* (and not only in the fragmented self-portrait).

Boren'ka, though, was a timorous character, desperately uncertain of himself, and it was his brilliant champion and representative, Andrei Bely, who took Symbolist society by storm in 1902, dazzling Briusov and the Merezhkovskys with his profundity, erudition and apparently uninhibited originality. Bely, at the tender age of twenty-one, was the very embodiment of the universal man. He thought in diagrams, he was studying the natural sciences, he was to be one of the first writers to use mathematics in literary criticism, he 'danced' his lectures and 'sang' his poetry – and all the disciplines seemed natural to him, mere facets of his own quicksilver personality. For both Blok and Briusov the first impression of Bely was of a strange mixture of youth and age.³⁶ What only became evident later was the Peter Pan quality of the man behind the mask. Though for many years this was partly obscured by the richness and variety of mood, the range of intellectual interests and the genius for innovation, Bely/Bugaev did not change or mature, living and reliving his difficult childhood, always on the look-out for substitute parents, fiercely devoted to the band of 'brothers' he captained and in whose company he first escaped the stifling grown-up world of his parents' unhappy home, a world of which he himself was the cherished pivot.

We see this combination of scholarly habit and immaturity in his three volumes of memoirs. Here, Bely notes days and dates and full names with academic precision, treats the reader to dazzling impressionistic displays of erudition and recall, entertains with the most life-like conversation-pieces and vivid portraits. It is the highly-polished performance of a sophisticated artist – yet the authorial persona, of whom we are constantly aware even when he is merely giving vent to silent astonishment through the expressive use of punctuation marks, rows of dots, question or exclamation-marks, is not 'Andrei Bely', but Boren'ka, the misunderstood child, the dazzlingly successful then 'persecuted' schoolboy, the

shy, clumsy student, the unsuccessful lover, hysterical, sick, cross-eyed with anguish and, beneath it all, desperately anxious for grown-up approval and resentful of those 'painki' (goody-goody) children of whom the grown-ups do approve, unable to shake off the feeling that he himself is somehow hopelessly 'biak' (naughty), identifying now with Christ in His innocent sufferings, now with Cain. This lonely child longs for companions, but they have to play *his* way or all is over – till the next round of the game.

In this, of course, Bely was the product of his home environment rather than of any literary influence. The son of a distinguished but eccentric professor of mathematics with a taste for philosophy, he held his father in profound affection but only really became friendly with him in 1903, the year of the senior Bugaev's death. That year Boria, by a prodigious feat of cramming, delighted his father by obtaining an excellent degree in Natural Sciences, which he had set himself to study both to please the good Professor and to acquire what he himself felt to be a necessary grounding for a twentieth-century Symbolist determined to change the world: 'Well, Boren'ka – you *have* surprised me,' his father had exclaimed, 'never thought you had it in you; after all, basically, you spent the whole year playing the fool; still, that's all over! A first class diploma, – after all!'³⁷

That 'whole year' had seen the publication of Bely's first book, an increasing involvement with Skorpion and the literary life of Moscow, his début in *Mir Iskusstva* as a theoretician of Symbolism, the beginnings of a febrile 'mystic' friendship with the Merezhkovskys, the first exchange of letters with Blok and, in general, an ever-increasing absorption in philosophy and the arts . . . To his father, however, all this was 'playing the fool'. Nevertheless, when he found out that the author of the scandalous *Dramatic Symphony*, pilloried in the respectable press but much praised by the Symbolists, was none other than his own son, Professor Bugaev had, contrary to expectation, been rather pleased, had actually read the book – to his son's profound alarm – and had consented to receive that 'clever brute' Briusov, who had shocked him inexpressibly only a year before by reciting a poem describing the rape of a corpse at a university dinner in honour of Merezhkovsky. Indeed, the Professor's concern for his son's degree was due more to the anxiety of a sick man as to how his family would subsist after his death than to the wish to see Boris follow in his own academic footsteps. He, too, had been involved in examinations in 1903, though from the other side of the examiner's desk, and had ignored doctor's orders to rest. At the conclusion of the academic year, alone in the flat with his son, he died of heart failure.

All that Bely subsequently wrote about his father is a mixture of admiration, tenderness – and total rejection of his beliefs, way of life and taste in art and literature. The more they were drawn to each other, it seemed, the less they understood each other. Bely identified with his father's awkwardness, the genius as a figure of fun . . . and at the same time clearly felt that society, his father's society, the 'Professors', were rejecting him in the name of his father, of everything about his father which *he* rejected: almost that they blamed him for his father's death:

. . . meeting the professors, some of whom extended me two fingers and slapped me in the face with their eyes, as though I'd bumped Father off; I was edged away from the coffin as though I were a thief who'd come creeping into someone else's house and not someone who could have had all these ignoramuses thrown out. [. . .] But from that day I would go to the monastery at sunset and sit in front of the still-living flowers on the blossoming grave, fitfully lit by the flaring of the little dark-pink lantern.

Sitting in the hushed cemetery, he recalled his mother singing a song: 'The angel of silence watched over the quiet grave'; and how his father, listening from the doorway, straightening his spectacles with one hand, beating time with a paper-cutter in the other, had murmured: 'Beautiful, yes indeed; the words and the tune!'³⁸ A moment of fragile harmony! Bely's mother and father did not get on, had always torn the child apart. One of his earliest memories was of their discussing divorce in his presence but deciding they must stay together because neither would trust the other with his upbringing. She was a pretty woman, neurotic, artistic, a musician. Impatient with her husband, she lived in dread of their son growing up to resemble him and covered the little boy's bulging Bugaev forehead with soft curls. To please her he played the fool, disguising an uncanny facility for figures, letters and languages. From both parents he concealed his love of fairytales, because a first beloved German '*bonne*' had been dismissed for 'over-exciting' him with them. He likewise concealed his love of music, which he was convinced would also be forbidden if 'they' found out with what ecstasy he listened from his bed to his mother playing Beethoven and Chopin's nocturnes. He also kept quiet about the games of the imagination in which he found solace, particularly his 'playing at religion'.

Unlike Briusov's parents, the Bugaevs were not prosaically atheistic. Bely's mother occasionally went to church but he noticed that she attended concerts and the theatre more often. His father's mathematical universe was not, could not be, 'materialistic':

Ты говорил: 'Летающие монады
В еонных волнах плещущих времен, —

Не существуем мы, и мы — громады,
Где в мире мир трепещущий зажжен.*³⁹

For the little boy, veneration for the University, the ‘Temple of Science’, of which his father was a ‘priest’ and to whose service he felt himself inevitably destined, replaced respect for the church and the clergy, who, he also learnt from his elders, were superstitious, ignorant and cupiditous. He was taught, albeit somewhat perfunctorily, to ‘say his prayers’, but God was explained with a certain embarrassment as ‘so-to-speak, perfection’ and his father told him the Bible stories as ‘allegory’. They were, however, stories, and these were gratefully accepted, especially the New Testament, ‘in the rhythms of musical aesthetics,’ as the boy’s ‘first perception of dramatic poetry’.⁴⁰ Religion became a very personal identification with the innocent sufferings of Christ which, if borne with love, would lead to resurrection and, at the same time, a solemn and enchanting ‘game’ which he played alone or with his Russian wetnurse. She did not live in the Bugaev flat – but visited regularly and she was the only person to whom, as an adolescent, Boria risked reading his poetry. These childhood games – the perception of a patch of sunlight on the parquet floor, as the descent of the Holy Spirit – were, Bely maintained, a preparation for Symbolism.

His mother’s music as the source of ‘rhythm’ and the games of pretend gave him the power to conjure form, movement and images from the chaos of his emotions. Without such creative play in childhood, Bely claims, there would be no Einsteins. Certainly there would have been no ‘Andrei Bely’, who took over from the nameless but heroic ‘he’ of Boren’ka’s youthful imagination when ‘he’, smitten by Buddhism and Schopenhauer, in that order, retired to the East ‘to become a writer’ . . . So Boren’ka prepared to become an Einstein of literature:

. . . I abandon myself entirely to the sounds of music and moonbeams; staring at the moon, I begin to study its reflection in the mirror; I put the mirror on the table, climb on to the table myself, and gaze at the reflection of the moon in the mirror at my feet – to the point of self-hypnosis, carefully studying my own reactions; suddenly it seems to me that the power of moonlight would be increased by a sniff of smelling salts. I say to myself,

‘The moon is connected with ammonia’.

Footsteps; I flutter down from the table; the mirror is in place; at the table sits ‘the schoolboy’ and studies Cicero;

‘Translating, Boren’ka?’

‘Translating . . .’⁴¹

* ‘You used to say: “We are flying nomads / Caught in the aeon-waves of dancing time. / We do not exist, and we are immensities, / Where vibrant world in world is set alight.”’

The mirror-theme was later taken up in the Third Symphony, *Vozvrat* (The Return, 1905), the hero of which ‘returns’ to a former life by upsetting his boat between two moonlit skies, and from this time such experiments became a passion. ‘I learnt to see “Plato’s ideas” in nature’ ... ‘to “see” [simple everyday objects] without will, disinterestedly.’⁴² The young writer became a ‘specialist’ in skylines, sunsets, sunrises. Then, from Schopenhauer, he proceeded to Fet, from Fet to Bal’mont, whose first collection *Pod severnym nebom* came his way in 1897, after which he ‘read everything’. This extraordinary progression from the more difficult to the less was gradually brought into the open, sorted through and ventilated by the providential arrival of the Solov’ev family to take possession of a flat two floors down from the Bugaevs’.

Bely began visiting with the Solov’evs a year before his discovery of Schopenhauer at the age of fifteen. Their son, Sergei Mikhailovich Solov’ev (1885–1941), a precocious ten-year-old altar boy, who was to follow Bely, tentatively and, for the taste of the time, somewhat over-cautiously, into literature, but who eventually found his vocation in the priesthood, was his first real friend and ally in an esoteric game of spiritual knight-errantry in which the two became absorbed virtually from their first meeting. Bely was astonished to find ‘what was deeply hidden in me was open in him; without embarrassment, he spoke with childish directness of things that I had kept quiet about in the presence of grown-ups for years’.⁴³

Ol’ga Mikhailovna Solov’eva, artist and translator, was also ‘a friend’ who accepted the young Bugaev, as she did her own son, on equal terms and who was fun to be with, being gifted with a quality that had so far been singularly lacking in the boy’s life and which he was later to appreciate in Ol’ga’s nephew, Aleksandr Blok: an elusive, understated sense of humour. Ol’ga was very small, with a deep voice, at once ‘uiuinaia’ (cosy) and ‘bespokoiushchaia’ (disturbing). She introduced Bely to her own wide-ranging reading in modern European literature – Wilde, Nietzsche, Ruskin, de Gourmont, Verlaine, Mallarmé, Huysmans – and opened up to him the world of painting: the Pre-Raphaelites, the Impressionists and, when it began to come out, *Mir Iskusstva* and the whole spectrum of Moscow and Petersburg artists associated with that journal and its exhibitions. It was the Solov’evs who drew Bely out once and for all

... from the fearsome underground; in talking to O.M. [Ol’ga Mikhailovna] I began to gain control over my own language [...] my tonguetiedness had been rooted in the fact that I, experiencing metaphor as gesture or play and admiring metaphor in language, never introduced it into my own speech; and everything that was alive and new in me could not be expressed without metaphor.

It was at the Solov'evs' I heard:
 'V.F.M. is a faun; he goats.'
 It was a revelation.⁴⁴

Here, in the jargon of the Solov'evs' flat, is the source of Bely's sparkling gift for neologism, pun, the creation of new compounds, the juggling with those very parts of speech whose names he had had such difficulty in remembering as a little boy under his father's painstaking tuition and whose functions he had been brought up to regard as sacrosanct. Now it turned out they were all gloriously interchangeable. If a mutual acquaintance could 'goat', then a nose could 'purple' and a building could 'sneer'. Kisses and feasts could become adjectives, and adjectives themselves be doubled and trebled to add light and movement to mere colour. Sounds could be used like music, change of key and counterpoint conveyed by words. Old-fashioned words, properly orchestrated, could mince and flounce and dance a minuet. You could use those endless scales his mother made him practise at the piano to suggest Eternal Return and you could convey the kaleidoscopic quality of city life through non-sequiturs, you could create a hiatus in time by describing a hiatus in space: 'the absence of all boots', for instance, as spotted through a basement window. In fact, you could do anything – even write prose like poetry and call it a 'symphony'.⁴⁵

It was the third occupant of the flat, the quiet Mikhail Sergeevich Solov'ev, the unassuming brother of the famous Vladimir, who confirmed the boy in the idea that not only *could* he do all these things, but that they were worth doing. If Ol'ga and Sergei had taught Boria to talk, Mikhail Sergeevich was the ideal listener, drawing him out with a quietly responsive, 'convex' silence, always ready with the pertinent question to help him think through his own thoughts. A man of keen imagination, capable of entering in all seriousness into the boys' creative play, he was, at the same time, sober and sensible and, like his brother, a person of firm moral commitment. He was the young Bugaev's first, best and most disinterested mentor outside school and family and it was he who decided that the second, 'Dramatic' Symphony was worthy of publication. Sensing Boren'ka's terror of his father's world, he stood godfather to the boy's new alter ego, naming him Andrei Bely, Andrew the White, straight from his and Sergei's ongoing, familiar crusade, thus lovingly and wisely choosing a mask that would not just be something for the boy to hide behind but would fit the adult author like a second face.

It was at the Solov'evs' flat that Bely, on 5 December 1901, first met Briusov and, on the following day, Hippus and Merezhkovsky. From there Mikhail Sergeevich arranged for Skorpion to publish the *Symphony*. It was partly as a result of discussing the Merezhkovskys and their ideas

with the Solov'evs that Bely decided he must take issue with this 'Russian Luther' and his fascinating wife on their understanding of 'Times and seasons'. Encouraged by Sergei and Ol'ga Mikhailovna, he sent them a letter, signed as from 'a student of the natural sciences', demanding that they either formulate their thoughts about the coming end of the world more clearly – or refrain from leading people astray by their deceptive certainties. Hippus, intrigued beyond measure and apparently identifying without difficulty the shy youth she had twice met at the Solov'evs', replied through Ol'ga, asking Bely to meet her and Merezhkovsky next time they came to Moscow. Within the year, Bely's letter was scheduled for publication in the first number of *Novyi Put'*, Merezhkovsky had begged him to join and 'instruct' their 'circle', which had perhaps – so he said – become too much entangled in public life and thus lost a certain subjective depth and purity which Bely could provide, Zinaida Hippus was writing him 'mystic' letters to the laboratory (typically, he concealed this new friendship from his parents), and the text of a lecture he had given to a student circle, 'Formy iskusstva' (Forms of art), had been accepted for publication in *Mir Iskusstva*.

This article was Andrei Bely's first attempt to erect that defensive apparatus of aesthetic theory and scientific method – or scientific metaphor – which was, eventually, to form such a considerable proportion of his oeuvre and which was to make him perhaps the supreme exponent of 'Symbolism' to the modern mind.⁴⁶ In this article, Bely's preoccupation with apocalypse is soft-pedalled, though present in a direct reference to the Merezhkovskys' and Solov'ev's prediction of the passing of art into religion, as well as in a liberal sprinkling of quotation from St John and from Solov'ev's poetry. What Bely was after in the article, as in his life at this time, was a 'synthesis' of philosophy, science and aesthetics which would lead to a religious justification of culture. To the construction of this synthesis he brought all his reading to date and all his efforts to master scientific facts and plumb the philosophy of science. This led to some curious verbal accumulations: 'In the given instance', he wrote, 'poetry plays the role of a spatial equivalent to music, analogous, for example, with the mechanical equivalent of heat. Poetry is the vent that lets the spirit of music into the spatial forms of art. "It bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth"' (St John).⁴⁷

One can almost see Bely in his white laboratory overall blowing up his friend Petrovsky's retort as they discussed Hippus's latest letter, then thrusting his nose into a preparation of cyanide! Later he was to gain greater control over his metaphors, but the idea of energy generated by explosions and the optimistic analogies (such as apocalyptic millennium

generated by social catastrophe and resurrection by personal anguish) were to remain the essential foundation not only of his thought, but of his very being as man and artist.

It is not, however, with Bely the theoretician that we have to deal here but with Bely the artist who, in 'The forms of art', alerts us to the principal tenet of his credo by repeating it twice, each time slung like a four-cornered hammock between the wobbly supports of paraphrased quotations from Kant, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche and Spencer: '... every form of art has reality for its point of departure and music, as pure movement, for its destination.'⁴⁸

This was a statement of significance not only for Bely's Symphonies, but for all his poetry and, later, his novels. There is always the real-life take-off point, as perceived by the 'naturalistic' eye of the tongue-tied Boria. As he says in the *Dramatic Symphony*: 'The ordinary eye would see nothing unusual here, though a careful observer would reason otherwise.'⁴⁹ Boria's observations are then taken up and transfigured until they yield a concentration of 'pure movement' – jets of energy leaping heavenwards, only to break and fall back in laughter or tragedy, sometimes with an audible bump, sometimes in a rainbow shower of pure joy.

Bely's first book of poetry, *Zoloto v lazure* (Gold in Azure, 1904), is full of the euphoria of this newfound power over words. The poet can make anything happen – well, almost anything – and clearly enjoys doing so.

Bely's reading, and his acquaintance with the art of Shtuk and Boecklin, for instance, had given him a great longing to meet the creatures of antiquity: titans, unicorns, centaurs. But who ever heard of such things in prosaic, turn-of-the-century Moscow? Yet the centaur comes thundering out of the shadows at his call and romps with him all day long in the golden sunshine: 'Veselyi kentavr sred' lazurnogo dnia / Dozhdem nezabudok osypal menia' ('The merry centaur amidst the azure day / Pelted me with a shower of forgetmenots').⁵⁰ There is a whole cycle of centaur poems and the first, 'Northern' Symphony, published in 1904, also by Skorpion, is overrun by mischievous, friendly and occasionally scary escapees from classical Greece and the bestiaries of the Middle Ages.

In the poem, 'Na gorakh' (In the mountains), Bely launches out to paint a purely allegorical landscape of the soul from the ancient Mosaic theme of retreat into the mountains, reused to such effect in their generation by Nietzsche's Zarathustra and Ibsen's Brand and also by the young Blok in a solemn devotional lyric 'Moi ogni goriat na vys'iax gor', which Bely had been shown by Ol'ga Solov'eva to whom it is dedicated. 'Na gorakh' begins:

Горы в брачных венцах.
 Я в восторге, я молод.
 У меня на горах
 Очистительный холод.*

But then the unexpected occurs:

Вот ко мне на утес
 притащился горбун седовласый.
 Мне в подарок принес
 из подземных теплиц ананасы.

Он в малиново-ярком плясал,
 прославляя лазурь.
 бороною взметал
 Вихрь метельно-серебряных бурь:

Голосил
 низким басом.
 В небеса запустил
 ананасом.†⁵¹

The poem, written in 1903, is rich in innovation. Bely was one of the first Russian poets to ignore the convention of beginning a line of poetry with a capital letter and typographical experiment was, from the beginning, an integral feature of his writing in prose and verse. In the part of the poem we have quoted there are two one-word lines – ‘Golossil’ and ‘ananasom’ – and one broken line – devices usually associated with Maiakovsky, who first read ‘Na gorakh’ at the age of sixteen while in solitary confinement – and decided on the strength of it to give up illegal revolutionary work for the time being to learn how to become an artist. ‘How merrily Andrei Bely “bunged his pineapple into the sky”, and all I’d managed to produce was “hundreds of wearisome days”’, he noted.⁵²

Particularly typical of Bely’s early poetry is the basically amphibrachic metre with free variation of length: two, three and one accentuated syllables per line. This gives great lightness, a nimble, dancing quality which again suggests Nietzsche: Bely loved to quote the passage about Zarathustra dancing: ‘Zarathustra – pliasun ...’. There is a dancing rhythm, too, in his semantic counterpoint, constantly arousing and defeating expectation. The landscape is ideal, the mountains clearly mountains of the spirit and the hero is ‘in ecstasy’, but the hunchback who

* ‘The mountains are in bridal crowns. / I am in ecstasy, I am young. / Here on my mountains / There is purifying cold.’

† ‘But here to me on my cliff / a grey-haired hunchback has come clambering / Brought me a present / of pineapples from the underground greenhouses. // He danced in vivid raspberry, / glorifying the azure. / His beard brushed up / a whirlwind of blizzard-silver storms: // Yelled / in a deep bass voice / Bunged a pineapple / into the sky.’

'comes clambering', 'hauling himself up' (the verb 'pritashchilsia' suggests a second meaning of 'came trailing after me') brings, as a gift, absurdly out-of-place pineapples.

In the next verse this figure of fun is transformed into an elemental. His ritual dance 'glorifying the azure' brings down a blizzard by the toss of his beard. The language becomes impressionistic. Bely does not tell us what the hunchback is dressed in: all we see is a leaping blob of 'raspberry-vivid' red against the blue – suddenly obliterated by 'a whirlwind of blizzard-silver storms'. The compounds suggest, as so often with Bely, luminosity and shimmering mutability of colour and thus achieve a kinetic quality. The impression of sheer boyish mischief which first appears with 'pritashchilsia' is heightened by the next two verbs: 'golosil' ('howled, yelled') and 'zapustil' ('threw, launched, bunged'). Bely used the latter in the same year in another context to which it is eminently 'better suited': to describe a boy throwing a cobble-stone at a cat.⁵³ The one-stress line 'nizkim basom' ('in a deep bass'), coming straight after the silvery 'golosil', conveys to a nicety the shock and resonance of the hunchback's deep voice. To movement of mood and movement of sound is added the purely visual movement of the pineapple's trajectory across the sky and the way in which it bursts into radiance as it nears the horizon.

On the philosophical level, it would be possible – though dangerous, perhaps – to interpret this poem as an allegory of Bely's relation to Nietzsche: the sorcerer who can make the weather but who can be 'overcome' by boyish daring and the light of the true sun.

Other themes of Bely's youthful poetry, particularly before 1901, are more melancholy and earthbound. The earliest poems, as with his coeval Aleksandr Blok, are sighs of loneliness and youthful pessimism which give way, not without backsliding, to the radiant 'dawns' of 1901. Bely's forte was dynamism rather than constancy, but there is one poem written in August 1901, infused with images from Solov'ev and dedicated to Ol'ga Mikhailovna, which suggests a 'credo'. The poem is called simply 'Znaiu' ('I know') and begins with the line 'Pust' na rassvete tumanno – / znaiu – zhelannoe blizko [. . .]' ('Let it be misty at dawn – / I know what we wish for is near').⁵⁴

The *leitmotif* of the 'dawns' sounded in this poem – 'Nezhen vostok poblednevshii, / Znaesh' li – noch' na iskhode' (Tender is the paling East / Do you know that night is almost spent?) – is varied throughout Bely's first book with breathtaking skylines, shifting mosaics of precious stones, ever-changing, glowing hues straight out of the description of the New Jerusalem in the Book of Revelation. The jewel-imagery tends to dazzle and, as Blok's young wife Liubov' Dmitrievna did not hesitate to

point out to Bely, occasionally verges on the gaudy. The influence of Bal'mont, to whom the first three poems in *Zoloto v lazure* are dedicated, especially that of his *Budem kak Solntse* and some of the early fairy poems, is not always happy. Even the World Soul in one of Bely's poems is given 'dragon-fly wings'.⁵⁵

Closely bound up with the theme of the dawns are the poems which Bely later grouped together under the subtitle 'Bagrianitsa v terniakh' ('Purple in thorns'). Welling up from the days when the little Boria would sit sobbing in a dark corner praying to God to 'forgive Mummy, for she knows not what she does', but more immediately influenced by doubts about the validity of his own more openly prophetic, apocalyptic declarations, emerges the theme of the poet as a false Christ, crucified by his followers for proclaiming 'the End' prematurely, an object of ridicule and execration. Using words which echo Merezhkovsky's earlier poetry, Bely here identifies with those who 'have awakened too early': 'Slishkom rano ia vstal nad nizinoi, / Slishkom rano ia k spiashchim vozval' ('Too early I rose above the lowlands / Too early I called upon those who slept'). The hysterical note of the lines: 'Raspinaite menia, raspinaite / Znaiu – zhazhdete krovi moei' ('Crucify me, crucify. / I know – you thirst for my blood') is the obverse of Bely's lightness and gaiety. A complex at times approaching persecution mania provides a rich source for his art, particularly in the novels where it is an essential ingredient of the climactic 'grand guignol' scenes such as the murder of Dar'ial'sky in *Serebrianyi golub'* (The Silver Dove), of Lippanchenko in *Peterburg*, or the torture of Mandrygin in *Moskva* – but it makes for uncomfortable reading in his lyric poetry. Bely must have felt this for, as time went by, he learnt to introduce comic, prosaic counterpoint even into the theme of the poet rejected and crucified. So, in 1904, we see him, his 'snow-white brow' 'torn by the thrusting thorns', knocking in vain at the windows of smoke-filled rooms. When 'they' finally let him in, it is to offer him a cigarette and, when he takes his seat with them at table, 'I, molias', zamiraiu / O nezemnom / Predlagaiut mne chaiu' ('And, prayerfully, go off into a trance / thinking of things celestial, / they offer me a cup of tea').⁵⁶

This poem is indicative of a certain disillusionment not so much with the philistine 'outside' world as with Bely's own friends: the 'Argonauts', of whom the musician A.S. Chelishchev, to whom the poem is dedicated, was one. The 'Argonauts' were, in a sense, themselves a projection of Bely's and Sergei Solov'ev's imagined 'crusade'. While still at school, Bely had made friends with the future painter V.V. Vladimirov and the brilliant but unbalanced Lev L'vovich Kobylinsky (Ellis). Later, at university or through his ever-widening circle of acquaintances amongst the

Moscow literati, he had formed close friendships with A.S. Petrovsky and E.K. Metner, the brother of the composer N.K. Metner, a lover of Goethe and at one stage, many years later, a patient of Jung; with P.N. Batiushkov, grandson of the poet Batiushkov, a theosophist; and with several other intelligent but nervy young men in full rebellion against their parents. Blok, who met a number of them on his first visit to Bely in Moscow, at the beginning of 1904, paid tribute to their *envolement* in one of the concluding cycles of *Poems to the Most Beautiful Lady*, 'Molityv' (Prayers).⁵⁷

The pleasing myth of a crew of young men setting out in search of the Golden Fleece (the unconquered sun? Nietzsche's 'lost God'? the Eternal Feminine? – probably each sought his own) was not built to last, dear as it was to Bely's homeless heart. His poem, or rather cycle of poems, 'Zolotoe runo' (The Golden Fleece), written in 1903 and dedicated to Emilii Metner, pictures the sailing of 'our Argo' and inspired Ellis to describe the friends – Bely himself denies that they were 'a circle' (*kruzhok*) in the usual sense of the word – as 'Argonauts'. Bely first published parts of 'Zolotoe runo' as an illustration to his second theoretical and, in a sense, programmatic article for *Mir Iskusstva*, 'Simvolizm kak miroponimanie' (Symbolism as a way of understanding the world), so that it was not unnaturally taken up by his admirers as a kind of anthem. It tells how the Argonauts, refusing to be discouraged by the setting of the sun, cast anchor at nightfall, braving the open sea, sailing to meet the sunrise. If the sunrise itself is the usual cascade from the open jewel-box, the setting-forth is moving:

Пожаром склон неба объят ...
 И вот аргонавты нам в рог отлетаний
 трубят ...
 Внимайте, внимайте ...
 Довольно страданий!
 Броню надевайте
 из солнечной ткани!
 [...]
 Старик аргонавт призывает на солнечный пир,
 Трубя в золотеющий мир.*⁵⁸

One other delightful section of Bely's first book is the cycle of eighteenth-century stylisations, very much in the mischievous manner of Somov, though oddly they were more keenly appreciated by the gentler Borisov-

* 'The slope of the sky is aflame ... / And hark, the argonauts on the horn of departures / are blowing ... / Hear, hear ... / Enough of sufferings! Put on your armour / of woven sunlight! // [...] // The old argonaut summons to the feast of the sun / trumpeting / into a world turning to gold.'

Musatov.⁵⁹ These trifles, Mozartian in imagery and lightness of touch as well as in the witty orchestration of their now stately, now tripping music, show a mastery of words and rhythms and a sheer puckish enjoyment which ranks them amongst the most satisfying pieces Bely ever wrote. They are, however, and remain – trifles.

Although Bely was an exquisite artist, there is about his poetry a certain lack of *depth*, of stillness. It rushes out to meet you rather than drawing you in. It is a refreshment for the spirit rather than a reservoir for the soul. At times almost embarrassingly personal, the poet withdraws easily into tinkling objectivity. He pays for range and brilliance by a certain lack of 'steadiness of eye', the quality that Blok was to call 'pristal'nost' vzgliada'.⁶⁰ Bely's greatest achievements, curiously for such a virtuoso of poetic form, were in prose; the Symphonies and the novels, especially, perhaps, *Serebrianyi golub'*, *Peterburg* and *Kotik Letaev*.

III

In 1889 or 1890, when Bely was rising ten years old, his father had received a visit from three Petersburg academicians. One, a serene old man with greying, curly hair, a big beard and long, quiet hands, took his fancy. 'I circled round him; soon I was standing between his knees and he stroked me kindly and gently; and sat me on his knee; and I just wanted to stay there ...'⁶¹ This was Blok's grandfather, Andrei Nikolaevich Beketov, the botanist and one-time Rector of the University of St Petersburg. Thanks largely to Beketov, Aleksandr Blok (1880–1921) had a very different upbringing from that of his coeval Boris Bugaev, although their backgrounds were essentially similar and their lives interwoven in many ways before they met.

Blok was brought up by his grandfather's family, between St Petersburg and the small family estate of Shakhmatovo, situated on the edge of the vast state forest of Praslovo in rolling country some forty miles north-west of Moscow. Here, his grandfather would take him for long exploring walks through the woods, opening his mind, imparting a sense of belonging, of freedom and expectancy.

The poet's parents were separated and Blok grew up out of reach of his 'demonic' but talented father, Aleksandr L'vovich Blok, professor of law at Warsaw University, although, as a man, he was to remember him 'in the blood'. His childhood was presided over by a tiny, lively mother, a woman of questing spirit and delicate health who suffered from cyclic depressions, but who was a guide, then a companion through many 'worlds' of the imagination, and by a strong-minded, amused grandmother. A close-knit community of aunts and cousins, accomplished,

humorous and industrious, helped create the rarefied atmosphere of his home. Though only Blok's mother encouraged or indeed understood the interest in the new literature which he began to develop (much later than Bely) during his third year at university, Blok was able to write in an autobiographical note: 'no one in the family ever persecuted me, everyone only loved and indulged me'.⁶² Blok's childhood, in other words, was happy and secure and he was in no hurry to grow out of it.

The world, the flesh and the Devil obtruded themselves on his conscious mind in the course of the long Petersburg winters of his adolescence as he plodded his way through the state curriculum at an alien and uninspiring school. His mother had remarried when he was nine and his home from then on was the barracks of the Grenadier Guards on the Petrogradskaia Storona, a circumstance which was to have considerable bearing on his attitude to the 1905 revolution. There was no outward friction with the step-father, Colonel Frants Feliksovich Kublitsky-Piottukh, and the boy and his mother continued to live 'dusha v dushu': soul to soul. Nevertheless, the strange environment did have some effect. Aleksandr became increasingly reserved and withdrawn. More dimly than Bely, but painfully nonetheless, he was aware that something was wrong with the grown up world. None of his mother's generation had the zest for life and sense of purpose which characterised his grandparents; the school was a limbo; the barracks – also.

More acutely than Bely, who appears to have led a blameless youth, Blok also realised there was something 'wrong' with him, the way he was growing up, his first experiences of sex 'with a woman bought for a few hours'.⁶³ Then, at seventeen, when escorting his mother to the sedate German spa of Bad Nauheim, he had drifted into a romantic liaison with an older woman. On finishing school, he drifted into the Faculty of Law at the university, 'because it was the easiest' and took leave of the year 1900 with the apathetic lines: 'I ty, moi iunyi, moi pechal'nyi / Ukhodish' proch! // [. . .] Ia za toboi, gost' sluchaynyi, / Kak prezhdë – v noch'' ('And you, my youthful, my sad [year] / Are slipping away! // [. . .] I follow on – a casual guest / As before – into the night!').⁶⁴

Yet the year 1901, for Blok as for Bely, was to prove an *annus mirabilis*: not, as for Bely, in terms of emancipation and achievement, but in terms of self-discovery and commitment. The summer of 1901 Blok called his 'mystic summer'. It was spent uneventfully in the country, falling deeply and dreamily in love with Liubov', the daughter of the great chemist Dmitrii Mendeleev, a friend of his grandfather's whose summer home was only a few miles from Shakhmatovo, reading *Severnnye Tsvety No. 1* and all the new literature he could lay hands on, and writing poetry. Towards the end of the summer Blok decided to transfer from the Faculty of Law

to the study of literature. He had found his vocation and rediscovered faith in the underlying harmony of things, the ultimate goodness of the world. From this time onwards, the time of what he called his 'true covenant', given not to him alone but – or so it seemed to him – to 'the soul of the people', the deep faith which came to him that summer remained as the *prima motor* of his life in art ... 'sokrytyi dvigatel', he called it, 'the secret mover'. Blok's first book, *Stikhi o Prekrasnoi Dame* (Verses about the Most Beautiful Lady, 1905) celebrates the brief period when it seemed possible to sing openly of this 'covenant', this awakening of 'anamnesis', the recollection of the world as it should be, and as, for him, it had perhaps appeared in early childhood.⁶⁵

This awakening had come to him through the emotion of love, Eros, love for a particular woman in a particular place at a particular time: Liubov' Mendeleeva in the country near Shakhmatovo in the first year of the twentieth century, when meteorological disturbances were causing spectacular dawns and sunsets ... He seems to have been aware from the beginning that it would not last, that the Goodness and Beauty, the radiance he perceived through the state of being in love would be lost to him. When that happened, he would write of other things, but for the time being he was totally absorbed in the one great theme before which all others fell silent, and his lyre remained 'single-stringed': 'Iz etikh pesen sozdal ia zdan'e / I drugie pesni – spoiu kogda-nibud' ('From these songs I have built a building / And the other songs I shall sing some other time').⁶⁶

The process of emergence from the doldrums of adolescence had begun in the autumn of 1900 with a 'period of submission to God, and Plato'. Through the 'restless longing for God' which Blok describes in a poem written in December 1899, 'Dolor ante lucem', in which there appears to be as much resentment as longing, he was drawn to Plato, with whose 'paganism' he felt in sympathy. During the winter of 1900–1 he played truant from his law lectures to attend a university course on Greek philosophy. It was then Blok read the first volume of the Dialogues and Valdimir Solov'ev's introduction, which set out the drama of the philosopher's life in a way with which he could identify and where he found an exposition of the doctrine of Platonic love in which he recognised something of his own experience.⁶⁷

It was not only Diotima's disquisition on the nature of love, but also Plato's cosmogony that seems to have captivated Blok's poetic imagination: the idea, above all, of the cosmos as 'a living creature endowed with soul and reason owing to the providence of God'.⁶⁸ Plato's 'God' was not screened off, like Kant's, but could be guessed at – never wholly known or

described, but 'grown towards'. The waywardness and insentience of matter, the 'infinite' as Blok called it, borrowing Plato's term, he saw as inertia which must be shaken off in order to remind himself and others of a truer state of being, one which is finite, unchanging and translucent.

Blok, however, was at first instinctively, later consciously aware that the calling of the artist was not to abide in the sphere of the finite but to wrestle with infinity, to bring cosmos from chaos, harmony from discord or, as Nietzsche put it in the *Birth of Tragedy*, the Apollonian vision from Dionysian *Rausch* (delirium). In this, Blok was close to Viacheslav Ivanov, but it was not a consistent philosophy which he took from Plato and Solov'ev, rather a scattering of ideas like musical themes which form a kind of melodious continuum just below the surface of all his thinking and poetry.

His mother's Easter gift of a book of Vladimir Solov'ev's poetry, in the spring of 1901 confirmed many insights first glimpsed through Plato. In this poetry Blok found again the vision of life as an eternal struggle from the storminess and dark of 'infinity' towards immutability and light. Here, too, he found the suggestion of an ineffable yet direct and personal link between love for a human being and reverence for the World Soul.

In the first poems in which She makes Her presence felt (Blok always gave Her a capital letter), poems from the section which opens the first edition of the *Stikhi o Prekrasnoi Dame* under the subtitle 'Nepodvizhnost', (Immutability), written in St Petersburg in the spring and at Shakhmatovo over the summer of 1901, there is no resounding affirmation of a supernatural vision or experience. On the contrary, it is just that 'Gde-to svetlo i gluboko / Neba otkrylsia klochok' ('Somewhere, light and deep / A tatter of heaven was revealed').⁶⁹ But this was enough, enough to give hope for a lifetime.

The moment of initial brightness and stillness is very elusive. There are no dazzling sunrises or fanfares of trumpets as in Bely's poetry. There is simply a questioning awareness. In 'crimson twilight' and 'sounding silence' a presence is felt: 'Ty l' smykaesh', plameneia, / Beskonechnye krugi?' ('Is it you Who, flaming, closes / Eternal circles?')⁷⁰

In the country, at Shakhmatovo, a visual form is suggested, a 'Russian Venus', Blok calls her, though she rather resembles Minerva: 'Tiazheloi tunikoi povita, / Besstrastna v chistote, neradostna bez mery, / V chertakh litsa – spokoinaia mechta'. ('Draped in a heavy tunic, / Passionless in purity, sad beyond measure / In the features of the face – a calm dream'.⁷¹

In other poems, though, the addressee is 'young and golden', 'a rosy girl standing on the threshold' . . . After all, the power of his inspiration came from his love for a real flesh and blood girl: 'an idea on two legs – you don't marry them' as Andrei Bely exploded irritably to Sergei

Solov'ev on hearing of Blok's engagement two years later.⁷² Even in the section 'Nepodvizhnost', even at the height of Blok's mystic summer, the poetry of revelation is very soon mingled with other notes of chivalrous devotion, suppressed passion ... and with the theme of sorcery and enchantments, of 'spellbound, dark love', 'Zakoldovannoi *temnoi* ljubvi'.

Central to 'Nepodvizhnost'' is a poem of foreboding, one of Blok's first published poems. The epigraph is from Solov'ev: 'I tiazhkii son zHITEiskogo soznan'ia / Ty otriakhnesh', toskuia i ljubia' ('And the oppressive dream of everyday awareness / You will cast off, in longing and in love'). Through the power of love, the poet is hoping to overcome the lethargy, the inertia of 'everyday awareness' (custom, convention) and – in himself at least – a strong tendency to clinical depression, which he wrote of and probably actually thought of as premature senility. He identifies Solov'ev's 'love and longing', which he echoes in this poem, with a cosmic 'love and longing' of which he is but a part. So in tune is the poet with the Universe (the *Weltall*) that he feels Nature's yearning as his own. In him there is a darkness which reflects and is reflected by nature itself, a darkness which may – or rather will, for the future tense, not the conditional is used – result in a fall, a surrender to 'mortal dreams' and a change in 'the Guise' (*oblik*) in which the Lady, Herself immutable and finite, is revealed or elects to reveal Herself. The poem is untitled:

Предчувствую Тебя. Года проходят мимо —
Все в облике одном предчувствую Тебя.

Весь горизонт в огне — и ясен нестерпимо,
И молча жду, — *тоскуя и любя*.

Весь горизонт в огне, и близко появленье,
Но страшно мне: изменишь облик Ты,

И дерзкое возбудешь подозренье,
Сменив в конце привычные черты.

О, как паду — и горестно, и низко,
Не одолев смертельные мечты.

Как ясен горизонт! И лучезарность близко.
Но страшно мне: изменишь облик Ты.*⁷³

The incantatory effect is based on repetition of whole phrases ('predchuvstvuiu Tebia'; 'ves' gorizont vogne, no strashno mne'; 'izmenish' oblik ty') and of single words ('iasen, blizko') which form, as it were, an

* 'I feel You coming. The years pass by – / Always in the same guise / I feel You coming. // The whole horizon is aflame – and unbearably clear, / I wait in silence, – *in longing and in love*. // The whole horizon is aflame, and the manifestation is near. / But terror is upon me: You will come in other guise, // And awake an impudent suspicion, / Having changed at

indefinably monotonous accompaniment, as if to a song, which modifies the meaning of the lyric. The heavily emphasised mid-line break creates a rocking, dreamlike effect. There are no verbal fireworks; the language is throughout lofty and solemn, the adverbs (there are few adjectives) conventional. Yet the words have a quality of inevitability, and the poem – power and mystery.

'I remember a constant succession of lyrical waves washing over me', Blok wrote of his childhood.⁷⁴ His poetry seems to have arisen naturally from this constant ebb and flow between self and the world; sometimes, often indeed, the 'lyrical waves' did not synchronise with outward events but preceded them, yet were moved by them as surely as the tides are drawn by the moon. The fact that the poetry is out of step with the chronology of the poet's life (as in this poem, one of the *first* to the Most Beautiful Lady) led some contemporaries to see it as prophetic, but that Blok always denied, saying simply that poetry and prophecy were two quite different things and that he had not the voice to be a prophet.

The poetry is rather one of passive, cumulative concentration. Inwardly faithful to his way and to the private myth which gave shape and purpose to his life, Blok *appeared* to drift, waiting for the 'music', letting it carry him. The same words, images and phrases occur again and again in different contexts, his own or echoes from other poets, songs, prayers – anything that had lodged in his memory, consciously or subconsciously, but reorchestrated by a master musician to fit *his* context. The technique is not obvious, but certain features can be distinguished. Some – the sharply accentuated contrasts; the frequent use of oxymoron; the melodious lilt, occasionally broken by syncopation; a natural gift for alliteration and assonance, particularly the latter – seem to have been found at once. Others he was learning throughout the summer of 1901 and the next few years from a close study of Briusov's poetry, Hippius and Konevskoi.⁷⁵

Initially, Blok was naturally attracted to the Petersburg poets. In Hippius's poetry he detected the voice of a loneliness that he suspected had already been partly overcome amongst the Moscow Symbolists. In the spring of 1902 he sought out the Merezhkovskys in St Petersburg and was impressed by their commitment and concern. He corresponded with Hippius, about 'mystic' questions rather than prosody which, *per se*, interested him little, throughout the following summer. Though respectful and keenly interested in both Merezhkovskys as artists and in connection

the last the familiar features. // Oh, how I shall fall – both bitterly and low, / Not having overcome mortal dreams! // How clear the horizon! And radiance is near. / But terror is upon me: You will come in other guise.'

with all the activity around *Novyi Put'*, then in the planning stage as an offshoot of the Religious-Philosophical Meetings which he occasionally attended, Blok, like Bely and later Ivanov, resisted what Hippius called their 'realism': the determination to prepare for an imminent millenium on a social basis. It was quite foreign to Blok's nature to try to make things happen. Revolution and apocalypse would come: the one in its own time, the other – 'in the twinkling of an eye' – to roll up time 'like a scroll'. Meanwhile what could the poet do but watch and wait, 'in longing and in love'?

Hippius's version of Platonic love, the idea that 'vliublennost'', the state of being in love, was creative in the higher sense whereas the normal relationship between man and wife was a mere social institution for the continuance of mankind, was too clear-cut for him. She was shocked at the idea of his marrying Liubov', to whom he became privately engaged in the autumn of 1902 and whom he wedded in the summer of 1903. Unlike Bely, who became increasingly involved with the Merezhkovskys during the years leading up to the first Russian Revolution, Blok was reluctant to expose his hidden depths to Hippius's probing, 'tender, fine sting', and withdrew into the mists of deliberate, agnostic passivity. Hippius's thinking was at once 'alien' and 'akin' to him. Her efforts to calculate the incalculable, to force events, to clarify the mysteries, fascinated him, but while accepting her poetry and respecting her dedication to 'that which is not in this world',⁷⁶ he rejected her methods.

With Konevskoi there could be no such clash of temperament. Though there was only three years difference in age and they moved in the same circles, the two never met. Konevskoi's poetry began for Blok in the year of his death, with the poems published in the 1901 *Severnye Tsvety*. The influence of the poet and his legend were probably at their peak for him during the years 1904–6, when, in Konevskoi's combination of idiosyncratic individualism and feeling for family and history, in his capacity to mingle his voice with the voice of the element, to look into the snowstorm and to listen to the wind, Blok found a precedent, a way to extend lyrical subjectivity to encompass Russia and the world. Both poets perceived Russia, earthbound and real with her sad sun and the 'quiet backwaters' of her strange, marshy capital city, as a wilderness which would one day come into bloom. It seemed to Blok that his predecessor had stood on the brink of great discoveries: 'Even Konevskoi', he wrote to Bely in 1903, 'had not yet become aware and could not yet penetrate the murk of his own spirit and find something genuine there. He scattered his riches all in a heap, glittering but formless ...'⁷⁷

There are a number of textual similarities between Konevskoi and Blok's poems about St Petersburg and Russia, but it was Briusov who –

albeit for a short time only – showed Blok the way to control form, to introduce themes from the modern city and themes from the murky ‘underground’ of the unconscious without succumbing to chaos. Briusov’s books, particularly *Urbi et orbi*, which Blok reviewed for *Novyi Put’*, made the younger poet think about structure: in the single poem, the cycle, and the book.⁷⁸

There was one thing, however, which Blok did not need to learn from his contemporaries, which he took as his birthright: succession to the cumulative heritage of Russian literature throughout the ages, the feeling that Russia was a part of himself:

Россия, нищая Россия,
Мне избы серые твои
Твои мне песни ветровые
Как слезы первые любви!*

The liturgy and the chronicles; laments and incantations; folk-song and gypsy-song; the occasional stately eighteenth-century Slavonicism and sense of nationhood; the whole symphony of nineteenth century poetry from Pushkin to Polonsky, from Lermontov to Tiutchev and Nekrasov – all these echo on in Blok’s verse, made new by juxtaposition, smelted together with the contemporary world in the slow furnaces of his creative concentration.

Andrei Bely, in his very first letter to Blok, written on 4 January 1903, paid generous tribute to this quality which he had perceived in the few unpublished poems to have come his way via the Solov’ev family. In a bold appraisal, disregarding the dismissive opinions of accepted authorities such as Briusov and the Merezhkovskys, Bely wrote:

It is as if you had been consecrated by Lermontov, Fet and Solov’ev to continue their way, to illumine and open up their thoughts. The remarkable contemporaneity, I would even say prematurity, combines nevertheless with this *succession by right of blood*. This succession [. . .] is lacking in such undoubtedly interesting poets as Bal’mont, F. Sologub [he writes Sollogub] and many others. I have to say it straight out: your poetry eclipses almost the whole of contemporary Russian poetry for me. Possibly that is not so objectively, but I do *not* set myself up as an authority.⁸⁰

Blok’s genius, however, matured slowly. Before he could turn the promise noted by Bely into achievement he had to grow out of intimate lyricism and extend the range of his poetical vocabulary. The poems of ‘the mystic summer’ are set in the Russian countryside: wide skylscapes, shaggy fir

* ‘Russia, destitute Russia, / To me your grey log huts, / To me your wind-borne songs / Are like the first tears of love.’

trees against the clear light of dawn or sunset, fields of rye and clover, the hollow thud of a horse's hooves on the peaty road to Boblovo, and the Mendeleev house with its wooden, *style-russe* carvings, transformed by his art into the dwelling of a Princess. 'I want to get rid of the exaggerated fairy-tale quality of my recent mysticism' Blok wrote to his absent and inimical father in 1902, explaining that what he was now after was something in the nature of Dostoevsky's 'realism [. . .] bordering on the fantastic'.⁸¹ The theme of St Petersburg, beginning from the middle and last sections of his first book, 'Perekrestki' (Crossroads) and 'Ushcherb' (The Wane), begins to predominate over the theme of the country which is the natural setting for the Most Beautiful Lady. Static panorama gives way to flickering sequence: the street, usually at night; dark doorways; deceptive, shifting patches of light; streetlamps; hands held out for help; shuffling figures; glimpses of interiors; churches, full of whispering and superstition; wild cries.

Blok is still the poet of the Most Beautiful Lady seeking now to build his aerial bridge between the shadow-world of the city and the Eternal good. Yet what was he to make of his own murky, far from ideal life, particularly after his marriage, after taking responsibility for another human being? The poetry suggests many alternatives – equally daunting. Should he, for instance, as he tries unsuccessfully to do in the poem 'Vse krichali u kruglykh stolov' ('They were all shouting at the round tables'), introduce his Bride to the world of the city, presenting her to a boozy, noisy crowd in a smoke-filled restaurant? Or attempt, as Bely sometimes saw himself doing, to entertain indifferent passers-by – a pathetic, unfunny jester, performing acrobatic contortions at the crossroads? Or bring on Liubov' herself and dance for the crowd with her – Harlequin and Columbine? She liked theatricals . . . Perhaps, though, he should look outside himself and record, from his 'high window', real people clocking in at work in the next-door factory? Or simply conjure impressionistic pictures of the unreal ghost-life of the Imperial City?

At this last, Blok was past master. Part of the technique is that he never tells you whether he is writing about some being from another world or, say, as in the following poem, just a lamplighter putting out the gaslamps at dawn:

По городу бегал черный человек.
Гасил он фонарики, карабкаясь на лестницу.

Медленный, белый подходил рассвет,
Вместе с человеком взбирался на лестницу.

Там, где были тихие, мягкие тени —
Желтые полоски вечерних фонарей.

Утренние сумерки легли на ступени,
Забрались в занавески, щели дверей.

Ах, какой бледный город на заре!
Черный человек плачет на дворе.*⁸²

The insubstantial quality of this poem is heightened by the deliberate use of approximate rhyme which leaves the ends of the lines floating: 'che-lovek', 'rassvet', 'zare', 'dvore'. The apparently negligent repetition of a word in the rhyming position – 'lestnitsu' (the ladder) – in fact serves to highlight a recurring symbol of ascent in Blok's poetry. It also focuses attention on the contrast between the first stanza, when it is the man in black who clammers up the ladder, and the second, where it is the white light of dawn that comes flowing up behind him. The rhythm and sound of the first verse, with the rushing alliteration of the first line and the staccato consonants and marked mid line break in the second, suggest the scurrying business of the man in contrast to the inexorable spread of the light conveyed by the lingering assonance of the first two adjectives which almost bring the poem to a halt: 'Medlennyi, belyi'. This dawn which turns the town pale is sadder than sunset, and it is not surprising that the man in black – down on the ground again – is weeping. Nevertheless, the ending is strangely abrupt, a non-sequitur as in some nursery rhymes. This impression is enhanced by the use of diminutives: 'fonariki', 'zanaveski', 'chelovechek'. Over the winter of 1903 Blok's cityscapes grow progressively darker. A hunchback awaits the last trump; the poet moves, dinner-jacketed and alienated, through Christmas-season parties; a mother abandons her children to fling herself in front of a train ('Iz gazet', 'From the newspapers'). It is as if the lyrical persona were dancing a part in the Nutcracker Suite on a stage which is constantly being invaded by creatures of nightmare that bear a suspicious resemblance to everyday life. A gulf yawns between society and the poet. 'The most difficult thing now is to tell one's own fairest dream to another person,' Blok wrote in December 1903 to Sergei Solov'ev. For it to be understood it is necessary that it should be loved and since everyone is busy with their own affairs it is more *contemporary* (whether more *eternal* I do not know) to go to work with a dagger, like Briusov, like Vrubeľ'.⁸³

This is almost a declaration of intent. By allowing his cult of the Most Beautiful Lady to become confused with his love for Liubov' Mendel-

* 'About the town there ran a man in black. / He was putting out the street-lamps, clambering up a ladder. // Unhurried, white the dawn was approaching, / Together with the man it climbed the ladder. // There, where before there were quiet, soft shadows / Were yellow strips of light from the evening lamps, // The morning twilight had spread over the steps, / Had crept into the curtains, into the cracks of the doors. // Ah, how pale the town is at dawn! / The little man in black is crying in the courtyard.'

eeva, Blok had created an untenable situation, in life and in poetry. It was a slow and difficult business to disentangle his most sacred thoughts and hopes from his everyday life and his poetry but, on 18 June 1904, he managed to write a poem, 'Vot on, riad grobovykh stupenei' (There they are, the steps to the tomb), which is a kind of Dormition or Assumption. For Blok, sleep symbolises acceptance of life as it 'is', or as he would have said with Plato, as it 'appears to be', and here the human girl is pictured asleep in the grave, smiling, as if imploring him not to wake her:

Остальное — бездонная твердь
Схоронила во мгле голубой.

Спи — твой отдых никто не прервет.
Мы — окрай неизвестных дорог.
Всю ненастную ночь наиролет
Здесь горит осяянный чертог.*⁸⁴

The first section of Blok's second book of poetry, *Nechaiannaia radost'* (Joy Beyond Hope), published by Skorpion in 1907, 'Vesennee' (Vernal), ends with a formal acknowledgement that the Most Beautiful Lady is no longer – for him – to be perceived imminently, even momentarily, as a real woman. If, in 'Vot on; riad grobovykh stupenei', the human object of his love, Liubov', is laid to rest, allowed to die to her ideal image and to live on (or sleep on) in an imperfect world, here the Lady, the Thou with the capital letter, 'Ty, derzhashchaia more i sushu / Nepodvizhno tonkoi rukoi!' ('You, Who hold sea and dry land / Immobile in Your slender hand!'), is elevated to the world of the ideal. The rainbow bridge is broken. The poet is left alone in 'this drowsy world' (always the images of sleep and the marshes to indicate 'kosnost', inertia, the resistance of matter). However, just as the first poem ends with the promise that a light will continue to burn for him throughout the night, so 'Prayer' begins on a note of solemn reaffirmation: 'Ty v polia otoshla bez vozvrata. / Da sviatitsia Imia Tvoe!' ('You are gone into the fields without return – and hallowed be Your name').⁸⁵

Together, the two poems mark the parting of the ways between religion and art. This had been foreshadowed from the beginning in Blok's poetry as in his thought and did not, of course, come all at once.

To some extent, the secularisation of Blok's art was precipitated by the misapprehensions which the confusion in his own life had engendered amongst the other 'Solov'evites', notably in the mind and life of Andrei

* 'All the rest – the fathomless firmament / Has buried in pale-blue mist. // Sleep – no one will interrupt your rest. / We are on the verge of uncharted roads. / All through the wet and windy night / Here this radiant dwelling will shine on.'

Bely, who, two months before Blok's marriage, had written to him with a whole string of questions. Sophia, the Divine Wisdom, was neither Blok's invention nor his poetic patent. The theme was common property among the Solov'ev group and was, in the poetry of the master himself, an ancient and venerable one. Bely wrote demanding 'a logical clarification of everything about *Her* from you, because here many paths intersect. [...] Collective thinking is important, so important [...] When thinking in such a way, harmoniously, it is easier to breathe, one can tread more firmly in this sphere where everything is so new to our culture.'⁸⁶

For Blok, in 1903, the Most Beautiful Lady was not a 'cultural' concept. She was rather a religious postulate perceived through a lyrical haze and the experience of being in love. To Bely, whose Christianity or 'Christism', as he once said he would prefer to call it, was profoundly personal, but whose ideas about Sophia were purely theoretical and cultural, Blok's hesitant, painstaking attempt to answer his questions out of his own experience rather than out of books seemed 'idiotic', 'anti-social', 'cut off from everyone else'.⁸⁷ No one had ever asked Blok to explain the basic tenets of his personal philosophy in five minutes flat – as Bely's father had done to him, watch in hand! – and he was not yet prepared for 'culture', not in Bely's sense of a battle of ideas, for which one must be properly armed and supplied.

Yet the idea of 'collective thinking' had arisen so naturally, it was so important to them both and, at the same time, they still knew so little about one another, that it is not surprising that they persisted in the attempt to reach a closer understanding, stumbling from confusion to confusion. After all, they had not only been disciples of Vladimir Solov'ev but they were closely united before they began to correspond by their familiarity with the family of his brother, Mikhail. Ever since Blok, at the age of eighteen, had begun to show his poetry to his mother and she to send it to her cousin Ol'ga, the Solov'ev household had followed his progress with intense and benevolent interest. They had come to think of Blok as 'one of ours' during his summer visits to them. Sergei hero-worshipped him. Bely and his 'Argonaut' friends were deeply impressed by the poetry, and the result was that Blok, who did not meet Bely until the beginning of 1904, had already long been included *in absentia* as an ally in Sergei and 'Boria's' esoteric 'game'.

Blok, for his part, had heard about Boris Bugaev's appreciation of his poems from Ol'ga and Mikhail Solov'ev, and Hippus had shown him the anonymous letter that Bely had sent her about Merezhkovsky's predictions of Apocalypse. The letter echoed Blok's own doubts about the Merezhkovskys, and he marvelled at the 'youth and age', 'weight and chaos' of Bely's ideas. The letter, it seemed to him, was all white, 'a whole

anthology of apocalyptic whiteness'.⁸⁸ Bely's article 'Formy iskusstva', however, when it appeared in *Mir Iskusstva* towards the end of 1902, had disappointed or at least confused Blok, who had determined to write to the author to seek an explanation. At the same moment Bely, fascinated by the coincidences between Blok's poetry and his own thought and deeply curious, also decided to write, and the letters crossed.

In his letter of 3 January 1903, Blok plunged straight into the subject which interested him: the coming of the end. Did Bely really believe, as it seemed from 'Formy iskusstva', that Music (not in any metaphorical sense but *as music, as a 'form of art'*) was 'at the end of all things'? Blok had been arguing with Hippius all the previous summer in letters and with Merezhkovsky in his own mind that art does *not* pass into religion, that it is qualitatively *different*. It had seemed to him from Bely's letter to them that he, Bely, thought so too. Now, taking no thought whatsoever for the protection of his own ego from his unknown correspondent, Blok wrote that he needed Bely's answer because he, Blok, was writing 'out of his sin', in the knowledge that art can be infernal; that his own art had more to do with the Whore of Babylon than with the Woman Clothed with the Sun, and that therefore it was up to Bely (as a theoretician of genius and as a poet of much greater purity) to make it clear that – as he put it – 'Isis has nothing in common with the Maiden of the Rainbow gates'. 'Don't be evasive', Blok begged, 'And carry the standard on ahead of us, streaming out and *without folds*. In folds things "can hide". Folds are frightening. Say straight out that "we shall all be changed soon, in the twinkling of an eye"'.⁸⁹

Bely's first letter, more formal, written with polite flourishes, does not assume but offers an alliance. His second, defending the oblique style of 'Formy iskusstva', points out that he could not speak directly in that article because it had originated as an address to a students' society and he had therefore needed to 'approach the subject from afar [. . .] for those with ears to hear'.⁹⁰

Blok had not had the long schooling in 'hiding in the folds' that life had administered to Bely. He never spoke otherwise than 'directly' (in so far as in him lay) and he never fully understood that, for Bely, art and religion together were, in a sense, a jealously safeguarded, essentially subjective 'game'. Neither did Bely understand the deep-seated certainties that allowed Blok, for all his dark sensuality and elusive lyricism, to speak in one breath of art as hell – and of his 'soul' as a 'sentry unrelieved'.⁹¹

On a purely 'human' level, Bely's love for Blok was demanding; he bloomed in the quiet serenity of his attention, but faded and fumed in the arctic cold of his withdrawals. There was also a certain amount of honest envy. Blok had so much: that kind grandfather; a beautiful country home;

a mother rather like Ol'ga Solov'eva in her quickness of understanding, as responsive to Bely as to her own son but always ultimately on the side of 'Sasha', however fair to 'Boria'; an innocent bride, the very embodiment of old-fashioned Russian beauty, capable, like her husband, of friendly, soothing silence.

When Blok brought his bride to Moscow at the very beginning of 1904, she too was given a part in the Argonaut game and, after a visit to Shakhmatovo in the summer of the same year, Bely and Sergei Solov'ev solemnly posed for a photograph, one on each side of a small table bearing two photographs: Vladimir Solov'ev and the lady under the protection of the Divine Sophia: Liubov' Dmitrievna Blok. The Bloks themselves, though fond of Serezha and Boria and aware of the element of inspired play, were not altogether comfortable with this invasion of the 'impossible tenderness' of their marriage. In spite of all their differences, however, Blok and Bely remained bound by a genuine sense of brotherhood through their original allegiance to the 'world of the Solov'evs'. At Easter of 1903 after Mikhail's death and Ol'ga's suicide (unable to face life without her husband, she shot herself the moment he breathed his last), Blok sent Bely a poem, dedicated to the orphaned Sergei, which linked their shared cult of the Eternal Feminine to shared grief:

У забытых могил пробивалась трава ...
Мы забыли вчера ... И забыли слова ...
И настала кругом тишина ...

Этой смертью отшедших, сгоревших дотла,
Разве Ты не жива? Разве Ты не светла?
Разве сердце Твое — не весна? ...*⁹²

It was this kind of luminous interplay of life, death and poetry that was to prove, in the long run, in the history of literature, more important than the psychology of their relationship. The fact was that Blok and Bely, by virtue of their own works, thanks to those 'dawns' which they had both contemplated in the early years, were 'in the same story'! Not only in each other's works as Pierrot and Harlequin, poet and astronomer, professional soldier's and senator's son, but in the more intangible realm of their collectively created myth – sombre pilgrim through the hell of art and life, stubbornly pursuing his 'only road', and bright warrior in the

* 'By the forgotten graves the grass was breaking through ... / We forgot yesterday ... and forgot words ... / And there was silence all around ... // By this death of those who have departed, who have burnt to ashes, / Are You not alive? Are You not alight? / Is not the heart of You – Spring?'

cause of the revitalisation of culture, 'mortally' wounded in a thousand skirmishes, but always returning to the fray.

The part played in the 'triumvirate' by Viacheslav Ivanov, detached and erudite, yet aglow with Platonic tenderness for both younger poets, was essentially to remind them of the part each was destined to play in this 'sobornoe deistvo', and to recall its objective significance.

8 The Sophia-myth and the theme of Apocalypse

Ах, восстанут из тьмы два пророка.
Дрогнет мир от речей огневых.
И на северных бледных равнинах
Разлетится их крик боевой
О грядущих, священных годинах,
О последней борьбе мировой.

А. Белый*

It is often said that the first generation of Symbolists was influenced by the French, the second by German Romantic philosophy, particularly in aesthetics. In fact, as we have seen, Briusov, whose concept of Symbolism was at one stage directly inspired by the French movement and for whom the Gallic influence continued to be of major importance, was in himself a kind of 'intermediate' generation. For Minsky, Merezhkovsky, Hippius, Sologub and Bal'mont the French had played a comparatively minor part along with many other influences from Europe and North America.

Blok, it is true, was himself part German and loved the Jena Romantics and Heine. During his most impressionable years, however, he was more directly influenced by Merezhkovsky's ideas and by the poetry of Hippius, Briusov and Konevskoi than by any foreign reading. Bely was impressed by the same people in much the same way if, for Konevskoi, we substitute Bal'mont. He read Schopenhauer, Kant and Helmholtz as a schoolboy and the neo-Kantians, Marx and Kautsky after 1904 and used them extensively in his theoretical articles, but these can scarcely be called 'literary' influences. Ivanov spent long years studying in Germany, was aware of the philosophy behind the German Romantic movement, particularly Schlegel, wrote about, translated and deeply admired Novalis and had a profound affinity with the later Goethe, but he was a man of such deep and wide-ranging culture it would be absurd to limit him to any one land or age.

* 'Ah, two prophets will rise from the darkness. / The world will tremble at their fiery speeches. / And over the pale plains of the North / Their battle-cry will fly far and wide / Announcing the holy years to come, / The last world-wide battle.' Andrei Bely

There was, though, one seminal influence which both unites and distinguishes the second generation: that of Vladimir Solov'ev. As Viacheslav Ivanov wrote to Blok and might equally have written to Bely: 'Solov'-evym, tainstvenno my kreshcheny' ('We have been mysteriously baptised by Solov'ev').¹

The dramatic increase in Solov'ev's importance for the general development of Russian Symbolism at this time was due to two factors: the work of his last three years, most particularly the publication of his poems and the reading of his *Povest' ob Antikhriste* (Tale of Antichrist) in the hall of the Duma, and his death on the very threshold of the twentieth century. In Solov'ev's belated outburst of lyrical and imaginative activity, Blok, at least, perceived a reawakening of 'anamnesis', the return of a dying man to the visions of youth.

The 'philosophers' of *Mir Iskusstva* and *Novyi Put'* had respected Solov'ev, though his closely-reasoned tomes had had little aesthetic appeal for them. Nevertheless, during his lifetime, he had been a distant and somewhat frightening figure. Rozanov, writing in *Voprosy Zhizni* five years after his death, lamented: 'What use did I make of Solov'ev, of his learning, of his soul? None. I simply passed him by, absolutely obtusely, as though he had been a milepost.'² Hippus says in her memoirs that she reread the philosopher after the institution of the Religious-Philosophical Meetings in 1901, and was struck by the similarities with the line of thought which she and Merezhkovsky had been pursuing in *their* effort to reconcile culture and Christianity, but denies any direct influence on her husband's development. All we know about Merezhkovsky, deeply concerned with Dostoevsky and Nietzsche, art and literature, but indifferent to philosophy *per se*, confirms this. Solov'ev, moreover, disapproved of Merezhkovsky, above all as a confederate of Rozanov whom he had once labelled in print 'little Judas' and whose opinions on sex and conservative view of society were anathema to him.³ *Mir Iskusstva* published Solov'ev's 'Ideia sverkhcheloveka' (The idea of the superman) in 1899, an article which promised to initiate a dialogue with the 'Nietzscheans' of that journal, but this was followed immediately by a sharp reaction on his part to the Pushkin centenary number. *Mir Iskusstva* was hurt when Solov'ev declined to continue his 'serious conversation' in the pages of their journal, but to a polite reproach, voiced by Filosofov, Solov'ev replied that the Pushkin number had opened his eyes to the impossibility of any such conversation. All that the *Mir Iskusstva* authors were interested in, he added, was orgiastic 'Pythianism', Rozanov genuinely and Merezhkovsky 'purely formally'.⁴ Neither Merezhkovsky, Rozanov, Minsky nor Sologub, therefore, all of whom contributed to the Pushkin number. which. it must be said. was not one of *Mir Iskusstva's* best. had

cause to look on Solov'ev as friend or ally. Add to this that the philosopher had expressly turned down Lev Shestov's book on Tolstoi and Nietzsche, and had ridiculed Briusov's *Russkie Simvolisty*. Viacheslav Ivanov, on the other hand, Solov'ev had helped and encouraged; with Bely he had had one serious talk about Antichrist and to Blok he appeared in the guise of a revered teacher.

To the first generation, therefore, Solov'ev was a father-figure to be cast down. To the second he was a benevolent ancestor to be sanctified, a visionary, a fallen warrior in the struggle for spiritual renewal, misunderstood and despised (just as they felt themselves to be) by a complacent society. 'What a blockhead', Blok's uncle had muttered on the only occasion the young poet had been afforded a glimpse of Solov'ev, at a family funeral. 'A talented man', Bely's father Professor Bugaev would murmur anxiously, 'But sick; you know, he has hallucinations'.⁵

These hallucinations or visions were, of course, to a great extent the source of Solov'ev's fascination. Like Martin Luther, but unlike Sologub or Hippisus or Merezhkovsky, for all their preoccupation with the Devil, Solov'ev had actually seen the Prince of Darkness (or one of his emissaries) to talk to. He had also had three visions of the Eternal Feminine: once as a young boy in church, once under the dome of the Reading Room at the British Museum and the third time, as a result of instructions received on the second occasion, in Egypt. Solov'ev, in his deliberately bathetic poem 'Tri svidaniia' (Three meetings), gives a vivid picture of himself, wandering off into the desert in his frockcoat and top hat, getting lost and, in recompense for a cold night within earshot of snuffing hyenas, being granted a third 'Meeting' at sunrise.⁶ Briusov, one of the first to review Solov'ev's poetry, seems to have missed out on the sheer oddity of the bathos. Though he understood well enough the implications of the image of the Eternal Feminine in the philosopher's thought, he does not seem to have considered this image in the poetry as more than a metaphor.

Blok, on the contrary, accepted the visions as such and explained the bathos as a defence mechanism and as Solov'ev's concession to the rationalism of his generation. Bely, albeit with incomparably greater aesthetic tact than Solov'ev, used similar defence mechanisms, particularly in his Symphonies, creating a constant shimmer of visionary wonder, deflatory laughter and black despair. Viacheslav Ivanov masked his most intimate and sacred experiences in mythical imagery from distant times and places. Blok, for himself, tried Romantic irony, but eventually found artistic form to be 'the *only* defence'.⁷ All of the second generation, however, *understood* Solov'ev and believed that, whatever his weaknesses as a poet, his chivalrous cult of Sophia the Divine Wisdom was based on

some kind of real experience, which had had real consequences for him; that he was, as it were, consecrated by his love of Sophia to the salvation of the world. They were aware, however, just as he had been, that society no longer shared or tolerated the concept of such chivalry and, in a sense, they put the shared 'mythologema' of dedication to Sophia between themselves and society. They made the myth or revived it for their own time, and, within the myth, they understood one another and were free from the conventions of a rationalist age.⁸

What and Who, then, was Sophia? Solov'ev's 'visions' were the idiosyncratic manifestation of an ancient concept. Born of the meeting of Hebrew and Greek, 'Sophia', as sung by Solov'ev, is at once the Old Testament Wisdom, who was with God before He 'created the Earth and the fields or the first grains of dust', an 'artist, a joy to Him every day, making merry before his face, at all times'⁹ and the Platonic concept of Wisdom as the ultimate object of man's desire. Reflections of Sophia are to be perceived in the great churches and iconography of the Byzantine tradition, though the depiction of Her in human form has always worried the Orthodox Church, which considers Sophia an aspect of Christ.

Any separation of the image of Christ and of the Divine Wisdom contained seeds of heresy. The Valentinian Gnostics wove a whole mythology about Sophia the Aeon (eternal being) who, for love and pity for the world, became entrapped in matter (where She is known as 'the World Soul') and who yearns to be set free. It is Christ, also an Aeon, Who, according to the Gnostics, braves matter (accepts incarnation) and will eventually redeem Her. At one point in his poetry, Solov'ev uses one of the Gnostic titles of Sophia: 'the Maiden of the rainbow gates' ('Deva raduzhnykh vorot'), and in some poems ('Saima', for instance) he perceives Her through nature as the troubled, captive World Soul.¹⁰

Vladimir Solov'ev always denied that his concept of the Eternal Feminine was 'Gnostic', but there is no doubt that he was not only aware of the Valentinian doctrine but was actually studying it – with intense interest if not with approval – at the time of his second vision. There is an ambiguity in his thinking on ideal love which led him to write lyric poetry rather than hymns.

Neither all philosopher nor all prophet nor all poet, Solov'ev was, nevertheless, a larger-than-life personality thanks to his lifelong commitment to Christianity, of which his cult of Sophia was a part, as was his interest in 'the way of the superman',¹¹ and his existential concern for the world. As the son of an historian and the grandson of a priest, he was acutely aware of the interaction of time and eternity, of his personal responsibility to serve God and man in the historical context. He wrote to Alexander III to intercede for the assassins of Alexander II – feeling that

their execution would institute a chain reaction of retribution – and lost his post at Moscow University. He wrote to the Pope of Rome to advocate the Union of the Churches and, receiving a cool answer, ended by attempting – albeit in his own brief span – to embody that union in his own person, virtually excommunicating himself from both churches from the day he took the sacrament at the hands of a Uniate priest to the day he received the Last Rites from an Orthodox.

Solov'ev's extraordinary *Povest' ob Antikhriste* – in which he predicted an invasion of Russia from the East, war and social upheaval on an unprecedented scale, the eventual triumph of materialism and of the Mangod, Antichrist, and, at the last, the reunion of the much-diminished churches, of the last 'little flock' – was received with open mockery or ill-disguised embarrassment. 'Hard is the service of the Lord', he is said to have exclaimed on his deathbed.¹² Indeed, for all his efforts to persuade reasonable people to use their reason, Christian people to behave like Christians, responsible people to show some forethought for looming peril, the ship of fools and the ship of state had sailed majestically past him on their appointed course: 'Chelovecheskaia glupost' / Velichava, bezyskhodna, / Vse, chem muchila zemlia' ('Human stupidity / Majestic, inexhaustible, / Everything by which the earth tormented us').¹³

The men of the turn of the century, those who had heard the chime of Bely's 'silver bell', felt for Solov'ev and were inspired by his commitment. Although there was a great deal of loose talk in the first years of the century about the coming Apocalypse ('Have you *heard* the latest? They've got the End of the World in Moscow', Voloshin is reported to have yelled from a cab window at his Russian friends in Paris),¹⁴ neither Solov'ev nor his followers pretended to know 'times or seasons'.

Only Merezhkovsky, having reached the idea of 'the End' by his own road, came near to setting a timetable – possibly involuntarily, by reason of his chronic inability to achieve the multi-dimensional relativity of Symbolist expression. His urgency made a tremendous impression on those who, alerted by Solov'ev like the young Blok and Bely, were startled, shocked and fascinated by Merezhkovsky's proclamation of the imminent End when they first made his acquaintance (Bely at the end of 1901, Blok early in 1902). However, the idea that it was time to stop talking, to lay aside the pen, to forget art and to plunge into some unspecified social 'action', did not suit their gifts, and Merezhkovsky's influence was as quickly cast off as it was intensely experienced.

Under the constructive posthumous influence of Solov'ev, the urge to shout warnings yielded to the need to prepare for what promised to be a long, losing battle. For the artists and poets of the Silver Age, the battlefield was culture rather than society because culture was *their* responsibility; but it would be rash to conclude that culture was all that

mattered to them, and that everything else was but a metaphor for the battle to preserve the superstructure of human endeavour.

Briusov, caught between generations, sceptical of both 'apocalyptic' camps, his heart and imagination untouched by the myth of the Eternal Feminine, was yet, from the moment he read Solov'ev's poetry, aware that here, perhaps, was the theme of themes: a combination of dread and hope which was, in spite of the ancient mythical form, uniquely contemporary. In his review of the third edition of the philosopher's only collection of poetry, *Stikhotvoreniia* (Poems), which came out in the periodical *Russkii Arkhiv* (Russian Archive) just after the author's death in 1900, Briusov concludes that although, so far as form is concerned, there was nothing for the professional poet to learn from Solov'ev, there was 'the most important thing that can be asked of poetry: "novyi stroi dushi"' [a new 'formation' of soul]. The main part of the review, as the title 'Vladimir Solov'ev: smysl ego poezii' (Vladimir Solov'ev, the meaning of his poetry) suggests, is devoted to a dispassionate analysis of the poet's credo. Without going deep into the Sophia-myth, Briusov explains Solov'ev's belief that the earthly paradise can be momentarily revealed to us and will be restored in the fullness of time by *Love*, 'the incarnation of which in earthly form, we call Femininity; the supra-terrestrial ideal – the Eternal Feminine'. The great hope of Solov'ev's poetry, the reviewer insists, is in real, physical resurrection, the return of all we love here and now, only 'Chishche, sil'nei, i zhivei, i polnei' ('More pure, more strong, more vital and more complete').

Coolly critical, as always, Briusov points out that such belief in the incarnation of the Ideal entails duality: 'The one important thing', he writes, is that the poet should know and remember that earthly Love 'is "only a distorted echo" of other, fuller "harmonies"'. Here Briusov implies a licence not granted by Solov'ev's difficult Platonic eroticism, which was to bedevil the lives and poetry of his immediate followers Ivanov, Bely and Blok. In Solov'ev's poetry (as indeed in his philosophy) the 'seething foam' of storm-tossed passion is never wholly reconciled with 'the mighty and immutable shore of love'. Briusov says as much. 'It would be incautious', he remarks primly, 'to say that this devotion of Vladimir Solov'ev's poetry to but one Aphrodite, the heavenly one, is totally irreproachable.'¹⁵

Nevertheless, Briusov did try his hand several times at Solov'ev's theme of sacred and profane love, notably in 'K blizkoi' (To one who is close by), a poem which so impressed Blok that he borrowed some lines from it, as an epigraph to the most sacrosanct section of his *Poems about the Most Beautiful Lady*.¹⁶

The review of Solov'ev's poetry brought Briusov a warm letter of

appreciation from the late philosopher's brother Mikhail Sergeevich Solov'ev, which led in its turn to acquaintanceship with the family. It was at the Solov'evs' where it was difficult to get one's first cup of coffee and cigarette 'without Antichrist', that Briusov made the acquaintance of the student Boris Bugaev and was first shown some poems by Aleksandr Blok: 'from the world of the Solov'evs – not a poet', as he incautiously informed Pertsov.¹⁷

The Solov'ev milieu was not so central to the literary and artistic life of the time as were the Merezhkovskys or the *Mir Iskusstva* group, but this was more than compensated for by their passionate interest in all that was going on in the world of art and poetry. In a sense, they were Skorpion's first truly sympathetic, highly qualified, critical public. It is not surprising that, during the early years of the 'battle for Symbolism', Briusov tended at times to use the language and even perhaps to think in the terms of their circle, particularly when making general statements intended for a wider public.

In his poetry, however, and in what he wrote and said in polemics and reviews, Briusov was more circumspect. Take, for instance, the part he played in fanning the apocalyptic mood of which Solov'ev's extraordinary, out-of-character last testament, *Povest' ob Antikhriste*, was the quintessential statement. Bely was prepared to accept Solov'ev. At the age of seventeen, on the Tuesday of Passion Week 1898, he had himself been overtaken in church by the grandiose concept of an apocalyptic mystery play – a play which, though never written, was to nourish his lyric poetry and prose like an underground spring for the first decade of his life in literature; indeed, if we are to believe his own evidence, until his meeting with Steiner in 1913. Briusov, however, remained unconvinced of the imminence of a Christian Apocalypse. He sought stimulation rather in the occult studies of Agrippa of Nettesheim (a sixteenth-century German scholar with a taste for necromancy), and found scary predictions of the onset, at the beginning of the twentieth-century, of the penultimate age of the world, the terrible, 'adamantine' era of Ophiel.

This taste for the occult led to Briusov being perceived as a seer of another kind. Even the mature Ivanov, during his brief stay in Moscow in early 1904, fell under the spell of his 'great, black, beautiful eyes', the eyes which look out of the mad Vrubel's unfinished portrait, and seems to have felt the Moscow poet was possessed of some dark secret. 'To Valerii Briusov, who discovered to me the era of Ophiel according to the lore of Agrippa', runs the dedication of Ivanov's 'apocalyptic' cycle 'Carmen Saeculare'.

Ты стал мне друг и брат. Судьбе
Завет глухой я завещаю

И музы темной посвящаю
Прозренья — зрячему Тебе.*¹⁸

‘To you – a seer’ ... What Briusov saw, however, was not so much the coming battle of Good and Evil (in which, as he teased Bely, he was determined to take the side of the loser, ‘the poor Beast’), as the indifference of the world about him to all such ‘signs and portents’, more especially the indifference of the modern city with its senseless yet unstoppable momentum. His poem ‘Kon’ bled’ (The pale horse), inspired by a street accident in Paris, uses traditional apocalyptic symbols to create a terrifying non-event set in ‘the city of the future’. The poem begins with a description of the raucous bustle of the street, suddenly brought to a halt by the appearance of a horseman with a face of flame. Awestruck, the people fall silent. The traffic halts.

Но восторг и ужас длились — краткое мгновенье.
Через миг в толпе смятенной не стоял никто:
Набежало с улиц смежных новое движение,
Было все обычным светом ярко залито ... †

A prostitute, a madman and a poet are the only ones to notice, to need, to remember the signs ... As with the poem ‘and *no one* is pursuing me’, so even in Briusov’s contribution to the theme of Apocalypse it is the panic fear of absence, the fear that, after all, there are no mysteries, which dominates ... and this fear echoes on through the romantic irony of Bely’s *Symphonies* and in Blok’s early poetry of the city.¹⁹

It was another matter that, by electing to stay – in spirit – outside in the street with the madman and the prostitute, Blok and Bely became very different poets. Briusov chose less perilous ways and preferred to seek his insights, citing the precedent of Rimbaud, through ‘un long dérèglement des sens’, dabbling in but not altogether giving himself over to the occult, to amorous experiment and drugs. In private he did not seek to deceive himself or his close colleagues – however much his public statements may have misled them: ‘Do not lay on me a burden beyond my strength’, he wrote to the young Blok in November 1904. ‘Let me be just a maker of poetry, just an artist in the narrow sense of the word, everything beyond this will be accomplished by you, the young ones.’²⁰

In the poem ‘Mladshim’, addressed to these same ‘young ones’ whose

* ‘You have become a friend and brother to me. I leave this obscure Testament to Fate and dedicate these insights of the sombre Muse to you, a Seer.’ In this translation I have not followed Ivanov’s convoluted syntax but rather the sense of the quatrain as a whole: a line by line division would therefore be inappropriate.

† ‘But the ecstasy and terror lasted – one brief instant. / The next moment not one of the shocked crowd of bystanders remained: / From streets which gave on this one new streams of traffic flowed, / Everything was inundated with the usual brilliant light ...’

'gold and azure' poems of praise to the Eternal Feminine both tantalized and infuriated him, Briusov donned once more the mask of the jealous slave:

Они Ее видят! Они Ее слышат!
С невестой жених в озаренном дворце!
И отсветы радостно блещут в венце.

А я безнадежно бреду за оградой
И слушаю говор за длинной стеной.*²¹

Here there is perhaps genuine envy. Yet in Briusov's riposte to Bely's attempt, in his article on 'The Apocalypse in Russian poetry', to include *him* among the 'prophets' of some new faith, a riposte written and published in 1905, the same year as the article 'Sviashchennaia zhertva', we hear the unmistakable voice of Briusov the individual as distinct from Briusov the promoter of Russian Symbolism:

But, say what you will, poets can be judged only by the merits and demerits of their poetry, not by any other yardstick. If, as you maintain, it is the destiny of Russian poetry to conceive in its own depths a new religion hitherto unknown to the world, if Russian poetry is 'providential', then of course its most vivid representatives will be representatives of 'The Apocalypse in Russian poetry' [...]. You value poets according to their attitude to 'The Woman clothed with the sun'. The critics of the 1860s valued poets according to their attitude to the progressive ideas of their time ... Honestly, there's not much difference.²²

To begin with, however, the younger Symbolists, took Briusov's flirtation with Solov'evian themes and his call to sacrifice life to art in all earnest. For Blok, indeed, who at one stage understood his manifestos quite literally, Briusov merely gained in stature by his disclaimers, appearing 'sincere in the extreme' precisely in his concealment of 'his knowledge of Her'. 'Moreover', the younger poet noted for himself at the end of May 1903, 'he deceives *everyone*, insisting that *Urbi et orbi* is rational'.²³ Viacheslav Ivanov, too, for all his clear perception of the fundamental difference in their approach to art, included Briusov in his own created legend as one involved in a perilous spiritual journey such as he himself had already trodden, and exhorted him: 'Eshche, eshche preodolen'e / Eshche smertel'noe tomlen'e / I vot – iz bezdn voskhodish' ty!' ('One victory more, but one – One moment of mortal languor, – / And see – you are ascending out of the depths').²⁴ Ivanov's poetry is a lifelong attempt to express in words the yield of his own spiritual pilgrimage from alienation through Dionysian passion (and sin) to the revelation of the resurrected

* 'They see Her! They hear Her! / The bridegroom is with the bride in the brightly-lit palace!
/ The lamps rock the gentle flame, / And the reflections gleam brightly in the crown // But
I, without hope, wander beyond the pale, / And hear them talking behind the long wall.'

Christ ('the sun of Emmaus'). It was long before he began to understand Briusov's refusal to be tied down to any one myth, the refusal so buoyantly expressed in the introductory poem to *Urbi et orbi*: 'Tvoriu, chtoby kinut' opiat'!' ('I create, in order to cast away').²⁵

Bely's relationship with Briusov was closer. He eventually devoted a whole cycle of poems to the older poet, in which he perceives him now as a heroic, now as a demonic figure. Always, however, he is shown as a man engaged in making poetry, bent over his book, 'Dry, serious, well-crafted, direct', for whom everything is just a symbol – 'the world – Russia – Petersburg – / the Sun – distant planets . . .' Yet, in the last poem of the cycle, Briusov is explicitly included in Bely's own mythic landscape of mountains, sunset and sunrise: 'Nam s vysei ne idti nazad: / My smotrim na odni vershiny, / My smotrim na odin zakat, / Na neba golubye stepi' ('We cannot retreat from the heights: / We look at the same peaks, / We look at the same sunset, / At the pale blue steppes of heaven').²⁶

Briusov cast himself and was cast by his friends as the dark genius of their quest – for Ivanov a younger, for Bely and Blok an older 'brother' who had passed through infernal trials, borne the brunt of public opprobrium and was, as a result, somewhat grim and unpredictable. Somebody, after all, had to play Loki, Klingsor, Mephistopheles, essential characters in the Mystery of redemptive action to which (had he not told them so himself?) they, as artists and poets, were forging the keys. Briusov both revelled in and struggled to shake free of his role in this Mystery, but it was written by many hands out of the depths of the spirit of the times and he was part of it.

The other formative influence on Ivanov, Bely and Blok, to which that of Solov'ev, to some extent provided the antidote, was the thought of Friedrich Nietzsche. It was the shock of Nietzsche which gave the positive thinking of Solov'ev musical resonance and which suggested the stirrings of creative chaos beneath the cosmos of Solov'ev's 'mental postulates'.

Only Blok *began* from Vladimir Solov'ev. His early poetry is untouched by Nietzsche and, though he can scarcely have avoided indirect influence through Solov'ev himself and, from 1901 onwards, through involvement with Russian modernism, Blok's preparation for the German philosopher was through Merezhkovsky, Viacheslav Ivanov and Wagner. He did not read *The Birth of Tragedy from the Spirit of Music* until December 1906, but when he did he made a conspectus in his notebook, underlining the words 'Apollo could not live without Dionysos', and eventually breaking off because: 'You'd have to copy out everything – this book is such a revelation.' There can be no doubt that it was Nietzsche's influence, together with that of Viacheslav Ivanov and of the time itself, which

helped to launch Blok into the wild drama of his Second Volume: 'Aleksandr Blok – To Dionysos'.²⁷

Blok's First Volume, however, the one he later called 'that magic crystal through which I first beheld the distance of a free romance', is altogether from the world of Solov'ev. There was something filial in the poet's attitude to the philosopher whom he revered as a man who had been granted a brief vision to which he was faithful throughout his life, the truth of which was confirmed by the gift of poetry. The poems themselves, Blok first read in the spring of the year 1901, the year of his 'mystic summer' when he wrote the core of verse which went to make up his first book; *Stikhi o Prekrasnoi Dame*. He did not imitate Solov'ev, as he was later, for a short time to imitate Briusov, but he cherished his poems and drew inspiration from them all his life long.²⁸

Of more importance, perhaps, even than the poems, and most certainly of more importance than the philosophical works, which Blok tackled enthusiastically but never finished, even writing them off in one much-quoted letter as 'boredom and prose',²⁹ was the manner in which Solov'ev opened up for him the 'splendid worlds' of Plato. Blok himself makes a direct link between the change of heart which began to come over him from the autumn of 1900 and his discovery of Plato. During the winter of 1900–1 he read all he could find about the Greek philosopher in his grandmother's extensive library, including the first volume of the Dialogues in the new Solov'ev translation, in a copy presented to her by Mikhail, co-translator with his brother Vladimir. It may well have been Vladimir Solov'ev's introduction to the dialogues, 'Zhiznennaia drama Platona' (The drama of Plato's life), which originally focused Blok's attention on Plato's teachings; certainly it helped him to apply them to himself.³⁰

Solov'ev, in his introduction, compares the spiritual tragedy of Plato to the 'psychological' and 'social' tragedies of Hamlet and Orestes. All three begin with the loss of a father, in Plato's case of a spiritual father, Socrates. Plato's dualism is seen as a reaction to the execution of Socrates, after which he elevated the Good and the True to the realm of transcendent (or ideal) reality. Somewhere about the time he wrote the *Symposium* and the *Phaedrus*, Solov'ev maintains, Plato experienced love, for only direct experience could have led the philosopher to so profound an understanding of the nature of Eros. The experience did not last, but it was Plato's apotheosis, from which he fell away into tragic compromise with apparent reality in the *Republic* and the *Laws*.

Solov'ev's description of Socrates' and Plato's conflict with the world into which they had been born had a clear bearing on modern Russia, and Blok was to see Solov'ev as *his* Socrates, one who stood 'full in the draft'

between warring worlds: the conservatives and the liberals, the material and the ideal, the past and the future, this and 'other' worlds. 'It was not from want but from abundance', Blok wrote of Solov'ev, 'that his most rich cup overflowed as he was dying (and on me amongst others a drop fell).'³¹ The impossible task laid upon the pagan Plato of achieving the synthesis of the material world with the ideal (or, to use the simple Solov'ev imagery Blok so often quoted, of bringing forth roses from dirt, light from darkness) was accepted by Blok as a life-long vocation. He was deeply impressed by the idea that this could be brought about only by love, Eros, the 'pontifex', the builder of 'aerial, rainbow bridges'. Though such bridges were by nature insubstantial, to build them was at least to remind people of the covenant, the promise of a true, lasting synthesis, however far beyond the scope of the artist or the philosopher this might lie.

Plato's tragedy, in Solov'ev's view, was that he had become reconciled to the idea that perfection can exist only in the sphere of the ideal, forgetting that by its own logic loyalty to Goodness and Truth obliges the lover of perfect beauty to give it material form 'so that it should not remain thought only . . .'

What Blok appears to have missed at the time in this 'Zhiznennaia drama Platona' was Solov'ev's conviction, clearly expressed in the last paragraph, though without naming names, that the incarnation and resurrection of Christ was such an act of love, atonement, synthesis – albeit 'forgotten'. Probably, given the later development of the theme of Christ in his poetry, Blok chose to leave this thought to mature of itself, taking up Solov'ev again from his article in *Mir Iskusstva* about the superman, written in the year after the introduction to Plato, in 1899:

Even if the image of the true 'superman' does not arise in our memory, the true conqueror of death and 'first fruits of them that sleep' [. . .] or even if this image has been so darkened and enmeshed by various later layers that it can no longer speak directly to our consciousness [. . .] even if there were no true model of the 'superman' to whom we could look, at least *there is the way of the superman* [*est' sverkhchelovecheskii put'*], in which human beings have walked, are walking and will walk for the good of all . . .³²

So, on the verge of finding his vocation in poetry, Blok, through Solov'ev's understanding of Plato and Nietzsche, found the idea of 'the way'; the idea of Platonic love, the power of sexual love symbolised by Eros, Aphrodite, the World Soul, which gives 'wings' but which cannot endure; and the idea of philosophy (or poetry, or any life work) as a structured aesthetic construct, a drama.³³ He also found a model in what he called the 'immutable' image of Solov'ev a 'knight-monk': 'What are all the many volumes of Solov'ev in this picture? Nothing but shield and sword –

in the hands of the knight, good works – in the life of the monk. [. . .] Only a *means*: for the knight – to fight the dragon, for the monk – to combat chaos . . .³⁴

For Viacheslav Ivanov and Bely, Nietzsche's impact preceded that of Solov'ev, and was more traumatic. Andrei Bely became obsessed by Nietzsche, particularly by the aphoristic, inconsequential style of *Zarathustra*, in 1899, a year before he embarked on 'a most stubborn study of Solov'ev's philosophy'.³⁵ In a sense, it was this study of Solov'ev that helped him to break the spell which the German philosopher had cast over his youthful mind, though it is noteworthy that Bely always maintained that, however easy it became for him to refute him in 'philosophy', Nietzsche retained inexpressible power over him 'in poetry'.

The influence of Solov'ev was more intimate – almost, as with Blok, familial. The philosopher's nephew and future biographer, Sergei, was Bely's best friend, and in his home Bely not only met the philosopher, but had the opportunity, after his death in 1900, to study his manuscripts with Mikhail Solov'ev, first editor of his *Collected Works*. Bely took to visiting Solov'ev's grave in the grounds of the Novodevichii Monastery with Sergei, as if asking the dead man's blessing 'on the task of our future service', a habit which became engrained when Sergei's parents died tragically on the same day, early in 1903, and were laid to rest beside him. Later that year, Bely's father, too, died and was buried at Novodevichii. Study of Solov'ev's poetry and philosophy was thus combined with something like a cult of departed figures of authority and, even before he began to write, Bely tells us 'I was trying to unite in my heart two polarities: (Solov'ev and Nietzsche)'.³⁶ In the various schemae of his development which Bely drew up for Ivanov-Razumnik in 1927, Solov'ev is always associated with ascent, universalism and Sophia whereas Nietzsche is identified with descent, Christ and individualism. The two influences alternate and counterbalance each other throughout his formative years.³⁷

In Bely's first published work, *The Dramatic Symphony*, Solov'ev appears as a joyous apocalyptic figure trumpeting out a call to arms from the roofs of Moscow: 'Zlo pozabytoe / Tonet v krovi / Vskhodit omytoe / Solntse liubvi' ('Evil forgotten / Drowns in blood / Cleansed there arises / The sun of love'). The lines are from a poem found amongst the philosopher's papers which also delighted Blok and which confirmed both poets and the youthful Sergei Solov'ev in their vision of the philosopher as an advocate of 'Holy War'.

In the programmatic poem, which serves as an epigraph to this chapter, written in 1901 and dedicated to Sergei, his chief ally in their imaginary

crusade for a renewed, 'white', perhaps millennial culture, Bely hailed *two* prophets, Solov'ev and Nietzsche: 'Ah, two prophets will arise from the darkness. / The world will tremble at their fiery speeches. / And on the poor, northern plains / their battle cry will take wing and spread / heralding the sacred years to come, / the last world-wide battle.'³⁸

Like Blok and Ivanov, Bely returned often to the image of Solov'ev, notably in the celebrated 1921 narrative poem *Pervoe Svidanie* (First Encounter), as well as in more prosaic considerations of the philosopher's significance for his entire generation.³⁹

Ivanov's meeting of minds with Nietzsche began, like Blok's, with *The Birth of Tragedy from the Spirit of Music* and the revelation of Dionysos, or rather of the essentially complementary though opposed principles of art: the Apollonian (male, objective, having to do with visual form, diurnal, logical and harmonious), and the Dionysian (female, subjective, having to do with musical mood, nocturnal, ecstatic and chaotic). This view of Dionysos, not as the old half-forgotten Bacchus, god of the vine, but as a timeless tragic principle of human nature, altered Ivanov's life. When he began reading Nietzsche in 1890, he was a young married research student with brilliant prospects and decent liberal principles. In 1893 while working in Rome, he met a woman with three children, temporarily separated from her husband, Lidiia Zinov'eva-Annibal, 'a meeting like a mighty Dionysian storm' after which, he said, everything in him was 'renewed, came into bloom, grew green'.⁴⁰ Two years later, Ivanov was in the throes of divorce and committed to the uncertainties of a poetic vocation. Nietzsche and Dionysos between them had opened his heart and hardened his will. Although he always felt guilty towards his first wife and child and only gradually came to feel that this new union was blessed, his 'sinful' passion and involvement with Nietzsche had the paradoxical effect of shaking him out of academic self-absorption, putting him back on the road to life – and to religion.

In this process, the influence of Solov'ev was immediate and acknowledged: it was the philosopher's belief that only in erotic love (whether through celebration or sublimation of Eros) could the subject effect the transcendence of self in recognition of the absolute being, the equal value with the self of the beloved. The 'Ty esi' (Thou art) with which he acknowledges this being outside himself is extended to every other human individual ... to society, nature, the cosmos. In this doctrine Ivanov found a positive interpretation of his own experience. He had come upon his love deeply confused and unhappy, a rebel against life and God, and had helped her to understand herself and to fulfil herself. For him, this was 'the archetypal male experience', but one that it was dangerous to undertake 'without raising it to a supra-personal level in the light of

Christ'.⁴¹ Before he had himself achieved any such supra-personal level, his fascination with the orgiastic cult of Dionysos led him and his beloved, an emancipated, self-willed aristocrat who whole-heartedly embraced and acted out his ideas, imbuing them with her own maximalist temperament, into a series of experiments with their own lives which were to scandalise even the most broad-minded of their acquaintances. Yet all this was anchored to a bed-rock of faith and positive aspiration, and they rose above it.

Curiously, it was Ivanov's first wife, Dariia Mikhailovna Dmitrievskaia, who, after her return to Russia in the summer of 1895, had shown his poetry – without his knowledge – to Solov'ev and who was thus responsible for the philosopher's early interest in his work. In Ivanov's philosophical lyrics, Solov'ev perceived 'complete originality'. The writer's Nietzscheanism, it seemed to him, was but a passing stage, and he sent a telegram offering to help place his work in the periodical press. Ivanov was naturally delighted and went to see Solov'ev next time he visited Moscow and, thereafter, every time he went back to Russia. The philosopher became for him 'the protector of my muse and the confessor of my heart'.⁴² Two months before his death, Solov'ev specifically approved Ivanov's plan to publish his first book of poetry independently of the Symbolists, though he seems to have been aware that his protégé would have been more than welcome among the new poets and that he would eventually gravitate towards them.

Both Ivanov and Lidiia felt that it was with Solov'ev's tacit blessing that they undertook – as penitents – a pilgrimage to the Great Monastery at Kiev, a deliberate re-entry into communion inspired by the philosopher's insistence on the importance of shared religious experience within the church founded on earth by Christ, however far from perfection that institution might appear.⁴³ If Solov'ev gave the original impulse, Ivanov continued on the course he had set in the strength of his own intellect and scholarship. The year 1902, after an Easter pilgrimage with Lidiia to Jerusalem, he spent in Athens, intensively studying the religion of Dionysos at source. It was, he claimed, 'the only way I could overcome Nietzsche in the sphere of religious awareness'.⁴⁴

The immediate fruit of this study was the course of lectures he gave in Paris in 1903 'on the religion of the Suffering God', a version of which was serialised in *Novyi Put'* (1904) and *Voprosy Zhizni* (1905). Ivanov was to return to the theme again and again throughout his long life, notably during the First World War, when he completed a book on the subject, and in the years leading up to the Second, when he prepared a version in German.⁴⁵

The influence of Solov'ev as a man actively engaged in the struggle to

renew secular culture through the 'mind of Christ' was to give direction to Ivanov's lifework, particularly during his 'Russian' period, from 1905 to 1924, when he was consciously labouring to organise and educate, first the creative artists and poets of the Silver Age and then people of the nascent Soviet culture.

The idea of the Eternal Feminine, albeit in a somewhat different form from that in which we find it in Solov'ev, plays an important part in Ivanov's thought and poetry. By experience and temperament the two men were very different and, however much Ivanov may have admired Solov'ev's teaching on love and sex – 'no one after Plato' spoke of them 'so profoundly and vitally' – he was not, as the philosopher was, an ascetic. In Solov'ev's recognition of the necessity and possibility of transcending self in imitation of Christ, the idea of the *bogochelovek* (Godman), Ivanov saw a truer and deeper understanding of Nietzsche's concept of the Superman (*chelovekobog*, the mangod).⁴⁶ When Ivanov joined the Roman Catholic Church in 1926 he made a profession of faith devised and used by Solov'ev and, in his last sustained burst of lyric poetry, the *Roman Diary* of 1944, he remembered the philosopher on the day of St Vladimir (15/28 July).

Вмещен был узкою могилой,
Кто мыслию ширококрылой
Вмещал Софию. Он угас;
Но все рука его святая
И смертью не отнятая,
Вела, благославляя нас. *⁴⁷

The example of Solov'ev, his combination of mystic vision and concern for the real world, can thus be seen to have inspired a whole generation of poets on the eve of the Russo-Japanese War and the first Russian Revolution, at the beginning of the long run-up to 1917. He gave them the bright image of Sophia to protect them from hopeless dualism and as an emblem of faith in the ultimate triumph of good – 'the Synthesis' of the material and the ideal. At the same time, he prepared them for dark days ahead and set an example of tragic dedication. He helped them to 'overcome' and absorb Nietzsche, suggesting how the 'way of the superman' might be hallowed by the saving grace of the Godman, the forgotten Christ.

The vigour of Solov'ev and the emotional, musical groundswell of Nietzschean aspiration lifted them out of the trough of extreme individualism and isolation. Having this common background, which they

* 'He whose wide-winged thought / Had space for Sophia / Was laid in the narrow grave.
He is gone / But still his holy hand / Not taken away by death / Led and blessed us.'

deliberately built into their creative work, the artists of the second generation – for all their frequent, often bitter quarrels – moved with comparative ease in and out of one another's poetic worlds and sought a wider community through the mythologisation not just of their own, personal feelings, but of man in history, struggling to give permanent artistic form to the chaos of events in the temporal world.

Part 4

A glittering hell

9 The Russo-Japanese War and the 1905 Revolution

В ту ночь нам судьбы диктовала
Восстанья страшная душа.

Александр Блок 'Вячеславу Иванову'*

The 'dawns' of 1901 were succeeded in 1902 and 1903 by the reflected glow of blazing estates and factories. The country was seething with unrest before the outbreak of the disastrous war with Japan in January 1904. The shock of repeated defeats in the Far East led first to demands for constitutional reform, which reached their culmination in the autumnal 'spring' of 1904. After Bloody Sunday, 9 January 1905, the groundswell of public opinion in favour of moderate reform was overtaken by the swirling rush of social revolution which, since the turn of the century, had been building up behind it. Throughout 1905, almost every day brought fresh news of assassinations, revolts, mutinies and strikes. The granting of a Constitution in the 1905 October Manifesto and the elections which followed did much to placate moderate opinion and to break the momentum of the country's united opposition to the autocracy, but passions were running high and there were barricades on the Moscow streets and bitter fighting before the social revolution was stamped out. Russia continued in a state of extreme unease until 1908, when the combination of coherent economic policies and energetic suppression of subversives by summary military courts instituted by Stolypin restored a semblance of order – until the next war, the next revolution.

In 1904–5 the Symbolists, whose gaze had hitherto been fixed on the riddles of the skies – the rising sun, the guiding stars, the rainbow bridge – felt the earth move under their feet: 'As something broke in us', Blok was to recall in 1910, 'so something broke in Russia [...] and Russia [...] turned out to be our own soul.'¹ Confirmed subjectivists as they were, it seemed as though it had been in their own hearts and in the ranks of the Symbolist movement itself that discord and confusion had first invaded

* 'In that night, our fates were dictated / By the terrible spirit of rebellion.' Aleksandr Blok to Viacheslav Ivanov.

and overset their brief shared vision of a dawning harmony, the first stirrings of which the young Konevskoi had felt when he wrote:

Есть не только тайны заката,
 О, не только есть таинства ночи:
 Есть и тайны рассвета, откровения утра,
 Легче, воздушней, короче!*²

I

In the autumn of 1904, Viacheslav Ivanov, profoundly moved by events at home and anxious to make a more direct contribution to the cultural evolution of his country, made up his mind to leave his Genevan retreat and to return to Russia. He appears to have felt that his future lay with both *Vesy* and *Novyi Put'*, although the take-over of the latter journal by the 'Idealists' in the autumn of 1904 momentarily inclined him to accede to Briusov's insistent entreaties to associate himself more closely with the Moscow journal. At the time, the two poets enjoyed a close literary friendship – Briusov was editing Ivanov's second book of poetry, *Prozrachnost'* (Transparency) for publication by Skorpion, and it was to Ivanov that he dedicated his own fourth collection, the acclaimed *Stephanos* (The Wreath).

The failing health of Lidiia Zinov'eva-Annibal's father had necessitated the postponement of the couple's plans to return to live in Russia; on his death Briusov (with almost indecent urgency in his letter of condolence) renewed his invitation to Ivanov to return to Moscow and to co-edit *Vesy*. Ivanov, feeling that Poliakov, who after all held the purse strings of *Vesy* and Skorpion, was less enthusiastic than was Briusov about enlisting an additional fulltime editor, replied evasively, not committing himself, but full of enthusiasm for the 'new era' that he felt had just begun, an era which required 'us' – him, Briusov, Bely – 'to define our position as a movement'. *Vesy* he saw as the organ of 'some kind of collective self-assertion, some kind of vital process in Russian – European, if you like – self-definition . . .' 'I think', he added, 'that for me, too, there will be a part to play in the common task. It is all a matter of solidarity of opinions and trust'.³

'Solidarity' and 'trust', however, were in short supply. Bely, for instance, had greeted Ivanov's first appearance in Moscow in the beginning of 1904 with some hostility; it had seemed to him that his own

* 'There are not only the mysteries of sunset, / O, there are not only the mysteries of night: / There are also the mysteries of dawn, the revelations of morning, / Easier, more aerial, more brief.'

position was under threat: 'Andrei Bely – he-he!' people were whispering unkindly. 'The ex-king of the Promised Land.' Bely saw the scholar-poet as a pretender to his throne, a 'German schoolmaster' with a long nose and a red, patchy face, out to gain influence and to organise all the decadents into antique round dances to the sound of Beethoven, 'sticking out his shiny nose and crying out in a loud voice: Kongs om pax!'⁴

Ivanov, on the contrary, had been keenly interested in Bely, and tried to gentle him into returning to the fold of *Severnye Tsvety* when, that same winter, Briusov provoked a rebellion by forbidding his 'Scorpions' the right to publish with the rival Grif. He also took Briusov severely to task when the extraordinary 'poetic' challenge he had issued to Bely in 1904, 'From Loki to Baldur',⁵ threatened to develop into a real duel. The story behind this is part of the history of Symbolism and symptomatic – as were Bely's later disagreements with Blok – of the onset of a period of disruption.

Bely, living his own 'created myth', had ventured for the first time beyond the sphere of his Peter Pan band of Argonauts to become involved with a young woman poet, Nina Petrovskaja, the wife of Sergei Sokolov (literary pseudonym Krechetov), the founder of Grif. Petrovskaja was cursed with intense empathy which found no adequate outlet in creative work. It made her a charming companion but an unusually susceptible and suggestible one. She was unsettled in her marriage, uncertain of her way in life. Bely determined to 'save' her by introducing her to the world of the Argonauts, and a beautiful brother-and-sister relationship developed which, to his horror, became or threatened to become 'an affair'. Briusov, watching from the sidelines with cynical amusement, found the situation interesting and the lady attractive. He began to pay court to Nina, involving her in occult experiments, and – both through the tug-of-war for Nina's soul and in his whole demeanour to Bely – threatening the very foundations of the younger poet's beliefs and hopes. Between the two of them – Bely who wished to elevate her to his own gold and azure world but who shrank from a physical relationship and Briusov who had conceived for her a dogged passion – Petrovskaja became almost demented, smuggling a pistol into a lecture given by Bely who, she felt, had rejected and abandoned her, but then, touched by his inspired oratory, turning it on Briusov . . . who quietly disarmed her and took her home.

Both Petrovskaja and Bely seem to have felt that Briusov had actually acquired some hypnotic power over them and, in a sense, they were indeed his puppets, as he was busy at the time with plans for his novel *Ognennyi angel* (The Fiery Angel), which was to transport them all back to sixteenth-century Germany and have the poor heroine burned at the

stake as a witch.⁶ Bely freed himself from what he felt to be Briusov's threat to his spiritual integrity by intense mental effort, astonishing the older poet with a superb poetic rejoinder to his 'Loki-Baldur' challenge, using the imagery of a wizard's duel. Briusov acknowledged Bely's moral and poetic victory in sombre verse:

Кто победил из нас — не знаю!
 Должно быть ты, сын света, ты!
 И я, покорствуя, встречаю
 Все безнадежные мечты.*⁷

Ivanov, from the sidelines in Geneva, rather enjoyed the poetic duel, of which Briusov kept him informed. He despised 'bourgeois morality'. However, a furious letter from Briusov (which has not been preserved) informed him that he and Bely had fallen out in all earnest – over the Merezhkovskys of all people: Briusov had spoken ill of them to Bely, who, at that time, was almost a member of their family and looked to them for religious guidance. Unreasonably riled by Bely's stiffly-phrased written request that he should not speak to him again of the Merezhkovskys in such a tone, Briusov had called Bely out – news which almost brought the naturally sedentary Ivanov hot-foot to Moscow. Briusov's next letter, explaining that Bely had placated his resentful pride and that the slaughter was postponed (Bely's proposed second, Ellis, had taken a solemn oath to finish off the challenger himself had his principal been killed), brought down on Briusov's head a severe but loving scold: 'I thank the powers which I invoke upon you that the crime was committed by you *only* in the world of the possible. Because you did intend to kill Baldur.' In challenging Bely, Ivanov wrote, Briusov was really 'wrestling with God in the night'. Had Bely accepted the challenge, he would never, their common mentor asserted positively, have attempted the life of a fellow poet which was 'sacred' to him, whereas Briusov might well have killed Bely. 'Do as I wish,' he urged, 'make peace with Baldur completely and fraternally, for you, too, though you do not recognise yourself as such, are a god of *light*. Your loving Viacheslav.'⁸

It was typical of Ivanov's Olympian attitude to his fellow-poets that his reaction to the Briusov–Bely quarrel should have been in no way coloured by the fact that Briusov was, at the time, a devoted admirer, whereas Bely had shied away from him like a nervous horse. To Ivanov, they were all brothers, 'theurgists'. Once re-established in Russia, his was to be a soothing and inspiring presence, but the task he had set himself was rather like trying to hold together a tent in a hurricane:

* 'Which of us has won – I do not know! / It must be you, son of light, you! / And I, making submission, go forth to meet / All hopeless dreams.'

Лишь я хочу весь мир подвигнуть
 Ко всеобъятию, лишь я
 Хочу в союзе бытия
 Богосознания достигнуть.*⁹

Thus Ivanov's hope of a brotherhood of Symbolists centred about Skorpion was already foundering before he finally returned to Russia – to settle in St Petersburg, which he felt to be more at the centre of things than Moscow and where he was, contrary to expectation, stimulated and interested by the contributors to the new periodical *Voprosy Zhizni*, which continued to publish his lectures on Dionysos and, in general, made him welcome. In the summer of 1905, he and Lidiia Zinov'eva-Annibal took a flat near the Tauride Palace which had a round room in one of those turreted protuberances beloved of the *style moderne*, a room which Lidiia had actually seen in a dream the night before leaving Switzerland and which was to go down to literary history as 'the Tower'. From here, on 29 August 1905, Ivanov wrote to Briusov of the state of affairs in Moscow as he saw it: 'There will be no collective spirit and *Vesy* does not define the position of its own group in "the new movement", which now appears to be in the process of differentiation, otherwise than as the self-assertion of individual members ...'¹⁰

This was not a break – Ivanov was writing a series of articles 'On contemporary moods' for Briusov's journal, and the first of these, subtitled 'Apokaliptiki i obshchestvennost'' (The apocalypitics and society) came out in *Vesy* No.6 that same year. He was, however, upset by the lack of cohesion in the latest number of Skorpion's Almanac, *Severnye Tsvety*, which was pointed out in an article in the short-lived Grif journal *Iskusstvo* (1905), in conjunction with an ill-considered attack on his own contribution.¹¹

Andrei Bely, quite independently of the older poet, had been no less upset – both by the constation of the centrifugal tendencies of *Severnye Tsvety* and by the attack on Ivanov, who, whatever Bely might have thought of him personally at that time, shared his grand vision of art as a door on to 'the promised land'. He withdrew his co-operation from *Iskusstvo* in a sharp letter to the editor and the probable author of the offending article, Sergei Sokolov. Whether or not for extra-literary reasons (Sokolov was, after all, the husband of Nina Petrovskaiia) the burly master of Grif took offence, and Bely – for the second time that year – had to extricate himself from a challenge to physical combat. Devastated by this new attack – which he was not conscious of having provoked

* 'I alone want to move the whole world / To embrace all things – I alone / Want, in union with all that is. / To achieve awareness of God.'

– and acutely aware that his withdrawal from a second challenge left his physical courage open to doubt, Bely made one last effort to get through to Briusov, to whom he wrote around 28 September 1905:

[...] I thought of you all as dissenters in the name of new forms of life, whereas now, proceeding from the standpoint of the old life, you have accused me of overstepping accepted forms. I have understood that for you the 'new life' is nothing but words ...¹²

It was also in the course of that most disturbing summer of 1905 that Bely had discovered a dark will to perdition in his friend Aleksandr Blok, and, in spite of his own waning self-confidence, had determined to 'save' Liubov', originally his confidante in his troubles with Petrovskaja and Briusov.

As the dawns faded from both their horizons, Bely launched into a sustained effort to woo Liubov'! She, though she regarded Bely as a 'temptation of genius', eventually chose to remain faithful – in her fashion – to her husband. When Bely refused to take 'no' for an answer, it seemed to Blok that his love for Liubov' was artificial. It was all a part of his 'game' of creating 'new forms of life'. At the same time, because of their common background, it was an unpardonable interference in Blok's private myth as well as in his private life.

The affair was painful to all concerned and, though it did not sever the spiritual ties which linked the two poets, it made their personal relationship as tempestuous as the years through which they were living and which they were trying to express in their poetry. Nevertheless, in their search for new forms adequate to the storm now blowing up to confound the very memory of the preceding calm, they were not only close, but in close contact with each other's poetic experiments. The trend was set, however, by the more mature writers: by Sologub, the Merezhkovskys, Ivanov and, most importantly for the younger poets, by Briusov.

Even as his real influence on Russian poetry dipped past its zenith, Briusov's apparent control of the Symbolist movement was approaching its apogee and, for so long as Russia was engaged in war against Japan, he saw to it that *Vesy* should maintain its Olympian stance as a journal so far above politics that it could afford to publish an article on Japanese art in the midst of hostilities. His private views were more belligerent. On 29 January 1904 he published a patriotic ode, 'To the Pacific Ocean', not in *Vesy* but in the newspaper *Russkii Listok* (Russian Pamphlet). 'It is Russia's duty to rule in the Far East ... The Great Ocean is our Lake', Briusov wrote in April 1904 to P.P. Pertsov, who characterised him as

'always a devotee of the powerful state ('gosudarstvennik') and a "Roman"'. It was certainly as a 'Roman' that Briusov reacted to the war, calling as late as December 1904, long after his first burst of patriotic poetry had begun to seem 'almost comic' in the light of the defeats and humiliations already inflicted on his country, for a civic truce: 'Vy, liktory, zakroite forum! / Molchi, neistovyi tribun!' ('You, lictors, close down the forum! / Be silent, intemperate tribune!')¹³

Ivanov, who shared Briusov's concern for a Russian victory, nevertheless wrote to him from Geneva on the 14/27 January 1905 apropos this poem, requesting an editorial notice in *Vesy* to the effect that, since the journal on principle did not concern itself with politics, individual contributors did not necessarily subscribe to one another's political views:

It is not at all a good thing that people should see in 'decadence' something in the nature of a social sect. A political opinion is an opinion valid only for the current moment. [...] Personally, I consider that, given what we are undergoing at present, the slogan 'This is no time for stormy debates, you, lictors, close down the forum! Be silent, intemperate tribune!' is *now* not right. [...] But if you and I are not in agreement on this *now*, don't let's make a *public* issue out of it.¹⁴

Ivanov, though not so bombastic an 'Imperialist' as his younger friend and colleague, was a serious patriot who in 1904, (as later in 1914–17), took a solemn and poetic view of war and the sacrifices it required. In a poem dedicated to the memory of his wife's nephew Aleksandr Zinov'ev, one of the first to fall at the front, he apostrophised Russia as one doomed to lose her first born and perhaps to suffer final defeat,

Зато, что ты стоишь, немея,
У перепутного креста,
Ни Зверя скиптр подъять не смея,
Ни иго легкое Христа . . . *¹⁵

A poem to the newborn heir to the throne written 18 February 1905 looks forward, in traditional fairy-tale fashion, to the day when the Tsarevich will rule over a free country and a field of spears will grow to serve him from the blood of those who gave their lives in the year of his birth.

As late as May 1905, Ivanov reacted to the naval defeat at Tsushima, from which one of the few Russian ships to escape was the cruiser *Almaz*, with words of comfort and inspiration for Russia, although not for those in charge of the country:

Огнем крестися, Русь! В огне перегори
И свой Алмаз спаси из черного горнила!

* 'Because you stand, dumbstruck / At the sign of the crossroads, / Not daring to take up either the sceptre of the Beast, / Or the easy yoke of Christ.'

В руке твоих вождей сокрушены кормила:
Се, в небе кормчие ведут тебя цари.*¹⁶

Ivanov was, by instinct, a cautiously liberal traditionalist who did not want to see his country destroyed by revolution but who perceived there was no future for it in war or peace without some political change.

Briusov, perhaps in deference to Ivanov's plea, perhaps on principle, kept what social and patriotic poetry he happened to write out of *Vesy*, but did not revise his personal loyalist stance until the news that the Government, in the face of defeat on the battlefield and mutiny and revolution behind the lines, was negotiating what he saw as an inglorious peace. A fight to the last, he claimed, he would have supported, but now, in several scathing poems he 'crowned with shame' the 'sexless, weak-willed' Tsarist regime which had let slip the opportunity of founding a 'Third Rome' on the shores of the Pacific, and declared that, like Julius Caesar, he had 'crossed the Rubicon' – to the side of the revolution.¹⁷ If he had hopes of the first revolution, however, they were centred on the emergence of a Napoleon-figure and the stance he chose to adopt meanwhile was very much that of an onlooker. War and revolution alike appeared to him as an aesthetic spectacle. In this light, the October Manifesto is depicted as a pathetic compromise:

Прекрасен, в мощи грозной власти,
Восточный царь Ассаргадон,
И океан народной страсти,
В щепы дробящий утлый трон!

Но ненавистны полумеры,
Не море, а глухой канал,
Не молния, а полдень серый,
Не агора, а общий зал.†

This was Briusov the Symbolist speaking *ex cathedra*, repeating in a civic context the note on which he had chosen to conclude *Urbi et orbi*: 'I Gospoda i D'iavola / Khochu proslavit' ia' ('Both the Lord and the Devil / I wish to glorify').¹⁸

* 'Russia, be baptised in fire! Burn away in flames / And save your diamond from the black furnace! / The rudder is crushed in the hands of your leaders: / Behold, in the sky there are guiding tsars to lead you.' (Ivanov is making a play on the cruiser's name, which means 'diamond', and the poetic image of coal turning to diamond. That 'tsars' is an anagram of 'stars' is, however, a fact of the English, not the Russian language – although the adjective 'kormchie' is one Ivanov applied to stars (not tsars) in his first book.)

† 'Beautiful in the might of his dread authority / Is the Eastern Tsar Assargadon, / And the ocean of the people's passions, / Pounding to pieces a decrepit throne. // Half measures, though, are detestable. / Not a sea, but a wretched canal, / Not lightning, but a grey midday, / Not the agora, but a public hall.'

True to this device, Briusov had in fact been among the first to try his hand at civic verse, experimenting with revolutionary themes, just as he had been among the first to experiment with the theme of the Eternal Feminine. In 1901 he had been approached by Georgii Chulkov, at that time still a medical student with an interest in the poetry of Vladimir Solov'ev, to contribute to an 'illegal' collection of poetry, and this had been the stimulus for the first such experiments. Chulkov was arrested in 1902 and dispatched to cool his fiery red head in exile in the taiga. The collection of revolutionary poetry never appeared. Neither, until some years later, did a number of Briusov's poems eventually to be included in the *Stephanos* cycles 'Povsednevnost' and 'Sovremennost' (The everyday and The contemporary). These poems, however, some of which were published in *Urbi et orbi* (1903) and in the periodical press over 1902 to 1905, were known from readings and possibly in manuscript to people in Briusov's own circle and had considerable influence on the younger generation.

In 'Kinzhal' (The dagger), a handsome exercise in literary continuity which takes its epigraph from the eponymous poem by Lermontov: 'Il' nikogda na golos mshchen'ia / Iz zolotykh nozhon ne vyvresh' svoi klinok . . .' ('Or will you never, heeding the voice of vengeance / Draw your blade from the golden scabbard . . .'), Briusov, as it were, replies:

Из ножен вырван он и блещет вам в глаза
 Как и в былые дни, отточенный и острый.
 Поэт всегда с людьми, когда шумит гроза,
 И песня с бурей вечно сестры.*

Having withdrawn to 'the land of silence and graves, to mysteriously distant ages past' while 'necks bent silently beneath the yoke', now that 'the trumpet has sounded and the storm is rising', the poet is ready to respond, 'to second the thunder'. 'I snova ia s liud'mi, 'zatem, chto ia poet, / Zatem, chto molnii sverkali' ('And again I am with people, because I am a poet / Because the lightnings have flashed').¹⁹ In the famous 'Kamenshchik' (The mason), Briusov looked not to the tradition of Romantic defiance, as in 'Kinzhal', but to Populist poetry for some lead as to how to respond to the increasing vigour of incipient revolution. Taking a long-winded meditation in verse by P. Lavrov, in which an educated man explains to a humble stonemason that the prison he is building will most surely serve to incarcerate him and his children, Briusov transforms it into a pithy dialogue between the lyrical hero and a

* 'It is torn from the scabbard and glitters in your eyes / Even as of old, whetted and sharp. / The poet is always with people when the thunder rolls, / And song and storm are always sisters.'

morose but socially aware workman, who finally sees him off with the words: 'Ei, beregis!' pod lesami ne balui ... / Znaem vse sami, molchi!' ('Hey, watch yourself, don't play around under the scaffolding ... / We know all that ourselves, shut up!')²⁰ This poem, written in 1901, caused some confusion when P.P. Pertsov succeeded in publishing it for the first time in October 1904 in *Novyi Put'*, where it earned for its author a quite undeserved reputation as the first Symbolist to join in the chorus of liberal disapproval.

Briusov might second the thunder of mass discontent, but he did not like to be perceived as a poet in any way concerned with respectable majority opinion, such as the demand for representative government which, in that autumn of 1904, was being voiced by the Zemstva, the universities and spontaneous citizens' demonstrations on the streets of St Petersburg. The response to these events was left to Fedor Sologub who, in a solemn and – for him – exceptionally optimistic poem, 'Soborniĭ Blagovest' (Cathedral chimes), wrote of how '... v soglasii velikom / Vstaet rodimaia strana' ('In mighty accord / Our native land is rising'), comparing the Russian people, in a melodiously sustained metaphor, to heavy brass bells, long silent but now, moved by the fateful tremors of war in the East, already pealing out the good news to a land regenerate and reformed.²¹

Blok and Bely began to feel their way toward their own approach to the theme of civic unrest. Bely, in the spring of 1904, in a letter to Blok, in which he confessed to lifting the revolutionary rhymes 'Tovarishch' and 'pozharishch' ('comrade' and 'conflagrations') from his friend's recent experiments, enclosed a poem of his own, in a 'neo-Populist' style. Entitled 'Poproshaika' (The persistent beggar), it opens with a city-scape which is a direct crib from Briusov's second 'Kamenshchik' (Mason), written December 1903 and eventually published in *Stephanos*. Where Briusov's poem begins: 'Kamni, polden', pyl' i molot, / Kamni, pyl' i znoi' ('Stones, midday, dust and mallet, / Stones, dust and heat'), Bely's offers the variation: 'Kryshi. Kamni. Pyl'. Zvuchit / Golos barkhatnogo al'ta. / K nebu edkii zhar valit / Neostyvshogo asfal'ta' ('Roofs. Stones. Dust. There sounds / The voice of a velvet alto. / To the sky rises the corrosive heat / Of asphalt which has not yet cooled'). In his reply, Blok pointed out the near-plagiarism and went on: 'The same thing is happening to me, only even more so [. . .]. I am in despair and hoping harder than ever for some way out of these "asphalt nouns".'²²

After this, Bely made a game of pointing out borrowings in the poems they exchanged: from Briusov, from one another, and from Leonid Semenov, a mutual friend who had made his poetic debut with Blok in a

collection of verses by students of St Petersburg University. In the spring of 1904, however, Nekrasov and the populist Gleb Uspensky became Bely's bedside books and, over the summer of that year, he and Sergei Solov'ev, at whose family's small estate at Dedovo Bely spent much of the vacations, went through a stage of sympathy for 'the Russian peasant'. Bely attuned his receptive ear to genuine folksong and to Mussorgsky's *Trepak* and other Russian songs from the repertoire of the singer Olenina-D'Algeim, who was something of a cult figure for the second generation of Symbolists.²³ By October 1904, Bely was even dreaming of giving up Grif and Skorpion, 'the talented Briusov, the tense Bal'mont, the puffy Sokolov, the tapeworm-like Lang* and the repulsive Koiranskys', and building himself a log hut in Diveevo, near the hermitage of St Seraphim of Sarov, there to devote himself to study and to become a teacher . . . 'At times I even long to become an exemplary individual (*svetlaia lichnost'*) and suffer for my convictions, but it would seem the idea came to me somewhat late: you won't get far on that road with Sviatopolk-Mirsky. Not the same thing at all as the late Plehve!'²⁴ So, somewhat flippantly, Bely mourned the passing of the recently assassinated Minister of the Interior, whose successor, pursuing a more conciliatory policy towards the country's disaffected youth, was to facilitate the return from exile to the capitals of a number of aesthetically and politically radical writers who chose to attach themselves to the Symbolists rather than to the Realists: among others, Georgii Chulkov, Aleksei Remizov, and the man who was to serve as the model for Bely's 'Neulovimyi' in his novel *Peterburg*, set in the year 1905, and to capture the imagination of the Merezhkovskys – the God-seeking terrorist Savinkov.

Bely, of course, neither went to the people nor gave up the Moscow Symbolists. Yet his next book, *Pepel'* (Ash), is dedicated to Nekrasov. The poems, written between 1904 and 1908, when the book eventually came out, are overrun by convicts and beggars and echo the stamping and whistling of drunken peasants. The palette reflects the subdued, melancholy colours of Levitan's landscapes and on occasion Bely even indulges in the kind of grotesque caricature which *Mir Iskusstva* had so lately deplored in the pictures of the Ambulants. Yet Bely's Populism is quite different from that of the Ambulants or Nekrasov. It is an attempt to merge with the folk-element rather than to lament the sufferings of the people or to instruct their ignorance.

Perhaps because, over the years 1906–9, Bely was pouring virtually all his considerable energy into critical writing, he never really made these folk-themes his own. Both *Pepel'* and *Urna* (The Urn) show an almost

* Briusov's old friend and ally on the first *Russkie Simvolisty*, Miropol'sky.

embarrassing dependence on Blok, with whom their author was at loggerheads off and on from 1906 to 1910 but whose verses about Russia – the wind and the railways, the torpid villages and the migrant birds – infiltrated his poetry with an apparently irresistible power.²⁵ In the technical sphere, however, Bely set a precedent which Blok did not take up until 1918 when he wrote *The Twelve*. This was in the creative adaptation of folk-rhythm.²⁶ Something of the poet's inner torment, as well as the mocking overtones of blasphemy and rebellion engendered by the historical situation, is to be heard in the best of Bely's poetry written at this time, in the 'funeral cycle' 'Panikhida', for instance, and in such songs as 'Vesel'e na Rusi' (Merriment in Russia):

Дьякон, писарь, поп, дьячок,
Повалили на лужок.
Эх —
Людям грех!
Эх — курам смех.
[...]

Дьякон пляшет —
— Дьякон, дьякон —
Рясой машет —
— Дьякон, дьякон —
Что такое, дьякон, смерть?

'Что такое? То и это:
Носом — в лужу, пяткой — в твердь!
[...]
Над страной моей родной
Встала Смерть.*

The rhythm comes from the same source as the dance of the Oprichniki in Prokofiev's music for Eisenstein's *Ivan the Terrible*, even down to the use of the menacing one-stress refrain:

LUGOVSKOI (for the Oprichniki): Da prikoláchivai! (And nail it fast).
VELY: Da pritopátývai! (And tap out the rhythm with your foot).

At the end of the poem, the switch from wild movement to the corpse in the puddle and from this to the static figure of Death Herself towering over Russia has the laconic power of medieval allegory.²⁷

Bely later wrote that it was during the demented August of 1906, which

* 'Deacon, clerk, priest, sexton / Came spilling out on to the meadow. // Ekh – / For people – a sin / Ekh – for chickens – a laugh! / ... / The deacon's dancing – Deacon, deacon – / Whirling his cassock – Deacon, deacon – / Tell us, deacon, what is death? // 'What it is? It's this and that:/Nose in the puddle, heel in the sky! // [...] // Above my native land / Towers Death.'

he spent with Sergei at Dedovo, unaware that it was to be the last in Mikhail Solov'ev's familiar wooden annexe, which was burnt down together with the old books and the chintz armchairs later that year, that he conceived the idea for the novel *Serebrianyi golub'* (The Silver Dove), written in 1909, a novel which exposes the irony and potential tragedy of the Intelligentsia's desire 'to merge once more with the soul of the people'. Later that autumn, during a still more anguished visit to St Petersburg he found 'all the material' for *Peterburg*.²⁸ These two novels, rather than the poetry of *Pepel* and *Urna*, were, for Bely the artist, the real fruit of the Revolution.

Blok's awakening to the rhythmic magic of the folk element was more gradual. Gradual, too, was the awakening of his social conscience, but his feeling for the people, for their right to a better life, began, like Bely's, to seep through into his poetry in the course of the year 1904. Bely even pinpointed what he felt to be the exact moment, distinguishing four lines from a poem Blok sent him dated 8–12 May 1904 as 'a turn towards socialism'. The lines he singled out were the second quatrain of the following two verses:

И я не знал, что вечер близок,
 Что день мелькнул мне одному,
 Что там, где дух безмерно низок, —
 Готовятся изведать тьму,

 Что в диком треске, в зыбком гуле,
 День уползал, как сонный змей, —
 Что счастью в очи не взглянули
 Миллионы сумрачных людей.*²⁹

Hardly a 'socialist' statement! Yet Blok's lines and Bely's exegesis tell us much of their feeling for what was going on: first and foremost, that for them the revolution had to do with perceived cultural exhaustion and was social rather than civic or political. Both felt that they had come on the scene too late, too near the twilight of their Europeanised culture to play an active part ... and that they had not the right to judge. They were witnesses. It was not they but the 'millions of twilight people' who – for good or ill – would make the future. In a sense – Bely with his 'explosions', Blok with his mounting self-destructive pathos – they were already

* 'And I did not know that evening was near, / That the day had flashed by for me alone, / That there, where the spirit was immeasurably degraded, – / They were preparing to experience the dark, // That in wild clatter, in howling, roaring noise / The day had crawled away like a sleepy snake, – / That millions of twilight people / Had never looked into the eyes of happiness.'

preparing to immolate their own 'decadent' individualism on the altar of a new 'organic' culture . . . In this they were close.

Blok's 'Hymn', for instance, sent to Bely on 29 September 1904 and described as being, 'particularly at the beginning, an imitation of you', uses the type of boyish, dynamic verbs which are such a feature of *Zoloto v lazure*, and even borrows the image of the un-conquered sun, though here its rising awakes rebellious passions in the dusty-grey murk of industrial St Petersburg:

Солнцу — дерзкому солнцу — пробившему путь
 Наши гимны, и песни, и сны без числа!
 Золотая игла!
 Исполненным лучом побежденная мгла!
 Опаленным, сметенным, сожженным до тла —
 Хвала!*³⁰

This song of destruction is in a major key, in sharp contrast to the minor key of Blok's welcome to the potential destroyers, the poem 'Prishletsy' (The newcomers) which, inserted in the same letter between the 'imitation' of Bely and another poem Blok describes as an 'imitation of Briusov', mentions no prototypes. Here we have simply the student, Aleksandr Blok, somewhere between the university and his stepfather's flat in the barracks of the Grenadier Guards, gazing wide-eyed, for the first time, at a workers' demonstration:

Встала улица, серым полна,
 Заткалась паутиной пряжей.
 Шелестя, прибывала волна,
 Затрудняя проток экипажей.
 / . . /
 Скоро день глубоко отступил,
 В небе дальнем расставший зори.
 И незримый поток шелестил,
 Проливаясь в наш город, как море. †

The conclusion is gentle: let the new people replace us. Uncertainly as yet, Blok was groping for his own words, hushed and restrained, almost drained of primary colour but flickering with reflections of fire and blood suggested by the historical moment, words fitted to sing of *his* revolution,

* 'To the sun, the bold sun that has blazed the trail / Our hymns, and songs, and dreams out of count! / Golden, needle-spire! / Darkness conquered by a titanic beam / To all that has been scorched, swept away, burnt to embers — / Praise!'

† 'The street rose up, full of greyness, / Spinning out its cobweb thread. / Rustling, the wave gathered force, / Hindering the flow of vehicles // . . . // Soon the day retreated to the deep, / Leaving a glow in the far sky. / And the invisible flood whispered on / As it poured into our city like the sea.'

his city where he had taken to wandering late at night, ‘V kabakakh, v pereulках, v izvivakh / V elektricheskom sne naiavu’ (‘In taverns, in alleys, in windings / In an electrical waking dream’).³¹

Like Bely, Blok was now looking back more frequently to Nekrasov, and also to Tiutchev and to the neo-Romantic songster Apollon Griгор’ev. It was from Tiutchev that he took the image of Russia as a ship stranded in the shallows, awaiting some great tide or superhuman force to set her afloat. He describes the workmanlike process as ‘someone strong in a grey padded jacket’ releases the vessel. Then, smoothly . . .

Тихо повернулась
Красная корма,
Побежали мимо
Пестрые дома.
Вот они далеко,
Весело плывут.
Только нас с собою
Верно, не возьмут!*³²

In spite of a certain superficial similarity of mood to such poems of Briusov’s as ‘Griadushchie gunny’ (The coming Huns) or ‘Lik Meduzy’ (The face of the Gorgon), in both of which the older poet declares his readiness to welcome the chaos which comes to destroy him and his beautiful, ordered world, the influence of Briusov – so strongly felt at the beginning of 1904 – was clearly waning. He was emerging ever more clearly as a ‘maker’ rather than a ‘seer’,³³ a poet of impressive skills, but untouched by wonder. ‘What is past is past’, Blok wrote to Sergei Solov’ev on 21 October 1904. ‘The “Magus” is terrifying – but not for ever, only when suddenly, through a “gap in the clouds”, one glimpses his silhouette. The next time one notices the details (“the pointed beard”) and then the buttons on his jacket, and then finally one begins to wonder: “What is that black-avised gentleman still hanging about up there for?”’ To Bely, who still genuinely feared and admired Briusov, Blok wrote on 8 August 1905: ‘I have quite lost my love for the poems of Valery Briusov, almost without exception!’³⁴

II

In answer to Blok’s attempt to see in him ‘something more than a literary authority’, Briusov had begged to be considered ‘only as an artist in the narrow sense of the word’.³⁵ The Merezhkovskys, on the other hand,

* ‘Quietly the red prow / Has swung around, / Smoothly past / Run the multi-coloured houses. / There they go, far off, sailing merrily. / Only as for us / They surely won’t take us with them.’

seemed to Blok to have abandoned literature, which they understood, in favour of politics, in which they were floundering. They were interested not so much in incorporating the revolution into their art as in the part to be played in the development of Russia by 'the new religious consciousness' and their involvement in civic action was leading them even further from their original aesthetic positions. Their attempts to find their way about amongst the various trends, parties and personalities of the revolutionary underground, as well as amongst representatives of various shades of moderate liberalism, left them no time for artistic concentration. Blok admired this commitment but felt it to be no less alien to true Symbolism than was Briusov's aesthetic eclecticism. To the Merezhkovskys, on the other hand, both Blok and Bely appeared, in 1905, to be unforgivably apolitical.

Filosofov, their mentor in matters of public morality throughout the autumn of 1904, was full of sympathy for the young writers returning from political exile. He tried to interest Hippus in Aleksei Remizov – without success until she met and became fond of his wife, Serafima Pavlovna, a young woman whose remarkable personality and strong religious faith brought her within the orbit of the Merzhkovskys' 'inner circle'. It was Filosofov who persuaded them to take on Georgii Chulkov as secretary to *Novyi Put'* and, with Chulkov's help, effected the merger with the ex-Marxist 'Idealists'. So it came about that, even as *Vesy* withdrew more decisively than ever from all political commitment, *Novyi Put'* made a suicidal effort to shoulder responsibility.

The exodus from the Marxist camp of Nikolai Berdiaev, N.O. Lossky, S.L. Frank, S.A. Askol'dov and Sergei Bulgakov, marked by the publication of their book *Problemy idealizma* in 1902, had coincided with and was, indeed, partially responsible for the Symbolists' change of attitude to Russian marxism. By 1904 Symbolist periodicals were calling the doctrine which had such a short while before seemed a natural ally against Populism 'this craze', 'so dominant until a few years ago', 'a corpse'.³⁶ It seemed natural, therefore to revive the idea, already mooted by Pertsov when *Novyi Put'* was still at the planning stage, of inviting the co-operation of the 'Idealists'. Chulkov, who had known several of them in exile, was dispatched to negotiate and came back with what proved to be a takeover deal, though for the time being, 'unfortunately' as Briusov wrote to Viacheslav Ivanov, the Merezhkovskys retained their monopoly of the literary section. The implications of the merger were discussed at the Merezhkovskys' flat in the Dom Muruzi, Andrei Bely wrote, 'as if from the alliance of Bulgakov, N.A. Berdiaev, S.A. Askol'dov with D.V. Filosofov and the Merezhkovskys the element of the revolution which was just breaking out would be regenerated'.³⁷

Merzhkovsky's political hopes in 1904 were centred on some kind of theocracy, and he did not immediately realise that they were not shared by his new allies. These were men whose moral outlook and expectation of life had been formed by revolutionary commitment, and they were looking for a way forward for Russia, which would ensure both individual liberty and social and economic justice. They had seriously tried Marxism but had come to reject it, largely on philosophical grounds, feeling that the Marxist creed went beyond politics and economics and would not tolerate pluralism.

In method, if not in aims, the new contributors did make a considerable difference to the journal. It was as though Icarus had yielded place to a competent team of aviation engineers. Sergei Nikolaevich Bulgakov was a man of moral backbone, a priest's son who had in adolescence lost his faith to Utopian Marxism but who had already, in 1904, begun moving back toward traditional Orthodoxy. Nevertheless, he was not able to bring himself to take holy orders until 1918, after the disestablishment of the Russian Church had, in his eyes, purged it of a long association with worldly power. Bulgakov took over the Religious-Philosophical Chronicle in *Novyi Put'*, continuing it under the title 'Bez plana' (Without a plan), raising the tone of the polemics with theological journals and introducing the kind of solid, well-qualified, albeit sometimes prosaic discussion which, between the revolutions, characterised the various Religious-Philosophical societies in St Petersburg, Moscow and Kiev. From the beginning, Bulgakov was keen to weed out those associates of the Merezhkovskys whom he considered true 'decadents', as opposed to 'neo-Christians' and 'Symbolists'; an impossible task.

Petr Berngardovich Struve, like Bulgakov, had no sympathy for the wilder shores of intuitive thought. He played comparatively little part in *Voprosy Zhizni*, but when he later founded his own liberal monthly review, *Russkaia Mysl'* (sole editor 1910–18), he did entrust the literary and critical sections to those Symbolists he considered most clear-headed and responsible: Briusov and Zinaida Hippus. Here, Struve also welcomed contributions from Merezhkovsky and Sologub, but refused to print Blok's 'Narod i intelligentsia' (The people and the Intelligentsia) or Andrei Bely's *Peterburg*. Askol'dov (pseudonym of Sergei Alekseevich Alekseev) busied himself at this stage mainly with the new sections of the journal on economics and the political situation.

Nikolai Aleksandrovich Berdiaev, an idiosyncratic aristocrat who had originally come to Marxism via Kant, Schopenhauer, Dostoevsky, Lev Tolstoy, Nietzsche and Ibsen (all the 'decadent' forebears), was more congenial to the old-established contributors to *Novyi Put'*. A friend of Lev Shestov's, whom he had first met in their home town of Kiev.

Berdiaev soon came under the influence of the Merezhkovskys. At first repelled by their elitism, Berdiaev was attracted in spite of himself by the 'feeling of dusk and doom mingled with a sense of daybreak and hope in the transformation of life' which he discovered in their circle. It was his first contact with the world of art and imaginative literature and he quickly, albeit temporarily, succumbed to the combined magic of 'creative inspiration, novelty, tension, struggle, and challenge', in the Dom Muruzi.³⁸

Merezhkovsky's studies of Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, like Shestov's, were formative factors in the development of Berdiaev's own thought, and he later popularised both in his own much-translated book on Dostoevsky.³⁹ Nevertheless, he did not feel altogether at ease with what he called the 'unhealthy mystic sensuality' and lack of clear moral commitment prevalent in the Merezhkovskys' circle. There was a feeling of claustrophobia, later heightened by the 'sectarian love of domination' he detected in Hippus. In the end he was to take refuge from her remorseless spiritual probing in the Orthodox Church. 'I still dream of her sometimes', he wrote many years later, when both were in the emigration but no longer close, 'And there is always a feeling of oppression.'⁴⁰

For Merezhkovsky, Berdiaev was in many ways a useful partner, combating his tendency to 'go into ecstasies over combinations of words' and doing much to clarify his terminology and to explain him to his own readers, notably in the article 'O novom religioznom soznanii' (On the new religious consciousness).⁴¹ He allied himself with Filosofov and Hippus to wean Merezhkovsky from a lingering attachment to the ideal of a Russian theocracy. Eventually, in July 1905, Hippus obtained her husband's admission, (duly recorded on the lid of a chocolate-box!), that the autocracy was 'of Antichrist', and Berdiaev persuaded him to acknowledge in print that the very idea of a 'Christian State' was a monstrous contradiction in terms. Afterwards, however, the two writers developed along different lines.

Rozanov Berdiaev appreciated as the most gifted prose-writer of his time but thought of him as the complete opposite of himself, a man who thought 'not logically but *physiologically*'.⁴² Indeed, it was probably Berdiaev's bent for *logical* thought that prevented his being accepted by the Silver Age artists in the way they accepted Rozanov and Shestov. He was an intelligent man, a man of taste, an asset to the cause ... yet the picture which arises unbidden in connection with his year with the Petersburg Symbolists is one left to us by those two mischievous will-o'-the-wisp observers, Bely and Remizov. At a party to celebrate the saint's-day of Varvara Dmitrievna Rozanova, the massive Berdiaev was sitting

rocking gently on the garden swing when the tiny Remizov, with a devilish gripping shove, sent him over the top and Andrei Bely was so surprised he swallowed a date: 'Berdiaev, roofed by the swing, appeared to us in the most terrible fashion: where his boots had been, there was his head; where his head – two patent-leather boots . . .'⁴³

The Merezhkovskys themselves no longer felt altogether at home in the new premises of *Voprosy Zhizni*, as *Novyi Put'* was renamed from the beginning of 1905, as soon as the Idealists had found a publisher in D.E. Zhukovsky. Here Chulkov was installed as secretary and Remizov in the humble role of 'kanzeliarius'. Berdiaev had thought that the humorous tricks and human experience of the fantastical little man would introduce a warmer and more understanding atmosphere than the 'hot-house' intellectualism of the Dom Muruzi.⁴⁴ The Merezhkovskys, for their part, were more pleased than otherwise to be free of responsibility for the day to day affairs of *Voprosy Zhizni*, to which they continued to contribute prolifically, creating a certain continuity.

It was not only the influx of more politically-minded contributors, but the horrendous events of 9 January 1905 which set the mood of the new journal.

'Horrendous' is a sensational word. History has seen worse massacres, more villainous betrayals, but the horror of the Russian Bloody Sunday is the horror of hindsight, of knowing what followed. The violent dispersal of a loyal demonstration left all the old loyalties, above all the traditional, almost mystic link between Tsar, Orthodox Church and Russian people, broken and scattered, precipitated social revolution and soured what general joy there might have been at the concessions eventually forced by an ungovernable country from a reluctant government towards the end of the year.

The serene optimism of Sologub's 'Sobornyi blagovest'' was unthinkable after January 1905. He, who in the autumn of 1904 had written reverently of approaching freedom as of the first miracle at Cana in Galilee, chose, when the October Manifesto proclaimed the long-coveted 'four freedoms', to don the protective motley of the licensed fool and to mock both givers and grateful receivers:

Что вас радуют четыре
Из святых земных свобод?
Эй, дорогу шире, шире!
Раступайтесь, — шут идет!

Острым смехом он пронижет
И владыку здешних мест,

И того, кто руку лижет,
Что писала манифест.*⁴⁵

From feeling himself – albeit briefly – a *man* in the full, Christian sense of the word and a member of a united, harmoniously developing nation, Sologub returned, under the impression of government-administered repression, to dog-imagery and to the theme of the knout.

It was news of 9 January 1905 which had led Viacheslav Ivanov to disassociate himself, albeit privately, from Briusov's 'Be silent, tribunes!' and which was to make him and his wife susceptible to the influence of revolutionary hotheads like Chulkov after their return to Russia. It was the immediate reaction to 9 January which drove the thin end of the wedge between the Merezhkovskys and Blok and Bely ... creating an almost imperceptible fault in their relationship which, in 1917–18, was to widen to a rift with 'all bridges blown'.⁴⁶

On the night of 8/9 January, Bely – unaware of the impending demonstration – was jolting his way from Moscow to St Petersburg on the overnight train. Aleksandra Andreevna, Blok's mother, was awakened that same night when her husband was summoned to lead a detachment of troops to man the bridges from the industrial islands in the delta of the Neva to the mainland on which was situated the Tsar's residence, the goal of the anticipated march. Watching from her window as the soldiers assembled on the barrack square, she overheard the command not to forget transport for the wounded ... and woke her son. They spent the rest of the night walking the town and watching the line-up of opposing forces – a workman in a smart pink scarf goodnaturedly wrangling with an unhappy cavalryman, forbidden to answer; crowds assembling, soldiers on the bridges dancing round bonfires to keep their circulation going in the freezing dawn.

Leonid Semenov, an ardent, romantic monarchist, was preparing to march with the people to help plead their cause with the Tsar. On the mainland, the leaders of Petersburg literary society, everyone who was anyone from Maksim Gor'ky to Dmitrii Merezhkovsky, had foregathered at the office of the journal *Syn Otechestva* (Son of the Fatherland), aware that soldiers were pouring out from barracks all over the city. Message after message was sent to the government, warning of the dire consequences of the inevitable confrontation, but the writers' deputies were footballed from one official to the other. Nobody seemed to

* 'Why should you be pleased with four / Of the holy earthly freedoms? / Hey, way then, make way! / Stand back, – here comes the jester! // With sharp laughter he will transfix / Both the lord of this place, / And the one who licks the hand, / That signed the manifesto.'

know precisely what was going on, no one would admit to being in charge.

Bely was informed of the situation at the barbers' where he went for a shave after getting off the train, but nevertheless managed to make his way across a heavily-guarded bridge to the barracks, where he found Blok and his mother breakfasting after their sleepless night; him seething with contempt at the ineptitude which was turning a loyal procession into a potential massacre, her deeply concerned both for her husband's safety and for the invidious moral position in which, as a serving officer, he had been placed. Even Liubov' Dmitrievna, hitherto most apolitical of young women, was shocked and upset.

Warned that the barracks might soon be cut off from the mainland, even under siege, Bely, not minded to be imprisoned in this bastion of oppression on such a day, hastened to the Dom Muruzi on the Liteinyi Prospekt in the centre of the town. Here a crowd was foregathering, every newcomer bringing a different rumour. The Merezhkovskys whisked Bely off to seek out Filosofov and all four went on together to a protest meeting in the Free Economic Society. News of a massacre was confirmed. Merezhkovsky went to close down the Mariinskii theatre as a gesture of respect for the fallen. Bely stayed on and heard the meeting briefly addressed by the priest Gapon who had headed the procession, cleanshaven now and in disguise, appealing in a hoarse voice for revolutionary action. The sense of unreality was deepened by rumours that Gapon was acting as an *agent provocateur* – though possibly unaware or but partially aware of the way in which he was being used.

Yet neither at this meeting nor at the Merezhkovskys' flat, Bely reflected, was there that total, deeply-felt, albeit necessarily passive involvement he had experienced at the Bloks'. Next morning, he was back at the barracks and, though he stayed with the Merezhkovskys, he made continual 'escapes' to walk the back streets with Blok, watching the town lapse into sullen, temporary normality. 'It's a wretched life', Blok said to Bely. 'Very sad . . . They, the Merezhkovskys, don't notice . . .'⁴⁷

They were too busy to notice . . . making contact, for the first time, with 'illegal' revolutionaries – to some of whom their insistence that the 'decadents' had been the first to challenge all accepted values was a source of considerable irritation; assessing the revolutionary potential of the sectarians; monitoring the muted reaction of the Russian Orthodox Church and the sudden politicisation of their own acquaintance from the *Mir Iskusstva* group. Serov, for instance, had resigned from the Academy of Art, whose honorary president, the Grand Duke Vladimir Aleksandrovich, was supreme commander of the troops involved in the massacre. He and other aesthetes, notably the brothers Lanseray, Mstislav Dobu-

zhinsky and Ivan Bilibin, launched out into savage political caricature for radical journals such as *Zhupel* (The Bugbear) and *Adskaia Pochta* (Infernal Post).

There was an immediate reaction, too, from many poets associated with the Symbolists. Semenov, who had seen the carnage at first hand, spoke wildly of assassinating the Tsar and went underground with the Socialist Revolutionaries. Sologub, who seems to have seen nothing but suffering and foolishness in the war with Japan, was now drawing for the first time on his knowledge of common speech and writing the kind of revolutionary poetry which passes easily into song. Even Viacheslav Ivanov, gentlest of men, produced the thunderous 'Astrolog':

Бьет час великого возмездья!
 Весы нагнетены, и чаша зол полна . . .
 Блажен безумьем жрец! И чья душа пьяна, —
 Пусть будет палачом! . . . Так говорят созвездья.*⁴⁸

Only the two youngest Symbolists seemed to have nothing to say.

'Here are we discussing what is to be done and there are you two going off for walks!'⁴⁹ Always jealous, the Merezhkovskys were convinced that Blok was using the mesmeric power of his poetry to sidetrack Bely from the good fight and to lure him away from their close community of private prayer and impassioned discussion, thought of as a preparation for 'action'. Triumphantly, they pointed to a recent poem, one of several Blok wrote at that time as if from a feminine protagonist. Here, 'she' is about to leave the remote convent where she has dwelt hitherto, her soul only remaining behind, pressed like a flower between the pages of the Psalter. All a-shimmer with regret and excitement, the poem marks the ultimate 'dematerialisation' of the Most Beautiful Lady theme and ends:

Как свеча догорала она,
 Вкруг лица улыбалась печаль.
 Долетали слова от окна,
 Но сквозила за окнами даль . . .
 Уплывали два белых цветка —
 Эта легкая матовость рук . . .
 Мне прозрачная дева близка
 В золотистую осень разлук. . . .
 Но живу я в далеком скиту
 И не знаю для счастья границ.

* 'The hour of mighty retribution strikes! / The balance is weighed down and the cup of evils is full . . . / Blessed is the priest in his frenzy! And he whose soul is drunk / Let him execute vengeance! . . . So say the constellations.'

Тишиной провожаю мечту.
И мечта воздвигает Царицу.*

'Khlystovstvo', Hippius said to Bely, insisting it was 'all there in that last line, "Tsaritsu-u-u"'.⁵⁰ Indeed, the trailing, howling syllable was a vulnerable tail to leave hanging for others to tweak. No one could seriously call the non-rhyme 'granits' and 'tsaritsu' 'innovation' and no one, least of all the offending author, could explain what it all meant. Be that as it may, Bely remembered Blok's set face, staring out from the window of the barracks over the rough ice of the Malaia Nevka to the towering chimneys beyond, as though making some irrevocable inner commitment. This, however, like the sadness of life in the back streets, he could no more explain to the Merezhkovskys than could Blok who, since his marriage – which he could not explain either – had tended to avoid them. Although, as the year went by, Bely became increasingly irritated by the talking-shop in the Dom Muruzi, he still felt that the Merezhkovskys were giving shape and purpose to his religious world-view, '*the most important thing in life*', as he wrote to his mother.⁵¹ They had taken the place of his own father and of Mikhail and Ol'ga Solov'ev. 'Bor-ichka', Zinaida Hippius called him tenderly . . . and Merezhkovsky 'Moi mal'chik' (my little boy). Nevertheless, it was with the Bloks that Bely experienced the aftermath of 9 January, and what bound them together, amidst all the 'barren arguments' of their acquaintances, was the silent certainty that they had already crossed some threshold beyond which there were no more certainties, only faith.

Their faith, inexpressible and unexpressed, yearned out towards the future of a pastoral, unsullied Russia, who – now that she was shaking off the stupefying opiates of the old regime – was threatened anew, on the one hand by the dangers of pollution and mechanisation inherent in westernising liberal dreams of industrial development, on the other by her own inherent chaos and formlessness. The two young poets both felt that Russia must dare to 'blow up the social mechanism and advance on the way of religion to forge new forms of life', but that as yet there was no way to say this, 'either in form or in words'.

Дремлю — и за дремотой тайна,
И в тайне поживает Русь,

* 'Like a candle she burned away, / Around her face sorrow smiled. / The words came flying from the window, / But beyond the windows was distance . . . // Two white flowers were floating away – / The light, opaque pallor of hands . . . / The transparent maiden is close to me / In this golden autumn of separations . . . // But I live in a remote hermitage / And I know no limit to joy. / In silence I watch my dream depart. / And the dream elevates the Queen . . .'

Она и в снах необычайна.
Ее одежды не коснусь.*⁵²

In the world of art that winter, as in daily life, everything was in a state of flux, impregnated with emotion, expectation, foreboding. The mood was by no means confined to the Symbolists. The latest literary sensation was the story 'Krasnyi smekh' (Red laughter) by Leonid Andreev, one of the most popular authors of the 'Znanie' group. A friend of Maksim Gor'ky, Andreev was a neo-realist whose prose nonetheless showed a truly 'decadent' abhorrence of logic and a preoccupation with dark, unconscious horrors. In 'Krasnyi smekh', Andreev graduated from the lurid themes of alcoholic delusions, sex and blasphemy to the monstrosity of war. As defeat followed on defeat in the Far East, the rumblings of mutiny were heard ever more frequently and his story, which culminates in madness and carnage, reads not so much as a plea for pacifism as a threat. Certainly Blok, reading it at night that January in the barracks, felt an urgent desire to run out and find the author to ask him 'when we are all to have our throats cut' – although, he added, 'next morning I took tea'. Viacheslav Ivanov, reviewing the story in *Vesy*, acknowledged Andreev to have been 'touched by Dionysos', though not to 'righteous madness'.⁵³ Later, he cited Andreev's lurid prose as an example of the dangers of using the Symbolist method when one does not share the Symbolist world view: instead of uncovering ultimate reality behind the transparency of the object, the false Symbolist, he says, is left with nothing, not even the apparent solidity of the material world.⁵⁴

Blok, less certain of art as a way to the 'more real', blamed Andreev in 1910 for continuing to bang on his drum when the 'world Orchestra behind him had fallen silent', but remembered after his suicide in 1919 that 'the really important Leonid Andreev [...] was always facing out into the empty blackness of the window that looks over the islands to Finland, into the damp night, into that heavy autumn rain that he and I loved with the same love ...'⁵⁵ Their hopes were different but they were akin in despair and it was Leonid Andreev, particularly in his capacity as editor of the Shipovnik (Sweetbriar) publishing house and almanacs, who was to introduce Symbolism to the wider readership enjoyed by radical authors of more 'realist' complexion. That same winter of 1905, the theatre in Russia demonstrated that symbol and myth, far from furnishing a retreat from 'real life', could be powerful vehicles for sociological ideas. The Petersburg stage saw a magnificently revolutionary performance of Wagner's *Ring*, in which Wotan was clearly to be identified with the old

* 'I am half-asleep and behind the drowsiness is a mystery, / And in the mystery slumbers Rus'. / Even in dreams she is not as others are, / I will not touch her garments.'

regime, Siegfried, the smith's apprentice, with the people, and Brünnhilde – at least to Blok, Bely and Liubov' who attended the theatre together – with the World Soul, more specifically the soul of Russia about to be awakened from an enchanted sleep. Another shared experience, exciting pastoral dreams of primeval innocence which Europe had forgotten since the French Revolution, was the 'Greek' dancing of Isadora Duncan. It was these theatrical impressions which inspired the image of the 'green meadow' the idea of 'the symbolisation of social aims [...] the understanding of society as an individual organism, "The woman clothed with the sun" [...] the Sleeping Beauty who will some day be awakened', in the thought and prose of both Blok and Bely later that year.⁵⁶ Bely's mood, at the beginning of 1905, was still full of 'yearning and melancholy' and he left for Moscow on 4 February in charity with all the world, on a cloud of euphoria. The revolution, however, continued on its grim course. He arrived in the older capital to be greeted with the news of the assassination of a member of the Royal Family, the Governor-General of the city, Prince Sergei Aleksandrovich, another event which both he and Blok saw as a portent of things to come.

For all members of the Intelligentsia sympathetic to the new religious consciousness, the winter of 1905 was critical in defining their relationship with church and state. V.P. Sventitsky and V.F. Ern, the future founders of the Christian Brotherhood of Struggle, friends of Bely and of Ivanov, came from Moscow to petition the Synod to disassociate itself from the official action on the 9 January. Though a few ecclesiastical voices were raised in some of the more liberal theological journals to express sympathy for the fallen, the Synod and the upper hierarchy chose to evade the issue. Secular opinion was outraged. The press was abusive; even school-children were demanding the abolition of scripture lessons . . . Merezhkovsky wrote an impassioned article, 'Now or never', in which he called upon the church to shake off its civic torpor and to assume the leadership of the revolutionary Intelligentsia.⁵⁷ Although Merezhkovsky's language was intemperate and he dismissed the cherished argument, that the church had been paralysed by enslavement to the state under Peter the Great with the painful counter-argument that, on the contrary, it had been enslaved because it was *already* in a state of paralysis for having too long neglected the things of this world, the article elicited a surprising response. A delegation of high-ranking clergy actually initiated a meeting in the offices of *Voprosy Zhizni* to discuss it.

The meeting was the last vital discussion between the Symbolists and official representatives of the Orthodox Church in Russia, after which Filosofov, speaking sadly for the 'new religious consciousness' as a whole,

concluded that 'there was no more to be hoped for from the Orthodox Church in the sphere of politics'.⁵⁸ Blok, who was there, was disappointed, as was Merezhkovsky himself, with the Bishops' overriding concern for the restoration of the patriarchate. '... I see no one to replace them', he wrote to his father of the Merezhkovskys, 'and it will be a long time before we get any others capable of creating such a stir as they have done (in their own sphere of magnificent theories, often almost foolish, but always talented, always calculated to rivet the attention of laity and clergy alike)'.⁵⁹ So urgent and so violent was the historical moment that, at the time, Merezhkovsky's strident impatience seemed to make sense. A few weeks after the meeting, however, he was acknowledging in a private letter that he was totally lost and confused by the turn things were taking:

This is not a revolution any longer, it is something far more terrible such as has never yet happened in history ... In spite of everything, our business is with words and thoughts and here neither words nor thoughts are likely to have any effect. Here there is some kind of elemental all-destroying force.⁶⁰

Unable to come to terms with the church, alienated from the 'elemental all-destroying force' of the revolutionary people, Merezhkovsky began to involve himself more and more in polemics with those members of the Intelligentsia whom he saw as harbingers of atheist materialism: notably Chekhov and Gor'ky, whom he attacked in the article 'Griadushchii kham' (The coming boor).⁶¹ In this, Merezhkovsky was heading in the opposite direction from the second generation of Symbolists. Their instinct was rather to seek consolidation with the rest of the Intelligentsia in the face of social upheaval and to preserve religious and cultural values not by argument, but by the power of 'music'.

One of the last events of the momentous winter season 1904–5 – recorded in *Vesy* – was the banquet at the Tauride Palace to celebrate Diaghilev's exhibition of eighteenth century Russian portraits. Diaghilev told his fellow-guests how he had travelled round the provinces collecting portraits from 'gloomy great houses, frightening in their dead splendour, inhabited today by charming, mediocre people' and concluded: 'We are witnesses of the greatest moment of summing-up in history in the name of a new and unknown culture which will be created by us but which will sweep us away.'⁶²

III

It was to such 'music' that, in the spring of 1905, Viacheslav Ivanov returned to St Petersburg – just as most other people were going off – war and revolution notwithstanding – to their summer retreats: the Merezh-

kovskys to the Crimea and Constantinople; Blok, as always, to Shakhmatovo; Bely to divide his time between his mother's estate, Sergei Solov'ev's and the Bloks'; Briusov (with Nina Petrovskaja) to Lake Saima in Finland.

The impact of the Ivanovs' personalities, as opposed to the civilising force of Viacheslav's subtle pen, and most particularly Ivanov's genuine and profound love for ancient Greece, her tragic cults and Platonic Eros, immediately attracted all that wing of Silver Age culture which was itself in love with masks and play-acting and which found in antiquity the aestheticisation and justification of its own sexual ambiguity. Lidiia Zinov'eva-Annibal and Viacheslav Ivanov were both scornful of 'petty-bourgeois morality', and the erotic ambivalence which had been tolerated in *Mir Iskusstva* and sublimated in *Novyi Put'* became almost programmatic in the Tower.

Yet the Ivanovs had returned to Russia with a strong sense of mission. He wanted to help the divided Intelligentsia to find common ground with one another and with the people. To this task he brought the sense of perspective of one who had long lived abroad and was thus genuinely more aware of what Russians had in common than of the barriers which separated them. He also distinguished, in a way Merezhkovsky never could, between eternal truths, the clouded mirror of art and the tragic battleground of history, where the choices, as he believed, lie not between good and evil but between sin and sin. His was an existential attempt to raise the general awareness of lasting spiritual values, and to stress the receptive, 'orgiastic' state required of the artist in face of social chaos.

Ivanov was no less opposed than Merezhkovsky to the materialism of the contemporary world, but unlike Merezhkovsky he was not afraid of chaos and all that he wrote of war and revolution amounted to a declaration of faith in the people and the 'seeing blindness' of what he believed to be their mythological view of life. He was an 'anarchist' in as far as he felt strongly that no one 'is called upon to impose organisation on the soul of the people' and that the task of the artist is limited to helping them 'with all the experience of the artistic tradition in the organisation of their own future spiritual freedom', that 'God is to be found in the heart, everyone should find Him freely in his own heart'.⁶³

Ivanov, true to the cult of the suffering god who gives his body to be dismembered for the sake of regeneration and resurrection, was genuinely ready to sacrifice the social order necessary for the well-being of his own refined culture in order that 'the art of the cell' might be regenerated and a new, syncretic culture come into being. However, being a scholarly man used to thinking in terms of centuries and even millennia, he was aware this would not happen overnight and was prepared to fill in the time of

waiting with refined Alexandrine pleasures, encouraging a kind of permanent Symposium within the glowing orange precincts of the round reception room in the Tower. In the tense atmosphere of these years the boundary line between art and life was tenuous in the extreme, and the master of the Tower was soon to acquire a reputation as a purveyor of a dangerous and, on occasion, rather ridiculous mix of mystic eroticism and sociological maximalism which it took many years of hard work and many sorrows to live down.

The Wednesday receptions at the 'Tower' attracted people from all walks of life: scholars, revolutionaries, symbolists, realists, Social Democrats and Liberals. Although it was not Ivanov's style to confront his guests with 'Now or never' ultimata and the debates here were of a more abstract, academic nature than in the Dom Muruzi, they were nevertheless infected by revolutionary excitement. There had been blood on the streets of St Petersburg. There would be more. The Ivanovs' arrival virtually coincided with a police raid on the premises of *Voprosy Zhizni*, after which Chulkov was briefly detained. One Wednesday in the following autumn the Tower itself was raided and searched, though the only casualty on that occasion appears to have been Merezhkovsky's fur hat! Public services were disrupted by the general strike. Meetings took place by candlelight. Some of those who attended came and went through dark streets under assumed names.

In this highly-charged atmosphere, Lidiia Zinov'eva-Annibal came into her own. Left to himself, Ivanov might well have never abandoned the sheltered quiet of his patriarchal Genevan retreat. The catalyst which precipitated his return to Russia in her hour of trial was the Russian conscience of his wife. *Noblesse oblige* – and Lidiia's relatives were unhesitatingly sending son after clean-shaven, eau-de-cologned and splendidly uniformed son to defend Russia on the Eastern Front. She had retained their sense of duty while rejecting their aristocratic way of life, getting herself expelled from a select German boarding school and running away with her tutor to 'work for the revolution'. The tutor, however, had turned out to be a social climber and – like Remizov's wife Serafima Pavlovna, another youthful revolutionary from a rich and ancient family – Lidiia soon found that to work for social change was not enough for a nature which craved ideal justice and beauty. When, in 1893, she had left her husband and her country, with three small children in tow, to find herself in Western Europe, she had found Viacheslav Ivanov. Now, with a kind of crazed generosity, possibly even in part as a penance, she was ready to lay all the happiness and fulfilment which she had discovered in her second marriage, together with the man who had bestowed them on her, on the altar of her country. He, seeing in her not

just the beloved but the Muse to whom he owed his awareness of himself as poet, as 'king' in his own mythology, was readily persuaded. Berdiaev remarked that Viacheslav's was a refined rather than an ecstatic nature, not in the least orgiastic; Blok noted likewise that it was Lidiia, not Viacheslav, who was 'truly Dionysian'. Petersburg society nicknamed her 'Diotima', but Ivanov in his poetry compared her rather to the Earth-mother, Demeter.

It was Lidiia, then, who was initially responsible for the worst lapses of taste of the Ivanov set, as on the occasion soon after their arrival in St Petersburg when she appeared at a party given by Nikolai Minsky in a blood-red toga with sleeves rolled up like an executioner to extract from the guests drops of 'sacrificial' blood, which were then mixed in a communal cup of wine and solemnly drunk by all present. Yet it was Lidiia also who created the particular atmosphere of informal spontaneity and creative improvisation which ensured that poets and artists, as well as philosophers and politicians, became regular visitors to the Tower Wednesdays. If the latter waxed too abstract, she and her poets rebelled, set up a rival, more amusing party, even, on occasion, pelted the more long-winded speakers with oranges. A descendant of Peter the Great's 'Moor', the Abyssinian Hannibal, Lidiia, with her Valkyrie physique, mane of fuzzy light hair and compelling, dark-rimmed eyes, was striking rather than beautiful. Her voice had been trained by Pauline Viardot, the Spanish alto who had enthralled Turgenev, and she could occasionally be prevailed upon to sing in a powerful, rather scary contralto. A kind if despotic woman, Lidiia was always ready with sympathy and practical help for guests who came, went and quite often did not go, taking up residence in the Ivanovs' warren of a flat which expanded according to need, eventually absorbing two neighbouring apartments.

Under Ivanov's influence and protection, his wife wrote and published: an unfinished novel *Plamenniki* (Little Flames); a play *Kol'tsa* (Rings), published by Skorpion in 1904; the notorious novella with lesbian overtones *Tridtsat'-tri uroda* (Thirty-three Monstrosities), published in 1907, which enjoyed the distinction, quite difficult to achieve in that comparatively liberal year, of being officially banned; and a collection of short stories *Zverinets* (The Menagerie, 1908).⁶⁴ Zinov'eva-Annibal's lush emotional prose now seems overblown. It was Ivanov, not she, who gave lasting form to her chaotic generosity of spirit – but she in her turn provided the initial dynamic without which his poetry might have remained a scholar's pastime, a series of accomplished experiments in form.

By moving Viacheslav Ivanov back to Russia at the height of war and revolution, Zinov'eva-Annibal was in a sense compelling him for the

second time to plunge into that chaos of otherness from which his natural tendency was to withdraw. Yet his was a nature which combined the 'preacher' and the 'confessor' and he in his turn genuinely 'fell in love' with the talented young people who gathered about him. He had the gift of *listening*, of 'catching at what is elusive in you', as Bely said: 'he would catch it and explain you to yourself ... everyone goes to Viacheslav Ivanov, they even come in virtually off the street; no one is sent away without advice, affection, encouragement'.⁶⁵

Ivanov felt that the moment of his return to a wounded and receptive Russia was the time for a concentrated effort to lead high art beyond the borders of 'empirical freedom' into 'inner, prophetic freedom'.⁶⁶ In one article after another, he insisted that the bold spirit of the poet should venture out of retirement and, albeit treasuring the wisdom attained during long years of solitude, should launch out into ecstatic, self-forgetful communion with the dark night-soul of the people. Only then would the poet learn to sing their songs, to take up their cause before the throne of God himself, to fight like Job for heavenly justice.

Although, at the turn of the century, Ivanov had made his own private peace with the church, following Solov'ev, he did not, as Merezhkovsky did at one time, make a religious principle of social commitment ('obshchestvennost'). Religion, according to Ivanov, should penetrate everything we do or think, and he even saw the war with Japan as a test of Russia's Christianity. History would work itself out like a tragedy in which players and chorus (individuals in authority and the enfranchised people) must themselves find the wisdom and strength to perceive that higher harmony which is the essence of being. The lowliest are raised by the downfall of the greatest, from which they learn through tragic participation, through catharsis, through liturgy – 'the most beautiful tears', 'the tears of the lesser for the greater, of man for God'.⁶⁷ It is the duty of the artist to be involved, to merge with the people from whom he originates, to share their experience and give it salutary form.

Individualism, Ivanov maintained, was now out of date. His prescription was a synthesis of the individual and collective ('sobornost'). That synthesis, he maintained, was to be found through 'the rejection of the world' and 'anarchy', by which he meant total absence of constraint of any kind: 'The social process can tend towards and must approach the ultimate minimum of restriction of personal liberty; the anarchic idea is in essence the denial of all limits.'⁶⁸ The rejection of the world as it is in the name of something *better* Ivanov saw as man's duty; yet he preserved the awareness that, without divine aid and example, the *best* will prove eternally elusive. By challenging the world, Ivanov was seeking a way to lead revolutionary, often militantly atheistic society back into some kind

of relationship with its creator.⁶⁹ What social statements he made were moderate and gradualist, but his aim as an artist was to open men's hearts to participation in the tragic grandeur of history, to insist on a commitment to contemporaneity as well as to eternity.

Blok, though intimidated by Ivanov's personality, was deeply enchanted by his thought. 'The poet', he wrote, 'removes veil after veil from our eyes, accustoming us to look into the dark, from which – we know – terrifying images will soon arise'. Experienced dualism, the struggle to will 'from self another self',⁷⁰ was, according to Blok, of the essence of the 'terror' of Ivanov's darkness but, in his thought as in his poetry, there was always light beyond the darkness: 'We are at the source of pure lyricism, it always reflected the past as the future, recollection as promise . . .', Blok wrote, perceiving in Ivanov's lyric poetry a Romantic apotheosis of the folk element which was now, in the poet's articles, putting on 'the armour of method, of theory'. In Ivanov's 'lyrical philosophy' Blok saw a way ahead for his generation not open either to Briusov's aloof aestheticism or to Merezhkovsky's sociological engagement. 'A new dream is being born: to drown once more in the soul of the people', he wrote, and acknowledged with gratitude that, in *Kormchie zvezdy* and in *Prozrachnost'*, 'this personal, enclosed poetry chimes gently in an era of rebellion. It throws into relief the ferocity of the fires. It erects milestones, establishing that the road has been travelled before.'⁷¹

Bely – in spite of his dreams of a log cabin in Diveevo – did not see this. In the summer of 1905, he was grappling with the theory of cognition and entering a period of increasing distrust of intuitive solutions. Ivanov's 'masks' and his cult of Dionysos struck him as something dug up from a dead past to 'pad out' Nietzsche, a transplant of 'the history of culture from ancient Mycenae to the ruins of Eleusis, from the museum to the salon'.⁷² Bely took fright at Ivanov's rejection of individualism, a 'safe and tried stronghold' in time of doubt, and at his serene belief that, for the artist, the plunge into the darkness of the 'soul of the people' is itself a way to tragic self-fulfilment. In one of his extraordinary philosophical fantasies, 'Khimery' (Gargoyles), Bely presented himself as a demented youth surrounded by grotesque beings who offer him conflicting advice. Amongst them is a stooping figure with an aureole of golden curls and a fluffy Italian Renaissance beard, the 'Pheoretik of Dionysism'. The youth accuses the 'Pheoretik' of showing only the 'how' and of not knowing, or of concealing, the one thing he himself needs to know: 'Again that terrible "how"! . . . Ah woe is me! I need to know *what* I am. And here is yet another stranger leading me away into emptiness.'⁷³

To this direct attack Ivanov replied in the very next number of *Vesy*,

sharply and to the point, for he considered Bely a worthy opponent. Bely's article, he said, was blasphemous and intolerant: 'not from Dionysos and not from Christ'. Bely replied with a half-apology, taking refuge behind his own 'masks': the gargoyles, he informed Ivanov, are projections of the demented youth's own thoughts at a certain stage in his quest for his own identity. The 'Pheoretik' was no more Ivanov himself than 'the beardless passer-by with the face of Mercury' was really Blok. In a private note to the latter, Bely wrote: 'If you see V. Ivanov, tell him that I never want to polemicise with him because in the realm of theory I feel myself closer to him than virtually any of the other "decadents"'.⁷⁴

Bely recalls that Blok, in spite of his appreciation of Ivanov's lyrical philosophy and perhaps in part because of the warm welcome the philosopher-poet had accorded to his *Stikhi o Prekrasnoi Dame* as a step 'from symbol to myth',⁷⁵ feared to become personally involved with him and might never have done so had not Bely eventually brought them together. While Blok struggled to find his way forward in poetry, Bely devoted much of the summer and autumn of 1905 to a furious intellectual effort to reconcile Symbolism and Social Revolution through the study of Social-Democrat and neo-Kantian literature. In doing so, he conceived considerable sympathy for the Marxist parties. This sympathy coloured his highly emotional, albeit peripheral involvement in the siege of Moscow University, the parades in Red Square on the day of the October Manifesto, the demonstration in honour of the murdered Jewish communist Bauman, the ensuing pogroms (during which students, in their conspicuous uniforms, were almost as much at risk as Jews), and the Presnia fighting. Adrenalin flowed, but Bely did not actually join his fellow-students, perched over the university entrance with tins of sulphuric acid in the manner of medieval soldiers with boiling oil, though he did attempt to collect money for them. 'One felt one could not raise one's hand to anything', he recalled of the Government's successful combination of concessions and repressions that autumn, 'What did rise, though, was anger.'⁷⁶

He was angry with the wealthy liberal capitalists whom he had met in the circle of Margarita Morozova, who, after the Manifesto, launched out into forming the Kadet [constitutional democrat] party and preparing for elections, ceasing to care about the continuing carnage on the streets. At the Merezhkovskys', scenting a similar mood – his hosts in ever closer accord with Struve and their friend Rozanov actively canvassing for the Kadets – Bely again felt himself more in sympathy with Blok who, on the day the Manifesto was announced, had marched through St Petersburg with a workers' procession, carrying a red flag.

True, Blok almost immediately relapsed into shocked passivity and the

two poems he had been turning over in his mind as he marched were more in the nature of a Symbolist meditation than a call to arms. They were both about St Petersburg, the mythic city with its palaces, statues and great, grey, indifferent river, both in a distinctly minor key. The capital of the Romanov dynasty stands doomed, yet unscathed, like the Bronze Horseman trampling the serpent in the first poem, the dark knight on the roof of the Winter Palace in the second, and through it all 'Esche neschastnykh, prosiashchikh khleba / Nikomu ne zhal', nikomu ne zhal!' ('And still for the unfortunates who beg for bread, / No one has pity, no one has pity!').⁷⁷

The anguished passivity of Blok and Bely may seem like the abdication of responsibility, an expression of the death-wish of a fading culture such as Diaghilev had depicted in his April speech, or it may seem rather to have arisen from presentiments gained from their listening awareness of the mood of the streets. On the whole, their attitude, though it could not at that juncture ignore politics, was poetic, not political ... and therein close to Ivanov's.

Indeed, those older Symbolists who tried to take a more positive civic stance tended to monumental misjudgement. After the Manifesto, the newly-granted freedom of the press led to an almost surrealistic burgeoning of revolutionary publications, from the works of old illegal favourites like Chernyshevsky and Bakunin to the first legal Bolshevik newspaper, *Novaia Zhizn'* (New Life), edited by none other than Nikolai Minsky, who claimed in an editorial in the third issue that 'mysticism, bold and pure in its very essence, can ally herself in the sphere of freedom with an equally bold doctrine of unbounded horizons such as Social Democracy'.⁷⁸

Minsky began to realise the error of his attempt to revive the 'auld alliance' between decadents and Marxists when his own editorial board turned against him, refusing to allow him to publish a friendly in-house rebuttal of Maksim Gor'ky's views on Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, but it was not until the arrival on the scene of Vladimir Il'ich Lenin that he and, indeed, everybody else, learnt of the function envisaged for Bolshevik party literature by its leader: that of a 'little cog, a little screw' in the party machine.⁷⁹

Briusov, using one of his better-known pseudonyms, made what amounted to his first overtly political statement in *Vesy*, a rebuttal of Lenin and thus of declared Bolshevik policy for the arts. He used the old arguments that freedom from all political commitment, not just from outward restraint, was a *sine qua non* of a healthy literature, whose business is with the subtleties of the human psyche, not with the packaging of political ideas. Literature, he said, was no more called upon to

reflect or further the revolution than were all the textile factories of Moscow to produce nothing but red flags (a dig at Sologub and the woman poet Teffi, both of whom had written highly popular poems on the theme of the little weaver-girl working on the red banner). Merezhkovsky, too, heartily disapproved of Minsky's new friends, his attempt to write a 'Workers' anthem' and his publication of bad revolutionary verse by Bal'mont, but Minsky felt it incumbent on him to brave out the short and stormy life of the newspaper and was subsequently constrained to take off for abroad when, as responsible editor, he was threatened with legal proceedings after its closure for incitement to armed uprising.⁸⁰

Given this kind of disarray in the ranks of the older generation, it is scarcely surprising that Bely channelled some of his impotent anger into a challenge to their authority – to Merezhkovsky himself, Rozanov, Minsky. In the last number of *Vesy* for 1905 (which in fact came out early in 1906) Bely took issue with Merezhkovsky for writing of Dostoevsky, that grandmaster of social and ideological chaos, as the 'prophet of the Russian Revolution'. Some of the assumptions of Merezhkovsky and Rozanov, said Bely, 'are enough to wrack the brains of the devil himself, and they lead nowhere. And now they are telling us that the end of Russian literature is at hand, instead of admitting frankly: Dostoevsky has led us into a morass, we must look for other ways.'⁸¹

Merezhkovsky sent his rebellious 'boy' a long letter of affectionate reproach, above all for questioning the authority of Dostoevsky, but next time Bely appeared in St Petersburg, Dmitrii Sergeevich and Zinaida Nikolaevna hauled him over the coals for his 'betrayal' and forgave him. Bely, who loved them dearly at this time and was grateful for their support in his increasingly disruptive courtship of Blok's wife, stayed in their flat when he visited St Petersburg both before and after the publication of the offending article. The reconciliation, however, was on a personal rather than an intellectual level, and Bely found the headier atmosphere of the Tower, where the talk was already of 'mystic anarchism', rather more to his taste than the 'sensible' ideas now being expressed by the Merezhkovskys – who were, in any case, preparing to leave for Paris.

So it was that Bely, much to his subsequent regret, introduced Ivanov into Blok's home, where the 'Pheoretik' charmed both Blok and his wife with seductive talk of history as mystery and a new concept of theatre in which actors and audience would participate together as in ancient Greek tragedies or medieval mystery plays.

Blok, already more than half won over by Ivanov's articles and poetry, now succumbed to his personality:

И в этот миг, в слепящей вьюге,
 Не ведаю, в какой стране,
 Не ведаю, в котором круге,
 Твой странный лик явился мне . . .

И я, дичившийся доселе,
 Очей пронзительных твоих,
 Взглянул . . . И наши души спели
 В те дни один и тот же стих.*⁸²

IV

So, at the turn of the year 1905–6, on the level of high poetry and, it must be said, geographical propinquity, Blok passed into the ‘sphere of influence’ of Viacheslav Ivanov, and thus came to be included, together with Ivanov, Gorodetsky and Chulkov, amongst the ‘Mystic Anarchists’.

Bely, though he rather fancied the term ‘Mystic Anarchism’ at the time, avoided a similarly close involvement. After the Merezhkovsky’s departure for France on 25 February 1906 he returned to Moscow to plan his future with Blok’s wife, whose affections he believed he had finally secured without alienating Blok himself during his winter sojourns in St Petersburg. Ivanov’s ‘way’, with its acceptance of the constant re-enactment of the one religious tragedy within the cycles of a fallen world, was not then acceptable to Bely, who still looked for victory, for a happy ending here and now, in his love life as in the grand battle for culture. He was, therefore, horrified to see, on his return to St Petersburg, how both his friend and Liubov’ herself were being drawn unresisting into the ‘lilac mists’ of revolution, where he felt he had no influence over them and where the part he was playing in their life suddenly appeared ignoble, even absurd. After a miserable six months during which impressions of the throttling back of revolution were combined to the point of psychic derangement with the misery of his unsuccessful struggle to ‘save’ Liubov’ and to recall Blok to their old ideal of chivalrous devotion to the World Soul, Bely fled abroad, found refuge with the Merezhkovskys in Paris and, encouraged by them and by Briusov, who deplored the new direction in Russian Symbolism outside his direct control, declared open war on ‘Mystic Anarchism’ and its adherents on the pages of *Vesy*. By that time, however, ‘Mystic Anarchism’, mercilessly criticised by Briusov, Bely, Hippisus and Ellis, all of whom understandably felt it wiser to avoid

* ‘And in that moment, in the blinding snow-storm, / I know not in what country, / I know not in which circle, / Your strange face appeared before me . . . // And I, who had been shy up to now / Of your piercing eyes, / Looked into them . . . And our souls sang / In those days one and the same song.’

challenging Ivanov head-on, had come to be associated primarily with Chulkov.

Georgii Chulkov was a likeable person, rash, enthusiastic and, according to his own bohemian standards, a man of honour. In spite of a lingering feeling that he had 'gone over' to *Voprosy Zhizni* and was thus somehow guilty of the demise of *Novyi Put'*, the worst even Zinaida Hippus found to say about him – once the dust raised by 'Mystic Anarchism' had settled – was that his most characteristic line of poetry was 'Ia khochu i ia budu krichat'' ('I want to yell, and I will'). Ivanov and Blok remained loyal to him as a person through every embarrassment. The Remizovs' initial liking for him and his wife Nadezhda Grigor'evna stood the acid test of a shared kitchen when both families lived on the premises of *Voprosy Zhizni*. Even Briusov, who greeted Chulkov's first collection of poetry *Kremnisti put'* (The Stony Path, 1904) as 'not altogether hopeless' and afterwards persecuted him mercilessly in print, confessed to being fond of the man; and Bely, Chulkov's most virulent critic, offered a handsome apology in his memoirs and recalls how he was originally genuinely attracted to the bustling young secretary by 'his truly heroic, foredoomed effort to blow up a flame from that scarcely smouldering ashheap *Voprosy Zhizni*'. Chulkov's misfortune, according to Bely, was a passion for being first in the fray which simply did not correspond to his real ability:

Having been in exile with Dzerzhinsky and outstripped all the other members of his political party, he threw himself full time into overtaking the decadents; and in so doing he challenged the religious thinkers; I got to know him in the middle of his next race when, having overhauled the Merezhkovskys, [...] he was drawing level with Ivanov, Viacheslav, in order to thunder on neck and neck with him in pursuit of Blok; having caught them all unaware with his manifesto in the name of the Mystic Anarchists – he then served the manifesto on Meierkhol'd, Ivanov, Blok, in an attempt to explain to them what exactly they – Meierkhol'd, Blok, Ivanov – were really all about.⁸³

Chulkov's sudden notoriety was the fruit of two years' wheeling and dealing among disparate literary groups. He came into his own at the beginning of 1906 when the collapse of *Voprosy Zhizni* left the Petersburg Symbolists with no immediate outlet for their work. Now that, for the first time, anyone in Russia could publish anything without preliminary censorship, they needed to find such an outlet – and quickly.

Chulkov was a useful person in this situation, bringing Viacheslav Ivanov and his entourage into contact with writers of proven radical reputation and organising projects, publishing houses, almanacs, alliances. In January 1906 he organised a meeting in Ivanov's Tower between his own embryo publishing house *Fakely* and Gor'ky's *Zhupel*, for the

first time uniting 'Realists' and 'Symbolists', albeit transiently, around a real project – the creation of their own theatre. It was to be directed by Vsevolod Meier'hol'd, a friend of Remizov and Chulkov who had broken away from Stanislavsky's studio to tour the provinces with his own troupe. Gor'ky's idea was for a people's theatre of astringent political satire: a real possibility, given the lifting of the censorship. The Symbolists saw theatre as a way out into broader, more popular forms which would involve, organise and uplift 'the people', and draw vitality from the unleashed Dionysian energies of Revolution. Meierkhof'd was deeply taken both with Ivanov's theories of reviving the role of the Greek chorus and extending it to involve some kind of audience participation and with Gor'ky's idea of exploiting the living tradition of popular street theatre. There was talk of a new theatrical enterprise, at once mystic and popular. It was felt that the Italian *commedia dell'arte* might prove a way of marrying a true 'people's theatre' to the more sophisticated traditions of Petersburg culture and, at the same time, allow for a certain symbolic resonance.

Blok attended the meeting and, like Remizov who was also present, was enchanted by Gor'ky, whose imminent departure abroad was, however, to leave Meierkhof'd, Chulkov and their project altogether in the hands of the Symbolists and Gor'ky's friend, Leonid Andreev. Blok was more than a little overwhelmed by the suggestion made at the meeting that *he* was (a) to recite at a literary evening to raise funds and (b) to expand a one-page lyrical poem, 'Balaganchik' (The Puppet Booth) into a lyrical play for the new theatre. 'All this concoction by highly cultured people like Viach. Ivanov or highly enterprising people like Georgii Chulkov and Meierkhof'd is beginning to get on my nerves', he wrote to Bely immediately after the meeting. 'I feel as though they want to scrape something out of me with a scalpel [. . .] Write! *Ought* I to put my case in full to these people who take me for a rebel and a mystic? you know that is not so.'⁸⁴

At the time, Bely did not respond to this question, but when, a few weeks later, he heard Blok read the play, *Balaganchik*, a delicately ironic retelling of their shared cult of the Most Beautiful Lady and tragi-comic rivalry for Liubov', it struck him as proof positive that his friend had turned against him and was making a mock of all their shared values; that he had in fact become, if not a 'mystic anarchist', then a 'mystic hooligan'. The play not only parodied his romance, it denied his optimism. The Harlequin-Bely figure leaps through a window 'into the spring of the world' to find the beautiful country beyond had simply been painted on paper and, at the end of the play, all the decorations are whirled away as if by a cyclone. For Meierkhof'd, however, the 'happy invention' with which he eventually staged *Balaganchik* was 'the first stimulus to lend definite direction to my art'.⁸⁵

Though Blok provided Meierkhol'd with a play, neither *Zhupel* nor *Fakely* succeeded in providing him with a theatre and it was not until the following autumn, when the director was invited to work with Vera Kommissarzhevskaja and her troupe, that Blok's play was staged. Chulkov did, however, succeed that same spring in publishing it, with a delightful frontispiece by Dobuzhinsky, in the first *Fakely* almanac – alongside contributions from Bunin, Sergeev-Tsensky and Leonid Andreev.

Reviewing that first number of *Fakely*, it was Briusov who linked Chulkov's introduction on 'Mystic Anarchism' to Ivanov's sonnet 'O nepriiatii mira' (On the non-acceptance of the world) and deduced that together they amounted to some kind of manifesto. Briusov felt strongly that his own Parnassian position and the hegemony of *Vesy* and *Skorpion* were once more under threat: not, this time, from the 'new religious consciousness' of the Merezhkovskys, but from Ivanov's belief that art expressed a deeper reality in which all men could eventually unite and in his and Chulkov's readiness to welcome authors who had no previous connection with Symbolism as he, Briusov, had consistently tried to define it. He could not approve of a torch raised in the name of anything so amorphous as 'a free association of people based on love for a future, transfigured world'.⁸⁶

In his reply to Briusov's criticism, in the very next number of *Vesy*, Ivanov denied that *Fakely* represented a new school or that Chulkov's introduction and his sonnet constituted a 'manifesto'. Chulkov, however, responded by publishing a collection of his own articles, *O misticheskom anarkhizme*, to which he persuaded Ivanov to write an introduction defending the term and bearing the same title as the sonnet: 'O nepriiatii mira'.

'Mystic Anarchism' was not, Ivanov claimed in this introduction, an oxymoron, a contradiction in terms, as Briusov had maintained. It was rather tautological, for mysticism is free by definition, not the servant of theology or of dogma, and for this reason all mysticism is anarchic in the sense that it accepts no outward authority or control. He also took the opportunity to outline more precisely the positive significance he attached to the idea of the 'rejection of the world': to 'wrestle with God' – like Job, Prometheus, Christ Himself – seeking the will of God for the transfiguration or rebirth of a fallen, unacceptable world. Ivanov's poem 'Dithyramb' as printed in *Fakely* concludes with the words of the Pythea: 'Iz *Net* neprimirimo / Slepitel'noe *Da*' and the state direction 'Pri bezzvuchnom pylanii fakelov molitvennoe bezmolvie khora' ('Out of an implacable No / A dazzling Yes!' ('By the quiet flickering of the torches the

prayerful silence of the choir')).⁸⁷ This was how Ivanov envisaged the relationship between the poet and the people: an alliance against the inertia of an unsatisfactory world which only appears anarchic and destructive but which leads, through prayerful catharsis, to renewal.

There was nothing in Ivanov's introduction to Chulkov's collection that he had not said before in the pages of Briusov's *Vesy* and of *Voprosy Zhizni*. Moreover, it was hardly to be supposed that Briusov would offer any serious objection 'on principle' to the emancipation of 'mysticism' from 'theology'. Indeed, in his practice as editor for *Skorpion*, he welcomed this trend, working towards the publication of Blok's *Nechaian-nyia radost'* (Joy Unexpected) and of Ivanov's *Cor ardens* at the height of the attacks he himself initiated and coordinated against their authors in *Vesy*.⁸⁸

The reason for the split amongst the Symbolists which left Briusov, Hippius, Bely and Ellis ranged against Chulkov, Ivanov and Blok was not a matter of ideas – philosophical or artistic. Briusov's explanation to Sologub that what was going on was simply a 'struggle for survival' within a movement which had proliferated too fast, does to some extent explain the attitude of Briusov himself; yet his reasons for fanning the flames of the personal rivalries, both professional and amorous, which motivated his allies were not pecuniary. Briusov was well suited by his own trim fleet consisting of *Skorpion*, the *Severnnye Tsvety* almanacs and *Vesy*, and instinctively resisted the desire of those authors he liked to think of as 'his own' to strike out into wider waters. If *Vesy*'s rearguard action against the wider Symbolist movement had a rallying-call, it was the integrity of Russian Symbolism.

By and large, Hippius and Bely, however outrageous a form their polemical writing took, were out to maintain standards and combat sloppy thinking. They, who had weathered the mockery of the liberal and conservative, lay and ecclesiastical press in the years before Symbolism had, after 1905, begun to acquire 'almost academic laurels', were more sensitive than Ivanov, whose late début and formidable erudition had spared him the loudest guffaws and most hurtful calumnies, to the fact that Chulkov's articles in *O misticheskom anarkhizme* read like parodies of their own thought.⁸⁹ Ivanov, who used the word 'orgiastic' with proper religious awe, might forgive the ex-medical student Chulkov such happy-go-lucky expressions as the 'orgasm of street-fighting' and the 'orgasm of the awaking soul'. He appears not to have noticed what derivative nonsense the young man was writing.

Invoking the names of Nietzsche, Ibsen and Jesus Christ, Chulkov asserts in the concluding article of his brochure that, for the true mystic anarchist, the one imperative is to destroy:

Social revolution, which Europe is destined to experience in the near future, is but a small prelude to that beautiful conflagration in which the old World will burn away. The old bourgeois order must be destroyed to clear the field for the last battle: there, in the free socialist society, will arise the rebellious spirit of the Man-Messiah, in order to lead people from mechanistic construction to the miraculous incarnation of Eternal Wisdom.⁹⁰

None of the Symbolists could honestly disclaim Chulkov. Merezhkovsky, who, in Paris, was becoming quite deeply involved with the terrorist Savinkov and the leading socialist-revolutionary Bunakov-Fondaminsky, described the revolution as a forest fire and the decadents as the topmost, driest, most brightly-burning twigs. He also informed Europe: 'Pour vous, la révolution est la politique; pour nous, la religion.'⁹¹ And so it appeared to be in Minsky's first editorial in *Novaia Zhizn'*. Bal'mont had magnified the cruel 'joy of destruction' in *Budem kak solntse* and glorified political violence in his *Pesni mstitelia* (Songs of an Avenger). Bely's Nekrasov poetry and Blok's 'Gimn' strike the same note. All these can be perceived as fuel for Chulkov's 'beautiful conflagration', as can Briusov's declaration to all the revolutionary parties: 'Iomat' ia budu s vami / Stroit' – net' ('I will demolish with you / But not build'). The same can be said, moreover, of Ivanov's constant use, throughout 1904–5, of Phoenix-imagery to symbolise Russia's rebirth from war and revolution and of Sologub's revolutionary poetry in the spirit of 'V gnevnom plameni proklat'ia / Umiraet staryi mir. / Slav'te, drugi, slav'te, brat'ia, / Razrushen'ia vol'nyi pir!' ('In the wrathful flame of malediction / The old world is dying. / Sing glory, friends, sing glory, brothers, / To the free feast of destruction!').⁹²

Although the majority of Symbolists recoiled at once before the distorting mirror held up to them in *O misticheskom anarkhizme*, Viacheslav Ivanov accepted responsibility – at the time and thereafter. Almost the only major Symbolist to welcome both the October Manifesto and the February Revolution as possible preludes to reconciliation and quiet, constructive work, he yet responded in 1919, a year of personal tragedy and general hardship, to Chulkov's epistle in verse: 'Ved' vmeste my szhigali dom, gde zhili predki nashi chinno' ('But it was together we set fire to the house where our ancestors led their sedate lives') with an answering poem of categorical acceptance:

Да сей костер мы поджигали,
И совесть правду говорит,
Хотя предчувствия не лгали,
Что сердце наше в нем сгорит.*⁹³

* 'Yes, we set this bonfire burning, / and conscience speaks truth, / Although presentiments did not lie. / That our heart would burn with it.'

10 The antithesis

... Быть художником — значит выдерживать ветер из миров искусства, совершенно не похожих на этот мир, только странно влияющих на него; в тех мирах нет причин и следствий, времени и пространства, плотского и бесплотного [...] Искусство есть ад.

Александр Блок*

Subversion of their own, enclosed world of subjective idealism was the obverse side of the Symbolist movement. Because the Symbolists had not yet matured sufficiently to distinguish or indeed to wish to distinguish between life, art and religion, the historical crisis which their country underwent over the years 1904–6 left private lives, literary alliances and faith in the imminent re-establishment of an Earthly Paradise, the Sophianic dream, in tatters. The story of the years between 1906 and 1910 is the story of a prolonged and bitter crisis, during which the idea of the closed Symbolist community gradually gave way before the larger demands of life itself. After a period of frenetic play-acting, of a sustained and conscious effort to turn life into art and to open up the innermost sanctum of private life to that elemental Dionysian chaos from which they hoped for rebirth into a wider community, poet after poet pronounced the return of Symbolism to the sphere of art and, at the same time, the demise of the movement as such, the passing of Russian Symbolism into the mainstream of Russian literature.¹

One of the central myths which the Symbolists conjured up to make this transitional time endurable was that of the spiritual journey, the pilgrimage . . . and most especially Dante's *Inferno* and *Purgatorio*, the story of the soul's journey through hell toward reunion with Beatrice who serves as a figure for Sophia.² It was typical that the journal most representative of this period, the life-span of which, from the end of 1905 to 1910, coincided with it exactly, organised in the first year of its existence a

* '... To be an artist means to endure the wind blowing from worlds of art, quite unlike this world only exercising a curious influence over it; in those worlds there is neither cause nor effect, time nor space, material nor immaterial [...] Art is hell.' Aleksandr Blok.

competition for artists, prose writers and poets on the theme of the central figure in the bottom-most pit of hell – ‘The Devil’.³

Zolotoe Runo began to come out while the fighting was still going on in the Presnia district of Moscow where it was printed. Its opening statement or manifesto was defensive, reaffirming the Eternal values of an ‘indivisible’, ‘Symbolic’ and ‘free’ art amidst the ‘urgent questions’ and ‘bloody answers’ posed and given by contemporary Russia.⁴ Unlike *Mir Iskusstva*, which practised a deliberate individualistic eclecticism, making no attempt to fuse content and illustration, the new journal published a striking selection of specially illustrated poems and a series of portraits of poets and musicians by contemporary artists; some, such as the superb ‘unfinished’ portrait of Briusov, one of the last works by the now hopelessly insane Vrubel’, were specially commissioned by the editor Nikolai Riabushinsky.⁵

In a sense, *Zolotoe Runo* was, in itself, a *Gesamtkunstwerk* and it rivalled *Mir Iskusstva* in polygraphic luxury though it lacked the light-hearted pioneering solidarity, the romantic verve which Diagilev had inspired in his collaborators. There was no cohesion, no common aim. The contributors soon fell out among themselves and, more importantly, with the despotic Riabushinsky, who had the knack of making those with whom he came into personal contact feel like employees: not for him the Diagilev touch of builder’s foreman all covered with lime and glue! The merchant’s son had ambitions to make his journal a shop-window for Russian culture in Western Europe . . . a crude approach which went against the grain of a movement which was and perceived itself to be as much European as Russian. Indeed, Tasteven’s pedestrian translations from the French in the first bi-lingual numbers of *Zolotoe Runo* were, from the outset, a source of unholy amusement to those of the Symbolists who, like Zinaida Hippisus, were at home in the language and used it themselves with grace and ease.

Riabushinsky’s first choice as literary editor was Sokolov-Krechetov, the founder of *Grif* and publisher of *Iskusstvo*, a man of independent means and, in the eyes of the Symbolist élite, something of a charlatan. Accustomed to independence, Sokolov quit Riabushinsky’s employment when his friend, the artistic editor Nikolai Tarovaty, died in office, and went on to found his own, rival journal *Pereval*, for ‘the unification of free art and free society’.⁶ *Pereval* lasted but one year – 1907 – ridiculed and undermined by its own contributors, above all by Hippisus and Bely in *Vesy*. Briusov, particularly after hearing of Sokolov’s defection, made tentative efforts to draw *Zolotoe Runo* into his own sphere of influence, but soon he, too, clashed with Riabushinsky and seceded from his counsels; Bely quarrelled violently with him; and in solidarity with

Bely Briusov succeeded in engineering a public declaration from the Merezhkovskys and Sologub that they, also, would disdain to contribute to Riabushinsky's journal: a promise that was later broken – albeit on their own terms.

Sokolov was nominally succeeded as editor by Aleksandr Kursinsky, but the lion's share of work on the journal was done by the secretary, Genrikh Tasteven. Tasteven helped to compensate for Briusov's boycott by enlisting contributions from Viacheslav Ivanov, who, nevertheless, avoided associating himself too closely with *Runo*, and from Blok, who was happy to accept an offer to write a regular survey of the cultural scene – to the intense indignation of Andrei Bely, who had just, to his own considerable financial detriment, refused a similar offer. Tasteven also kept up a regular correspondence with Chulkov, whose 'mystic anarchism' was at the vortex of Symbolist polemics, imploring him not to reply in kind to fusillade after fusillade of criticism from *Vesy*, for the wise secretary of *Zolotoe Runo* had the good sense to perceive that all this was froth on the surface of a still fundamentally homogeneous artistic grouping.⁷

In spite of its lack of editorial direction, *Runo* did carry an important part of the long Symbolist debate on individualism and community, the need for Symbolism to join the mainstream of Russian art. It also, largely by the forceful impact of its magnificent reproductions and its choice of fiction and poetry, tinged the atmosphere of the time with a peculiar demonic half-light.⁸

This atmosphere was intensified by the lurid eroticism which became positively fashionable in the wake of the 1905 concessions on censorship. Its chief exponent was the sensational writer Mikhail Petrovich Artsybashev, whose novel *Sanin* was published by Skorpion and widely read and discussed. Established Symbolists tended to see the success of Artsybashev's crude vitalism and explicit advocacy of sexual emancipation as a vulgar anomaly, but they too pursued their interest in erotic themes far beyond what would formerly have been considered permissible, often beyond the bounds of elementary good taste. Ivanov and Briusov put aside their differences to publish poems side by side in *Vesy* which shocked even their fellow-Symbolists, Ivanov delivering himself of the notorious 'Trista tridtsat' tri soblazna ...' ('Three hundred and thirty-three seductions'), and Briusov contributing variations on his usual steamy blend of sado-masochism and blasphemy.⁹ In Briusov's defence of this venture there was an element of schoolboy bravado. In the air of the time, however, there was a whiff of brimstone.

The subject of Briusov's first novel, *Ognennyi angel* (The Fiery Angel),

which appeared in *Vesy* beginning in No.1, 1907, is black magic and the occult, although the clear prose, stylised in the manner of a sixteenth-century German romance, has a surprisingly sober ring.¹⁰ The hero and first-person narrator, Ruprecht, a mercenary soldier who, like Briusov, is an intelligent sceptic prone to smouldering jealousy of those more favoured by birth or inspiration, falls in love with the unhappy Renata, who has been rejected by her brilliant and noble lover Count Heinrich. Ruprecht helps Renata in the practice of the black arts, by which she hopes to recapture the heartless Heinrich, and, when she is at last taken by the Inquisition, arranges her escape. She, however, rejects him as Gretchen rejected Faust, electing to die faithful to her angelic visions, and Ruprecht, after a kind of reconciliation – at least on the intellectual plane – with Count Heinrich, sets forth to conquer new worlds in the recently discovered Americas. That Briusov was here sacrificing life upon the altar of art according to his own prescription did not serve so much to enrich the novel as to sap the human content from his relationship with Bely and Nina Petrovskaia, the prototypes of the Count and Renata, perhaps because the ending is disingenuous and stems from Goethe, not from the distressful parting between the real-life lovers, at which, it seems, no rescue was offered.

Briusov himself maintained that the novel was at least as good as Merezhkovsky's historical trilogy. It is better structured; the period detail is as thoroughly researched and not allowed to deluge the plot; but it lacks the quality which makes Merezhkovsky's trilogy – for all its manifest faults – a milestone in the development of Russian literature: the quality of intellectual passion, the excitement of passing modern ideas through the test-tubes of history, the genuine uncertainty as to how it will all work out.¹¹

A more convincing way forward for Symbolist prose was shown by Sologub in his *Melkii bes* (The Petty Demon), which began publication in 1905 in *Voprosy Zhizni* but came out in book form in 1907. Without betraying the Symbolist canon or the world of his poetry, Sologub had produced so vivid a picture of a provincial town and its inhabitants that, as with Gogol's *The Government Inspector*, people accepted it for real, and many read the ex-schoolmaster's subjective fantasy as an indictment of the cruelty, cupidity and mindless obscurantism of the educational system. It was as if Sologub had taken a direction, already pointed out as desirable by Bely, Briusov and Ivanov, 'to learn of Chekhov rather than Maeterlinck and return to the chaste refreshing sources of the everyday', to 'details through which, it seems, nothing could be glimpsed, but through which we glimpse so much'.¹² In *Melkii bes* one can smell the flowers and feel the blowing dust of the summery small town where the

protagonist, Peredonov lives, schemes for promotion and looks for a 'fat little' bride. The skinny Varvara, Peredonov's mistress, the sheep-like Volodin with his protuberant eyes and baaing laugh, the lively, giggling Rutilov sisters and the charming schoolboy Sasha all seem, on first reading, perfectly believable characters. On another plane, however, they are projections of Peredonov's madness, no less than is the Nedotykomka, the grey, dusty, clinging little creature who so stubbornly refuses to be exorcised from Sologub's poetry, from Peredonov's mind.¹³ The climactic scene of the masquerade, where Peredonov is the only person in ordinary dress, shows them up for what they are – or for what they are to him: inhuman, hostile masks. The story ends in violence as the demented hero slaughters Volodin and sets fire to the town hall. Ambiguously, the boy Sasha, a youth on the brink of corruption, escapes – for the moment – with the help of an actor, a master of make-believe like Sologub himself.

Melkii bes, the only full-length work in which Sologub found a balance between obsessive dream and perceived daytime reality, enjoyed immediate success among the wider reading public, by whom it was hailed as a return to realism and social concern. What the novel in fact demonstrated was rather the old truth that 'the moment of realism is always present in symbolism' and that the more subtly observant is the Symbolist's concentration on reality, the more pellucid is the 'transparency' of his works.¹⁴ For Peredonov is, as the title of the novel suggests, an archetypal character, the ultimate projection and degradation of the high Romantic image of the Demon as Fallen Angel, and the place of his habitation is Hell itself, full of torment, fear, evil smells, horrible compulsions and ultimate loneliness.

Remizov, too, in the novel *Prud* (The Pond) like *Melkii bes* first published in *Voprosy Zhizni*, offers an infernal view of the world, also involving adolescents, in which the most terrible events, quite irreconcilable, it would seem, with belief in heavenly Justice, invariably occur on high days and holy days . . . In this novel, as in the curiously wrought story 'Chasy' (The clocks), in which a monstrously deformed boy – a watchmaker's apprentice – stops the tower clock to avenge himself on the citizens who have made him an outcast, Remizov was moving slowly from the conventional old-style Symbolism he had absorbed from reading and by association towards the unique patchwork of dream, legend and quirky domestic detail which came to be known as neo-realism or ornamental prose. This process can be seen most clearly in the later reworkings of *Prud* and 'Chasy',¹⁵ but was already inherent in them, as was the author's outsider's view of the world. Remizov had the true Symbolist eye in that he saw and depicted – in his writing as in his drawing – not objects but 'ex-objects', the terrible and comic 'emanations' of actual things. Blok

felt this, writing to Remizov in the summer of 1905 that there was something terrifying crawling out of his *Prud*. Unlike Sologub's novel, however, Remizov's early works had little immediate success.

Perhaps he had not yet gone far enough down the road back from the general to the particular. Now, whereas, at the beginning of Russian Symbolism the down-to-earth Briusov had sought ways of de-materialising his poetry, the essentially aerial, impressionistic Blok and Bely were struggling to reassert their grip on matter, even if only, as Blok put it, 'so that stupid, dull, senseless matter is lured on, begins to gain confidence, starts to make advances in its turn; and THIS is when "the hour of the mystery should strike"'.¹⁶

In the spring of 1906, Blok, having completed his first lyrical drama *Balaganchik*, and thereby set a sparkling tinsel question mark over his poetical cult of the Most Beautiful Lady, wrote the poem 'Neznakomka' (The stranger), which made his name as 'the first poet in Russia' amongst the habitués of the Tower. Here the poet at last succeeded in introducing his contemporaries to his 'own fairest dream' but, in the process, lost the dream, and was left with something else: the Stranger herself, a figment of the imagination, a succuba, 'a dead doll with a face dimly reminiscent of that once glimpsed amongst the heavenly roses'.¹⁷

The setting of the poem is as 'real' as that of Sologub's *Melkii bes*: a lakeside suburban resort, where, sitting in the smoky station buffet, the poet gazes drearily at his own reflection in the purplish-red depths of his wine. To obtain the desired effect, the appearance of the Stranger, the wine had to have this tinge of Vrubel's 'lilac worlds' which had dominated Blok's poetry since the previous autumn, since the long dream-poem *Nochnaia fialka* (The Night Violet), but which, after 1910, he exorcised from his palette completely. Bely had warned Blok at the time that this colour, though the 'acme of subtlety', was void of Christ's indwelling presence, 'the Countenance', to which Blok had replied, 'That is as it should be.'¹⁸ Around the Stranger all the former positive symbols are subverted: the spring is sick; the moon leers senselessly; the child cries; the gleam of gold turns out to be nothing but the croissant on a baker's sign. Yet the powerful spell cast by the music of the poem, its alliteration, assonance and rhythm, created the illusion of a genuine visitation from some half-remembered world of dream or myth:

И каждый вечер, в час назначенный
(Иль это только снится мне?)
Девичий стан, шелками схваченный,
В туманном движется окне.

И медленно, пройдя меж пьяными,
Всегда без спутников, одна,

Дыша духами и туманами,
Она садится у окна.

И веют древними поверьями
Ее уругие шелка . . .*

'You are right, drunken monster', the poem ends in an ironic reprise of the clichés heard from the neighbouring tables before the girl's appearance. 'I know: in vino veritas!' The bathos leaves no doubt that the prospect beyond Blok's swirling 'lilac mists' was bleak indeed: 'In the first circle of Dante's hell', he wrote, 'there is no pain, but only depression [. . .] and Dante's depression is full of light "the air is still and silent" – what could be more terrible for us?'¹⁹

In the autumn of 1906, Blok sought a way out of this terrifying stillness and silence through the theatre. After *Balaganchik*, he made a lyrical drama from the poem, *Neznakomka*, where the theme of the 'incarnation' of the Prekrasnaiia Dama is re-enacted and again subverted by new dramatis personae: the Poet, the Astrologer and Mariia – a fallen star. On one plane, these characters again represent Blok, the passive dreamer, Bely, whose passion for rationalisation involves him in precipitate and abortive action, and Liubov' ('Columbine, my fiancée'), who is simply looking for love and does not find it, despite the efforts of both the main characters and the host of minor doubles: the mystics, the masks, the well-meaning Author or the lascivious gentleman who – unlike the poet – is all too keen 'to love and caress' her.²⁰ As with all lyrical drama, however, these plays are solipsistic, enclosed in the self. Blok is both Pierrot and Harlequin, Poet and Astrologer. Columbine and the fallen star-girl are reflections in *his* mind of the ideal, the Most Beautiful Lady, and, as reflections, elusive. In a sense, the lyrical plays suggest the old romantic horror theme of the hall of mirrors from which there is no way out, yet *Neznakomka*, which Blok read out to an 'unconverted' university audience in February 1907, has been described as the first victory of the new poetry 'over the lethargic element of the crowd' ('nad kosnoi stikhiei tolpy').²¹ Blok's third play, written in the autumn of 1906, *Korol' na ploshchadi* (The King in the Square), was less successful, perhaps because it did not, like the other lyric dramas, grow from the seed of a single lyric poem.

Korol' na ploshchadi is Blok's first attempt at a social drama with mystical overtones. People wait in a doom-ridden city full of rumours

* 'And every evening, at the appointed time / Or is it just a dream I dream? / A girl's form, moulded in silks, / Moves in the misty window. // And slowly, making her way between the drunks, / Always without escort, alone, / Breathing perfume and mist, / She sits down at the window. / And ancient superstitions hover / about her supple silks . . .'

(pleasingly personified as little boys in red darting through the crowd) for the collapse of the King and the coming of the Great Ships. Although Blok later described the play as 'Petersburg mysticism',²² the sense of place is not strong and the play lacks the touchstone of particularity.

Korol' na ploshchadi was banned for the stage as subversive, *Neznakomka* as blasphemous. *Balaganchik*, however, was staged that winter, as intended, by Vsevolod Meierkhol'd, though not in his own theatre, but in that of Fedor and Vera Kommissarzhevsky. Kommissarzhevskaja, an actress of great repute, had gathered about her a young company, some of whom had previously worked with Meierkhol'd on tour, with intent to master the art of staging Symbolist drama. Meierkhol'd wanted rhythmic patterns in dialogue and choreography against stylised, non-naturalistic backgrounds and Kommissarzhevskaja worked from the simpler premiss that, in order to speak and move as modern drama required, her actors must first steep themselves in modern art. She arranged soirées where they could meet the designers, musicians, writers and poets also involved in the productions. In a long candle-lit room, the walls draped by the artist Nikolai Saponov with cobwebs of pale-blue netting, 'vibrant and solemn as before a first-night performance', the frail actress with the great eyes and musical voice bade poets, artists and musicians welcome.²³

There were three such gatherings in October 1906, before the season opened on 10 November with Kommissarzhevskaja in the title role of *Hedda Gabler*. Most of those invited were also frequenters of Ivanov's Tower. At one reception, Mikhail Alekseevich Kuzmin, a distant relative of Ivanov, a subtle writer and near-professional musician, sang his 'Aleksandriiskie pesni' (Alexandrine Songs) to his own music. Saponov was to do the decor for Blok's *Balaganchik*, though Kuzmin, who wrote the enchanting music, would have preferred another artist, Sergei Sudeikin, with whom he was in love. Indeed, everyone at these gatherings was – in an ephemeral kind of way – a little in love with someone else and it is not surprising that the boundaries between life and the stage were soon blurred. 'We were all very young, all aflame with the love of our art: poetry, the theatre, painting [. . .] It was this which made our meetings so vivid, light and beautiful', recalled the actress Natalia Volokhova who was to become for Blok, post factum as it were, the embodiment of his 'Neznakomka' and the inspiration of a whole volume of poetry and – as 'Faina, the gypsy singer' – of one more play: *Pesnia sud'by* (The Song of Fate).²⁴

Viacheslav Ivanov was deeply moved when the actresses, in chorus, gave a breath-taking torchlight rendering of his Dionysian 'Dithyrambs', the rhythms of which were to echo in the minds of all who heard them that night as the underlying, ecstatic beat of the next few years. Sologub read

his play *Dar mudrykh pchel* (The Gift of the Wise Bees) and Blok, that first evening, read *Korol' na ploshchadi*. On another occasion, he recited poetry and, in his poem 'V goluboi dalekoi spalen'ke' (In the pale-blue, far-off night nursery), gave the troupe an object lesson in Symbolist open-endedness: 'Did the child die, or was he just asleep?' . . . the young actresses clamoured, to which the poet answered: 'I don't know.'²⁵

The staging of *Balaganchik* on 30 December 1906 was a *succès de scandale* to which the thunderous applause of the friends of the new art and the whistles and catcalls of its enemies bore eloquent witness. Apart from Kommissarzhevskia, who did not appear in Blok's drama, and Meierkhol'd himself, who not only directed but played Pierrot, there was perhaps more enthusiasm and grace than talent among the company. Blok, though, was enchanted. He was in the midst of a creative crisis and now, swept off his feet by the glamour of the theatre and the triumphant beauty of Nataliia Volokhova, he found new creative vitality by plunging his own life into an ongoing theatrical experiment. 'I have been dissatisfied with my poems since the spring . . .', he had written in his diary on 21 December, nine days before the première of his play. 'But perhaps this new, fresh cycle will come soon and Aleksandr Blok – to Dionysos!'²⁶

The new cycle, *Snezhnaia maska* (The Snow-mask), consisted of thirty poems written over a fortnight, sometimes at the rate of six a day. The poems, with their irregular, tattered lines, and dramatic spondees, constitute the high point of Blok's verbal magic. The poet achieves extraordinary changes of tempo: 'Temnye dali / I blistatel'nyi beg sanei' ('Dark distances / And glittering running of sleighs') . . . His strange alliterations and assonances sometimes take the form of internal rhymes: 'Zov zakovannyi'; 'i vdali v volnakh, vdali . . . / na pribrezhnom, snezhnom pole'; 'Veter zval i gnal pogon'ia / Chernykh masok ne dognal . . . ('Fettered summons'; 'And far away, in the waves, far away . . . / on the snowfield, by the shore'; 'The wind called and gave pursuit / Did not catch up with the black masks . . .'). All-pervading and profoundly dissonant is the device of oxymoron ('svetit mglā'; 'ogon' zimy paliashchei'; 'steny vozdukhā'; 'ognedyshashchaia mglā') ('darkness shines'; 'the fire of scorching winter'; 'walls of air'; 'fire-breathing dark').

The poems also mark the moment of maximum velocity in the trajectory of his 'descent'. 'Taino serdtse prosit gibeli. / Serdtse legkoe, skol'zi . . .' ('Secretly the heart asks for perdition. / Slide, light heart') he says in one poem; in the next 'Net iskhoda iz v'iug, / I pogibnut' mne veselo' ('There is no way out of the snowstorms, / And it is merry for me to perish'); and, in the next: 'Ia vsekhn zabyi, kogo liubil, Ia serdtse v'iugoi zakrutil, / Ia brosil serdtse s belykh gor, / Ono lezhit na dne!' ('I have

forgotten all those I loved, / I have set my heart spinning in the blizzard, / I have thrown down my heart from the white mountains, / It is lying at their feet!').

The heroine of the poems has certain characteristics: 'winged eyes', a 'narrow hand', 'serpentine hair' but she is, most often, 'inevitable' ('neizbezhnaia'). She is the poet's fate, his doom, but a doom he has brought down on himself. 'Ты – stikhov moikh plennaia viaz' ('You are the captive weave of my verse'). In these winter poems, all thought of spring and regeneration is rejected – again and again:

Но посмотри, как сердце радо!
Заграждена снегами твердь.
Весны не будет, и не надо:
Крещеньем третьим будет — смерть*

More decisively than in the poem 'Neznakomka', the old symbols are rejected: unwanted ships, lost sword and unheeded horns (all the old emblems of hope and struggle). Even 'the outlines of the beautiful country' are forgotten, even the stars are black: 'I op'iat' gliaditsia smert' / S bezzakatnykh zvezd' ('And again death looks / From the unsinking stars'). The end of this cycle is self-immolation: 'Ia sam idu na tvoi koster! / Szhigai menia' ('I will mount your pyre of my own will! / Consume me with fire') and, in the last poem, the snowy bonfire blazes up around the hero and all ends in a Wagnerian *Liebestod*: 'Veisia, legkii, veisia, plamen' / Uvivaisia vkrug kresta!' ('Waft, waft, light flame / Coil around the cross!')²⁷

No sooner was *Snezhnaia Maska* completed than it was published as a small, separate book by Viacheslav Ivanov, who thus stood godfather to the cycle in more ways than one. Lidiia Zinov'eva-Annibal wrote to her daughter Vera, 'Blok has become very close to us (and it is this cycle of his, you know, *Snezhnaia maska*, which is in the press for Oraea just now). This friendship is a deep and great joy for us, because he is a man of stature and terribly stern and so a solitary.' Blok, for his part, wrote on the copy of his second book *Nechaiannaia radost'*, which he presented to the Ivanovs that same winter: 'To Viacheslav Ivanovovich Ivanov and Lidiia Dmitrievna Zinov'eva-Annibal, beloved, close and necessary, who opened up to me the snowy, joyous way'. For Ivanov *The Snow Mask* was 'the apogee of our poetry's rapprochement with the element of music' which revealed Blok 'as a poet of truly Dionysian and demonic, profoundly occult experience . . .'²⁸

Ivanov's publishing venture 'Oraea' was shortlived because, unlike

* 'But see how glad the heart is! / The firmament is blocked off by snow. / There will be no Spring, nor is one needed: / The third baptism will be – death.'

Skorpion, it had little or no financial backing beyond that which could be afforded by the Ivanovs themselves. Apart from *Snezhnaia maska* it published in that same year of 1907 Chulkov's collection *Taiga*, Zinov'eva-Annibal's *Tragicheskii Zverinets* and *Tridtsat' tri uroda*, Ivanov's own *Eros*, and the collection *Perun* by the young poet Sergei Gorodetsky.

The publication of Gorodetsky, who is also the addressee of *Eros*, was the outcome of Ivanov's own attempt to plunge once more into the inferno of all-consuming passion in which he had once found self-renewal, to attempt once again the 'way of descent' in order 'to will from self another self'.²⁹ He and Zinov'eva-Annibal, like most highly-strung people in 1906, were suffering from post-revolutionary nervous exhaustion. She, particularly, had invested tremendous energy in making her husband's home the centre of Petersburg creative life over a period of great trouble and great expectation. Love remained, but the sources of passion and therewith, according to their creed, the sources of inspiration were running low and, instead of accepting that they were of a different generation from the brilliant youth by whom they were now surrounded, they conceived what in retrospect seems the totally crackpot idea of opening up their marriage to a third person and thus extending the longed-for but illusive quality of 'sobornost'' to the intimacy of their private lives. Any triangle would have to have involved an element of homosexuality. Lidiia, it seems, was looking for a woman, but Ivanov, spurred on by Kuzmin, Somov and other members of an informal group who had chosen to call themselves after the Persian poet Hafiz persuaded himself into an unreciprocated passion for Sergei Gorodetsky, to whom he was teaching Greek.

Gorodetsky, described by a fellow poet as 'an impetuous and strong nature, completely fitted for the heroic twentieth century',³⁰ was a most unsuitable object. A younger friend of Blok's from university days, tall, lankhaired and chinless with a 'merry lisp', he was an extrovert member of the group of poets and artists centred around Kommissarzhevskaiia's theatre. Though born and bred in St Petersburg, he was a lover of the Russian countryside, interested, like many of his contemporaries, in the still-living folklore of the remoter districts: particularly the pagan survivals. Under Ivanov's influence, Gorodetsky learnt to use ancient verse forms to give new life to this subject matter and gained confidence in the contemporary meaningfulness of the Slavonic, Russian and Finnish legends which seem, in his best poetry, to give voice to rock, tree and water. His first book, *Iar* (Spring Corn, 1907), redolent of the scent of pine forests and the heady freshness of spring, came out to universal acclaim and was never equalled, never mind surpassed, by anything he later wrote.

For Ivanov, Gorodetsky's colourful neo-paganism represented the youth of Russia itself, and the angry undertones of his Petersburg poetry, the motif of solidarity with the poor and disinherited, seemed a part of the Russian tradition of compassion and coinherence that the older poet wished to include in his own world on the way from 'isolation to sobornost'.³¹

Their 'romance', however, was brief; spoilt, indeed, by Ivanov's determined invocation of Eros, which scared and probably repulsed the younger man who, though he shared the light-hearted amorality of his mutually enamoured circle, preferred the opposite sex. Although Briusov, inveterate devil's advocate, declared that in *Eros* Ivanov's poetry had attained new heights, the theme of sexuality – even in his love-poems to Lidia – was not suited to his muse and the imagery is heavy, over-ornate, stifling . . . Possibly the best poem was the last – one of renunciation, in which Ivanov, 'nishch i svetel' ('poverty-stricken and radiant'), proceeds on his way along the path he trod with such supreme assurance, the path of the itinerant, Platonic teacher:

И не знал я: потерял иль раздарил?
Словно клад свой в мире светлом растворил, —
Растворил свою жемчужину любви . . .
На меня посмейтесь, дальние мои!
Нищ и светел, прохожу я и пою, —
Отдаю вам светлость щедрую мою.*³²

The dissolved pearl of love was to prove the *leitmotiv* or key-symbol of the next cycle, a play on the name of its dedicatee, the artist Margarita Sabashnikova, the ethereal wife of Max Voloshin. But Ivanov's infatuation with Margarita, a gentle adept of theosophy who later confessed to feeling like a 'hare in the den of two lions', did not outlive Lidia.³³

As Bely was crying out in *Vesy*, there could be no true *sobornost'* except between 'people', but now writers who used to be people had 'put all of themselves into their books, had been devoured by literature',³⁴ immolating themselves as sacrifices to false gods and imaginary passions. Lidia was a 'person' and she had burnt indeed. A serious bout of pneumonia which kept her in hospital for several weeks in the spring of 1907 led the family to seek rest and country air on the estate of a relative in the depths of the country, 'Zagor'e'. Lidia was moody and subdued throughout the summer, riding far afield, talking wildly of following the pilgrims out

* 'And I did not know whether I had lost or given away; / I dissolved my treasure in the luminous world, -- / I dissolved my pearl of love . . . / Laugh at me, my distant ones // Poor and radiant, I pass by and I sing, -- / All my generous light I give to you.'

along the autumnal roads, yet painfully aware that this would not do for the sedentary, delicate Viacheslav. Quite suddenly, as the autumn closed in, the opportunity presented itself to make the real sacrifice, without gestures, without premeditation. There was an outbreak of scarlet fever in the villages round about and Lidiia, as a natural reflex of her kind heart and country-house training, threw herself into helping care for the sick children, caught the fever and died. Quietly, Ivanov accepted that they were people, not gods or phoenixes to be consumed again and again only to emerge renewed: that love, like everything in nature, changes and runs its course:

Моя любовь — осенний небосвод
 Над радостью отпразднованной пира.
 Гляди: в краях глубокого потира
 Закатных зорь смешился желтый мед

И тусклый мак, что в пажитях эфира
 Расцвел луной. И благодать темных вод
 Творит вино божественных свобод
 Причастием на повечерьи мира ...*³⁵

Bely who, on his failure to secure the affections of Liubov', had left Russia in the autumn of 1906, fallen ill in Paris on New Year's Eve and been taken into the Merezhkovskys' flat and nursed back to health by Zinaida Hippus, was well informed of the scandals around Kommissar-zhevskaiia's theatre and the Tower. In 'Khudozhnik kritikam' (The artist to the critics) in the first number of *Vesy* for 1907, he struck out with the virulence of a Savorola against the 'liberals, bourgeois, aesthetes, Kadets, whores and debauchees, idle men and women, half-hearted, inefficient cynics and Maecenae, blood-suckers, self-loving and self-indulgent orgiasts, pederasts, sadists and wot-not ...' whom he now perceived to be dominating Russian literature. That Briusov, who published the letter, was indifferent to the moral implications of Bely's diatribe, is clear from the fact that his and Ivanov's erotic verses appeared under the same cover and that the last two numbers of *Vesy* for 1906 were given over to the first overtly homosexual novella to be published in Russia: Kuzmin's *Krylia*.³⁶ His interest was to keep Bely and the Merezhkovskys from making common cause with his rivals and he positively encouraged an abusive and often impermissibly personal campaign against the 'mystic anarchists' – while privately preserving amicable

* 'My love is an autumn sky / Over the joy of a feast now fully celebrated. / Look: around the edges of the deep chalice / There is an admixture of the golden honey of sunset / And the dim poppy in the pastures of the sky / Has bloomed as moon. And the blessed goodness of the dark waters / Prepares the wine of divine freedoms / For Communion at the evening vigil of the world ...'

relations with Sologub and Ivanov and even confiding to Chulkov in a private letter that he felt Symbolism as a new truth had run its course. The crusade in *Vesy*, then, although apparently launched on ethical, aesthetic and ideological grounds, was in fact aimed primarily against the move away from exclusive individualism towards the blurring of boundaries between Symbolism and Realism in Fakely and Shipovnik.

In the 1906–7 season Meierkhol'd's production of Andreev's *Life of a Man* outshone even Stanislavsky's staging of the same play. Blok, enchanted, watched every performance from the wings. Chulkov, Meierkhol'd, Andreev, Blok and Sologub transformed the theatrical alliance mooted at the Tower into a close creative relationship and they were much in each other's company. Andreev even tried to persuade Gor'ky to invite Blok and Sologub to join *Znanie* – and resigned when Gor'ky refused. Blok's review article 'O realistakh' for *Zolotoe Runo*, which considered *Znanie* authors with some sympathy and included a discussion of Sologub's *Melkii bes*, read – to the deeply resentful and jealous Bely – like 'an application'. Nervous exhaustion (caused by his disillusionment with *Liubov'* and his recent illness no less than by the erosion of his hope in Symbolist brotherhood and in Symbolism as an agent for the transfiguration of culture) reduced him to a state of extreme, hysterical irritability. On 5 August he quarrelled with Riabushinsky and broke with *Zolotoe Runo*. Three days later, he wrote an offensive letter to Blok, accusing him of 'strike-breaking' in *Zolotoe Runo* and of currying favour with *Znanie*. He also pointed out that, in E. Semenov's 'Lettres russes. Le Mysticisme anarchique' (*Mercur de France*, No. 242, for 8 July, 1907) on the alleged break-up of the Symbolist movement, Blok, Chulkov, Gorodetsky and Viacheslav Ivanov were bracketed together as 'Mystic Anarchists' whereas Briusov, Bely, and the Merezhkovskys were put into other categories. The first two shafts struck home: Blok considered Bely's insinuations impugned his honour and called him out. As before, physical violence was averted. Bely withdrew the accusations and Blok addressed himself to the matter of Semenov's article and agreed that it was time to make a public statement defining his own position. He chose to do this in *Vesy* in order to emphasise the debt he still felt he owed to Briusov and the Merezhkovskys, *Vesy* and *Novy Put'*, and his continued spiritual affinity (in spite of their troubled personal relationship) with Bely. To Briusov's delight, Bely was thus able to deliver a letter from Blok, published in *Vesy* No. 8 disassociating himself from Semenov's categorisation: 'I consider it my duty to state that, highly as I value the work of Viacheslav Ivanov and Sergei Gorodetsky, with whom I have landed up in the same cage, I have never had and do not have anything in common with "Mystic Anarchism", to which my poems and prose bear witness.'³⁷ Blok did not

mention 'poor Chulkov' whom, he felt, had come in for more than his fare share of personal abuse. Neither did he stop writing for *Zolotoe Runo*. Still, the uneasy reconciliation with Bely (which lasted until April 1908 when the publication of the Fourth Symphony *Kubok Metelei* (The Cup of Blizzards)³⁸ opened up all the old wounds), together with the break-up of the Meierkhol'd-Kommissarzhevskaja alliance and the departure of Liubov' and Volokhova on tour with Meierkhol'd at the end of the 1907-8 winter season, forced Blok to reconsider his position in art. As the 'lilac mists' of revolution and Dionysan exaltation began to disperse, the long talks with Bely reminded him once again of the heights from which he had plunged down and – sick at heart, angry and desolate – he embarked uncertainly on the long ascent towards a more sober, objective poetry: not a confused merging with realism, but a new art, mindful of its origin yet, at the same time, firmly rooted in contemporaneity. Bely, for his part, visiting the Bloks in St Petersburg in the autumn of 1907, saw for himself that, however much he might deplore their 'play-acting', the picture of debauch and degradation that he had formed in his own mind was merely another 'chimera'. The reconciliation also had the effect of prising him away from the exclusive influence of Briusov and he began to contribute to Gershenson's neutral *Kriticheskoe obozrenie* and even – to Briusov's fury – broke his own boycott of *Zolotoe Runo* with a cycle of poems in No.3-4, 1908 and, in August 1908, arranged to publish *Pepel'*, his next collection of poetry dedicated to the memory of Nekrasov, with Shipovnik. True, he did not recover psychic equilibrium or creative form until 1909 and continued to write virulent criticism, but for him, too, the pilgrimage through Hell was beginning to lead on and out into a kind of purgatory.

Much had been lost by all concerned and the road back to life and reality was a long one. Viacheslav Ivanov, on his return to St Petersburg, continued like an automaton to keep open house at the Tower, and the conversation continued to circle around the theatre, *sobornost'*, Eros, Dionysos, crucifixion and resurrection while outside life in Russia was 'hard, cold and foul . . .'³⁹ Sologub, intrigued by the vogue for the theatre, began to move away from the mystic realism of *Melkii bes*, theorising about 'The Theatre of the Single Will' and writing his own lyric plays, cruel fairy-tales which never achieve the sense of irony, shifting dimensions and all-pervading anachronism of true Symbolist drama.⁴⁰ A special theatre for the revival of medieval and popular street drama appeared in Petersburg, anticipating Hofmannsthal's exploration of the same sources in Austria, though it produced no original plays. Remizov composed for it a stylised folk drama *Besovskoe deistvie* (A Play of Devils) and edited the *Tsar Maksimilian* which had so moved Briusov when acted by the

workers at Poliakov's factory; Blok translated Rutebeuf's mystery *Le Miracle de Théophile*.

The theatre was endlessly discussed, far from the actual stage, in the Symbolist periodicals and in the salons of Ivanov and Sologub. Bely's critique in the article 'Teatr i sovremennaiia drama' (The theatre and contemporary drama) was apt, but destructive. Ivanov's theory of a 'liturgical' theatre as a collective form, a potential 'mystery' in which audience and actors would co-operate, Bely had dismissed almost as soon as it was expressed on the grounds that, if theatre attempted to replace liturgy, it would overstretch itself and cease to be art. If the artist really succeeded in creating a 'mysterium' he would 'transfigure' his world, something would actually change (an idea Bely shared with the composer Skriabin). But this would not happen in a society not united by a 'single' world view. In the circumstances of disintegration at present obtaining in Russia, Bely insisted, all that was being achieved was a treacly mixture of socialism and individualism, play with synaesthesia right down to 'smell-effects', and the 'goat-dance', the *kozlovak*, a barbaric, lascivious capering over the shards of civilisation. Blok's 'lyrical dramas', published in Spring 1908, struck him as 'a piecing together of the broken bits of a once whole reality [...] an accumulation of the primitive associations of a soul which has renounced will and laid down its arms before the face of fate.'⁴¹ What both Bely and his friends and allies of the moment, the Merezhkovskys, did not yet understand was that the shattered 'reality' could not be put together by 'will'. Disintegration had crept up on the Symbolists, as upon the nation itself, from within – unexpectedly, bewilderingly. 'If the revolution we are experiencing is a true revolution', wrote Ivanov, 'it is taking place not only on the surface of life but in the most profound depths of the psyche [...] And so it is that true talent at such times cannot help but serve revolution, even when it seems to others and even to itself to oppose it.'⁴²

In spite of their bitter theoretical and personal feuds over the post-revolutionary years, the Symbolists had gained in popularity and influence precisely because the 'poisons' of their art were beginning to work through Russian society: they had prepared people for and to some extent now held up a mirror to destabilisation.⁴³ Their preoccupation with Hell and the Devil, the dark forces of chaos, blind chance and non-being, was a part of a wider moral turmoil. All the old notions of good and bad had to be tested and it seemed to the artists that their task was to rediscover, through trial and error, 'where Heaven watches over us, where hell'.⁴⁴ Although their 'pilgrimage through hell', Blok's perhaps most especially, was to appear to many more like a stroll through the Garden of Delights, it was, as Blok insisted in *The Snow Mask* and elsewhere – 'inevitable'. For those who had experienced the Symbolist 'dawns', the millennial

expectations of the turn of the century and the upheavals of the revolution, there could be no return to security, to collaboration with the elaborate pattern of moral compromise which is the *sine qua non* of a stable society. As Shestov says of the sphere of tragedy: 'A person who has spent time there begins to think, feel and wish differently. Everything that people hold near and dear becomes unnecessary, and alien to him.'⁴⁵

The condition of Hell is isolation. As the poets began to emerge, each from his own private inferno, they remembered what they had in common: the Orphic power of 'music'. Viacheslav Ivanov, writing in 1907, reminded them of this. The most important service that decadence, as the art of the intimate, has rendered to poetry, he said, was the accomplishment of the apparently simple, but in fact extremely complex and delicate task of separating 'poésie' from 'littérature', of leading it 'out of the confines of purely verbal logic into the round-dance of the arts: music, painting, sculpture, dance'. As Shestov had discovered before him, the modern thinker's task was to accustom people 'to live in a state of uncertainty'. For this, Shestov had written, also invoking Verlaine, 'we do not, unfortunately, need ideas any more: "de la musique avant toute chose – et tout la reste est littérature"'.⁴⁶

It was by recalling their vocation for 'music' in this sense that the Symbolists gradually began to shake off the play-acting, the confusion of art and life, and the aestheticisation of suffering which had begun to sap their creative vitality. At the same time, they began to outgrow their own subjectivity and the esotericism of Symbolism as dogma, as a 'school of literature'. One by one, they attempted to shoulder the burdens of their time and nation. The hope of transforming life itself was beginning to fade, replaced by Blok's more modest formulation: the establishment of the 'real connection between the contemporary and that which is outside time'. This he saw as the one achievement which makes the artist 'of any use to anyone at all'.⁴⁷

Part 5

Our home from the beginning

11 'From the real to the more real'

...мера нашей утонченности исполнилась [...] и потому мы *вправе* стать *реалистами* в новом смысле.

Блок Станиславскому, 9 декабря 1908*

Just as the Symbolists had reacted to the Revolutionary turbulence of the years 1904–6 by trying to find adequate expression for it in their works, so now they reacted to the stillness which was settling back over their country – which they felt to be no more than a lull – by an attempt to leaven that stillness with recall and foreboding. This involved a sharp-focus selective observation and depiction of foreground detail which is neither the static word-painting of the Parnassians nor the causal, all-round view of man in society associated with Realism. Although it had much in common with Impressionism, always a component of the art of the period, this new trend differed from nineteenth-century Impressionism by virtue of the conscious, implicit subtext of myth and multiple cultural associations. The Symbolists began to write less of Heaven and Hell, centaurs and Argonauts, earth-spirits and star-maidens, and more of Russia and the Intelligentsia, town and country, politics and industry. The world of their art, though, remained a mobile, shifting world of many dimensions, and the old themes were present in the new, moving the world perceptible to the senses in ways which could not be calculated but only felt and – perhaps – understood. Such understanding required concentration on events, constant work on form, and faith that somewhere, behind the ‘unplanned whirl of chance’, there was – perhaps – a plan.

I

Blok was among the first, in the summer of 1907, to try to lay hold on reality, to depict a society all out to forget the hopes and fears of Revolution . . . as it went to the races, gawped about a corpse hauled from

* ‘. . . The measure of our refinement is full [...] and for this reason we *have the right* to become *realists* in a new sense.’ Blok to Stanislavsky, 9 Dec 1908

the river, set out for the suburbs to chase the girls on a sunny afternoon. He chose blank verse and iambic pentameter to recount the 'Vol'nye mysli' (Free thoughts) such scenes inspired, learning from Pushkin. The police launches, a friend recalls, were plying actively to and fro along the shores of the Gulf of Finland, while the pleasure boats flaunted through the shallows and the poet, joyriding, looked back to the shore to see how

Наставили столов, дымят, жуют,
 Пьют лимонад. Потом бредут по пляжу,
 Угрюмо хохоча и заражая
 Соленый воздух сплетнями...^{*1}

There was a nightmare quality to this 'merry' life, a hidden threat. It was boring and, because of the repressions, hangings and beatings going on behind the scenes to ensure the new-found stability, nasty. For Blok, the 'classic' statement of the period was Sologub's gloomy ballad 'Niurenbergskii palach'' (The Nuremberg Executioner) with its refrain: 'Kto znaet, skol'ko skuki / V iskusstve palacha' ('Who knows what boredom / There is in the art of the executioner!').²

Looking with some distaste at the life he and his fellow-poets were leading in the 'sad quagmire' of St Petersburg, at their debauchery, cynical professionalism and all-pervading ironic laughter, Blok still felt that even such down-at-heel, hung-over ne'er-do-wells were better than 'honest' citizens prepared to accept the apparent reality of the status quo, 'content with themselves and their wives' and the already sadly curtailed liberties granted by the constitution of October 1905.³

In spite of his association with Leonid Andreev and the Znanie authors Blok could find no models amongst 'the Realists' for his own art: 'The instability of literary form is overwhelming', he wrote of them. 'There is no telling the difference between a story, a feuilleton, an article or a proclamation, or even between the old and the young.'⁴

More *art* was to be found in the 'psychological realism' and naturalistic detail of the productions of the Moscow Arts Theatre. Briusov had called their detailed realism 'unnecessary' and Blok too had felt the superiority of Meierkhol'd's invention for Andreev's *Zhizn' cheloveka*. Nevertheless, realistic 'details' seemed to him not 'unnecessary' but helpful, and it was to Stanislavsky that he offered his next play, *Pesnia sud'by* (The Song of Fate) – the first of his works, as he wrote, 'in which I began to feel the ground beneath my feet – not shifting and not only lyrical'. He wanted to reach a wider audience: 'not this blasé public composed of the contemporary intelligentsia but a new audience: alive, demanding and bold. Let us

* 'They set up little tables and puff smoke, / Chew food and sip their lemonade. Then stroll / Along the foreshore, laughing mirthlessly / And poisoning the salty air with gossip.'

be ready to meet this *youth*. It will solve our complications, it will raise the burden from weary shoulders, it will give us wings, or destroy us.'⁵

Though Stanislavsky was enchanted by the poet's reading of *Pesnia sud'by* in May 1908, he later found himself baffled by its elusive, and, for all Blok's efforts, excessively lyrical, 'disembodied' quality, and refused to stage it.⁶ At once autobiographical and allegorical, the play tells how the hero, Germann, (the name, of course, self-consciously 'foreign' and Romantic) deserts his loving mother, his wise young wife and his 'quiet, white house', to discover the soul of Russia, the mysterious Faina. In the Great City, where a World Fair is in progress, Faina appears to him as a gypsy singer who rejects him with contempt, but later, when he meets her in the snow-swept vastness of the steppe, he sees her as a simple Russian girl, a runaway from a strict sectarian community in the depths of the forests. Once again she rejects him, for he has nothing to offer, not even shelter from the elements, and goes off with her 'old lover': a senile representative of wealth and power, the counterpart of Gogol's wicked magician who holds the lovely Pani Katerina in an enchanted sleep. Heartbroken, the poet is left standing alone in the blizzard – until a passing pedlar-man promises to show him the way to the nearest village.

The play is written in poetic prose with a scattering of songs, and the approach of the pedlar is heralded by Nekrasov's 'Korobeiniki'. Blok was haunted by the song at the time, musing on its Russian sadness – 'sobbing out into the autumnal distances' – in the introduction to his third collection of poems, *Zemlia v snegu* (The Earth in Snow), published by *Zolotoe Runo* in July 1908. Viacheslav Ivanov, however, on Blok's sending him the book, wrote with some disapproval:

It seems to me that in your book you have rightly heard (although not quite rightly conveyed) the melody, as it were, of the deep Russian Soul [. . .], of the yearning anguish of the unique, living, feminine soul of our people, our earth. That of course I value very highly; but I would be glad if, in the form of your poetry, you were to overcome the manner and the soi-disant style of our drunken yells and whistles, the peasant's accordion no less than the guitars of the sozzled *Intelligentsia* of the 1840s which you have so unexpectedly resurrected. 'Nekrasovshchina' does not suit you – *tempi passati* . . . I am not sure whether I make myself clear? It seems to me that in your populism there is new wine: why the old bottles?⁷

The word 'Populism' or 'neo-Populism' was being bandied about more than Ivanov liked, to describe not only Blok's but his own attempts to treat contemporary Russian themes and to seek reconciliation with writers of other schools. Objecting to Bely's use of the term in an article entitled 'Simvolizm i russkoe iskusstvo' (Symbolism and Russian art), Ivanov explained that what he had in mind when he spoke of going back

to learn of the earth, the roots of language and the mythological world-view of the people, was a *future* popular art or art of the whole people ('vsenarodnoe iskusstvo'), 'organic' rather than 'critical', 'in no way to be confused with art of the Populist type'.⁸

For Ivanov as for Bely, 1908 was a year of theoretical rather than practical achievement, during which both poets, often stimulated by the ongoing polemic, attempted to formulate what they actually meant by Symbolist art.⁹

In spite of his creative and nervous exhaustion, Bely continued, both on principle and because he could not by nature do otherwise, to live in 'uninterrupted creativity', to struggle to express 'live, experienced life' in his writing and to live creatively, experiencing and recording 'eternity' through a torrent of real 'moments'.¹⁰ The strain was too great and by the end of the year 1908, during which he prepared his two poetry collections *Pepel* and *Urna*, and did a great deal of work on the theory of prosody, he was at breaking point.

Absorbed now in the mathematics of artistic form, Bely still retained enough of Solov'ev's teaching to feel that the task of the artist is to achieve mystical insights, 'experiences' confirming him in his essentially 'theurgic' aspiration to transform the world.¹¹ The word 'theurgic', however, though natural to Ivanov, comes curiously from Bely's pen, for though Christ, with whose sufferings he identifies, Sophia, whom he desires to save or to be saved by, and great and good spiritual leaders are all present in the world of the poet's 'experiences', God, if there at all, is invisible and voiceless. Perhaps this has something to do with Bely's search for his own voice. He thought of himself as a voiceless artist, a stammerer like Moses, whose calling it is to find a new language for the inexpressible. Although neither *Pepel* nor *Urna* has the linguistic freshness of the first three Symphonies or the poetry of *Zoloto v lazure*, Bely was working all the time on this 'new language': in his short poems, his studies of poetry and in the reworking, or 'spoiling' as he afterwards called it, of his fourth Symphony.

Ivanov – who still, throughout 1908, seemed to Bely a hostile figure, a catcher of men and a honey-tongued high-priest of mystic anarchism or, as Bely chose to call it, parodying Ivanov's own high-flown terminology in *Kubok metelei*, 'eroticheskii energetizm' – was in fact too heart-sick and bone weary after Lidia's death to do more than keep the cultural debate gently ticking over. He argued with Bely patiently and painstakingly in print, reaffirming his own Christianity, explaining his Dionysian 'method', writing of rescuing 'the Princess' (as with Blok and Bely, a figure for Russia) from a hideous spell, and of releasing 'deep hidden

reality' from the enchantment which enthralls her as the 'invariable and fundamental motif of male action'.¹² To Blok, the 'profoundly occult experience' of whose poetry now worried him, he wrote privately, in a letter of 12 November 1908 of the danger of 'perceiving and falling passionately in love with the feminine element of the dark Russian Soul and consecrating to it your own masculinity not rendered *suprapersonal* by the light of Christ'.¹³ Blok took this advice in the spirit in which it was offered, in good part, as he had not the more censorious and less tactfully expressed exhortations of Sergei Solov'ev and Andrei Bely in the spring of the year.¹⁴

Uncertain of Stanislavsky's reception of *Pesnia sud'by*, criticised by Ivanov, virtually excommunicated from what remained of the original Brotherhood of Symbolism by Bely and Sergei Solov'ev, Blok found in solitude and the contemplation of the Russian countryside the simplicity and vision for which, through the absurdities of the polemics and the clash of theory, they were all seeking.

Over the early summer of 1908, living alone in his childhood home while Liubov' continued in her tour of the provinces with Meierkhol'd, Blok reworked a theme he had already touched upon in *Pesnia sud'by*, the theme of the battle which had turned the tide in favour of Russia after almost two centuries of subservience to 'the Tartar yoke': the battle of Kulikovo Field. It seemed to him that the event was symbolic and destined to recur in different forms throughout Russian history.

The cycle of poems he grouped under the title *Na pole Kulikovom* (On Kulikovo Field) is for many Russians the most unquestionably acceptable and beloved of all Blok's work. For Bely it stood – together with the article 'On the present state of Russian Symbolism' and the poem 'The Scythians' – as a pledge of undying affinity. It is a poem about watchful passivity, inaction as duty. In *The Song of Fate*, the memory of the old battle wells up unbidden in the mind of the hero: 'I remember the dreadful day [. . .] I remember the smell of burning [. . .] the fresh troops had to sit in ambush all day, permitted only to watch and to weep, impatient for battle [. . .] It is too soon, our time has not yet come . . . I don't know what to do, action is against my duty, my time has not yet come! That is why I don't sleep at night!'¹⁵ This raw hysteria is transformed in the poem into a series of fleeting dreams and visions given coherence by sheer 'music'. The genre is difficult to determine for it falls, as many Symbolist works do, somewhere between the *poema* (the long narrative poem) and the cycle. It consists of five short poems of varying metre, none less than sixteen, none more than thirty-two lines long, the first written on 7 June 1908, the last on 23 December of the same year. The structure is firmer than that of a

normal cycle – more like a five-act tragedy, the climax falling on the third poem, and in this sense it marks the beginning of a return to more classic form which was to be as much a part of the development of the literature of the Silver Age as was the attempt to get to grips with reality. Yet all the action is interior, the warrior never reaches the battle. The end is open – but not amorphous. On the contrary, the poem ends on a summons.

The enchantment is cast from the first lines which conjure up an irresistible vision of flat, empty spaces: ‘Reka raskinulas’. Tchet, grustit lenivo / I moet berega’. Such simple words: ‘The river has spread itself. It flows, mourns lazily / And washes its banks’. No colour, no texture, just a sense of meandering, unhindered movement and the flux of time. But this is immediately reinforced by detail: ‘Nad skudnoi glinoi zheltogo obryva / V stepi grustiat stoga’ (‘Above the bare clay of the steep yellow bank / Haycocks mourn on the steppe’). The scene becomes seasonal, domesticated by the homely haycocks and yellow clay, yet ensouled, anthropomorphised – thanks to the repetition of the verb ‘grustit’ (to mourn, to sorrow).

For Russia as for the poet the road leads straight towards the inevitable battle. The thudding gallop of the horse, the whistling of the wind in the rider’s ears is brought to a halt by the one-stress, one-word line ‘ostanovi’ followed by the threatening repetition of heavy assonance on the long Russian ‘u’: ‘Idut, idut ispugannye tuchi’ (‘They come, they come, the panic-stricken stormclouds’).

In the climactic vision in the third poem of the cycle the lone warrior, beset by omens, the crying of swans, the screaming of eagles, the distant weeping of a woman as she sees her son off to war, is granted a celestial vision:

И с туманом над Непрядвой спящей,
Прямо на меня
Ты сошла, в одежде свет струящей,
Не спугнув коня.*

This quiet personal visitation by the unnamed ‘Ty’ (You) becomes national and traditional as, the next morning, the warrior goes out to meet the advancing hordes, the icon of the Mother of God ‘not made with hands’ brightly shining from his shield.

In the next poem the moment of Grace has passed, the watch is resumed, more terrifying than ever under a waning moon, all ‘thoughts of light burnt up by the dark flame . . .’, the flying mane of the white horse the only faint reminiscence of the glory of Her garments. This is where the

* ‘And with the mist over the sleeping Nepriadva river, / Straight down to me / You descended in garments of flowing light, / Not frightening the horse.’

cycle dried up on the last day of July. The fifth and concluding poem, more objective and sonorous, was written that winter in St Petersburg, and bears an epigraph from Vladimir Solov'ev, suggesting that Blok had found, at the heart of the Symbolist myth, the courage to go on. The epigraph is grim: 'I mgloi u bed neotrazimykh / Griadushchii den' zavoloklo' ('And the coming day is clouded over / By the darkness of inescapable catastrophes'). Here, though, the warrior-poet rises to the challenge, recognising the beginning of 'high and rebellious days':

Не может сердце жить покоем,
Недаром тучи собрались.
Доспех тяжел, как перед боем.
Теперь твой час настал. — Молись!^{*16}

In *Na pole Kulikovom* Blok, without 'forcing anything' as was his way, had found adequate expression for the personal, the Symbolist and the Russian myth.

It seemed to Blok that the battle would be fought this time by the Russian people against the alien culture and values of the Imperial Russian State, and that the place of the Intelligentsia in the inescapable conflict was uncertain. To Stanislavsky he wrote in the same month he finished the poem that he had found his theme, to which he intended to dedicate his life: the theme of the people and the Intelligentsia. The gap between them was, he felt more urgently with every passing day, opening up at their very feet like a widening crevasse.

Over the winter season of 1908–9, Blok continued to struggle to convey the urgency of his foreboding to the Petersburg Intelligentsia through talks and articles. The Merezhkovskys had returned and, fresh from abroad, had injected something of the old sense of immediacy into the debates of the Religious-Philosophical Society, encouraging attendance not just by the Petersburg élite but by their liberal and radical political acquaintances and also by a few peasant writers with whom they had become acquainted during their debate with the church and in the aftermath of the Revolution, usually men from amongst the Old Believers and sectarians,† who brought friends. Blok, whose correspondence with one

* 'The heart cannot live in peace, / The clouds are not gathering for nothing: / Armour weighs heavy, as before battle. / Now your time has come. – Pray!'

† In Russian, the term 'sectarian' was used to describe virtually the entire spectrum of dissent from the Established Church (with the exception of Old Believers or Old Ritualists, now reunited with the Orthodox Church in Russia, the Uniates and the Roman Catholics). Some 'sects', such as the Baptists, were simply what we should call 'Protestant', but others like the 'Khlysty' and the 'Skoptsy' were orgiastic and socially disruptive. Bely's imaginary sect, 'the Doves', are modelled on the Khlysty.

such writer, later famous as the peasant poet, Nikolai Kliuev, had convinced him of the 'infrangible barrier' between the Intelligentsia and the 'people', of their hostility to one another's most cherished values, welcomed the opportunity to voice his forebodings before such a mixed audience and, on 13 November 1908, he read a paper at an open session of the Religious-Philosophical Society devoted to 'demonism', the so-called 'God-building' of Gor'ky and Lunacharsky.

The paper, 'Russia and the Intelligentsia' or 'Narod i Intelligentsia' ('The people and the Intelligentsia', as it was subsequently retitled) caused a *furor*.¹⁷ The meeting was closed down by the police before the sectarians in the audience, excited and intrigued by the talk of inevitable change, could join in the debate. Some asked Blok to visit them and he did so, together with Remizov and Gorodetsky, becoming, like the Merezhkovskys though more passively and reluctantly, a link between their world and the world of books, newspapers and poetry.¹⁸ A full discussion of the paper was subsequently held at a closed session and it was read yet again at a wider venue, comprising Social Democrats and Populists, at the Literary Society, where again it provoked a heated response, mainly speeches 'in defence' of the Intelligentsia.¹⁹ Struve refused to publish Blok's 'naïve', poetical paper in his *Russkaia Mysl'* and the Merezhkovskys – who did not altogether agree with the poet but appreciated his lyrical sincerity – consequently dissociated themselves from editorship of the critical section.²⁰

It was not so much what Blok had said as how he had conveyed his very simple message which had shocked his audience. The idea that the 'awakening' of the Russian people, which the Intelligentsia had been trying for so long to bring about, might hold menace for them as well as hope was startling and repugnant. Blok spoke of the Intelligentsia's 'will to die', which, he said, was alien and abhorrent to the people. 'It is easy', he insisted, 'to understand why the unbeliever turns for help to the people, seeking the strength to go on living simply by the instinct of self-preservation; he turns to them in all urgency, only to come up against sarcasm and silence, against contempt and condescending pity . . .' There was something that his listening poet's ear had caught in the silences of Shakhmatovo, in Kliuev's letters telling him of the peasant's hatred and envy 'because you "can" whereas we "must"', in the failed romance with 'Faina', in the dream of Kulikovo Field, which suggested that the Intelligentsia and the people had nothing to offer one another, or at least that they were incapable, without radical change, of accepting even the very best they might have offered one another, and that herein lay an imminent threat to Russian culture. 'It pleased Gogol' and many Russian writers to picture Russia as the very embodiment of sleep', Blok said, 'but this sleep

is ending; the quiet is being replaced by a distant and growing roar quite unlike the cacophonous roar of the town.'²¹

The Merezhkovskys and other close colleagues took the view that there would be a convergence of enlightened individuals, not a schism or calamitous clash. Rozanov felt Blok was wrong to raise the spectre of revolution just as things were settling down again and entered into a most interesting, as ever intimate, correspondence with him about the rights and wrongs of political violence.²²

Viacheslav Ivanov equated Blok's mood with what he called the 'Russian Idea', the essentially Christian concept of 'descent' (if necessary into shared poverty, ignorance, pain and even sin) and of self-sacrifice combined with hope of resurrection, but warned that repentance, study and what he called 'action', meaning the acceptance of the world in Christ, were essential preludes to what might otherwise prove to be a self-destructive instinct to revere and serve what is lower than oneself. He took the terror out of Blok's warning by explaining it. The Intelligentsia's culture was 'critical' (i.e. individualistic and demonic), he said, whereas the 'people' had preserved the remainder of a 'primitive' culture (like that of the ancient Egyptians or the Christian Middle Ages). There was indeed a potential for mutual destruction, but the aim must be to achieve a culture of *all* the people, not by plunging into 'the element' in suicidal fashion, but by an ordered and strenuous process of descent and ascent, by love which takes away all fear:²³ beautiful thoughts but bland – particularly in the context of a society anxious only to put the memory of Revolution behind it, to set its sights on material prosperity and to relegate art once again to a pleasing distraction, and the 'descent into Hell' to an exciting trip on a Ghost Train.

As to the radical Intelligentsia, they were, in a sense, more complacent still, seeing themselves as the leaders and organisers of social awareness and as the deserving heirs to a future for which they had laboured hard and long. Of all Blok's audience at the Literary Society, only the old Populist Korolenko rose to quote Heine: 'If there is a crack in the heart of the poet it is because the world is split', and comforted the speaker with boiled sweets and kind words. No one, it seemed, altogether shared Blok's nightmare conviction that his message was not just a poetic meditation but a warning, delivered at the eleventh hour.

That winter, Blok repeated this warning in private and in public until he was hoarse, until he had become a bore to his friends and himself. In a sense, it was a call to repentance, to a change of direction, but, as he found out, he had not the voice to be a prophet. In the spring, he gave up and went abroad, taking Liubov' to explore beautiful, 'dead' Italy, which taught him 'humility' and the importance of artistic form.

Blok could not know it at the time (relations were temporarily severed), but there was one other person who had felt the same blind panic in the face of the Russian countryside that summer. Bely, on 23 July 1908, had written to a friend from Serebrianyi Kolodez', the small estate that his mother was in the process of selling: 'I'm leaving the country because I can't stand up any longer against the leaden sky, the measureless spaces, the wandering pilgrims cutting across distant fields and, over all this, a something – prehistoric, ancient, dark. The countryside of middle Russia is terrifying. [. . .] The villages like shaggy animals, belching forth smoke. In the fields there's a whistling, a dancing, a listening [. . .] There is something to run away from in Russia. I am afraid for Russia.'²⁴

This was the mood which foreshadowed the novel *Serebrianyi golub'* (The Silver Dove). Over the autumn of 1908 Bely began regularly to attend a theosophical circle which encouraged him to see events in the outside world and in the psyche as mysteriously interconnected and to link his own confusion and torment with 'the illusions that had descended upon all Russia'.²⁵ This growing conviction as to the existence of mysterious links – whether occult, genetic, providential, diabolic or psychological – between the microcosm of self and the macrocosm of Russia and the world liberated Bely from his stultifying preoccupation with philosophical abstractions and the 'theory of cognition', which, over the last few years, had kept the artist in him subservient to the scholar and thinker. Bely's interest in theosophy was given a new direction that December by his meeting with Anna Mintslova, who praised the 'civic' poetry of *Pepel* which had just been published and hinted mysteriously that Bely bore some special responsibility for the future of his country.

What Bely did not know at the time was that Mintslova had settled into the Tower of Viacheslav Ivanov, over whom she had gained great influence by implying that she was in touch with the spirit world and with Lidia. Originally introduced to Ivanov by Margarita Sabashnikova, Mintslova had connections with Rudolf Steiner and the Rosicrucian movement and was to come to believe that she had instructions to found a 'mystic triangle' comprising Bely in Moscow, Ivanov in St Petersburg and herself. Together they would work for the regeneration of Russia and the world. While the acquaintance was in its early stages, however, the obese lady with her beautiful hands and hypnotic eyes seemed to both poets merely a sympathetic person with a remarkable understanding of the occult sciences which interested them both.

Bely, that winter, was exhausted by constant money problems, chronic overwork, polemics, journalism, lectures, lonely shuttling to and fro between Moscow, Petersburg and the country. His description of his own

condition when, on 17 January, he dragged himself from a sickbed provided by the ever-solicitous Merezhkovskys to the Tenishev Academy in St Petersburg to give a lecture on no less a subject than 'The present and future of Russian literature', suggests a man physically and mentally at the end of his tether.

He was certainly in no fit state to resist the will of Viacheslav Ivanov, who attended the lecture with the express intention of 'turning' Bely away from the Briusov/Merezhkovsky camp. This alliance was, as we have seen, already disintegrating from within. As the journals on whose pages the long polemic had been fought, *Zolotoe Runo* and *Vesy*, coasted into their last year of life, their principal contributors were already too busy with other commitments in the wider field of Russian literature to continue the fight and the threat of an alliance between 'Mystic Anarchists' and Znanie finally passed with the publication of *Literaturnyi raspad* (SPb, 1908), a two-volume counter-attack by Gor'ky and others against the whole trend of art in post-Revolutionary Russia, including Leonid Andreev's, whose story *T'ma* (Darkness), in *Almanak Shipovnik*, III, 1907, had been understood as a libel on the revolutionary Intelligentsia. Residual hostility, however, remained, and when Ivanov took Bely by the arm at the end of his lecture, murmuring that the publication of *Pepel* was 'an event' and that they must talk, a furious Hippius sped him on his way: 'If you go with him now I'll never forgive you. You needn't come back!' He was not given the chance to do so; Ivanov sent round for his luggage and talked to him all that night and most of the ensuing three days, in the presence of Mintslova, who was tactfully silent 'her eyes like two wheels boring through the wall into cosmic emptiness'.²⁶

Bely's *Pepel*, Ivanov said, was truly 'real' in the sense of the new slogan he himself was now suggesting for symbolism in its present stage, a transitional step between the 'critical' culture of the past and the synthetic, organic 'vsenarodnaia', general culture which must be achieved: that is, in his poetry Bely begins 'from the real' to discover 'the more real', 'a realibus ad realiora'.²⁷ A mighty storm, Ivanov said, was gathering. Nietzsche, Ibsen, Tolstoy and Dostoevsky hung like thunderclouds over the world and the lightning was already flashing under lowering skies. This was Bely's theme in *Pepel*; it was Blok's theme in *Zemlia v snegu*, in *Na pole Kulikovom*. Ivanov's own work was infused with the electricity generated by the foreboding of crisis which, even as it ebbed from society as a whole, was being experienced ever more intensely by the poets.

Having reminded Bely of their similarities, quoting chapter and verse in a dispassionate, scholarly manner to which Professor Bugaev's son instinctively responded, Ivanov went on to point out how each poet had his own task to fulfil. For him, Ivanov, it was to build up a 'commune of

creative artists'; for Blok, to 'close the blades of the scissors between us and the people'; for Bely to keep them all in mind of their duty, of the spiritual responsibility of the Symbolists for world culture and higher truth. No doubt Ivanov also patiently repeated and explained much that he had written in answer to the younger poet's questions in *Vesy*, gently eroding the distrust which had accumulated during the polemic against Mystic Anarchism and inspiring Bely anew with ideas of service 'in perfect freedom' to a spiritual community in cooperation with an older, wiser guide.

Undoubtedly, the silent presence of Mintslova helped, and she was later instrumental, with 'great tact', as Blok informed Ivanov, in effecting the beginnings of a reconciliation between Blok and Bely. She made them feel responsible and she reminded them, or stimulated them to remind each other, of what they had in common: the feeling of impending crisis. As to her talk of a secret knighthood and a mystic triangle, though it undoubtedly intrigued both men for a while, it lost its charm for Bely when he discovered, more than a year later, that the 'third man', of whose identity Mintslova had not at first informed him, was none other than the familiar Viacheslav. Bely broke with Mintslova in May 1910, refusing her demand that he attend a meeting of Rosicrucians in Italy later that year for his final 'initiation'. That same spring, Ivanov, too, rebelled, refusing to take the vow of chastity Mintslova demanded of him when she perceived his growing fondness for Lidia's daughter by her first marriage, Vera Shvarsalon, whom he married in 1913 and who bore him a son, Dmitrii. Mintslova disappeared from Russia in the summer of 1910, convinced that she had failed in her mission, and was never seen again.²⁸

After the reconciliation with Ivanov, Bely attended a lecture the older man gave in Moscow on 29 January, in such a state of nerves that he became involved in one of his scandalous quarrels and had to be spirited away by his old 'Argonaut' friend A.S. Petrovsky to rest at Bobrovka, the country estate of A.A. Rachinskaia where, for a few weeks, he was able to detach himself completely from his hectic life and where he began work on his first novel.

Serebrianyi golub' is the projection of Bely's inner world on to the 'terrifying' Russia which threatened to engulf him but which he loved, for which he feared. Oddly, the exercise was therapeutic, in spite of the haste with which it was undertaken. Bely published his work chapter by chapter in serialised form in *Vesy* and the novel was eventually finished where it was begun, in Bobrovka, in December 1909. In the course of the year Bely also accomplished other important work, publishing his third book of verse *Urna* and beginning the studies of rhythm and the 'magic of words'

which were to revolutionise Russian literary criticism by introducing scientific methodology (word and syllable-counts, tables, diagrams, etc.) into the study of prosody.²⁹ He also lectured on Przybyszewski in Kiev and on Gogol' before the general public on the occasion of a solemn memorial ceremony at the writer's grave. Together with his friend E.K. Metner, a passionate Germanophile, he laid the foundations for a new Symbolist publishing house, Musagetes, with philosophical and musical branches under the imprints Logos and Alcion, which began its activities in Moscow that September of 1909 – all this while carrying the principal editorial burden in *Vesy*, from which Briusov had distanced himself at the end of the preceding year.

The summer was spent in Dedovo, which had contributed much to *Serebrianyi golub'*: the villages of Tselebeevo and the small town of Likhov both had local prototypes near Dedovo, the personality of the formidable Baroness Todrabe-Graaben was modelled on Sergei Solov'ev's Kovalenskaia grandmother, and the appearance of the hero Petr Dar'ial'sky and some features of the love affair between a gentleman and a peasant woman belonged by rights to Sergei – although, of course, Dar'ial'sky is first and foremost Bely himself. To crown a rich year, Bely was at last shaking off the shadow of his unhappy affair with Liubov' Blok and beginning to fall in love with Asia Turgeneva, an artist and a connection of the much-admired singer Olenina-D'Al'geim. Asia contributed something to the ethereal, cultured Katia and Liubov' to the bold yet essentially passive, enthralled and enthralling peasant woman Matrena, the contrasting heroines of Bely's extraordinary novel. It is not the biographical sub-text, however, which makes the work important in the development of Russian Symbolism. *Serebrianyi golub'* is the most vivid depiction we have of the 'infrangible barrier' between the Intelligentsia and the people, the Symbolists and the peasant sectarians. It is also the first of Bely's books to achieve intelligibility as a story and to have characters who walk the earth in a consistent geographical location.

The year is 1905. The hero, a man of culture, is engaged to Katia, the heiress of the Todrabe-Graaben family, whose future – if indeed it has a future – can lie only in the Europeanised life of the city. Katia partakes more and more of the nature of a disembodied Gogolian vision of the Eternal Feminine as the story proceeds. The engagement is broken because of Dar'ial'sky's involvement with or bewitchment by the pock-marked Matrena, who seduces him at the bidding of her man Dmitrii Kudeiarov. Kudeiarov, a sectarian carpenter, is the head of the 'Doves' of the title, who are involved in politically subversive as well as forbidden religious practices. From the union of Matrena and Dar'ial'sky, he believes, will spring a Child Who will bring Salvation. But no child is

conceived, and when Dar'ial'sky attempts to evade the Doves and return to his former life, in a scene of consummate horror, they catch up with him and, believing themselves betrayed, beat him to death. They bury him in a kitchen garden (Osiris? Dionysos?), in a winding-sheet embroidered with the Silver Dove. After all, he was a 'brother'.

The story has pace and excitement, the mythical subtext is not obtrusive, and Bely's 'verbal magic' works no less hypnotically than in the Symphonies. Not until the tragedy has run its course do we perceive, through the dilemma of the individuals Dar'ial'sky and Kudeiarov, the tragic impasse of the Russian God-seekers, caught between their own post-Enlightenment tradition and the quasi-medieval culture of the peasantry, between devitalisation and chaos, and beyond that again the dilemma of the poet who has tried to live his art – with fatal results.

Though he intended *Serebrianyi golub'* to be the first of a trilogy about the fate of Russia during and after the 1905 Revolution and the Japanese war, a history disclosing the movement of spiritual forces behind the particularity of individual destinies on the lines of Merezhkovsky's *Christ and Antichrist*, events were now moving too quickly and Bely was too finely tuned to what was going on in his country to write a straightforward sequel. His next novel, *Peterburg* (1916), though full of reminiscences, both personal and historic, of 1905 and even – somewhere among the 'fiery, feathery-pink clouds' in the cold Petersburg sky – of the 'dawns' of 1901, and of Dar'ial'sky's sacrificial death and hoped-for resurrection, is a novel of the city and already looks forward to 1917 and beyond to all the other exploding catastrophes. In Bely's view this chain of catastrophes was the inevitable outcome of the grandiose occult battle which was being waged not only in the outside world but within himself, within each individual.³⁰ It is these links between the general and the particular, the way ideas and actions slip and flit from mind to mind, mice to men, river to street, earth to sky – which Bely had taught himself to express through his poetry, his Symphonies, his theoretical works and polemics, and *Serebrianyi golub'* was his first objectively comprehensible achievement along the way. Though few recognised it at the time, behind the outlandish subject matter, the arcane cross-references, and the unfamiliar implementation of the idea that 'every word is first and foremost a *sound*', the book was also a quantum leap forward in Modernist prose.

There was little personal contact between Bely and Remizov, but, beyond the fact that they were the two most vivid and influential prose writers of their generation, they had much in common.³¹ Both proceeded from Gogol' and Dostoevsky (Remizov added Leskov – always – and Bely, for *Serebrianyi golub'* at least, Mel'nikov-Pechersky: 'regional' writers inter-

ested in the ‘Old’ Russia untouched by court culture). Both writers are ‘poets in prose’ in that they attach as much importance to sound as to semantics; both seek a dynamic, essentially oral syntax, though Bely’s is closer to that of the poet, Remizov’s to the language still spoken in the villages, the Russian that he had heard in childhood amongst the artisans of his uncle’s factory in Moscow. Throughout Russian history, this language had seemed too rough and ready for written use (where high Church Slavonic or later German and Dutch, then French syntax had predominated), except in seventeenth-century government documents written by humble clerks, ‘d’iachiki’, from which Remizov drew much inspiration and delight, or in such rare, unselfconscious works of art as the ‘vernacular’ autobiography of Protopop Avvakum.

Both Bely and Remizov are supremely uninterested in sequentiality, yet though their narratives appear to meander, tension is generated by linguistic, poetic means. In *Serebrianyi golub’*, for instance, there is a passage which begins idyllically with birds fluttering around the dome of the village church:

Слушай — струй лепет и ток стрижей: смутно стрижи зовут над колокольной, что золотом своим резным крестом поднялась над селом; вьются стрижи над ней. Черные стрижи над крестом день, утро, вечер в волне воздушной купаются, юлят, шныряют здесь и там, взвиваются, падают, режут небо: и режут, жгут они воздух, скребут, сверлят жгучим визгом воздух [...] Но стрижей, друг, не слушай в них не засматривайся: разорвут тебе сердце, и точно в грудь воткнут раскаленное сверло [...]

Ишь, как юлят, стригут крыльями воздух — облепили крест.*³²

This passage, like all good Symbolist prose, is clearly a description of something seen and minutely observed. There is nothing allegorical about the peaceful summer scene, yet it is ‘transparent’ to other worlds, to the essence of panic. The syntax is subservient to a phonetic scheme stressing sustained alliteration which highlights the sibilants (sharp and blurred) contained in the Russian word for martlet, ‘strizh’. The imperatives, which give the warnings such urgency, whistle and hiss – ‘Slushai!’, ‘Ne slushai!’, ‘Ne zasmatruvaisia!’ – and the vivid, vulgar ‘Ish!’ We are disorientated by the times of day, given out of sequence, by the rhythmic threefold conglomerations of verbs suggesting swift, aimless movement.

* ‘Listen – stream, murmur and eddy of martlets: confusedly the martlets call over the belltower, which raises its carved golden cross above the village; zigzagging, the martlets fly above it. Black martlets above the cross, afternoon, morning, evening, in a wave of wind bathing, swerving, darting hither and thither, soaring up, falling, slashing the sky: and they slash, they burn the air, scrape, drill the air with their burning squeals [...]. But, friend, do not listen to the martlets and do not look at them too long: they will tear open your heart, as if piercing your breast with a white-hot drill [...]. See how they swerve, shearing the air with their wings – they’ve smothered the cross.’

The idea of the sickle-wings ‘cutting’ the air is introduced by the verb ‘rezhut’ and prepares for the climactic introduction of ‘strigut’ (‘strich’ – to shear, from the same root as ‘strizh’ – martlet). The soft labials of ‘oblepili’ – corresponding only to the word ‘lepet’ at the beginning of the passage – effect a horrifying transition from sharply defined individual sounds and movements to a sticky, shapeless smother. Verbally, as well as ‘symbolically’, the paragraph is a microcosm of the novel.

Remizov’s work on words began not with analysis as Bely’s did but with the retelling of old tales: two collections, *Limonar’* and *Posolon’*, were published in 1907. Of the latter, which Remizov dedicated to Viacheslav Ivanov,³³ Andrei Bely wrote: ‘Every sentence here has a ring of exceptional purity, of elemental music. There is much that is elemental in Remizov’s work . . . But this elemental quality is everywhere subdued by the power of the artist’s word. The artist Remizov subdues the element. That is why everywhere in *Posolon’* there is such a victory over form’.³⁴

‘Such a victory over form . . .’ (‘takaia pobeda nad formoi’) is a curious way of putting it, but it sums up what both writers were attempting: a break with the accepted forms of sequential narrative and rational exposition without loss of form, without dissolution in the ‘element’ of language, in the chaos of intuitive perception; the attainment, in fact, of a new form conditioned by ‘music’. Where Remizov differs from Bely, and still more from Ivanov, is that he does not feel the need for a consistent metaphysical structure to underpin his experiments. He was an extremely well-read man (‘there are so many things a man simply has to know’, he once said of the wide-ranging reading of his student days) and he was a man who had experience of a wider, quieter Russia: from the flowering moss and northern lights of Ust-Sysol’sk to the acacias of Odessa and the warm fertility of Ukrainian summers. Yet he had his own vision of these things, a vision which he explained by the metaphor of his ‘shorn eyes’, his extreme shortsightedness, which haloed faces, each with their own aura, filled empty space with reflections, infringed on Euclid’s axioms and suggested a fourth dimension behind the three. ‘These eyes raised me into the world of dreams, but they also opened the way to the underground depths of the black viscous mire of life.’³⁵ It was enough for Remizov to find words to convey the wonder and horror of this vision; he did not need to ‘explain’ it – to himself or to others.

Remizov’s first unqualified success in treating contemporary life in this fashion, within the framework of the novella, was *Krestovye Sestry* (The Sisters of the Cross), published in 1910, the same year that *Serebrianyi golub’* came out in book form, and Remizov himself indirectly acknowledges the impression Bely’s earlier work had made on him, speaking of the ‘symphonic structure’ of the story.³⁶

The hero of *Krestovye sestry*, Marakulin, is an insignificant official descended from Dostoevsky’s Dedushkin and Gogol’s Akakii Akakievich, who loses not his beloved nor yet his greatcoat but something even closer to the core of self, his reputation, and makes the terrible discovery that man is not so much a wolf to his fellow man as ‘a log’. ‘Dropped’ by old friends, unable to find work, he leads a twilight existence in a rented room amongst the ‘sisters of the cross’, women whose dreams, into which he enters with self-forgetful enthusiasm, never come true, whose best impulses lead to the saddest consequences. Finally, after a moment of beatific vision, Marakulin throws himself out of the window but, as he hits the pavement, hears a triumphant voice gloating: ‘Lie there for ever’. We are left with the spread-eagled corpse and the abyss of unknowing.³⁷

Even this story was too much of a ‘mosaic’ to appeal to realistic critics.³⁸ ‘Burkov’s House’, the boarding house where most of the action takes place, ‘is the whole of Petersburg’ – or so the inhabitants tell one another. Remizov’s story weaves their lives into a complex, rhythmic pattern of ‘the whole of Russia’, of ‘the human condition’.³⁹ He does not introduce his characters in the conventional way but relies on ‘things’ and on ‘sound – colour – verbal expression’ to show ‘what a person is really like’, as in the picture of the merchant Plotnikov, who has drunk himself into believing he is a beehive, and whom we first encounter sitting bemusedly at his office desk between reproductions of Nesterov’s ‘Pre-Raphaelite’ pictures of saints and angels amongst the lakes and birches of central Russia and a cageful of pet monkeys, imbibing the honey of knowledge simultaneously from his own Orthodox tradition and from Charles Darwin, ‘between *Holy Russia* and the monkey’. Beneath either emblem is a litter of empty bottles.⁴⁰

At other times, as when all the remaining inhabitants of Burkov House daydream of a trip to Paris, the musical ‘sound-verbal’ element dominates and the text reads like a litany which might have been written a thousand years ago – or in Chekhov’s Russia, or today:

Там, где-то в Париже, Анна Степановна найдет себе на земле место и подымеется душою и улыбнется по-другому.

И там, где-то в Париже, Вера Николаевна поправится и сдаст экзамен на аттестат зрелости.

[...]

И там, где-то в Париже, когда Сергей Александрович, танцуя, побеждать будет сердце Европы, найдет Маракулин свою потерянную радость. Верочку бы отыскать [...]. И она там, в Париже ...*⁴¹

* ‘There, somewhere in Paris, Anna Stepanovna will find a place for herself on this earth and her soul will grow straight and she’ll smile differently. // And there, somewhere in Paris, Vera Nikolaevna will get well again and pass her matric. // And there, somewhere in Paris, when Sergei Aleksandrovich, dancing, will win the *heart of Europe*, Marakulin too will find his lost happiness. // We must find Verochka [...]. she, too, there in Paris ...’

Needless to say, they never get to Paris . . .

The further development of Symbolist prose escapes the time-span of this book. Before the decade was out it was, in any case, relabelled 'neo-realism', 'ornamental prose' or simply 'modernism'. The influence of both Bely and Remizov on Soviet prose of the 1920s – before the re-imposition of nineteenth-century norms through Socialist Realism – is generally acknowledged. Nabokov's comparison of Bely with Kafka, Joyce and Proust is used to promote virtually every new edition or translation of his novels, though Bely's influence on Nabokov himself has still to be researched. Attempts to disinter the *correspondences* between the individual and the general, the historical and the archetypal, continue to this day. It is a curious fact that Remizov, in the emigration, was more highly valued in translation by the French avant-garde than by the average Russian-in-exile, whose idiom was precisely that exhausted 'international' tradition from which he sought to free Russian literature in the name of 'russkii lad' (Russian harmony) and 'russkii sklad' (Russian structure). Not only were these the mainspring of his own work, but it was in careful labour on the mining of linguistic 'raw material' that he perceived the particular contribution of such writers as Khlebnikov and Zamiatin:

And that work began from the first revolution of 1905. It is possible to identify the place: the circle of Viacheslav Ivanov.⁴²

12 Russian Symbolism and Russian literature

... Мы упраздняем себя как школу. Упраздняем не потому, чтобы от чего-либо отрекались и думали ступить на иной путь: напротив, мы остаемся вполне верными себе и раз начатой нами деятельности. Но секты мы не хотим; исповедание же наше — соборно [...] Символист [...] заботится о том, чтобы твердо установить некий общий принцип. Принцип этот — символизм всякого истинного искусства

Вячеслав Иванов*

The last great modernist journal in Russia was *Apollon* (1909–17), the first number of which came out on 15 October, 1909.¹ It is a measure of the success of the 'new art' in all its forms that it was not founded specifically by the Symbolists for the Symbolists.

The original impulse for a new journal came from Sergei Makovsky, the son of the Populist artist Konstantin Makovsky, a man of considerable experience in art-journalism who had been co-editor of the journal *Starye Gody* (Bygone Years) since 1907, and was also the organiser of exhibitions in Russia and abroad and himself an amateur artist and a competent poet.

At Makovsky's 'Salon of 1909', an exhibition held in Petersburg in the January of that year, he met the young, as yet little-known poet Nikolai Gumilev, not long returned from Paris – the Sorbonne – and travels which had taken him to the wilds of Africa. The conversation turned to the desirability of starting up a new periodical which would replace *Zolotoe Runo* and *Vesy* but avoid the factionalism which had marred these journals, modelling itself rather on the eclectic urbanity of *Mir Iskusstva*. The journal, from the outset, was conceived as giving equal importance to the visual arts and literature. Such undertakings are of course expensive,

* '... we are disbanding ourselves as a school. We are disbanding ourselves not because we have renounced something and thought of setting out on some other way: on the contrary, we remain wholly true to ourselves and to the work once begun. But we do not want to be a sect; our confession is universal [...] The Symbolist [...] is concerned to establish some kind of general principle. This principle is the symbolism of all true art.' Viacheslav Ivanov

but Makovsky, in the course of the same exhibition, found a willing patron and co-publisher in the dilettante merchant M. Ushkov. Such undertakings also require a great deal of experience and hard work, and here Gumilev offered to persuade his ex-headmaster in the *gimnazia* at Tsarskoe Selo, the poet, playwright, translator and literary critic Inokentii Annensky, to assist in planning the journal and to lend weight and authority to the decisions of the comparatively youthful and obscure editor, in order to avoid manipulation by the old Symbolist cliques. Annensky, whose only, anonymous book of poetry, *Tikhie pesni* (Quiet Songs, 1904), had been favourably reviewed by both Blok and Briusov, had never before taken any part in Symbolist activities and was quite free of the influence of either the Briusov–Merezhkovsky ‘axis’ or the newly-formed Ivanov–Bely alliance. He was, says Makovsky, ‘exceptionally independent and tolerant’.²

A ‘circle’ or ‘society’ for discussions and readings which would, as it were, form the creative nucleus of the new journal, was considered a *sine qua non* for success and here the publishers, again on the advice of Gumilev who first visited the Tower in 1908, turned to Viacheslav Ivanov, who responded with predictable enthusiasm. The Society was called, somewhat pedantically, ‘Obshchestvo revnitelei khudozhestvennogo slova’ (The Society of Amateurs of the Artistic Word) and fully deserved the nickname by which it almost immediately became known to all the participants: ‘The Academy’.

The Academy did not replace the less structured symposiums of the Tower. It met once or twice a month. The meetings were public and formal. They took place in *Apollon’s* well-appointed offices on the Moika canal under the chairmanship of Ivanov. The executive committee, elected by the founders, originally included Annensky, Makovsky, Kuzmin (who since the departure of Mintslova had been living in his own rooms in the Tower), Blok and Gumilev.

Ivanov was a chairman of genius, according all-comers his full attention, entering into each writer’s world with a spontaneous generosity of spirit, which left no one in doubt of the importance he attached to his role as judge and mentor. He was also exacting, setting the highest standards and, though he had the gift of arguing a case without offending his opponent, those who did not share his highly structured and clearly delineated, if not precisely triumphalist then certainly triumphantly optimistic faith in the theurgic power of art, sooner or later came up against an unexpectedly rigorous dogmatist, ‘a fanatical schematiser’ who – in his own way – was no less demanding than Merezhkovsky, insisting upon ‘all or nothing’. One witness described Ivanov’s capacity for metamorphosis:

'The most detailed technical analysis would pass by imperceptible stages into a stringent examination of conscience of the young author from the point of view of philosophy, sociology. The master of words, enamoured of the finest gradations, would suddenly be transformed into the moralist. This was not acceptable to everyone.'³

In fact, Ivanov, during the preparatory work for *Apollon* and the first two to three years of its existence when he was intimately involved in all that was going on, was writing little original poetry; what he did write was in the nature of ornate set pieces, accomplished epistles in verse, *poèmes d'occasion*. The years following Lidiia's death until Ivanov went abroad are described by their daughter as dark and joyless and during them he almost reverted to type (the university professor he might have become), preparing his first book of prose articles, *Po zvezdam* (According to the Stars) and surrounding himself with young disciples who looked up to him and confided in him – but did not expect to be burdened with confidences in return.⁴ Perhaps compensating for this loneliness and creative dearth, Ivanov became totally absorbed in obtaining 'power over poets', albeit disinterestedly, and he frightened or alienated the more independently minded in the process.

During 1909 both Velimir Khlebnikov and Osip Mandel'shtam first appeared in the Tower. Ivanov appreciated them both and undoubtedly influenced both in their attitudes to myth, to the roots of language and of faith, even when he provoked them to opposition. To Khlebnikov, who, like Blok, was positively afraid of the Platonic 'Eros' which Ivanov himself considered a most important element in his relationship with younger poets, he addressed the poem 'Podsteregateliu' (To the wary one), in which he described himself as a hunter, spreading discussion like a net, or a ploughman, driving a living furrow through virgin soil, not a seducer but a scientific investigator armed with compass, touchstone and plummet.⁵

Bely, who was busy with his own publishing venture, *Musagetes*, with which Ivanov was also deeply involved, was an interested onlooker at this process during his stays at the Tower, now his home from home whenever he visited St Petersburg. He would arrive without warning, sometimes with a friend, and settle happily into the nocturnal routine of Ivanov's warren of a flat where a month passed like a day: chatting cosily with Kuzmin over the samovar at breakfast at one in the afternoon, wondering at the transformation the comfortably shabby poet would undergo on the premises of *Apollon*, when he would become elegant, hostile and distant. Towards midnight, though, Kuzmin would return to the Tower to sing, at Ivanov's request, his melodiously worded, tender songs about the pure

life of the Old Believer monks on the Volga or what he would do were he a second Antinous.*⁶

Sometimes Bely would sally forth with Ivanov (who only appeared, fresh as the morning after a day spent chain-smoking in bed over his manuscripts, for dinner in the evening). They would institute some new literary alliance or intrigue and return home for a quiet post-mortem on their own efforts, during which the younger poet would caricature all those involved, including Ivanov himself, to the latter's profound delight. 'My little Gogol', he called Bely appreciatively, and encouraged him to deliver himself of his 'Moscow chronicle': fantastic and probably libellous improvisations about friends, past and present, and all the goings-on in the other capital which undoubtedly set the tone of his future memoirs. Later, 'before the fried eggs' which Lidiia's long-suffering friend Zamiatina would be called upon to serve as supper-breakfast about five in the morning before Ivanov and his guests finally went off to bed, there would be intense, intimate talks, *tête-à-tête* in the poet's study. He would 'confess us', as Bely put it. He loved this cosy yet fecund womb of a flat.

It was here, in this relaxed, informal atmosphere that, according to Bely, Ivanov jokingly encouraged him to invent 'a firm position' for the critical and rebellious Gumilev, who quite often stayed the night in Kuzmin's rooms when he missed his train home to Tsarskoe Selo and who would appear next day at Ivanov's ever-hospitable table to delight him, the young Lidiia and her stepbrothers and sisters with tales of Africa. Bearded by the nimble-minded Bely, the young poet sat 'arrogant but good-natured' while Bely improvised for him a critique of old-style Symbolism and the word 'acme' (the high point) slipped out: "'Splendid", said Gumilev, "you've invented a position for me – against yourself: I'll show you 'acmeism!'" [. . .] and so in sport the talk of the end of Symbolism began!"⁷

Bely may or may not have given Gumilev the word 'Acmeism'⁸ – which was first 'adopted' by friends and followers in Gumilev's *Tsekh poetov* (Poet's Workshop) in 1912 – but the man who did most to introduce the new 'taste' (which Mandel'shtam once designated as the essence of the movement) was Innokentii Annensky. He had much in common with his coevals Merezhkovsky and Ivanov, above all their interest in and knowledge of the Greeks – and he and Ivanov worked closely together during the gestation of *Apollon* and at the Academy. Their approach to the

* Antinous was Ivanov's nickname for Kuzmin – after the beautiful youth beloved of the Emperor Hadrian. He died young and Hadrian erected a temple in memory of him, encouraging the belief that he had ascended to the stars and become a constellation.

ancient world, as to modern literature, was, however, very different. Annensky was interested in the psychology of author and characters: Ivanov in form and eternal truth.

Annensky wished to popularise Greek drama and to bring it closer to the modern reader through translations intended to be read not as poetic mysteriums (Merezhkovsky's approach) but more like modern plays. Not surprisingly, Annensky's particular love was Euripides, and his complete translation of the tragedies was eventually collected and published as a series.⁹ He was also held in high esteem for his critical appreciations of ancient Greek literature and had even written original tragedies on subjects from Greek mythology.¹⁰

Annensky was a subtle critic of Russian literature past and present. His occasional articles and reviews favour a low-key, off-the-cuff approach very different to the tone of high pathos adopted by Merezhkovsky and to a lesser degree by Ivanov in their studies of Russian and classical literature.¹¹ His *Tikhie pesni*, published in 1904 under the pseudonym 'Nik T-o', contained a section of translations from the French Symbolists, which is probably why it came to the attention of the Symbolist press. To Blok these genuinely 'quiet songs' at first seemed unimpressive, but he noted 'you suddenly begin to take an interest and read it right through and begin to feel good and not to believe, somehow, that it was written by a Mr Nobody (Nikto, as the name is spelt on p. 3). It's quite a new, unfamiliar feeling, such as one sometimes gets from an unexpected meeting.' Within a few days of writing the review, Blok and Annensky exchanged letters from which it is clear that the younger poet had not connected Nik T-o with the respected classicist when he read the poems in the country the previous summer, but that, as he wrote to Annensky, part of his soul 'had been left behind in them'.¹²

Both Briusov and Ivanov, in later reviews written in full knowledge of the identity of the author, noted Annensky's affinities with the early French Symbolists, particularly Rimbaud and Mallarmé, and saw him as an exponent of the 'associative' or 'impressionist' line of Symbolism.¹³ Briusov, in a review of Annensky's second posthumously published collection *Kiparisovyi larets* (The Cedar Box, 1910), wrote with approval of the irony, the sheer unpredictability and deceptively 'careless' form of the later poetry.¹⁴

Annensky's feeling for the world remained essentially that of the pre-Nietzschean generation: agnostic, pessimistic, unpretentious. He conveys psychological states in his poetry through observed, atypical physical gesture. Less enamoured of 'music' than most Symbolists, he insisted that the word was the basic building-unit of poetry and that 'the most terrible and powerful word, i.e. the most *enigmatic* – may well be the

most *humdrum*, everyday word'.¹⁵ There is a kind of stark simplicity in Annensky's monotone, civilised interiors – which comes as a relief after the cosmic dynamics of mature Symbolism:

Темнеет . . . Комната пуста.
С трудом я вспоминаю что-то.
И безответна и чиста,
За нотой умирает нота.*

Earlier in this particular poem the effect of a dying fall is heightened by the rhyming of the noun 'tiulpany' ('tulips') with the long, unexpected adjective 'fortepiannyi' ('of the pianoforte').¹⁶

Annensky's last lyrics sowed the seeds of a more austere poetry, stripping away all pomp and pretence:

Губы хотели любить горячо,
А на ветру
Лишь улыбались тоскливо . . .
Что-то в них было застыло,
Даже мертво . . .
Господи, я и не знал, до чего
Она некрасива.†

This poem, written in June 1909 about a parting at a railway station, curiously prefigures Annensky's own sudden death from a heart attack at the station on his way from Tsarskoe Selo to deliver a lecture in Petersburg. It happened on 30 November 1909 – six weeks after speaking out loud and clear in his well-modulated headmaster's voice, he had toasted the publication of the first number of *Apollon* and the editor Makovsky at a festive dinner given for all literary and artistic Petersburg. The poem ends almost as it begins: 'No etogo byt' ne mozhet / Eto – podlog . . . / Den' ili god i uzh dozhit / Il', ne dozhiv, iznemog . . . / Etogo byt' ne mozhet' ('But that is impossible. / It is a trick . . . / The day or the year and already lived through to the end, / Or, not having even lived it through, just to have been taken ill . . . / That is impossible').¹⁷

Annensky's letters of 1909 are those of a hard-working, self-disciplined person exhausted and irritated by his own weakness. Everything vexes him: Makovsky's postponement of the publication of his poetry in *Apollon*, the lofty obscurity of Ivanov's style, the flowery self-regard of the Merezhkovskys ('To go looking for God at 83 Fontanka [. . .] to look

* 'It's growing dark . . . the room is empty. / With difficulty I am trying to remember something. / And unanswering and pure, / Note after note dies away.'

† 'Lips want to love ardently, / But in the wind / They just smiled sadly, / There was something frozen in them, / Even lifeless . . . / Oh Lord, I'd never realised how / Plain she is.'

for God on Fridays . . . what cynicism!'), and the stubborn elusiveness of Blok ('You can argue with a Social Democrat, indeed you have to or you'll have him tearing at your throat, but you can only get bogged down in Blok'). He felt that the established writers with whom he was now coming into regular contact for the first time were cynical poseurs, publicity-seeking professionals who could never match up to the great literary figures of the past.

I and they, or most of them, talk a different language in almost everything. [. . .] I am angry with those people, but can I give any guarantee I am worth more than the least of them? Of course not. [. . .] In them, through them, through their self-satisfaction and affectation everything which is silent is seeking for the truth, everything which prays and which wishes it could pray . . .¹⁸

Under the searching regard of this dying man who had never been a professional artist, a great deal in Russian Symbolism began to appear exhibitionist, preposterous even. Yet he was part of their movement if not one of their company, and claimed only that they had not yet found the *true* Symbolism.

It was to Annensky that it fell to write the retrospective summary of the new poetry in Russia for the first three numbers of *Apollon*. Like all retrospectives, it has the ring of an obituary. It savours anew all the famous lines – sensational in their day – from Briusov's 'O, zakroi tvoi blednye nogi' to Blok's 'Dysha dukhami i tumanami', from Bal'mont's 'Khochu odezhdu s tebia sorvat'' to the same poet's axiomatic commandment to kill 'beautifully', from Sologub's dog poems to Ivanov's 'Dithyrambs' – and enquires bleakly: who do they shock now? Readers had become acclimatised to the excesses of Symbolism. What was left? A poetry of the city, refined, individualistic, androgynous . . . Annensky devotes a whole section to the women poets of Symbolism and perceives them as still different from but incalculably closer to the male poets than, say, the male and female singers of folksong. Tentatively he forecasts a convergence of roles for male and female protagonist.

The article is tired, highly subjective as is all Annensky's criticism, more of a list than an attempt at generalisation, but conclusions arise unbidden. The present-day poets, Annensky wrote, although they may appear bohemian, are in fact a bourgeois lot. Whereas the Romantics of the last century were ready to sacrifice their all to the one and only Jehovah, the new poets have a whole host of gods neatly bedded out in their back gardens. They may be good at 'creating legends', but 'not one legend will arise around the names of contemporary poets'. All they in fact 'symbolise' in their own persons is the 'instinct for self-preservation, tradition and steadily increasing cultural prosperity. The justification of their existence is in art, nothing more.'¹⁹

Annensky was not attacking the old in the name of the new. He was voicing a general unease, to which Ivanov responded positively in a poem subsequently entitled 'Ultimum vale' and published in the January number of *Apollon* 1910, with the lines: 'Ty zh, obnazhitel' besposhchadnyi / V tolpe glukhikh dushoi khladnoi – / Bud', slyshashchii, blagoslaven!' ('You, ruthless unmasker, / Cold of soul amongst the multitude of the deaf, / You who hear, / be blessed!').²⁰

A turning point was clearly perceptible. A return to some kind of classicism was symptomised by Bakst's 'Terror antiquus', reproduced in the first number of *Apollon*, and was advocated in his article 'Puti klassitsizma v iskusstve' (The ways of classicism in art).²¹ Such a return was, in a sense, symbolised by the choice of name for the new journal. Ivanov felt that, after the Romantic excesses of the recent past, there should be some such return – if not to classicism exactly, then at least to more objective non-lyrical genres. Blok, also, had come back from Italy convinced that 'great chaos', however fruitful in nature, was to be eschewed in art, which required form.²² He 'showed' anew his own ability to master chaos in the 'Ital'ianskie stikhi' (Italian verses) which, when he read them at the Academy, 'cast a spell over his listeners', 'as if the verses spoke convincingly for themselves quite apart from the actual words'.²³ In this poetry, though the turning of the world and the sighing of cosmic space were still audible just beneath the surface, the focus on the foreground has become more distinct: 'The sovereign Latin blares like a trumpet' from the sarcophagi and the damp has made them soft with green mould, the 'smoky irises' of Florence bow before the wind and, in Venice, there is a cold wind blowing from the lagoon and the gondolas are silent at their moorings, like coffins: 'Kholodnyi veter ot laguny. / Gondol bezmolvnye groba'.²⁴

In a sense, all the Symbolists were changing their skin. In a letter to his mother Blok called *Apollon* an 'avant-garde', not a 'Symbolist' periodical, though 'all the names are there' and, in the first number for 1910, Voloshin was writing of having 'outlived Symbolism'.²⁵ Gumilev, however, three numbers later, wrote in his obituary for *Vesy*: 'Now we cannot be anything other than Symbolists. This is not a challenge or a wish, it is simply a fact . . .'.²⁶

Nevertheless, there was a rift between the generations. Viacheslav Ivanov, in this comparatively uncreative period of his life, had become dogmatic and perhaps excessively authoritarian, insisting that the true, 'realist' Symbolist 'should cease from creative work that is not linked with Divine all-Unity, should cultivate in himself as far as possible the creative realisation of that unity'.²⁷ The younger generation felt this was asking

too much, and sought to put up barriers, confining art to this world. Bely and Blok knew how wide Ivanov's concept of 'all-Unity' was, but even Blok had his doubts about the idea of art as 'theurgy', aware that the impulses from which art sprang were seldom divine and that art itself, though it may seek to remind men of heaven, is of the fallen world. Nevertheless, he could not agree entirely with Annensky's conclusion that the justification of his existence was 'in art, nothing more', and he did agree with Ivanov's Platonic assumption that art is curiously linked to 'other' worlds and that there is a constant interplay of influences between these other worlds and the one immediately perceptible to our senses and comprehensible to our minds.

A 'fathers and children' situation arose, not unlike that which the Symbolist precursors had experienced in their relationship with the Populists. Even as the first Russian Symbolists were perceived by their 'fathers' as the spiritual heirs of the Romantic 1840s, so the authors grouped about *Apollon* gradually came to be perceived by the 'second generation' Symbolists (Ivanov, Bely and Blok) as pure 'aesthetes' in the style of the Parnassians, whose authority they did indeed invoke, or of the early Russian 'Decadents' – 'Without divinity, without inspiration', as Blok was to write of them virtually from his deathbed in 1921.²⁸

As with the dispute over Mystic Anarchism, these differences were magnified by polemical attempts to state a position or point of view later blown up to the status of manifesto. To begin with, they were slight, illusory even, since all were agreed on the need for change and development. Even the term 'generation' can really be understood only to distinguish those who had made their debut as Symbolists during the first years of the century, before 1905, and those who had not. Kuzmin, Voloshin and Makovsky, for instance, were all older than Blok and Bely, who were not yet thirty when the first number of *Apollon* was published (Bely was just twenty-nine, Blok not quite). Gorodetsky was four years younger than Blok, Gumilev six, Akhmatova nine. Only Mandel'shtam, born in 1891, could truly claim to be of another 'generation'.

When, in *Apollon*, Kuzmin published his article 'O prekrasnoi iasnosti (zametki o proze)' (On beautiful clarity 'notes on prose'), which precipitated the so-called 'crisis of Symbolism', eliciting statements pro or contra from Ivanov, Blok, Bely and Briusov, he was elaborating a desire for greater simplicity and 'Apollonian' measure, which had already been adumbrated in print, as well as in conversation at the Tower and at the Academy by the Symbolists themselves. At the same time, some of his remarks were specifically directed against the 'acrobatical syntax' of Bely and Remizov and the elliptical vagueness of Hippius's prose style. Although he refrains from criticising his host at the Tower, the desiderata

for clarity (particularly the devastating quotation from *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* on the various ways in which it is possible to say 'Beautiful madame la Marquise, your beautiful eyes make me die of love') were transparently applicable to Ivanov's notoriously convoluted syntax. Kuzmin was, in fact, attacking the Symbolists. Nevertheless, the article ended disarmingly:

To my dearest friend I would whisper in your ear: 'If you are a conscientious artist, pray that your chaos (if you are chaotic) should be illumined and organised, or at least control it for the time being by clarity of form: let the short story tell a story, in drama let there be action, keep lyricism for poetry, love the word, as Flaubert did, be economical with your means and stingy with your words, precise and genuine, and you will discover the secret of that divine thing – "beautiful clarity" – which I would call "clarism".'²⁹

Kuzmin himself, both as poet and prose writer, was an established *petit maître* of great elegance and precision.³⁰ He had, however, made a serious error of judgement in preferring the sustained stylisation of Briusov's *Ognennyi angel* to the vital, seminal prose of Bely and Remizov. Everybody, it seemed, now wanted to reassert control over genre and to combat chaos, but not everybody wished to do this in the name of the old enemy 'reason' or the anodyne concept of 'good taste'. For all his disclaimers, it was felt that Kuzmin had thrown down the gauntlet in the name of a new 'ism', and Ivanov took it up.

On 26 March 1910 at the Academy Ivanov read a paper, 'Zavety simbolizma' (The behests of Symbolism), setting out his own position with regard to the new heresy. Insisting on his magnificent view of Symbolism as poetry's recollection of its own roots, 'of its original, fundamental tasks and methods', he repeated his conviction that 'the poet remembers that his calling is to be a religious organiser of life, an interpreter and strengthener of the divine link with existence, a theurgist', and defined Russian Symbolism as 'the religious reaction of our national genius against the waves of iconoclastic materialism', tracing it back unequivocally to Dostoevsky, Solov'ev and Tiutchev.

There was, he said, dialectical progression to be distinguished, a dialectic which takes place in the heart of the individual artist as in the movement as a whole, as in every sphere of being. The Symbolist first experiences a moment of revelation when he realises that the world 'is not confined, one-dimensional and poor', but transparent to the eye of the artist, vast and free. There then ensues a period of trial, 'the antithesis', when occult and evil forces try to break in through the symbol-gateways. This can prove fatal. ('Mir tvoei slavnoi, stradal'cheskoi teni, bezumets Vrubel'), Ivanov interjected, calling down a blessing on the soul of the most demonic of the *Mir Iskusstva* artists. Mikhail Vrubel'. who died that

spring. Now Symbolism was emerging from these trials, albeit with heavy casualties and some desertions (here Ivanov coupled the Merezhkovskys with Aleksandr Dobroliubov as fugitives from art). Those who are left must not retreat into acceptance of the 'seeming' and be content to work on the refinement of their craft, if only because lyric poetry is not a representational art but an art of movement. What is necessary is to discover what he calls an 'inward canon', to do away with fragmented individualism, and to attempt 'bol'shoi stil' (*grand genre*): the epic, the tragedy, the mystery. 'If Symbolist tragedy proves possible', he said, 'then that will mean that the antithesis has been overcome.' To be true to itself, he appeared to be saying, Symbolism must pass into something other than itself: 'Until now Symbolism has made life more complicated. From now on, if it is to go on existing, it will *simplify*.'³¹

Blok, who was present at this speech, both agreed and disagreed with Ivanov's account of the 'dialectical process', which seemed to him applicable to his own way in poetry. The older poet had also pointed in the direction in which Blok himself now wished to proceed – towards more objective forms. On the other hand, the word 'theurgy', the hush of the epiphany evoked by Ivanov with a quotation from his own *Dithyrambs* ('Serdtsse, stan', serdtsse, stan') (Heart, be still! Heart, be still!) and which he saw as the *prelude* to the synthesis, to the discovery of the new simplicity – this worried Blok. Beyond *that* threshold there would be no need for art any more. For Blok, Ivanov made things sound too easy, or at least too accessible in art. There was about him, Blok later came to feel, a 'protivnovataia legkost'' ('a rather repulsive facility'). How could one write tragedy except out of the heart of chaos? He tried to say this, as always speaking in images, telling the Academy about the pictures he had seen in Italy, about the 'black background' necessary to show the brightness of Leonardo's saints and Madonnas. As so often when trying to speak of what mattered most to him, he was incoherent. What did emerge clearly from what he said was that, by and large, he had been moved and convinced by Ivanov's words.

On 12 April 1910, Blok – although still uncertain of his position and yearning to get back to writing poetry rather than trying to explain it – was persuaded to second Ivanov in his polemic against the 'Clarist' tendency, providing what he called a 'Baedeker' to the scholar-poet's complex speech. His 'guidebook' took the form of a lyrical description of the Symbolist's journey from the thesis through the antithesis, harking back to Briusov's old manifestos in *Severnnye Tsvety* and *Vesy* and to the time of the 'dawns'; evoking images from his own poetry and from Vrubel's pictures; identifying Russia's experience of the Revolution, the 'demand for miracle before the time was ripe', with the Symbolist experi-

ence of the 'Antithesis'. Throughout the lecture he used the word 'we', clearly remembering most vividly the old sense of community and shared experience and emphasising the moment of revelation, the feeling of being 'free in worlds of magic', as his own 'anamnesis', the mainspring of his inspiration.

For the period of the 'Antithesis' Blok accepted full moral responsibility, saying that the poets had brought down dark forces on their own heads, having plunged into the 'glittering Hell' of art insufficiently prepared. Like Ivanov, however, Blok felt that this period was now at an end.

His conclusion, though it does not altogether avoid the word 'theurgy', is subdued. Having depicted the Antithesis not as a 'trial' but as a 'fall', Blok sees the way ahead as a purgatorial ascent with an unfenced drop back into the Inferno. 'Our "literary fame"', he said, '(which is worth little or nothing) came to us at the moment when we betrayed the "Hallows of the Muses", when we began to believe in the phantoms of the "antithesis", our own creations, more than in the real revelation of the "thesis". Can what has happened to us be put right, or can it not? This is the same question, in essence, as the question: is Russian Symbolism to be, or not to be?'

To begin to put things right, he concluded, the artist must stop mixing art and life. He must take on himself the role of witness rather than of participant in the great events of those other worlds. So the Italian artists – Bellini, Fra Angelico, Signorelli – had placed themselves modestly as observers of, not as participants in, their splendid Last Judgements and 'santa conversazione'. For the poet, too, it was necessary 'to be reverent in boldness itself, knowing the cost of confusing art with life and remaining, in life, an ordinary man [. . .]'.³²

In this speech, Blok pledged himself, as Bely and Ivanov had already pledged themselves in their theosophical meditations, to the service of Russia, whilst 'remembering' the personal revelation of other worlds. For this public support, Ivanov silently kissed him full on the lips. The two papers were published together in the May–June number of *Apollon*.

The ensuing polemics showed up the divisions within the Symbolist establishment, though it was a sign of the times that most of the discussion was politely conducted in the pages of the one remaining 'avant-garde' journal. In the very next number, Briusov, whose growing formalism and eclecticism in the choice of themes was suggested by the very title of his latest book, *Vse napevy* (All the Tunes), entered the fray in support of his admirer Kuzmin, taking both Ivanov and Blok to task for suggesting that Symbolism could ever be or had ever wanted to be 'anything other than art'.³³ He had heard a version of Ivanov's speech at the opening of *Musagetes* on March 19 and disagreed strongly. Bely leapt to

the defence of Ivanov and Blok and renewed his friendship with the latter in the warmest terms – first by letter and then in person.³⁴

Gorodetsky, on the other hand, wrote a thoroughly offensive article subtitled ‘Strana reveransov i ee purpurno-lilovy Bedeker’ (The land of curtsseys and its lilac-purple Baedeker), which *Apollon* had the good taste not to publish. Even Merezhkovsky, who had not involved himself in the affairs of the Academy or *Apollon*, but who was jealous of Ivanov’s influence over Blok and Bely, chimed in from Paris with an article entitled ‘Balagan i tragediia’, accusing Blok of megalomania (for identifying with his country) and of betrayal of all that was holy in the Russian Revolution.³⁵

The days of ‘collective creation’ – such an important, such a unique feature of Russian Symbolism – were over. Neither did the Symbolists really need their own journals and publishing houses any more, even though *Musagetes* in Moscow and later *Sirin* in St Petersburg were closely associated with individual Symbolists and printed their works, even though *Musagetes* did attempt its own Almanac – of the very first number of which Blok wrote to Bely: ‘Why did we do it? The time for Almanacs is over’³⁶ – and subsequently a journal ‘Trudy i dni Musageta’ (Works and days of Musagete). *Apollon* continued to come out until 1918, even-handedly publishing Symbolists, Clarists and Acmeists and the ongoing debate between them.

The second generation, particularly, were still evolving, still full of vigour, and much of their best work lay ahead: most of Blok’s mature poetry and prose, *The Twelve* and *The Scythians*, Andrei Bely’s *Peterburg*, *Kotik Letaev*, the narrative poem *Pervoe svidanie*, not to mention the Moscow novels and volumes of reminiscences; Viacheslav Ivanov had yet to recover from the creative doldrums and write much of his best poetry, notably the ‘Winter Sonnets’ and the ‘Roman Sonnets’, and also the famous defence of culture in his correspondence with Gershenson, *Perepiska iz dvukh uglov* (A Correspondence between Two Corners) – most translated of all his works – the unfinished epic ‘Svetomir’, and that miraculous winter-flower, the 1944 *Roman Diary* written in his seventy-ninth year.

From 1910 onwards, the Symbolists could afford to leave the cut and thrust of literary politics to the youngsters, although of course they did not do so overnight, and it was not until Bely and Ivanov met abroad in 1913 that they consciously gave up the struggle. It was the turn of the Acmeists, who eventually emerged as a coherent group from Gumilev’s ‘Tsekh poetov’ (Poet’s workshop), the Imagists, Futurists and Ego-Futurists to issue manifestos and to polemicise against their predecessors

and one another. These new groupings sprang up like mushrooms after rain over the last decade of the Silver Age, stridently outbidding one another for attention and producing magnificent poetry, but all are unthinkable without the revolution in attitudes to art and language brought about by the Symbolist movement.

'I want to be an artist', Blok had complained just before launching out into 'On the present state of Russian Symbolism', 'not a mystic purveyor of talks.' For him the 'to be or not to be' really concerned 'art' rather than Symbolism. 'In our time there is no art outside Symbolism', he said in 1910. In 1912 he was critical of Ivanov's insistence on speaking of a 'school of art' and of his continuing polemic 'between the lines' with Gumilev, 'who may well be one of us', and whom – after the first Acmeist manifestos – Blok felt he could combat *alone*, as an artist, having shaken off all the 'isms' (including 'symbolisms' with a small s).³⁷

For Viacheslav Ivanov, Symbolism had not so much died as grown – to include Goethe, Dante, Dostoevsky, tragedy. What he had sought to establish was the general principle that '... any art is Symbolist', even if 'we who had established the principle had been at the same time the least worthy exponents of it'. In the new-born and shortlived *Trudy i Dni Musageta* (No. 1, 1912), in the article 'Mysli o simbolizme' (Thoughts on Symbolism) he played with the idea of the death of the movement. 'Of course it is dead!' say some, 'but we who have died bear witness, whispering in the ear of those who feast at our funeral, that there is no death.'³⁸ In a 1936 article written in emigration for an Italian encyclopaedia, Ivanov at last concedes the death of European Symbolism as he had known it, but again affirms his faith in the return under another form 'del simbolismo eterno'.

'Symbolism is no more', wrote Andrei Bely, looking back – not without irony – from the 'real twentieth century' in the Soviet Union, 'But in 1910 the Symbolists are doing better than ever before [...] long live the Symbolists.'³⁹

Epilogue

Я — не первый воин, не последний,
Долго будет родина больна . . .

Александр Блок*

The squabbles soon simmered down. New alliances were formed and old ones grew steadily more threadbare.

Viacheslav Ivanov continued the friendliest of correspondences with Briusov, though he blamed him severely – particularly during his period of bureaucratic service to Soviet power – for reneging on Symbolist responsibility and squandering his talent. Briusov died in 1924 and Ivanov, at the request of his widow, wrote a beautiful and thoughtful poem in memoriam.

Blok made his peace with the Merezhkovskys, then shied away from Ivanov whose Baroque ‘atmosphere’ became ‘unthinkable’ for him in the gloomy years leading up to the First World War. In 1912, he addressed a poem to him, still full of admiration, but declaring that he no longer saw him as ‘a friend’ as he had in the days of revolution. Ivanov replied imperturbably, *sub specie aeternitatis*: ‘Pust’ vnov’ – ne drug, o moi liubimyi, / No bratom budu ia tebe / Na veki vechnye, v rodimoj / Narodnoi mysli i sud’be’ (‘Let it be so again – not a friend, beloved, / But a brother I will be to you / To all eternity, in our native / People’s thought and fate’). Bely never quarrelled seriously with Blok or Viacheslav again. He continued to stay with Ivanov at the Tower when he came to Petersburg until both poets again began to spend long periods abroad and Ivanov, in 1913, moved to Moscow. Both Ivanov and Blok helped and encouraged Bely when he could not at once find a publisher for the sequel to *Serebrianyi golub’*, the superb *Peterburg*. Bely never wrote the third novel of the Trilogy, which was to have been called after Kitezh, the invisible city: *Nevidimyi grad*.

Indeed, Ivanov was, of all the Symbolists, the only one to persist and

* ‘I am not the first soldier, not the last / Long will our native-land still ail . . .’ Aleksandr Blok

partially to succeed in attempts to write of the goal of their pilgrimage, the Paradiso which, in the later works of Blok and of Bely, is present only by contrast, only in the briefest, most enigmatic glimpses. The Apollonian dream was closer to Ivanov's nature than the Dionysian frenzy in which the two younger poets continued to live and move and have their being, and he believed that it is present to us here on Earth, only veiled. Perhaps this is why, having welcomed, as did all the Symbolists without exception, the fall of the autocracy in February 1917, Ivanov was shocked and wrathful when Bely identified the Soviets as 'your orchestrae, Viacheslav' and Blok, in *The Twelve*, showed Jesus Christ amidst the snowy chaos and darkness of January 1918.

Nevertheless, Blok was more eager to hear Viacheslav's opinion of what was going on in Russian literature than anyone else's, when, in the summer of 1918, Aliansky sought to 'reunite' the Symbolists, and brought the three of them briefly together around his shoestring publishing project 'Alkonost' and the periodical *Zapiski mechtatelei* (Dreamers' Notes). They met for the last time at one of Blok's poetry readings in Moscow in the spring of 1921, when he was already a dying man.

Blok died aged forty in August of the same year, exhausted by art and a self-destructive life, within a few days of Gumilev, who was shot for alleged involvement in a monarchist conspiracy. At least they had begun to disprove Annensky's contention that no legends would grow up about the poets of their day.

Bely continued to write superbly, always on the brink of paranoia and nervous collapse, always winning through to channel his anguish into art. In 1921 he went to Berlin, in part for a reunion with Asia Turgeneva, who had remained with Rudolf Steiner to build the Goetheaneum in Switzerland when Bely returned to Russia to meet his call-up in 1916. She had been his constant companion since they left for Italy, Tunisia, Egypt and the Holy Land together in December 1910, but their relationship was broken off dramatically in 1922. Bely remained in Germany, deeply involved in Russian literary life there, spending much time with Marina Tsvetaeva, Khodasevich and Gor'ky until October 1923, when he returned to Russia. Here he lived with a theosopher friend, Klavdiia Vasil'eva, to whom he gave the protection of his name after her brief arrest in 1931, frequently visiting Max Voloshin at his hospitable home in Koktebel', living in later years in a small house outside Moscow in Kuchino, and staying for long periods in the Caucasus. Although active in the literary and theatrical life of Moscow throughout the 1920s (in 1925 an adaptation of *Peterburg* was staged with his participation by MKhAT with Mikhail Chekhov in the part of Senator Ableukhov), Bely was increasingly criticised and harassed after 1928. He died – perhaps as he

would have wished, certainly as his poetry obliquely foretold – of the after-effects of sunstroke suffered in the summer at Koktebel' on 8 January 1934; the urn with his ashes was interred in the graveyard of his beloved Novo-Devichii Monastery.

In 1919, Vasilii Rozanov died, as he had foreseen, in the arms of the church, or, to be more precise, of his friend the priest Pavel Florensky, having worked almost till the last on the *Apokalipsis nashego vremeni* (Apocalypse of Our Times), in which he blamed the disasters which had overtaken Russia on Christian neglect of this world.

Sologub lingered on. He inherited the civic mantle of Blok and Gumilev as chairman of the moribund poets' section of the old Writers' Union. The young Evgenii Shvarts – an infrequent attender at their smoke-enshrouded, mistrustful gatherings, during which the endless recitations of poetry which touched no one seemed to him to make the atmosphere still smokier – described one of Sologub's rare appearances:

He was in a heavy fur coat with a beaver collar such as priests wear and was out of breath after the steep stairs. From all sides voices were raised: 'Fedor Kuz'mich, recite something.' And immediately, without a pause, as he sidled along the wall from the hall to the room on the left, he began, breathing heavily: 'When I was a dog . . .' his heavy face, at once Russian and Roman, was completely calm, as though he were alone in the room. And everyone fell silent and it was as if the atmosphere cleared for a moment. A stranger was passing through the room, but a poet, dying, but still alive.

So in awe of this revenant from another world were the young Soviet writers that no one had the courage to escort him home from the banquet arranged in his honour in the last year of his life, 1927. He died, reluctantly, just before the Russian Association of Proletarian Writers established its four-year stranglehold over literature in 1928. A Manichaeist to the last, he divided his later poetry between sweet, tinkling pastorales and black imprecations against the Soviet State where 'Peredonov is Commissar'.

Bal'mont, who had suffered exile from Russia for his revolutionary poems and activities from 1906 to 1913, left his native land again in 1920 and, by 1921, had made public statements critical of Soviet power which ensured he remained abroad. He continued his life of study and poetry, but he had outlived his fame, turned increasingly to drink and, from 1932 till his death in 1942, suffered attacks of madness and lived in dire poverty in Noisy-le-Grand outside Paris, where he wrote no more poetry, though he continued to read and to recite: Esenin, Akhmatova, Tsvetaeva – and Bal'mont.

Aleksandr Benois, like Blok, Bely and Briusov, supported the October Revolution and worked as industriously as ever as a custodian of the

visual arts in his native St Petersburg until the mid-1920s when he left Russia and settled in Paris. Diaghilev, who had come to look on art as stimulation to the senses but retained his gift of discovering, loving, bringing together and promoting genius after genius, Russian and European, died in Venice – where else? – in 1936.

Remizov lived, as always, on the brink of penury in St Petersburg, where he grew increasingly friendly with Blok and acquired a following among young prose-writers, but which he left for Europe in 1921; in Berlin and in Paris he managed to piece together a wonderful patchwork of his life and times, dreams and old tales retold, which has still to be fully reassembled. He kept in touch with that other disintegrator of literary form, Lev Shestov, who, although he once wrote that ‘to try to do good to everyone at once is a sure way of not doing good to anybody at all’, always kept trying . . . even as he watched with open eyes the growth of tyranny in Russia and of Fascism in Germany and Italy. Having lived much of his life abroad anyway, Shestov had a solid European reputation, taught philosophy in Paris and published many works in German or French before they came out in Russian. Mercifully, he died before the German occupation of Paris.

The Merezhkovskys, whose personal involvement with Savinkov and Kerensky made them, from the outset, more militantly anti-Soviet than was usual among creative writers and artists, tried for a while to assist in liaison work between White Russian forces and the Polish Army after leaving Russia in 1919. Filosofov remained in Poland but Hippus and Merezhkovsky made their way to Paris where, always inseparable, they continued to organise Religious-Philosophical circles, to influence émigré literature, write abundantly and make political mistakes on the grand scale. Although she had publicly broken off relations with Blok and Bely for their acceptance of the October Revolution, Hippus privately retained great tenderness for both and brought them hauntingly before her readers in one of the first memoirs of the period, *Zhivye litsa* (Living Faces, 1925).

Between 1936 and the outbreak of the Second World War the Merezhkovskys paid almost annual visits to Italy and would spend whole days with Viacheslav Ivanov, who, after teaching as a professor at the University of Baku (1919–24) and the Collegio Borromeo in Padua (1926–34), had settled in Rome with his remaining family, his daughter by Lidiia and his son by Vera, who had died of consumption in 1920. Merezhkovsky originally admired Mussolini, but Ivanov, not being or wishing to be a member of the Fascist party, had to give up university teaching from 1934. He had followed Vladimir Solov'ev in converting to a Uniate form of Catholicism in 1926. In the halcyon lull before they were swept apart by

the fresh storms of the Second World War, the three of them would sit in Ivanov's 'gurgling' terraced garden on the Tarpeian Rock, all old rivalries forgotten, and talk . . . looking out over the ruins of ancient Rome and back over those of their own past, more recent and more sad.

Chronology

1892

February: *Severnyi Vestnik* [SV] (literary editor AKIM VOLYNSKY (A.L. Fletcher, 1863–1926) publishes poems by Z.N. HIPPIUS (1869–1945) and FEDOR SOLOGUB (F.K. Teternikov, 1863–1927), hers the first to appear under own name, his first under literary pseudonym.

'Poety Simvolisty vo Frantsii', by ZINAIDA VENGEROVA (1867–1941), is published in *Vestnik Evropy* No. 9.

D.S. MEREZHKOVSKY (1865–1941) publishes collection *Simvoly. Pesni i poemy (1887–1891)*. He spends summer in France and Italy with his wife, Zinaida Hippus, visiting the Parthenon on return journey. In St. Petersburg [SPb] on 7 and 14 Dec, reads two lectures, 'O prichinakh upadka i o novykh techeniakh v sovremennoi russkoi literature'.

Sologub moves from Vytegr to SPb, to teach mathematics at the Rozhdestvensky school. His 'only friend', his sister, keeps house.

VASILII ROZANOV (1856–1919) is teaching in one-street town of Belyi, Smolensk province.

LEV SHESTOV (Lev Isaakovich Shvartsman, 1866–1938) is recalled from assisting Moscow lawyer to take up family business in Kiev.

VIACHESLAV IVANOV (1866–1949) is in Rome at work on dissertation on Roman tax farming for his Berlin professor, Theodor Mommsen.

KONSTANTIN BAL'MONT (1867–1942), begins to publish poems in periodicals and embarks on translation of the 'complete works' of Shelley.

ALEKSANDR DOBROLIUBOV (1876–1944), disturbed by death of father and influenced by Vladimir Hippus, embraces aestheticism and the idea that 'all is permitted'. Reads Huysmans, French Symbolists and Parnassiens 'from cover to cover'.

VALERII BRIUSOV (1873–1924), a senior at L.I. Polivanov's school in

Moscow, confides to his diary on 21 August: 'I was born to be a poet. Yes! Yes! Yes!'

ALEKSEI BELY (B.N. Bugaev, 1880–1934) is a junior at the same school.

ALEKSANDR BLOK (1880–1921) attends the Vvedensky school in St Petersburg.

1893

Merezhkovsky writes on 'Misticheskie dvizheniia nashego veka' in *Trud* No. 4. His 'O prichinakh upadka . . .' is reviewed by N.K. Mikhailovsky in 'Russkoe otrazhenie frantsuzskogo simvolizma', *Russkoe Bogatsvo* No. 2.

Volynsky begins 'Russkie kritiki', in *SV* for Oct.

Bal'mont begins to publish with *SV*.

Rozanov obtains post as civil servant in SPb.

Viacheslav Ivanov meets Lidia Dmitrievna Zinov'eva-Annibal in Rome in July and 'recognises' himself as a poet.

Dobroliubov continues to study French poets and to preach and practise 'decadence' (drugs and cult of death).

Briusov, having declared to his diary on 4 Mar his intention of becoming the leader of 'Decadence', enrolls in the autumn at Moscow University; inspired by Vengerova's article (see 1892) he combs Moscow book shops for works by French Symbolists and tries his hand at translation and imitation.

ALEKSANDR BENOIS (1870–1960) is asked to write section on Russian art for Richard Muther's *History of European Art*.

1894

Briusov and A. Miropolsky (Lang) publish *Russkie Simvolisty* I and II. Briusov is visited by Aleksandr Dobroliubov and Vladimir Hippius in mid-June. 28 Sep he meets Bal'mont and they 'swear eternal love'. Bal'mont and Dobroliubov become role-models.

Bal'mont's collection *Pod severnym nebom* is published in SPb.

Sologub publishes first short story, 'Teni' (Shadows) in *SV*.

Merezhkovsky's programmatic 'Pesnia vakhantov' appears in *SV*. On holiday in France, he and Hippius first meet DMITRII FILOSOFOV (1872–1940).

Rozanov publishes his *Legenda o velikom inkvizitore* with two essays on Gogol' which lay foundation for Symbolist reassessment; he becomes involved in polemics with VLADIMIR SOLOV'EV (1853–1900).

1895

According to P.P. PERTSOV (1868–1947), editor and publisher of collection *Molodaia poeziia* which comes out this year, the *annus mirabilis* of Russian Symbolism.

Merezhkovsky's *Smert' bogov. Iulian Otstupnik*, the first novel of his trilogy *Khristos i Antikhris*, commences serialisation under title *Otverzhenyi* in *SV*.

Hippius's poems 'Posviashchenie' and 'Pesnia', appear in Mar and Dec nos. respectively, her story 'Miss May' in the Oct no.

Sologub's first novel, *Tiazhelye sny*, begins serialisation from July: his *Stikhi, kniga pervaiia* is published in Dec (dated 1896).

Briusov publishes two editions of *Chefs d'œuvre*, and third and last *Russkie Simvolisty (Leto 1895)*, causing uproar in press and inspires parodies in Vl. Solov'ev's review of all three *Sborniki* in *Vestnik Evropy*.

Bal'mont publishes *V bezbrezhnosti* and two volumes of translation from E.A. Poe: *Ballady i fantazii* and *Tainstvennye rasskazy*.

Dobroliubov publishes *Natura naturans. Natura naturata*.

Rozanov's article on Lev Tolstoy, appearing in *Russkii Vestnik*, shocks liberal opinion; *Krasota v prirode* is published in Moscow.

Shestov makes his début in *Kievskoe Slovo* with an article on Georg Brandes and *Hamlet* signed 'L.Sh.' By end of year on verge of nervous breakdown.

Bely begins to contribute poems to school journal; he meets Ol'ga, Mikhail and Sergei Solov'ev.

SERGEI DIAGLIEV (1872–1929) makes his first trip to Europe alone and begins to collect graphic art.

1896

Merezhkovsky's *Smert' bogov* is published in book form, also *Novye stikhotvoreniia (1891–1895)*.

Z.N. Hippius brings out a collection of short stories, *Novye liudi*.

Briusov begins work on *Me eum esse*. In Apr pays first visit to SPb, renews acquaintance with Dobroliubov and V. Hippius. Spends summer in Caucasus writing *Me eum esse* which he hands over to printer in Nov.

Volynsky's *Russkie kritiki* is published in book form.

Sologub's *Tiazhelye sny* comes out in book form.

NIKOLAI MINSKY (N.M. Vilenkin, 1855–1937) published *Stikhotvoreniia*, his first collection of verse since the neo-Populist 1883 *Stikhotvoreniia (1877–1882)* was ordered burnt by the censor.

Pertsov's critical anthology *Filosofskie techeniia v russkoi poezii* advocates an aesthetic attitude to thought and a thoughtful attitude to poetry which still seem a poor joke to majority of critics.

Rozanov's first article for *Novoe Vremia*, 'Psikhologiiia nashego otnoshe-niia k raskolu', appears on the 4/10 June.

Shestov writes an article (unpublished) on 'Idealism and Symbolism in *Severnyi Vestnik*'. In Mar he leaves for Europe for cure and to devote himself to literature.

Viacheslv Ivanov meets Vladimir Solov'ev who offers to help place his poetry.

Benois' enlists Moscow artists from the Abramtsevo group to exhibit at Munich Secession. In the autumn he moves to Paris where he is based until summer 1899. Before he leaves, Benois seeks out Merezhkovsky.

Diagilev begins to write art criticism for *Birzhevye Vedomosti*.

IVAN KONEVSKOI (I.I. Oreus, 1877–1901) presents a paper on 'Russian Symbolism' to a student society at SPb University.

1897

The Merezhkovskys leave *SV*, Volynsky having refused to serialise Mer-zhkovsky's *Voskresshie bogi. Leonardo da Vinci. Vechnye sputniki* is published by Pertsov.

Minsky publishes a 2nd edn. of his 'decadent' philosophical treatise *Pri svete sovesti*, originally 1890.

Bal'mont is invited to lecture on Russian poetry at Taylorian Institute, Oxford; returns to Russia at the end of the year.

Briusov's *Me eum esse* is published in Moscow; he marries Zhanna Matveevna Runt.

Shestov, living near Rome, finishes his first book, *Shekspir i ego kritik Brandes*. In Feb meets future wife Anna Eleazarovna Berezovskaia, and embarks on secret relationship.

Ivanov and Zinov'eva-Annibal spend most of this year in England (London and Cornwall).

Konevskoi makes first trip alone to W. Europe (Vienna, Salzburg, Munich, Nuremberg, on foot through Thuringia). Hears *Parsifal* at Bayreuth.

Dobroliubov leaves Petersburg for Olonetsk where he spends winter hunting, collecting folk-tales, songs, incantations. Suffers conversion, repents old 'decadent' way of life and renounces literature.

KONSTANTIN STANISLAVSKY (K. Alekseev, 1863–1938) and VLADIMIR NEMOROVICH-DANCHENKO (1858–1943) found the Moscow Arts Theatre [MKhT].

Bely reads Schopenhauer and writes fairy-tale and two-act play (lost), influenced by Ibsen, Maeterlinck and Hauptmann.

Blok, at Bad Nauheim with his mother, falls in love with K.M. Sadovskaia, the immediate inspiration of his earliest lyric poetry.

1898

SV closes down.

Diagilev and Filosofov organise the exhibition of Finnish and Russian painters (15 Jan–8 Feb). At their regular Friday receptions, they discuss with Merezhkovskys and others the founding of a new journal, *Mir Iskusstva* (*MI*), and obtain promise of subsidies from Princess Tenisheva and Mamontov; 9 Nov they celebrate publication of No. 1–2.

Hippius, who plays a key role in alliance with *MI*, publishes *Zerkala. Vtoraia kniga rasskazov*.

Rozanov leaves civil service to write regularly for *Novoe Vremia*; Pertsov offers to publish a collection of his articles and he makes the acquaintance of the Merezhkovskys and *Mir Iskussniki*.

Briusov, fired by Tolstoy's *Chto takoe iskusstvo*, writes *O iskusstve* (pub. 24 Nov). He spends Apr–May in Yalta and rest of summer between

Moscow and 'dacha' in Ostankino, where he is visited 28 July by Dobroliubov, who plans to give away all his worldly goods and enter a monastery; 12 Sep Dobroliubov visits Briusovs in Moscow and leaves them MSS which include folk poetry. Inspired by these, Briusov begins to experiment with specifically Russian metres. He reads these and other poems in SPb where, on 9 Dec, he first visits Merezhkovskys and on 14 Dec meets Konevskoi at Sologub's. That autumn begins work for P. Bartenev of *Russkii Arkhiv*.

Bal'mont publishes *Tishina*. He spends summer in Moscow and the Crimea and winters in SPb; there, in December, he is joined by Briusov (see above).

Ivanov places poems in the journals *Kosmopolis* and *Vestnik Evropy*.

Shestov's *Shekspir i ego kritik Brandes* published. He spends most of 1898 in Lausanne working on Nietzsche and Tolstoy.

Konevskoi again travels in summer vacation to Cologne, Heidelberg and on through Switzerland to the Italian lakes. (See also Briusov.)

Bely writes first fragments of his (lost) Mystery Play 'Antichrist'; in the summer visits Solov'ev family at Dedovo.

Blok plays Hamlet to Liubov' Dmitrievna Mendeleeva's Ophelia at Boblovo. Visits Solov'evs at Dedovo. He begins to study law at the University of SPb.

1899

In *MI* (1898–1904) Filosofov runs literary section and publishes Minsky, Merezhkovskys, Rozanov, Sologub and Bal'mont. Vladimir Solov'ev's dialogue with the 'Russian Nietzscheans' is broken off after Pushkin Centenary Number. Tenisheva withdraws support as does Mamontov, arrested in Sep. VALENTIN SEROV (1865–1911) persuades the Tsar (whose portrait he is painting) to subsidize *MI*, which attracts other patronage.

Diagilev edits Arts section of *MI* and organises first international exhibition of French and Russian painters Jan/Feb.

Hippius and Merezhkovsky spend most of year abroad, in Italy, Capri and Germany. *Voskresshie bogi* begins serialisation in *Nachalo*.

Rozanov publishes collections: *Religiia i kul'tura*; *Sumerki prosveshcheniia* and *Literaturnye ocherki*.

Shestov, staying in SPb, resumes friendship with Vengerova and meets

Minsky and other literati; *Dobro v uchenii Tolstogo i Nitche* is published and attracts attention of Diagilev and Merezhkovsky.

Bal'mont brings manuscript of Konevskoi's poems to Briusov in Jan and they plan *Kniga razdumii* (privately published in Nov) with contributions by Bal'mont, Briusov, Konevskoi and Modest Durnov (Hippius and Sologub decline). That summer Bal'mont is instrumental in bringing together founders of 'Skorpion' (see Briusov).

Briusov in Mar publishes first poems in commercial press *Iuzhnoe obozrenie*, No. 727 with help of Bunin whom he first met in SPb previous Dec. 17–22 May visits Bal'mont, Konevskoi, Pertsov, Merezhkovskys, Fofanov in SPb. In May graduates from Moscow University. June–July in Crimea. In Moscow in Aug is introduced by Bal'mont to SERGEI POLIAKOV (1874–1948) and JURGIS BALTRUŠAITIS (1873–1944); together they plan publishing-house Skorpion.

Konevskoi visits Briusov in Moscow in Sep. *Mechty i dumy* is published in autumn. For *Kniga razdumii* see Bal'mont.

Dobroliubov lives in monastery at Solovki (see Briusov 1898).

Zinov'eva-Annibal obtains divorce, and marries Ivanov at Livorno. Ivanov visits Russia in the autumn.

Bely enters Moscow University to study physics and mathematics.

Blok reads his first 'decadent' work, Hippius's *Zerkala*.

INNOKENTII ANNENSKY (1856–1909), not yet known as a Symbolist, publishes *Pushkin i Tsarskoe Selo*.

1900

Briusov emerges as life and soul of Skorpion. Publishes Baltrušaitis' and Poliakov's translation of Ibsen's *When We Dead Awaken*; Bal'mont, *Goriashchie zdaniia. Lirika sovremennoi dushi*; Dobroliubov, *Sobranie stikhov*, introduced by Konevskoi; and Briusov, *Tertia vigilia*. Work is begun on a Skorpion almanac *Severnnye Tsvety* [STs] which unites Moscow and SPb Symbolists under one cover. In Nov Poliakov establishes 'diplomatic relations' by calling on Diagilev and Filosofov at *MI*, and, with Briusov, on the Merezhkovskys.

Bal'mont returns from travel (Berlin, Paris, Spain, Biarritz, Oxford) in Aug to settle briefly in SPb (see also Briusov).

Merezhkovsky continues serialisation of 'Voskresshie bogi' in *Mir Bozhii*

and 'Lev Tolstoi i Dostoevskii' begins in *MI*. He and Hippius discuss 'historical' Christianity with Benois, Bakst, Filosofov and Rozanov, who introduces them to practising Orthodox friends.

Hippius brings out a collection of short stories, *Novye liudi*.

Shestov celebrates New Year in Kiev, leaves for Berlin in Jan and spends rest of year with his 'secret' family in Switzerland, working on Dostoevsky and Nietzsche.

Minsky publishes *Al'ma. Tragediia iz sovremennoi zhizni v trekh deistviiakh*.

Rozanov publishes *Priroda v istorii. Sbornik statei po voprosam nauki, istorii i filosofii*.

Volynsky brings out a collection of articles, *Bor'ba za idealizm*.

Dobroliubov's second book *Sobranie stikhov* (see Briusov) published *in absentia*.

A.I. Urusov, influential writer on Baudelaire and first patron of Bal'mont, dies (see Merezhkovsky's obituary, *MI* No. 15–16).

VI. Solov'ev dies 31 Jul in year of maximum impact on the Symbolists. Briusov reviews his *Stikhi* for *Russkii Arkhiv* (Book II, No. 8) highlighting the Sophianic theme; he gives public reading of *Kratkaia Povest' ob Antikhriste* in SPb; V. Ivanov obtains his approval for title and independent publication of *Kormchie zvezdy*; Bely talks to him about Antichrist and, after his death, begins to study his works with M.S. Solov'ev and Sergei, trustees of his literary estate; Blok reads his introduction to Plato's Dialogues.

Bely completes *Pervaia (severnaia) simfoniia*.

Blok attends extracurricular lectures on the history of philosophy and reads Plato (in the Solov'evs' translation). He offers the poem 'Gamaiun' to *Mir Bozhii* but it is rejected.

GEORGII CHULKOV (1879–1939), a medical student at Moscow University and an admirer of VI. Solov'ev, reads an 'apotheosis' of Briusov's poetry at one of Briusov's now regular Tuesday receptions and invites him to contribute verses to a seditious student collection.

Diagilev, Benois and V. Serov, after successful *MI* exhibition in St Petersburg in Feb, collaborate with Moscow artists Roehrich, Golovin and Golubkina and the philosopher Prince E Trubetskoi to arrange a further exhibition in Moscow.

1901

A year of political unrest at universities and conflict between Intelligentsia and government, marked by Gor'ky's arrest and Tolstoy's excommunication.

Bal'mont is sentenced to 3 years internal exile after reciting *lèse-majesté* 'Malen'kii Sultan' on 14 Mar at the Gorodskaja Duma.

Briusov takes over Bal'mont's regular survey of Russian literature for *The Athenaeum* and makes first contribution to *MI*, introducing 'Moscow' Symbolism in the article 'Otvét g. Andreevskomu'. Writes 'Kinžal' and other subversive poems for Chulkov's unpub. collection.

Filosofov, deeply involved with Merezhkovsky's ideas, lumbers *MI* with 'Religiia L'va Tolstogo i Dostoevskogo', serialises Minsky's 'Filosofskie razgovory' in Nos. 11/12.

Merezhkovsky lectures on Tolstoy at Petersburg Philosophical Society on 7 Feb, 2nd lecture cancelled after excommunication. That summer Hippius and Merezhkovsky decide to convene public debate between Intelligentsia and church and succeed in inaugurating St Petersburg Religious-Philosophical Meetings on Nov 29.

Lev Shestov is drawn into *MI* by Diagilev's invitation to review Merezhkovsky's 'Tolstoy and Dostoevsky' and to serialise his own book on Dostoevsky and Nietzsche (pub. in *MI* Nos. 2–9/10, 1902).

Diagilev is appointed Personal Assistant to Manager of Imperial theatres and produces almanac which delights the Tsar. *MI* group gains influence in State theatres.

Dobroliubov leaves Solovki and joins the sectarian Molokane, is arrested and eventually returned to supervision of family.

Konevskoi is drowned swimming in the River Aa on 8 July. Briusov begins to collect his works.

For Bely – the year of 'the dawns'. Engrossed in philosophy and poetry of Solov'ev, he conceives a 'mystic' passion for M.K. Morozova, whom he first sees at a concert in Feb and bombards with anonymous letters, a state of affairs described in the *Vtoraia (dramaticheskaja) simfonia*. Jun/Jul he 'studies the sunsets' at family country home Serebrianyi Kolodez' and – influenced by Bal'mont – incorporates their colours into his poetry. In Sep, Ol'ga Solov'eva first shows him Blok's poetry. M. Solov'ev seeks publisher for *Vtoraia simfoniia* and suggests pseudonym Andrei Bely. In

Nov Bely first meets ELLIS (L.L. Kobylinsky, 1879–1938) and G.A. RACHINSKY (1853–1939). In Dec – at the Solov'evs' – he meets Briusov (who agrees to publish the Symphony) and the Merezhkovskys, to whom he subsequently writes a letter signed 'A natural science student' (pub. in *Novyi Put'*, I, 1903).

Blok also finds vocation this year. A 'presence' begins to make itself felt in his poetry from Feb onwards and in Apr the gift of Solov'ev's *Stikhi* confirms the theme of devotion to the Most Beautiful Lady (Sophia). In the course of his 'mystic summer' he projects this theme onto his love for Liubov' Mendeleeva and studies new poetry in *STs*. That autumn he transfers to the Philological Faculty (Slavonic-Russian Department of University).

Other publications confirm reputations already established and include the following books: Merezhkovsky, *Voskresshie Bogi. Leonardo da Vinci* (SPb) and *Khristos i Antikhrisť v russkoi literature I* (SPb); Minsky, *Novye pesni* (SPb); Volynsky, *Tsarstvo Karamazovykh – N.S. Leskov. Zametki* (SPb); Rozanov, *V Mire neiasnogo i nereshennogo* (SPb); Annensky. *Melanippa-filosof. Tragediia* (SPb).

1902

Merezhkovsky publishes *Stikhotvoreniia (1882–1902)* (SPb), *Liubov' sil'nei smerti. Italijskie novelly XV veka* and the second volume of *Tolstoi i Dostoevskii. Religiiia* (SPb). His translation of *Hippolytus* staged during Autumn season at the Mariinsky with costumes and décor by Bakst and his speech ('O novom zhachenii drevnei tragedii' (*Novoe Vremia* 28 Oct, No. 9560)) initiates debate on Nietzschean concept of tragedy. Rel.-Phil. Meetings continue throughout winter season.

Hippius proselytises for the 'new religious consciousness' in *MI*, seeks to enlist Bely (on visit to Moscow 17–19 Feb) and almost succeeds in enlisting Briusov to become 'secretary to editors' of a new journal *Novyi Put'* [*NP*], planned at Luga that summer with Pertsov.

Rozanov, promised his 'own corner' in *NP*, participates actively at the Meetings.

Minsky publishes 'O svobode religioznoi sovesti' (SPb), a speech made at Meetings.

Diagilev does not welcome these developments and in *MI*, at a meeting on Nov 20, there is talk of closing down the literary section. This is

countered by Briusov, present for first time. Backstage intrigue leads to Diaghilev's fall from grace in Imperial Theatres.

Benois designs décor for Wagner's *Die Walküre* at the Mariinsky theatre.

Bal'mont is permitted to live out his exile abroad and in Mar leaves for Paris, Oxford and London. His poetic plays are staged (unsuccessfully) by M. Durnov's amateur circle 'Oman' in Moscow.

Briusov's involvement with *NP* and *MI* (where in 'Nenuzhnaia pravda' he initiates attack on aesthetic of MKhT) – leads him to spend more time in SPb. He visits Italy (5 May–11 Jul), and when in Moscow organises Wednesday jours-fixes, attends the Literary-Artistic Circle on Tuesdays. Within 'Skorpion' he publishes Bely's *Vtoraia (dramaticheskaiia) simfoniia*, Miropolsky's *Lestvitsa*, Bunin's *Listopad*.

ALEKSEI REMIZOV (1877–1957) pays 'illegal' visit to SPb and Moscow, finds more sympathy for his work with Filosofov than with Briusov but interests latter with tales of exile in Vologda and Ust-Sysol'sk with NIKOLAI BERDIAEV (1874–1948), and fellow ex-Marxist SERGEI BULGAKOV (1871–1942), authors of anti-materialist *Problemy idealizma* (Moscow).

Ivanov and Zinov'eva-Annibal travel to Greece, Egypt and Palestine. They return to Athens after Easter, where Ivanov succumbs to typhus and spends the rest of year convalescing and studying the religion of Dionysos *in situ*.

In Moscow SERGEI KRECHETOV (Sergei Sokolov, 1878–1936) founds a second Symbolist publishing house with its own Almanac – Grif.

Bely meets E.K. METNER (1872–1936) in Apr. Over summer he works on third Symphony *Vozrat*, reads Nietzsche and Kant and learns from Briusov's friendly criticism of his poetry. Nov he attends recital by Olenina d'Al'geim and reads a paper 'O formakh iskusstva' to a student society, meets Diaghilev at *MI* exhibition in Moscow and contributes review of recitals and 'O formakh . . .' to *MI* 11 and 12.

Blok, having first met the Merezhkovskys on 26 Mar, spends summer in Shakhmatovo (writing poetry, corresponding with Hippus, and reading *STs*). That autumn he begins to attend *MI* gatherings and Rel.-Phil. Meetings.

Annensky publishes *Tsar Iksion Tragediia V 5-ti deistviiakh s 5 muzhkal'nymi antraktami* (SPb); *Putevye ocherki* (SPb).

1903

NP (1903–4) begins publication. *MI* welcomes it as sister-journal but Shestov's unfavourable review of Merezhkovsky in *MI* No. 1/2 and ongoing polemic on art and religion between Benois and Filosofov are symptomatic of deepening rift between 'aesthetes' and 'thinkers'. In spite of double censorship (lay and ecclesiastic) *NP*'s first three numbers serialise Merezhkovsky's 'Gogol' i chort'; No. 1 publishes Bely's letter; No. 3 Blok's 'Iz posviashchenii' and Remizov's 'Na etape'. The Rel-Phil. Meetings are closed down by Pobedonostsev in Apr. *NP*, forbidden to continue printing stenographic reports, is plunged into crisis, but survives.

Rozanov contributes 'In my own corner' to *NP* and publishes *Mesto khristianstva v istorii* (SPb) and *Semeinnyi vopros v Rossii*, 2 vols. (SPb).

Briusov's *Urbi et orbi* (Skorpion) establishes him as the leading poet in the eyes of younger generation but he quarrels with several of them (notably Bely) in an attempt to block publication with Grif, who this year bring out their first Almanac and Bal'mont's *Tol'ko Liubov'*, *semitsvetnik* (M). Skorpion retains his *Budem kak solntse, kniga simvolov* (M). Briusov reviews Ivanov's *Kormchie zvezdy* for the Apr number of *NP* and is bearer of a letter to him from Merezhkovsky offering to publish his lectures on Dionysos to the Russian Community in Paris. News of these reaches *NP* through expatriate MAXIMILIAN VOLOSHIN (1877–1932), who appears in Russia in Jan with letters of recommendation to leading Symbolists. During 16 days Briusov spends in Paris in Apr he obtains Ivanov's agreement to publish with *NP*, interests him in 'Skorpion' and cultivates editors of *La Plume* and *Mercure de France*. Returns home via Cologne and Berlin. In Oct he extricates himself from *NP* when Poliakov obtains permission for a literary-critical 'Skorpion' journal, *Vesy*.

For Bely the year begins with exchange of letters with Blok and death, on 16 Jan, of Mikhail and Olga Solov'ev. He takes part with Briusov in the Mar 'battle for Symbolism' in Moscow – lectures, debates and public readings at which he meets Bal'mont, Voloshin, Baltrušaitis, Poliakov, Sokolov-Krechetov and the latter's wife Nina Petrovskaiia. In Mar *STs* publishes his lyric cycle 'Prizvyv' and dramatic fragment 'Prishedschii'; *Almanakh Grif* No. 1 publishes excerpts from unfinished *Chetvertaia simfonia*. At end of Apr Bely hosts his first 'literary evening'. 22 May obtains 1st-class degree. His father dies 29 May. In Serebrianyi Kolodez' Bely writes 'O teurgii', 'Simvolizm kak miroponimanie', 'Krititsizm i simvolizm' and 'Sviashchennye tsveta' and prepares a collection of poems

for Skorpion. That autumn he is increasingly involved with Grif and Nina Petrovskaia joins the Argonauts. Oct sees publication by Skorpion of *Severnaia simfonia (1-ia, geroicheskaia)* (M, 1904) and Bely co-operates with Briusov in planning *Vesy*, though in Dec they quarrel.

Blok, that spring, publishes cycles of poems in *NP* No. 3, the *Literaturno-khudozhestvennyi sbornik studentov Sankt-Peterburgskogo Universiteta* and (with Bely) in *STs* No. 3. 26 May–1 Jul visits Bad Nauheim with his mother and on 17 Aug marries Liubov'. On 10 Nov Blok accepts offer to print collection of poems with Grif.

LEONID SEMENOV (1880–1917), a poet also published in the *Sbornik studentov* (see Blok), begins to contribute to *NP* and, that summer, meets Briusov and Bely in Moscow.

Shestov at New Year in Kiev meets 'idealists' Bulgakov and Berdiaev. The publication in book form of *Dostoevskii i Nitche. Filosofii tragedii* (SPb) confirms success but next book proves intractable and on 31 July he returns to Switzerland, throws out 146 pp. on Turgenev (published posthumously in *Glagol* No. 2, 1978) and embarks on deliberately fragmented: *Apofeoz bezpochvennosti*. In Oct returns to Kiev and works on articles 'Vlast' ideii' and 'Iulii Tsezar' Shekspira'.

1904

Russo-Japanese War breaks out 24 Jan.

Vesy (1904–9) appears from Jan. Briusov's editorial and Viach. Ivanov's articles give cogent direction and Russian Symbolism becomes a literary 'school' in highest sense of the word. Stress is laid on cosmopolitanism: Voloshin is *Vesy* representative in Paris, where he engages interest of René Ghil, the Nabis group, and the brothers de Gourmont. Maksimilian Shick, A. Eliasberg and A. Lüther are 'German' correspondents. Sir William Morphill is a link with England; G. Papini, G. Amendola and G. Vannicola with Italy; Likardopoulo with Greece and Baltrušaitis, Poliakov and his brother-in-law Semenov with Scandinavia and Poland.

MI brings out 'antiquarian' and 'modern' numbers, alternatively edited by Benois and Diagilev. Ceases publication at end of year.

NP serialises Merezhkovsky's *Antikhrisť. Petr i Aleksei* and V. Ivanov's 'Elinskaia religii stradaushchego boga'. Filosofov replaces Pertsov as editor and Chulkov, on return from exile, becomes secretary towards end of winter. In July he enlists co-operation of 'Idealists', who agree to take

over all but literary section (to remain in hands of Merezhkovskys) from Oct. At end of year *NP* ceases publication.

Hippius publishes *Sobranie stikhov (1883–1903)*, vols. I and II (Skorpion). In summer, she and Merezhkovsky visit Tolstoy and travel in Germany and Austria, but that autumn are back in SPb with Filosofov (who joins their household for the next 15 years).

Sologub', carried away by optimistic indignation of 'autumnal spring' (which sees widespread demands for a constitution from Intelligentsia and local government) produces liberal, anti-war poetry. His *Sobranie stikhov*, vols. III and IV and *Zhalo smerti – rasskazy* are published by Skorpion.

Bal'mont brings out *Gornye vershiny* with Grif and the first volume of his *Sobranie stikhov* with Skorpion. The war seems to him 'someone else's mistake', to be accepted as 'Karma'. In summer he travels in Spain and Switzerland.

Briusov adopts a 'Roman' 'imperialistic' attitude, writing of Russia's destiny as a Pacific power and her 'barbaric' right to destroy Japanese culture, though he devotes *Vesy* Nos. 10 and 11 to Japanese art. His reaction to autumnal spring is to call upon the chattering classes to 'close the forum'. Throughout the summer, he shoulders business of *Vesy* and Skorpion, publishing (apart from important collections by Hippius, Sologub, Bely and Bal'mont) Konevskoi's *Stikhi i proza. Posmertnoe sobranie sochinenii* with his own introduction 'Mudroe ditia', V. Ivanov's *Prozrachnost'*. *Vtoraia kniga liriki* and Zinov'eva-Annibal's *Kol'tsa. Drama v 4-kh deistviakh*. He describes 1904 as a maelstrom. 'Never have I experienced such passions, torments, joys . . .' This is connected with his embroilment that autumn in a feverish triangle with Bely and Nina Petrovskaia, incorporated into his novel of 16th-century Germany, *Ognennyi angel*.

Ivanov and Zinov'eva-Annibal preside over birthpangs of *Vesy* in Moscow in winter and early spring, and visit SPb. Convinced that their place is now in Russia, they nevertheless return to Geneva for family reasons until spring 1905. Ivanov works on *Tantal*. (See Briusov for publications with Skorpion.)

Bely and Blok are jolted out of their 'Sophianic' dreams precisely as both are publishing works imbued by the cult of Sophia: Bely's *Zoloto v lazure* (Skorpion, M 1904) and Blok's *Stikhi o Prekrasnoi Dame*, with Grif in Oct (M 1905). They meet when Blok and Liubov' visit Moscow (10–24 Jan). Bely, who regards his relationship with Petrovskaia as temptation,

confides in Liubov', whom he now perceives as a 'Lady under the special protection of Sophia' and breaks with Petrovskaia after a visit to Shakhmatovo in July. At odds with Briusov since early spring (owing to insistence on publishing 'Svetovaiia skazka' in Feb and *Vozrat* in autumn with Grif), he seeks support from other friends, staying second fortnight in Mar with Metner in Nizhnii Novgorod (where he writes first poems of *Pepel'*). P.A. FLORENSKY (1882–1937) seeks him out because of interest in his father's 'mathematical' philosophy, and an intensive correspondence ensues. Bely at Serebrianyi Kolodez', works towards a 'symbolist' theory of cognition. At the end of Aug he accompanies his mother to Diveevo and forms cult for St Seraphim of Sarov. On 30 Aug he re-enters Moscow University (historico-philological faculty) where he influences classmates BORIS SADOVSKOI (1881–1945) and VLADIMIR KHODASEVICH (1886–1939). On 9 Dec Bely's reply to Briusov's poetic challenge 'Bal'deru Loki' is delivered to the Skorpion office by Florensky, and elicits an admission of 'defeat' from Briusov. Meanwhile Blok's introduction to Moscow Argonauts is counterbalanced by radical influence of Chulkov and increasingly sociological direction of *NP*.

Annensky makes anonymous debut as Symbolist poet under pseudonym Nik T-o. *Tikhie pesni. S prilozheniem sbornika stikhotvornykh perevodov 'Parnasty i Proklyatye'* (SPb). (Rev Avrelii (Briusov), *Vesy* No. 4 and Blok, *Slovo* No. 403 lit. prilozhenie No. 5, 1906).

Other publications are Rozanov, *Dekadenty. Kriticheskii etiud* (SPb); Chulkov, *Kremnistii put'* (M); Minsky, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, vol. I (SPb). Volynsky. *Kniga velikogo gneva. Kriticheskie stat'i – zametki – polemika* (SPb).

1905

Revolution. Bloody Sunday (9 Jan) briefly unites Intelligentsia from Gor'ky to Merezhkovsky in protest against inept brutality of the regime. Semenov, till now a monarchist, witnesses massacre and vows to devote himself to revolution, even regicide. Blok, observing line-up of troops throughout night of 8/9 Jan, is overcome by a more inward, slow-working alienation. Merezhkovsky organises protest, closing down the Mariinsky Theatre; Bely, arriving in Petersburg on the day of the massacre, is mentally and physically caught between the existential experience of social division at Blok's stepfather's quarters on the Petrogradskaia Storona and the Merezhkovsky's more actively political position at the centre of SPb.

Voprosy Zhizni [VZh] (1905), successor to *NP*, comes out under aegis of

the Idealists and their publisher D. Zhukovsky. It serialises two Symbolist novels: Sologub's acclaimed *Melkii bes* and Remizov's *Prud*, carries on debate with church, giving clearest-yet summing up of Merezhkovsky's ideological programme in Berdiaev's 'O novom religioznom deistvii' (No. 9), and continues to publish *NP* authors, but adds weighty philosophical and sociological sections.

Iskusstvo is founded in Kiev by Sokolov-Krechetov and his friend NIKOLAI TAROVATY (1876–1906). It uses some *MI* artists but, as the organ of the allied *Tovarischestvo Moskovskikh Khudozhnikov*, is considered 'mauvais ton' in SPb. It attracts authors from *VZh* and *Vesy* but, like the former, does not outlast the year.

Merezhkovsky, in the article 'Teper' ili nikogda' (*VZh* Nos. 4 and 5), calls on Orthodox Church to disassociate itself from the autocracy. The ensuing meeting between hierarchs and literati (including Berdiaev, Bulgakov, Blok and E. Ivanov) at the premises of *V.Zh* shows incompatibility of the church's dream of restoring the Patriarchate with the Intelligentsia's vaguer, more radical aspirations and, to the relief of Hippius, Filosofov and Berdiaev, marks the end of Merezhkovsky's flirtation with theocracy. In the article 'Umytye ruki' (*Vesy* Nos. 9 and 10) he attacks the church and returns to 'words and ideas' in 'Griadushchii kham' (*Polianaia Zvezda* No. 3) and 'O Chekhove' (*Vesy* No. 11); he elaborates a 'religion of the Trinity and the Coming Christ' in 'Sviataia Sofia' (originally *Novoe russkoe slovo*, discussed in *Vesy* Nos. 10 and 11), but its practice is confined to a tiny group of which he, Hippius and Filosofov are the nucleus.

Sologub contributes with several *MI* artists (notably Serov, Dobuzhinsky and Bilibin) to Gor'ky's *Zhupel'* and composes revolutionary songs, some too extreme to be printed, others published in *VZh* and non-Symbolist organs such as *Zritel'*, *Plamiia* and *Novaia Zhizn'*.

Novaia Zhizn' (*NZh*) (27 Oct–3 Dec), a newspaper for which Minsky obtains permission that summer, is originally conceived like *VZh* as an alliance with *ex-Marxists*, in this case P. Struve, and intended to build a 'mystic superstructure' to Marxism. Struve, however, refuses and Minsky enters an agreement with Krasin and Gor'ky, who brings in Lenin, and so becomes responsible editor of the first legal Bolshevik newspaper. Sologub and Bal'mont contribute. *NZh* is closed down for incitement to armed uprising.

Bal'mont, in Paris from Jan to Mar and in the US and Mexico from Mar to July, returns to Moscow in time to witness Presnia fighting, writes

inflammatory poetry, leaves Russia on New Year's Eve and becomes a political exile (based at Passy, near Paris) until the 1913 Amnesty. For publications see Skorpiion.

Briusov 'crosses the Rubicon' to the side of revolution that summer when it becomes 'clear that Russia is suing for peace' but continues to advocate absolute aesthetic freedom from politics and theology. He challenges Bely to a real duel on 19 Feb (smoothed over by 22 Feb) and in *Vesy* (Nos. 5, 6) attacks his 'Apokalipsis v russkoi poezii' for applying mystic criteria to poetry. He spends summer in Finland with Petrovskaja, absorbed with *Ognennyi angel* and his own poetry. In 'Svoboda slova' (*Vesy* No. 11), he rebuts Lenin's 'Partiinaia organizatsiia i partiinaia literatura' (*NZh* No. 12).

Ivanov, who returns to Russia in the spring, refuses Briusov's pleas for editorial help on the grounds that *Vesy* no longer represents a cohesive movement and that SPb (from which he writes regularly for *Vesy* on 'contemporary moods'), not Moscow, is now at the heart of events. He further disappoints Briusov by advocating SOBORNOST' in the article 'Krizis individualizma' (*VZh* No. 9). The Ivanovs settle in the Tower (25 Tavricheskaia ulitsa), where their 'Wednesdays' soon outshine Hippisus's and Sologub's jour-fixes. Briusov, visiting Ivanov that autumn, fears that he and Chulkov, who has that summer launched the term 'Mystic Anarchism', supported by Ivanov's 'O nepriatii mira' (*VZh* No. 7), are preparing a rival Symbolist centre.

Bely publishes his first Nekrasov-type poems 'Toska po vole' in *Almanakh Grif* in Feb. At Serebrianyi Kolodez' that summer he writes 'Khimery', 'Sfinks' and 'Lug zelenyi'. In Aug a peaceful fortnight at Morozova's estate Popovka contrasts with fraught stays in May/June and 20–2 Aug at Dedovo. A visit to Shakhmatovo with Sergei Solov'ev in mid-June results in Bely's abrupt departure, after declaration of love for Liubov'. Back at university, he studies Marx and is peripherally involved in siege of university and Presnia fighting and is influenced by revolutionaries Semenov and Valentinov (Volzhskiy). In spite of attacks on Merezhkovsky, Volynsky and Rozanov, who, he has come to believe, have led the Symbolists 'into the mire', in articles 'Ibsen i Dostoevsky' and 'Na perevale' (*Vesy* No. 12, but not published till Jan 1906), Bely stays with Merezhkovsky in SPb from 1 to 20 Dec. He also frequents the Tower and introduces Ivanov to the Bloks.

Blok walks Petersburg 'back streets' with Bely after Bloody Sunday and at *VZh* makes friends with Remizov to whom he dedicates 'Puzyri zemli'. 27 Apr–27 Aug at Shakhmatovo he writes 'Gorod' lyrics. After Oct

Manifesto, on 18 Oct, marches with workers' demonstration. Writes *Nochnaia vial'ka* in Nov. An article on Ivanov is published *VZh* No. 9 and introduction to Ivanov in Dec confirms interest in his thought on Dionysos, tragedy as 'popular' theatre, and 'mifotvorchestvo'.

Shestov publishes *Apofeoz bezpochvennosti* (rev. by Berdiaev and Remizov in *VZh* No. 3 in same number as his 'Tvorchestvo iz nichego. A.P. Chekhov').

Remizov, installed as 'kancelarius' to *VZh* where he, his wife and baby daughter share editorial flat with the Chulkovs.

Diagilev organises Exhibition of Russian Portraits in SPb.

Skorpion, neglected by Briusov, publishes mainly translations: Maeterlinck's *Stikhi. Peleas i Melizand*, tr. and with intro by Briusov, and St. Psybyszewsky's ongoing *Collected Works* (Book 2 tr. M. Semenov, E. Tropovskiy and S. Poliakov). It brings out Dobroliubov's *Iz knigi Nevidimoi* and Bal'mont, *Sobranie stikhov II*. Bal'mont's new books, *Liturgiia krasoty. Stikhinye gimny* and *Feinye skazki. Detskie pesen'ki*, go to Grif, as does his wife's translation of Oscar Wilde's *De profundis* and Sologub's *Kniga skazok*; Minsky's *Religiia budushchego (Filosofskie razgovory)* and Merezhkovsky's *Antikhris. Petr i Aleksei* came out with Pirozhkov (SPb). Two privately published collections by newcomers are NIKOLAI GUMILEV (1886–1921), *Put' konkvistadorov* (SPb) and SERGEI MAKOVSKY (1887–1982), *Sobranie stikhov* (SPb).

1906

A year of blurring of boundaries and, to some extent, lowering of standards. Symptomatic is the success of M. ARTSYBASHEV (1878–1927) whose 'Krovavoe piatno' (*Zhurnal Dlia Veskh* No. 2) and 2 vols. of *Rasskazy* (SPb) earn him instant notoriety, and who publishes also in almanacs and journals associated with Symbolists. The Znanie author LEONID ANDREEV (1871–1919) also becomes associated with them through Chulkov's 'Fakely' and his own 'Shipovnik'. Some symbolists, drawn into politics, publish in *Adskaia Pochta*, founded in May, and/or in Struve's and S.L. Franks's *Syoboda i Kul'tura* (Apr/May). *Vesy* defends autonomy of art. Many contributors, however, though against *subordination* of art to politics, feel the latter may also have a place in their art, while some 'Realists' begin to use symbolist 'techniques' to express irrational and tragic events.

Zolotoe Runo (ZR) (1906–9), a new art and literature journal, financed by P. Riabushinsky, begins to come out in Moscow in Jan. Art, it proclaims,

is eternal, symbolist and free. *ZR* is first symbolist undertaking not founded by Symbolists themselves and, in political climate of 1906, writers tend to suspect an attempt 'to exploit their labour', fears sharpened by Riabushinsky's lavish style and autocratic manner which leads to resignation of first lit. editor, Sokolov-Krechetov, to found his own journal *Pereval* (1906–7). Briusov thinks of replacing him but fails to agree terms and Aleksandr Kursinsky takes over. Genrich Tasteven is secretary to the journal throughout.

Vesy remains exclusively Symbolist and individualist but, spurred by competition, begins to feature literature as well as criticism, publishing poetry and prose by Hippius, Sologub, Briusov, Gorodetsky and Gumilev, and – in a special issue – Mikhail Kuzmin's novel 'Krylia' (Nos. 11 and 12). A hostile review of *ZR* by Hippius appears in *Vesy* No. 2. In No. 4, Briusov launches campaign against Chulkov's 'mystic anarchism' but publishes V. Ivanov's defence. In No. 8, however, Hippius and Briusov print devastating reviews of Chulkov's book *Misticheskii anarkhizm* (*Vstupitel'naia stat'ia 'O nepriatii mira 'Viacheslava Ivanova*) (Fakely, SPb).

Briusov, having broken temporarily with Petrovskaja, holidays in Sweden, then tides himself over withdrawal from inspiration and passion with morphine and renewed involvement with 'literature', honing his translations of Verhaeren (*Stikhi o sovremennosti*, Skorpion, M) and resuming lion's share of work for *Vesy*. *Stephanos* (Skorpion, M) is universally praised and a collection of prose, published that autumn by Skorpion (dated M 1907), *Zemnaia os' Rasskazy i dramaticheskie stzeny* (1901–1906), is well-received.

At the Tower on 3 Jan Ivanov's idea of audience participation in style of ancient Greek tragedy meets Gor'ky's enthusiasm for politicised street theatre. VSEVOLOD MEIERKHOL'D (1874–1940) (ambitious to found own theatre with help of Chulkov) suggests 'commedia dell'arte' as a 'transitional', bridging model and Blok is 'commissioned' to turn the poem 'Balaganchik' into a play.

Chulkov founds Fakely and publishes Blok's *Balaganchik* (see above) in first almanac in Mar and, as a separate booklet, his own *Misticheskii anarkhizm* (see *Vesy*).

Gor'ky leaves Russia in Jan, not to return until 1913.

Minsky leaves for Paris, not to return until 1913.

The Merezhkovskys leave for Paris on 25 Feb, where they settle until

1908. Merezhkovsky's *Gogol i chort* comes out with Skorpion and *Griadushchii Kham. Chekhov i Gor'kii* in book form in SPb. In *Vesy* Nos. 2–4 appears his 'Prorok russkoi revoliutsii' (on Dostoevsky) and, in No. 5, 'Dekadentsvo i obshchestvennost'. In *ZR* he comments on ideological disarray in 'Vse protiv vsek', No. 1, and publishes autobiographical poem 'Starinnye oktavy', Nos. 1–4.

Hippius brings out two books of short stories in SPb: *Alyi mech' (Raskazy) 4-aia kniga* and *Novye liudi* (dated 1907).

Viacheslav Ivanov and Lidia Zinov'eva-Annibal, in absence of Merezhkovskys and Gor'ky, become the centre of Petersburg intellectual life. In articles 'Predchuvstvie i predvestie' in *ZR* Nos. 4 and 6 and in *Vesy* Ivanov lends authority to 'Mystic Anarchism' (see *Vesy*). His romance with the poet SERGEI GORODETSKY (1884–1967) lasts through Aug to Sep, and by Dec yields two books of poetry, Ivanov's *Eros* (pub. by his own Oreae, 1907) and Gorodetsky's *Iar. Stikhi liricheskie i liro-epicheskie* ('Kruzhok molodykh', SPb. 1907). Voloshin's bride of 12 Apr, the painter Margarita Sbashnikova, becomes the subject of a second cycle of love poems: *Zoloty zavesy* (first pub. in almanac *Tsvetnitsa Or*, SPb 1907). These 'affairs' (together with Zinov'eva-Annibal's reading of 'Tridtsat' tri uroda' on 24 Oct) give the Tower a reputation for what Blok later calls 'stifling eroticism'.

Blok, however, is for the moment enchanted by Ivanov and Zinov'eva-Annibal. His *Neznakomka* (written 24 Apr) earns him acclaim by them as 'first lyric poet in Russia'. Even Briusov revises poor opinion of his poetry and accepts *Nechaiannaia radost'*, finished end Mar, for Skorpion (pub. in Dec, dated M 1907). Unsettled by Revolution and instability of his marriage (see below Bely), Blok does not seek employment on graduating from university but spends summer reading formerly 'illegal' literature, writing on Bakunin and working towards two further 'lyrical plays': *Neznakomka* (like *Balaganchik* inspired by a poem) and 'O liubvi, poezii i gosudarstvennoi sluzhbe' (later incorporated into *Korol' na ploshchadi*). On return to SPb, Blok and Liubov' move from Grenadier Barracks to cheap district of Petrogradskaia Storona (reflected in cycle 'Meshchanskoe zhitie'). On 14 Oct he reads 'Korol' . . .' and poems at a gathering of VERA KOMMISSARZHEVSKAIA's (1864–1910) troupe, who have invited Meierkhol'd to stage 'new' plays (European and Russian). For this theatre Blok completes *Neznakomka* (Oct–Nov) but neither it nor *Korol' . . .* are passed for stage by censor. *Balaganchik*, premiered 30 Dec, is a *succès de scandale*. Articles written this autumn include 'Poeziia zagovorov i zaklinanii', 'Devushka rozovoi kalitki i muravinyi tsar', and 'Bezvremen'e'. Nov 30–Dec 6 visits *ZR* in Moscow.

Bely, at odds with Merezhkovskys over challenge to their authority in *Vesy* (No. 12, 1905), makes up quarrel and sees them off from SPb on Feb 25. Feb 26 Bely and Liubov' agree to go abroad together. On 5 Mar he leaves for Moscow, then returns to find Liubov' determined to stand by her husband, a decision he disputes until early in May, when he returns to Moscow. From 22 May to 12 Jun stays at Dedovo. Over this and second stay end Jul/beginning Aug Bely absorbs impressions later mirrored in *Serebrianyi golub'* and writes 'Kust'', 'Venets lavrovyi' and 'Genrik Ibsen'. During interim month at Serebrianyi Kolodez' he reworks *4-aia Simfoniia*, and writes 'Panikhida' (pub. *Vesy* No. 6, 1907). Back in Moscow, on 10 Aug, sends Ellis to Shakhmatovo to call Blok out but, though no duel ensues, Bely insists on following Bloks to SPb on 23 Aug (impressions for *Petersburg*). On 20 Sep sets off alone for Munich, where he stays until 30 Nov. 1 Dec arrives Paris, where, on New Year's Eve, he falls ill.

Sologub publishes *Rodine* in SPb and *Politicheskije skazochki* with Andreev's 'Shipovnik'. Seeing revolution subside and first number of *Vol'nitsa*, to which he contributes, confiscated in Mar, expresses resentment in famous dog poems and seeks solace in make-believe world of theatre, reading his first lyrical play, 'Dar mudrykh pchel' (first pub. *ZR*, No. 2–3, 1907) at one of Kommissarzhevskaja's soirées on 28 Oct.

Bal'mont's authority as translator is challenged by Chukovsky (*Vesy* Nos. 10 and 12) and his relationship with Briusov becomes strained over delay in publishing *Zhar-ptitsa* (1907). *Stikhotvoreniia* comes out in series 'Deshevaia biblioteka tovarishchestva Znanie'.

Diagilev organises last *Mir Iskusstva* exhibition, 24 Feb–26 Mar in SPb. 'It is not we who imported our youthful art from Paris but it is Paris that is waiting for us as a source of strength and freshness' ('V zashchitu iskusstva [otvet I. Ia. Ginsbergu]', *Rus'* No. 50, 8 Mar). The reception of his exhibition of Russian Art at the Salon d'Automne justifies the boast. Bakst creates 'Russian' background for icons, sculpture and paintings. The exhibition goes on to Berlin and Venice.

1907

The Symbolists, left in possession of the cultural field, find themselves bracketed with Artsybashev, (whose notorious novel 'Sanin' is serialised this year in *Sovremennik* Nos. 1–5) and in part responsible for a positive vogue for sex, mysticism and horror. Concerned for the 'purity' of Symbolism, Bely, in the article 'Khodozhnik kritikam' (*Vesy* No. 1) disassociates himself from all this; the Merezhkovskys disapprove and

Briusov exploits their disapproval in *Vesy's* battle against Shipovnik, Fakely and ZR. Though sides are changed as often as in the old game of 'Nuts in May', cohesion is shattered and the year marked by bitter inter-Symbolist polemics. *Vesy* and Skorpion embark on a Darwinian 'struggle for survival'. Briusov publishes, with Bely and the Merezhkovskys, his intention to withdraw from ZR, 22–3 Aug (see *Vesy* No. 8 and ZR Nos. 7–9), wooing Sologub and Kuzmin to declare against ZR for *Vesy* and encouraging Bely to 'fetch away' Blok, who, with other writers of Ivanov's group, fills ZR vacuum.

Bely, after operation on 2 Jan, convalesces at Merezhkovskys', co-operating with them and Filosofov on *Le Tzar et la révolution* (Paris). On 22 Feb he lectures on 'Social democracy and religion' (pub *Pereval* No. 5, 1907) before returning to Moscow where, on 28 Feb, he gives poetry recital at 'Obshchestvo svobodnoi estetiki'. May and June are spent with Sergei Solov'ev whose collection of poems *Tsvety i ladan* (Grif, M) is published that Apr. On 30 June, Bely completes *4-aia simfoniia. Kubok metelei*. On 5 Aug he quarrels with Riabushinsky (the catalyst for Briusov's public break with ZR). On 8 Aug writes an insulting letter to Blok which nearly results in a duel, but after meeting on 24 Aug, Blok (though he defends article 'O realistakh' (ZR No. 5), which Bely had seen, in conjunction with Petersburg Symbolists' co-operation with 'Znanie' authors, as an 'application') agrees to disassociate himself from 'Mystic Anarchism' in an open letter of 26 Aug 1907 (*Vesy* No. 9). From 2 to 8 Oct the two poets perform together in Kiev, then return to SPb. Bely spends autumn between SPb and Moscow working on articles 'Teatr i sovremennaia drama' and 'Poet mramora i bronzy', but finally returns to Moscow 18 Nov. Here he meets M.O. GERSHENZON (1869–1925), who draws him into *Kriticheskoe obozrenie*. On 19 Dec he lectures on Nietzsche at the Polytechnical Museum.

Blok's *Balaganchik* brings notoriety as does controversial reception of *Nechaiannaia Radost'* and publication on 8 Apr of *Snezhnaia maska* (written 29 Dec 1906–13 Jan 1907) (Orae, SPb). On 1 Feb he reads play *Neznakomka* at Kruzhok molodykh. In Apr 'Korol' na ploshchadi' is published and, in Moscow 16–20, Blok signs up to write surveys for ZR. He works on *Pesnia Sud'by* and writes first poems of 'Motherland' cycle. Bely claims that in Kiev (see Bely) Blok has already put behind him the turbulence of *Snezhnaia maska*; the last flare-up comes that Sep with 'Osennaia liubov'' and 'Zakliatie ognem i mrakom'. For ZR, 'O realistakh', written in May, is followed by 'O lirike' that summer and 'O drame' and 'Literaturnye itogi 1907' in the autumn. 6 Dec with Volokhova Blok reads *Neznakomka* at Novyii Teatr and 7 Dec attends premiere

of Rutteboef's *Deistvie o Teofile* which he has translated for Starinnyi Teatr.

Zinov'eva-Annibal publishes *Tragicheskii zverinets* and *Tridtsat' tri uroda*, both with Oreae. The latter is banned. She is ill with pneumonia in Jan–Feb. The famous 'Wednesdays' are cancelled but at the Tower life is still an on-going symposium. It is decided to spend summer quietly at Zagor'e. There Ivanov writes celebratory, autumnal poetry and in Aug they are joined by Z.A.'s daughter, Vera Shvarsalon. Z.A. catches scarlet fever and dies on 17 Oct. Margarita, in Koktebel with Voloshin and Anna Rudol'fovna Mintslova (an anthroposophist close to Rudolf Steiner who has promised her mother to discourage the relationship with Ivanov) does not go to comfort the poet as she wishes. Mintslova does and remains as permanent resident of the Tower.

Sologub's reputation attains zenith with publication in Mar of the full text of *Melkii bes* (Shipovnik, SPb), the cycle *Zmii* and the short stories of *Istlevaiushchie lichiny* (Grif, M). He further publishes 'Chelovek cheloveku d'iavol' (ZR No. 1); 'Dar mudrykh pchel' (ZR Nos. 2, 3); 'Smert' po obnavleniu' (ZR No. 6); a drama 'Liubvi' (*Pereval* Nos. 8, 9); serialisation of his next novel *Nav'i chary 'Tvorimaia legenda'* begins *Almanac Shipovnik* No. 3. His sister dies in June and he is 'retired' from service as Inspector of Andreevskoe uchilishche.

Leonid Andreev proposes to Gor'ky that Sologub and Blok be invited to publish with Znanie, but Gor'ky objects in letter 8–12 Aug which leads to Andreev's resignation on 13. The appearance of 'T'ma' in *Almanac Shipovnik* No. 3 is seen by Gor'ky and the Social Democrats as satire against the revolutionaries, as is 'Nav'i chary'; Znanie, as well as *Vesy*, declares war on Shipovnik – from the opposite flank.

Bal'mont's 'Byliny' (*Sovremennik* Nos. 3–4) and *Zhar-Ptitsa. Svirel' slavianina* (Skorpion, M) are pronounced unsuccessful stylisations by Gorodetsky and Briusov in *Vesy* (Nos. 8, 10). *Pesni mstitelia* (Paris) do nothing to re-establish a reputation already dimmed by exile.

Gorodetsky's publishes second collection *Perun* (Oreae, M).

Kuzmin publishes 'Komedia o Evdokii iz Geliopolia' in *Tsvetnik Or Koshnitsa Pervaia*, a cycle of poems 'Prevrannaia povest' and 'Kartonnyi domik' in *Belye nochi* in May, in June *Prikliucheniia Eme Lebefa* and in Sep 'Ten' Fillidy (Egipetskaia povest') (ZR Nos. 7–9).

Remizov publishes *Morshchinka* in 'Detskaia biblioteka' series, illustrated by Dobuzhinsky (SPb), *Posolon*, ill. N.P. Krymov (ZR, M) and

Limonar', *sirech' Lug dukhovnyi*, ill. Dobuzhinsky (Oreae, SPb). His adaptation of *Besovskoe deistvie* is staged at Starinnyi Teatr.

Shestov makes brief visits to SPb and Moscow and publishes 'Pokhvala gluposti', *Fakely* No. 2 and 'Predposlednie slova' in *RM*.

Briusov declares in *Vesy*, under pseudonym V. Bakulin in 'Torzhestvo pobeditelei' (No. 9), the journal's readiness to pass its sceptre 'to the most worthy successor'. The serialisation of *Ognennyi angel* throughout the year in *Vesy* is a *succès d'estime*. His translation of *Pelléas et Mélisande* is staged by Kommissarzhevskaiia. *Litseyskie stikhi Pushkina. K kritike teksta, Puti i pereput'ia. Sobranie Stikhov Tom I. Stikhi 1892–1901 gg (Chefs d'œuvre. Me eum esse. Tertia Vigilia)* together with new poems in *Vtoraia tysiacha* (Skorpion, M 1908), all published that autumn, elicit polite accolades.

Diagilev organises five Russian 'Historical Concerts' at the Grand Opera (Paris) in May.

Other publications: an authorised translation of Oscar Wilde's *Florentine Tragedy* from manuscript by M. Likiardopoulo and A. Kursinsky and E. Tropovsky's translation of St. Przybyszewsky's *Vechnaia skazka*, Skorpion; Sergej Krechetov's *Alaia kniga. Stikhotvorenii*, Grif.

1908

Stolypin stamps out embers of revolution and gives the country new economic direction.

Gor'ky and other *Znanie* authors attack what they see as 'decadence' in *Literaturnyi raspad*, vols. 1–11 (SPb). Yet in this year Gor'ky publishes *Ispoved'*, the culmination of his reflections on 'bogostroitel'stvo' (god-building), welcomed by Symbolists and debated in the Petersburg Rel.-Phil Society (see below: Blok).

The Merezhkovskys return to spend summer at dacha in Suide and are active that autumn in the SPb Rel.-Phil. Society. Hippus publishes *Literaturnyi dnevnik*, the play *Makov svet* (supposedly written with Merzhkovsky and Filosofov) and *Chernoie po belomu* all with Pirozhkov (SPb), and Merezhkovsky two vols of essays: *V tikhom omute* and *Ne mir no mech*. His play *Pavel I* is staged on 14 Dec at the home of Baroness Iksul.

Blok meets Bely on 22 Jan and they agree to remain 'friends in life but enemies in literature'. On 15 Feb Liubov' leaves SPb 'on tour' with the

company formed by Meierkhol'd after his break (in Jan) with Kommissarzhevskaiia, followed on 4 Mar by Volokhova (whom Blok sees for the last time in Moscow on 9 Jun). *Liricheskie dramy*, published in Feb, are attacked by Bely in *Vesy* as 'shards of Symbolism'. Blok's negative assessment of *4-ia Simfonia* in letter of 24 Apr causes Bely to break off relations. *Pesnia sud'by* (completed 29 Apr) Blok offers to Stanislavsky when MKhT Theatre visits SPb in May. On 3 Jun he leaves for Shakmatovo, where he composes most of the cycle 'Na pole Kulikovom'. On 2 July returns to SPb and writes 'Ob odnoi starinnoi p'ese', 'Pis'ma o poezii' 'Sontse nad Rossiei' on Tolstoy, and poems reflecting his recent life: 'O doblestiakh, o podvigakh, o slave', 'Druziam'; 'Poetam'. *Zemlia v snegu* (ZR, M) comes out in July. On 10 Aug Liubov' returns expecting another man's child which Blok accepts. They go together to Shakmatovo, where he dreams of a periodical 'in the civic tradition of Dobroliubov's *Sovremennik*' and writes *Rossia*. On 4 Oct they return to SPb where Blok writes 'Vechera iskusstv' and 'Genrik Ibsen' (text for lecture at Kommissarzhevskaiia's theatre 2 and 21 Nov). He meets Andreev to discuss an (abortive) 'civic' periodical, and Sergei Makovsky to talk of a projected 'aesthetic' journal: *Apollon*. At Merezhkovskys' invitation, he speaks on 14 Nov at the Rel.-Phil. Society on Gor'ky's 'demotheism'. Blok's paper, 'Russia and the Intelligentsia', causes uproar. Struve refuses to publish in *RM*, but Blok is asked by S.A. Vengerov to repeat his talk at the Literary Society on 12 Dec. On 9 Dec he writes Stanislavsky, who finally turns down 'Pesnia sud'by', that the play nevertheless marks the finding of *his* theme, 'the theme of Russia'. On 30 Dec he gives paper 'Stikhia i kul'tura', at Rel.-Phil. Society. 'Irony', diagnosing sickness of his own milieu, comes out in *Rech'*, 7 Dec 1908. 'Questions, questions, questions' is the title of year's-end survey for ZR Nos. 11–12.

Bely begins the year with work on (unpub.) 'Teoriia simvolizma'; he lectures at Tenishev School in SPb on 'Iskusstvo budushchego' and, on 21 Jan in Moscow Literary-Artistic Circle, on 'Fridrikh Nittsshe i predvestiia sovremennosti', repeated in SPb on 25 Jan and at the Polytechnic in Moscow on 28. 'Vol'no-otpushchenniki' in *Vesy* No. 2 has scandalous repercussions. In Feb he meets artist Asia Turgeneva. *Kubok Metelei. Chetvertaia simfonia* (Skorpion, M) comes out early Apr. By end of Apr he quarrels with Briusov, having broken the boycott of ZR in Nos. 3–4; on May 3 he breaks with Blok and later in May to 24 June takes Metner to Serebrianyi Kolodez' (which is up for sale) where he revises *Pepel*. The second half July is spent with S. Solov'ev at Dedovo preparing *Urna* and studying prosody. On a visit to Merezhkovskys in early Aug he writes 'Kamennaia ispoved'' and arranges for publication of *Pepel* by 'Shipov-

nik' (pub. early Dec, dated 1909). On 15 Oct lectures at Society of Free Aesthetics on 'Simvolizm i sovremennoe iskusstvo' and end Oct/beginning Nov attends a meeting called by *Vesy* and accepts considerable responsibility for future of journal. 6 Nov lectures on 'Pesnia i sovremenost'' and 'Zhizn' pesni' at House of Song in Moscow and on Przybyszewsky at Kommissarzhevskaja's theatre later that month.

Viacheslav Ivanov, still crushed by the loss of his wife, cultivates automatic writing and comes increasingly under the influence of the 'mediumistic' Mintslova who also seeks out Bely after publication of *Pepel* in Dec, intending to establish a mystic triumvirate to work towards salvation of Russia.

Briusov's translation of D'Annunzio's 'Francesca da Rimini' is staged at the Malyi Teatr and *Ognennyi angel* Part I and *Puti i pereputiia. Sobranie stikhov* Part II are published by Skorpion. That summer he holidays in Italy, then travels to France, and meets the 'Abbaye' group and their leader René Ghil, founder of 'poésie scientifique', and at end Oct in Belgium, Verhaeren, whose play *Hélène de Sparte* he is translating. On return to Moscow he finds *Vesy* on verge of disintegration but determines to try one more year (see Bely). On 12 Nov he calls a truce with Ivanov: 'From 1909 [. . .] the polemical part of *Vesy* will be reduced to a minimum: this is the unanimous decision of all Moscow "regular correspondents".'

Bal'mont publishes the first vol. of his *Sobranie sochinenii* with Skorpion.

Sologub publishes the retrospective book of poems *Plamennyi krug*, translations of Paul Verlaine and the plays *Pobeda smerti*, *Nochnye pliaski* and *Van'ka Kliuchnik i Pazh Zhean*. Marries art and theatre critic ANASTASIA CHEBOTAREVSKAIA (1876–1921).

Remizov publishes *Chortov log i Polunoshchnoe solntse. Rasskazy i poemny* (SPb); a revised *Prud* (SPb); *Chasy* (SPb); (in an edition of 25) *Chto est' tabak*, ill. Somov (SPb). An accusation of plagiarism connected with failure to name the source of one of his retold tales causes great anguish.

Kuzmin's first book of poetry *Seti* is published by Skorpion.

Shestov publishes collection of articles (written since 1905) *Nachala i Kontsy* (SPb) (rev. by Bely in *Vesy* No. 10).

Diagilev, building on the success of the Russian concerts, takes Russian Opera to Paris: Shaliapin in Mussorgsky's *Boris Godunov*, 7 performances from 6 to 20 May at the Grand Opéra.

1909

Vekhi, which sets self-critical mood of this year, numbers amongst its contributors writers associated with *Problemy Idealizma*, *VZh*, *RM* and *Kriticheskoe Obozrenie*. *Vekhi* ran through 5 editions in one year, was attacked by SDs and SRs, but welcomed (by and large) in *Vesy* and *RM*.

Skorpion announces in its catalogue that 'Symbolism' will from now on be considered an artistic 'method' rather than an ideological platform and that 'extreme individualism' is a thing of the past (in Europe no less than in Russia).

Blok, on 14 Apr takes Liubov' abroad after death of her son in Feb having read his 'Ditia Gogolia' on 19 May to the League of Education. They travel through Venice, Ravenna, Florence, Perugia, Assisi, Foligno, Spoleto and Orvieto in Apr/May, then on to Siena, Pisa, Marina de Pisa, Milan and return through Germany (Bad Nauheim, Frankfurt-on-Main and Berlin) to SPb on 21 June. A week later they go on to Shakhmatovo and return to SPb 30 Sep where Blok is elected to council of the 'Obshchestvo revnitelei khudozhestvennogo slova' ('The Academy') at which he recites his 'Italian Verses', (pub. *Apollon* No. 4). His father dies in Warsaw on 1 Dec. While there Blok begins 'Iamby' and 'Vozmezdie' ('Retribution').

Bely throughout the year writes and serialises *Serebrianyi golub'* in *Vesy*. On 17 Jan he lectures on 'Nastoiashchee i budushchee russkoi literatury' at the Tenishev hall in SPb, staying as always with Merezhkovskys, but is 'kidnapped' at lecture by Ivanov and spends that night (and several thereafter) deep in conversation with him and Mintslova about their part (and Blok's) in the future of Symbolism and of Russia. Attending a lecture given by Ivanov in the Moscow 'Literary artistic circle' on 27 Jan, Bely becomes involved in scandalous incident with one F.F. Tishchenko. Recuperating on Rachinsky's estate in Bobrovka from 20 Feb to mid-Mar, he launches into pioneering work on metre and rhythm. On 14 Mar lectures in Kiev on 'Contemporaneity and Przybyszewski'. Back in Moscow, poses for portrait to Asia Turgeneva and falls in love. *Urna* (Grif, M) is pub. end Mar. 6 Apr he speaks on occasion of centenary at Gogol's tomb. Stays from May to Aug at Dedovo with excursion in May to see Metner in Izumudryi Poselok, where they discuss founding new publishing house 'Musagetes'; spends Sep in Moscow working on 'Problema kul'tury', 'Emblematika smysla' and on commentary to *Simvolizm*. On 30 Sep elected member of Moscow 'Society of Amateurs of Russian Letters'. Oct writes 'Lirika i eksperiment' and 'Magiia slov'. Articles

written in autumn at Bobrovka ('Opyt kharakteristiki russkogo chetyrehstopnogo iamba'; 'Svavnitel'naia morfologiia ritma russkikh lirikov v iambicheskom dimetre'; "'Ne poi, krasavitsa, pri mne . . .'" A.S. Pushkina (opyt opisaniia)') anticipate formalism.

Viacheslav Ivanov lays foundation for rapprochement with Bely (see Bely) and influences Khlebnikov and Mandel'shtam. End June Mintsova, who has noted and is shocked by Ivanov's growing dependence on stepdaughter Vera Shvarsalon, recalls Margarita and takes up residence with her in SPb. Kuzmin moves in to the Tower. Ivanov is still writing ornate, uninspired poetry and feels isolated, in spite of involvement in work for *Apollon* and 'Academy'. At end of the year, Oreae publishes *Po zvezdam*.

Annensky, Gumilev's old headmaster from Tsarskoe Selo, classicist and symbolist poet of Ivanov's generation but of a different, more French-inspired, 'associative' school (see Ivanov's 'O poezii Innokentii Annenskogo', written after Annensky's sudden death on 30 Nov) is the authority for founders of *Apollon*. It is he who undertakes to write a retrospective survey of symbolism for the journal, and Chulkov, Gumilev and Kuzmin who pen 'obituaries' for *Vesy*.

Brusov, seeking to establish himself in *RM*, leaves *Vesy* largely to Bely, Ellis and Sadovskoi; he gives 'Ispepelennyi' (originally a centenary lecture 27 Apr for the Society of Amateurs of Russian Letters) to the Gogol' number (*Vesy* No. 4) but makes only 11 other contributions (as against 81 in 1904). It is in *RM* (No. 5) that he reviews Ghil's *De la poésie scientifique* (Paris, 1909) whose ideas, he suggests to Poliakov at the end of the year, might be propagated in a new journal with articles on mathematics and physics as well as the humanities, but this comes to nothing and in preface to *Vse napevy* he admits using same devices, building on same themes as before. He spends 3 weeks in SPb with Petrovskaia in Mar and (after 6 weeks decorous travel through Berlin, Dresden, Prague and Switzerland with his wife) rejoins her in Paris where, from 7–19 Oct, they spend much time with his first role model – Bal'mont, whose new poems seem to him 'neither better nor worse than those he wrote before'.

Bal'mont publishes *Zelenyi Vertograd. Slova potseluiinnye* with Shipovnik and a book of translations *Iz chuzhezemykh poetov* with Prosveshchenie.

Sologub publishes a collection with Shipovnik who also begin his *Sobranie sochinenii* vols. I–XII (1909–12), and *V tolpe* (SPb). Serialisation of 'Nav'i chary' ends in *Almanac Shipovnik* No. 10.

Rozanov, active now in *Vesy*, also brings out *Italianskie vpechatleniia* in

book form, *Russkaia tserkov'* (SPb), translated in same year into German and Italian, and an account of visit to Iasnaia Poliana in *Mezhdunarodnyi Tolstovskii Al'manakh* (M).

Diagilev organises season of Russian opera and ballet at the Chatelet theatre: Borodin's 'Prince Igor', Rimsky-Korsakov's 'Pskovitianka', Glazunov's 'Raymonde', Cherepnin's 'Pavilion D'Almide' and Chai-kovsky's 'Sleeping Beauty'. The Russian seasons become a fixture of Parisian social life and, fully involved with music and art, Diagilev plays no further part in Russian literature – though he does keep an eye on drama.

Merezhkovsky and Hippius live retired for reasons of health, he working on articles and the historical novel *Aleksandr I*.

Apollon, the first three numbers of which are pub Oct Nov Dec takes over from *Vesy* and *ZR*, both of which cease publication at end of year (but see Briusov 1910). The 'names are all there', Blok comments after first number, but the form and content of the new journal suggest a new direction in keeping with its title: towards neo-classical serenity and pure, inclusive aestheticism.

1910

In *Apollon* 'the end of Symbolism', discussed, according to Bely, 'in jest' at the Tower the previous autumn, becomes a *fait du jour*, precipitated by debates at the Academy relating to Kuzmin's 'O prekrasnoi iasnosti' (No. 4), a direct challenge to the linguistic experiments of Ivanov's circle and to his 'realist' understanding of Symbolism. Some tenets of Kuzmin's 'Clarism' are developed over next two years by Gumilev, Gorodetsky, Akhmatova, Mandel'shtam, and Narbut, first as an attempt to rechannel 'Symbolism', then as 'Adamism' and 'Acmeism', a process begun that Aug by Gumilev's formulation of the difference between Annensky's and V. Ivanov's concepts of symbolism in 'Pis'mo o russkoi poezii' (No. 11). Gumilev's second collection *Zhemchuga* is published with 'Skorpion' as is Kuzmin's *Kuranty liubvi*.

Khlebnikov forms a new group of 'Budetliane' who publish *Sadok sudei* (attacked by Briusov as a 'puerile' attempt to 'épater le bourgeois' but considered, by him and others, the work of a Symbolist splinter group).

Viacheslav Ivanov, entertains Bely end Jan to 4 Mar planning 'Musagetes' (1910–17) as new centre of religiously-orientated, 'realist' Symbolism, and travels to Moscow with him to give a paper at the opening. On Apr 8 he

again defines and defends his views in 'Zavety simvolizma', delivered at the 'Academy' and supported by Blok's 'O sovremennom sostoianii rus-skogo simvolizma' (described by author as an 'illustration' or 'Baedeker' to Ivanov's more abstract paper). Both appear in *Apollon* Nos. 7–8. Also in Apr, Meierkhol'd's production of Calderon's *La devocion de la cruz* at the Tower is symptomatic of recrudescence of Ivanov's interest in private life and creative play, evident also in lyric poems later grouped under title 'Nezhnaia taina'. In Rome that summer he embarks on a liaison with Vera Shvarsalon, whom he marries summer, 1913 and whose significance for him is best understood through the character of the gentle child-wife and mother Otrada in the posthumously published epic *Svetomir*. He returns to SPb that autumn, but from now on spends much time abroad.

Mintslova's dream of a 'mystic triumvirate' is finally shattered when Ivanov refuses to take the vow of chastity she seeks to impose on him and Bely refuses to follow her to Europe for 'initiation'. In May she disappears.

Bely addresses the 'Academy' on 'Rhythm' on 18 Feb and returns Moscow with Ivanov 4 Mar for opening of 'Musagetes'. Their first publication is his *Simvolizm. Kniga statei* (end Apr). That summer *Serebrianyi golub* comes out with Skorpion and *Lug zelenyi. Kniga statei* with 'Al'tsion' (supposedly the 'music' branch of 'Musagetes'). May–Aug Bely spends with mother at dacha (Serebriany Kolodez' being sold) with a break mid-summer at Bogoliubi, the estate of Asia Turgeneva's mother. He writes 'Krizis soznaniia i Genrik Ibsen' and organises circle for study of rhythm from Aug to Nov. In Sep he resumes correspondence with Blok, supporting him in *Apollon* in debate against Briusov with 'Venets ili venok' (No. 11), and writes article 'Mysl' i iazyk (Filosofia iazyka A.A. Potebni)'. On Nov 1 he speaks on 'Tragediia tvorchestva Dostoevskogo' in Moscow Rel. Phil. circle. Tolstoy's flight from home and death (end Nov) lead him to develop this into *Tragediia tvorchestva. Dostoevskii i Tolstoi* pub. Musagetes 1911). On 26 Nov he leaves to travel abroad with Asia Turgeneva (whom he marries 23 Mar 1914). As with Ivanov, Bely's private life and creative writing is now more important than any literary movement, although neither poet admits this until, at a meeting in Switzerland in Sep. 1912, it is borne in on them that – given their ever longer absences from Russia – there is no one left to 'organise' Symbolism.

Ellis assumes ideological role in Musagetes, siding with Ivanov and Bely and publishing *Russkie simvolisty*.

Briusov produces the last number of *Vesy* (No. 12 for 1909 which in fact

comes out Mar 1910), announcing the triumph of 'the idea of Symbolism in that form in which it had been confessed by the contributors to *Vesy*' – an idea to which he himself privately no longer subscribes. At opening of Musagetes, he disagrees with Ivanov's speech and comes out in support of Kuzmin and Gumilev in article 'O "rechi rabskoi", v zashchitu poezii' (*Apollon* No. 9). Nevertheless, in a letter of 28 Nov, having secured terms as literary editor of *RM*, Briusov invites contributions from Ivanov and hurries him affectionately with *Cor ardens* for 'Skorpion'. He also reissues *Zemnaia os'* with original dedication to Bely.

Bal'mont drifts from place to place as usual, suffering writer's block after fellow-Symbolists' criticism of his poetry as prolix and repetitive. He tries to keep up with ongoing debate – but Bely's 'scientific' approach to literary criticism seems to him like collecting butterflies on pins (letter to Bely 13–26 Sep). A book of essays, *Zmeinye tsvety*, is published and the ongoing *Polnoe sobranie stikhov 1908–1913*, on basis of which Briusov, in 1911, pronounces cruel but not unjust verdict: 'as a distinct mover of our literature Bal'mont has, of course, said his last word'.

Sologub, admired by 'Clarists' for lucidity of his style, takes no part in polemic and adopts an increasingly bland tone.

Remizov, after 2 years in the wilderness for supposed plagiarism, publishes in *Al'manakh dlia vsekh* 'Neuemnyi buben'. This year also sees beginning of publication of uncompleted *Sochineniia* by Shipovnik.

Rozanov publishes articles written 1905–6, *Kogda nachal' stvo ushlo* (SPb), an introduction to Solomon's 'Song of Songs' and a piece on 'Death' for a Petersburg Almanac. Works on his most anti-Christian book *Temnyi lik. Metafizika khristianstva* (1911).

Hippius plays a leading role in the critical section of *RM*. Her poetry appears in anthologies such as *Iubileynyi sbornik literaturnogo fonda 1859–1909* (SPb) *Chtets-deklamator III* (Kiev) and *Zhenskaia lira* (SPb). Musagetes brings out *Sobranie stikhov Kn. 2-aia 1903–1909*.

Merezhkovsky attacks Blok's alliance with Ivanov and Bely in 'Balagan i tragediia' (*Russkoe Slovo* No. 211). A collection of articles *Bol'naia Rossiia* (SPb) evidences continued social concern, but his new *Sobranie stikhov (1883–1910)* (SPb) is of purely retrospective interest.

Shestov agrees to publish *Velikie kanuni*, a collection of articles on literature written over 1909–10, with Shipovnik (pub. 1911). At end Mar he leaves for Switzerland where he settles with wife and children in Coppet for next four years, with occasional visits to Russia and to parents

(now resident in Germany). From this time on his interests veer decisively from literature to philosophy.

Diagilev organises the first Paris season of the Ballets Russes.

Blok returns from Revel on 9 Jan. On 7 Mar he speaks at a memorial evening for Kommissarzhevskaja (d. Tashkent, 10 Feb) and on 3 Apr at funeral of Vruble'. These solemn occasions make him impatient of factional bickering but he supports Ivanov at Academy from genuine feeling that 'Zavety simvolizma' explains his own way in poetry. At Shakhmatovo throughout summer and autumn he prepares *Nochnye chasy* for Musagetes (M, 1911), writes first draft of 'Golos iz khora'; 'Na zheleznoi doroge'; 'Shagi kommandora'; 'Poseshchenie'. He leaves 1 Nov for Moscow to negotiate a *Sobranie stikhov* with Musagetes (3 vols. pub. 1914). On 14 Dec he speaks at memorial evening for Vladimir Solov'ev and touches also on death of Tolstoy.

Notes

PREFACE

- 1 Lev Shestov, *Apofez bezpochvennosti*, Opyt adogmaticeskogo myshleniia, ed. I.B. Ivanov (Leningrad: Izd-vo Leningradskogo universiteta, 1991), pp. 69–70.

PROLOGUE

- 1 Nikolai Berdiaev, in his *Filosofia Dostoievskogo* (Petrograd, 1921) considers the studies of Dostoevsky by Merezhkovsky and Shestov, first published in the opening years of the twentieth century in *Mir Iskusstva*, and maintains that 'a particular kind of soul' was required to understand him, a kind of soul which first appeared on the Russian scene in the 1890s. Vasilii Rozanov, from whose study of the legend of the Grand Inquisitor the quotation in this passage is taken (*Legenda o velikom inkvizitore* (SPb, 1894), pp. 179–80), was one of the first such 'particular souls'. For Max Nordau see below, n. 9.
- 2 See Anna Tyrkova, 'Anna Pavlovna Filosofova i ee vremia', *Sbornik pamiati Anny Pavlovnoi Filosofovoi*, vol. I (Petrograd, 1915), p. 338.
- 3 Fedor Dostoevsky, 'Zapiski iz podpol'ia', *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii v tridsati tomakh* [hereafter Dostoevsky, *PSS*], vol. V: *Povesti i rasskazy 1862–1866* (Leningrad, 1973), p. 174.
- 4 Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spake Zarathustra – A Book for Everyone and No One* (1883–92), trans. R.J. Hollingdale (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1961), p. 65. Nietzsche saw clearly that 'unchanging good and evil does not exist! From out of themselves they must overcome themselves again and again' (*ibid.*, 139). For this reason, he insisted, the ascetic who has overcome the world must learn to rejoice in it, the man who has made himself strong and sublime must 'unlearn his heroic will', for 'when power grows gracious and descends into the visible: I call such descending beauty' (*ibid.*, 140, 141). These passages, albeit understood by each man somewhat differently, are – spoken or unspoken – at the root of Merezhkovsky's and Minsky's concept of the 'two ways'; of Shestov's vision of himself as one who speaks of 'suppressed truths': 'even if it is a bad thing' because 'all suppressed truths become poisonous' (*ibid.*, 139); of Bely's constant self-observation and will to transform himself and life about him; of Ivanov's concept of 'descent'; and even of Blok's 'love of perdition': '... let everything that can break upon our truths – break!' (*ibid.*). The most comprehensive book in English on Nietzsche's influence in Russia,

- which extended far beyond the Symbolists, is *Nietzsche in Russia*, ed. Bernice Glatzer Rosenthal, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986).
- 5 Nietzsche, *The Gay Science* [*Die Fröhliche Wissenschaft*, 1882–7], here quoted as translated by R.J. Hollingdale in his introduction to *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (see n. 4), p. 19.
 - 6 This line from Charles Baudelaire's 'L'irréparable' was quoted in the form cited here by Lev Shestov to provide a conclusion of high pathos (and an epigraph) to his *Dostoevskii i Nitche, Filosofii tragedii*, in his *Sobranie sochinenii* [hereafter Shestov, *SS*], vol. III (Paris: YMCA-Press, 1971), pp. 245, 19, first serialised in *Mir Iskusstva* [*MI*] beginning in No. 2 (1902) and pub. in book form (privately printed, SPb) the following year.
 - 7 Osip Mandel'shtam, 'Erfurtskaia programma', *Sobranie sochinenii v trekh tomakh*, [hereafter Mandel'shtam, *SS*], ed. G.P. Struve and B.A. Filippov, vol. II: *Egipetskaia Ma'rka, Shum vremeni* (NY: Interlanguage Literary Associates, 1971), p. 88.
 - 8 Lev Shestov, *Apofoez bezpochvennosti*, p. 83.
 - 9 Max Nordau (real name Maximilian Südfeld), *Degeneracy*, first pub. in English 1895; reissued with an intro by George L. Mosse (NY: Howard Fertig, 1968): pp. 259 (mortality); p. 309 (Des Esseintes); p. 285 (degeneracy in England); pp. 206–7 (degeneracy in Germany); p. 230 (Ibsen); p. 170 (Tolstoy: the question Tolstoy asked was 'chem liudi zhivyt?' ['What do people live by?'], but Nordau, of course, would have read him in translation); p. 139 (Nietzsche); p. 552 (art as 'charming delusion', faith a 'subjective error'). Nordau's *Entartung* was first published in Berlin, 1892, and was taken up immediately by N.K. Mikhailovsky in *Russkoe Bogatsvo*; a Russian translation appeared within two years under the title *Vyrozhdenie* (SPb, 1894).
 - 10 N.K. Mikhailovsky in *Russkoe Bogatsvo* No. 1 (1893). Nordau, *Degeneracy*, p. 9.
 - 11 Dmitrii Merezhkovsky, *O prichinakh upadka i o novykh techeniakh sovremennoi russkoi literatury* (SPb, 1893) – as no publisher is given, it may be assumed that the work was privately printed, a common practice which did not always leave the author out of pocket; *Simvoly. Pesni i poemy (1887–1891)* (SPb, 1892).
 - 12 Mikhailovsky, 'Russkoe otrazhenie frantsuzskogo simvolizma', first pub. *Russkoe Bogatsvo* No. 2 (Feb 1893), but quoted here from Mikhailovsky, *Literaturnye vospominaniia i sovremennaia smuta*, vol. II (Pb, 1900), p. 60.
 - 13 Zinaida Vengerova, 'Poety Simvolisty vo Frantsii', *VE* No. 9 (1892), pp. 115–43.
 - 14 Vasilii Rozanov, 'Tsel' chelovecheskoi zhizni', *Voprosy Filosofii i Psikhologii*, Nov 1892, p. 27.
 - 15 Nikolai Minsky, 'Filosofskie razgovory', *MI* Nos. 10–11 (1903), p. 24.
 - 16 Merezhkovsky, 'O prichinakh upadka i o novykh techeniakh sovremennoi russkoi literatury', quoted here from his *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii* [hereafter Merezhkovsky, *PSS* (1911–13)], vol. XV (SPb, 1912), p. 250. This document, of fundamental importance to the early development of Russian Symbolism, has been ill-served by anthologists and translators, who have presented it in abbreviated form. It is worth reading in full.
 - 17 Akim Volynsky, 'Literaturnye zametki', *SV*, Mar 1893, pp. 132–3.

- 18 Merezhkovsky, 'O prichinakh . . .', *PSS* (1911–13), vol. XV, p. 236.
- 19 Vladimir Khodasevich, in his essay on Symbolism ('O simvolizme', *Izbrannaia proza* (NY: Russica, 1982), pp. 123–8, pointed out that no attempt had been made to distinguish the Russian use of the terms 'Symbolist', 'decadent' and 'modernist' (the last introduced as a useful blanket term to cover the whole movement for renewal by Semen Vengerov in a course of lectures given at Moscow University as early as 1897 (see V. Strada, 'La littérature de la fin du XIX^e siècle 1880–1900', in *Histoire de la littérature russe. Le XX^e siècle. L'âge d'argent*, ed. E. Etkind, G. Nivat, Ilya Serman and V. Strada (Paris: Fayard, 1987), p. 34). Although attempts to sort out the terminology were made by the protagonists themselves from the very beginnings of the movement, it is impossible to indicate a specific time when 'Symbolism' can be said to have succeeded 'decadence', or to distinguish between 'decadents' and 'symbolists' in the modernist camp, since the two tendencies existed concurrently in the same people and at the same time. As Chulkov wrote: 'All, as symbolists, wished to unite; all, as decadents, fled one another' (G. Chulkov, 'Aleksandr Blok i ego vremia', in *Pis'ma Bloka*, ed. S.M. Solov'ev (Leningrad, 1925), p. 102. Indeed, the epithet 'decadent' was applied at the time to all those seeking new ways in art and literature by their opponents, and often accepted by the innovators in a spirit of bravado: 'We have been labelled the children of degeneracy and we have calmly and humbly accepted this senseless and insulting appellation of decadents' wrote Diaghilev in his first editorial in *MI* ('Slozhnye voprosy', *MI* Nos. 1–2 (1899), p. 3). Like Zinaida Hippus, I 'do not even know whether we have any "pure" decadents, nor where they are to be found' (Z.N. Hippus, 'Torzhestvo v chest' smerti', *MI* Nos. 17–18 (1900), p. 87), and have contented myself with using the term in inverted commas. Nevertheless, there was evolution away from *fin-de-siècle* decadence (associated with extreme individualism) through Symbolism (the discovery of a new 'language') towards reintegration. (Cf. Z. Mints on what she calls 'the third stage of Russian Symbolism from 1908 to the early 1910s' in her 'Blok i russkii simvolizm', *Aleksandr Blok. Novye materialy i issledovaniia, Kniga pervaiia, Literaturnoe nasledstvo* 92, [LN 92, Bks. 1–4], pp. 110–111).
- 20 Viacheslav Ivanov, 'Mysli o simvolizme', first pub. *Trudy i Dni Musageta* [hereafter *Trudy i Dni*] No. 1 (1912), *SS*, vol. II, p. 611. The importance of Tiutchev for Russian Symbolism was the keystone of 'Zavety simvolizma', first pub. in *Apollon* No. 8 (1910), *SS*, vol. II, p. 597, and the concept of the organic roots of Russian Symbolism in the Russian language runs through all the articles Ivanov gathered together in the section 'Iskusstvo i simvolizm' in the collection *Borozdi i Mezhi* (Pb 1912).
- 21 Valerii Briusov, 'F.I. Tiutchev. Smysl ego tvorchestva', written for the *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii F.I. Tiutcheva*, ed. P.N. Bykov (SPb, 1911), quoted here from the collection *Dalekie i blizkie* (first pub. Moscow, 1912, repr. Brussels, 1973), p. 17. *SS*, vol. VI, pp. 193–208.
- 22 Merezhkovsky, 'Dve tainy russkoi poezii. Nekrasov i Tiutchev', (Petrograd, 1915), p. 95. Merezhkovsky misremembered the actual line, which reads: 'Die Welt ist tief, und tiefer als der Tag gedacht'. The slip, however, is consonant with the sense of Nietzsche's poem, inspired by the strokes of midnight.
- 23 Briusov, 'A.A. Fet. Iskusstvo ili zhizn'', public lecture read on the tenth

- anniversary of Fet's death in 1902 and quoted here from *Dalekie i blizkie* (see n. 21), p. 26. *SS*, vol. VI, pp. 209–17.
- 24 Liubov' Blok recalls this moment in her *Byli i nebylitsy*, ed. I. Paul'mann and L.S. Fleishmann, *Studien und Texte* No. 10 (Bremen: K-Press, 1977), p. 39. Fet's poem 'Kogda moi mechty, za gran'iu proshlykh dnei' was written in 1844.
- 25 Dostoevsky, 'G-in -bov i vopros ob iskusstve', *Vremia* No. 2, Part II, pp. 165–205, quoted here from Dostoevsky, *PSS*, vol. XVIII (1978), pp. 75–6. The poem 'Shepot, robkoe dykhanie', written in 1850, seduced even Saltykov-Shchedrin by its 'fragrant freshness' and delighted Tolstoy by the originality of its form – a series of 'pictures' with no predicates. It also fascinated the musicians; M.A. Balakirev, N.K. Metner and several others set it to music. In fact, the view of Fet as a totally neglected 'martyr' was exaggerated. He continued to publish poetry in *Russkii Vestnik* between 1863 and 1883 and his romances, as his most virulent critics were ready to admit, were sung by all Russia. No collection of his poems, however, came out over the period and the Symbolist vision of him as a literary outcast has the truth of myth.
- 26 Nikolai Gumilev, from an unfinished article begun in Paris in 1917 or London 1918, first published by G.P. Struve, 'From the archives of Nikolai Gumilev: unpublished materials for a biography of Gumilev and the history of literary trends', in *Opyty* No. 1 (NY, 1955); here quoted from a translation by David Lapeza in *Nikolai Gumilev on Russian Poetry* (Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1977), p. 173.
- 27 Iakov Polonsky, 'Vechernii zvon', written 12 May 1890, *Stikhotvoreniia* (Leningrad, 1957), pp. 319–20. Kornei Chukovsky, in his memoir of Blok, recalls that the poet confided to him as late as 1919 – in a conspiratorial whisper – that he and his mother tended to judge people by whether or not they liked Polonsky (K. Chukovsky, 'Aleksandr Blok', *Liudi i knigi* (Moscow, 1960), p. 519).
- 28 Blok, 'Narod i intelligentsia', *SS*, vol. V, p. 32.
- 29 Merezhkovsky, *Dve tainy russkoi poezii* . . . , p. 67.
- 30 Rozanov, *Uedinennoe*, first pub. Moscow, 1911; here quoted from V.V. Rozanov, *Izbrannoe*, ed. E. Zhiglevich (Munich: A. Neimanis-Verlag, 1970) [hereafter *Rozanov, Izbrannoe*], pp. 56, 11.
- 31 Merezhkovsky, *Dve tainy russkoi poezii* . . . , p. 111.
- 32 Rozanov, *Uedinennoe* (as n. 30), p. 11.

I TRANSITIONAL WRITERS

- 1 A good account of the part played in the development of *fin-de-siècle* literature in Russia by Akim Volynsky and *SV* is Amy Barda, 'La place du Severnyj Vestnik et de A. Volynskij dans les débuts du mouvement symboliste', *Cahiers du monde russe et soviétique* 22: 1 (Jan–Mar 1981), pp. 119–25. There are also articles on the subject by P.V. Kupriianovskii, 'Poety-Simvolisty v zhurnale "Severnyi Vestnik"', in *Russkaia Sovetskaia Poeziia i stikhovedenie* (Moscow, 1969), pp. 113–35; 'Iz istorii rannego russkogo simvolizma (Simvolisty i zhurnal "Severnyi Vestnik")', in *Russkaia literatura XX veka (dooktiabr'skii period)* (Kaluga, 1968), pp. 149–73 and 'K probleme: Simvolisty i legal'nye

- marksisty', in *Russkaia literatura XX veka (dooktiabr'skii period)* (Kaluga, 1970), pp. 217–29.
- 2 Cf. L. Gurevich, 'Istoria Severnogo Vestnika', in *Russkaia literatura XX veka (1890–1910)*, ed. S.A. Vengerov (Moscow, 1914–18), vol. I (1914), pp. 235–64.
 - 3 Volynsky's systematic attack on the radical critics took the form first of a series of articles published in *SV* from Oct 1893 until May 1895; these were then collected and reissued as a book: A. Volynsky, *Russkie kritiki* (SPb, 1895).
 - 4 Akim Volynsky, 'Kritika i bibliografiia', *SV* Nos. 10–12 (1898), pp. 206–7.
 - 5 See N.K. Mikhailovsky, 'Le mouvement littéraire en Russie', *Regne des regnes* (Paris), Nos. 2 and 3 (1894), and A. Volynsky, 'Literaturnye zametki', *SV*, Apr 1894, p. 117.
 - 6 Cf. Volynsky, 'Literaturnye zametki: Belinsky', *SV*, Oct, Nov, Dec 1893, pp. 120–56; 129–70; 146–96.
 - 7 Volynsky, 'Literaturnye zametki', *SV*, Jan 1893, pp. 128–9.
 - 8 Volynsky, 'Literaturnye zametki', *SV*, Feb 1895, p. 290.
 - 9 Volynsky, 'Literaturnye zametki', *SV*, Jan 1893, pp. 28–9.
 - 10 Cf. Volynsky, *Bor'ba za idealizm, kriticheskie ocherki* (Pb, 1900), p. 189, and his polemic with the radical critic Tikhomirov in *SV*, July 1896.
 - 11 Volynsky, 'Literaturnye zametki', *SV*, Dec 1894, p. 407.
 - 12 Dmitrii Merezhkovsky, 'O prichinakh upadka . . .', *PSS*, vol. XV (1911–13), pp. 217, 222.
 - 13 Volynsky, 'Narodnichestvo i liberalizm' (first pub. *SV*, Feb 1894), here quoted from the book *Kniga velikogo gneva* (Pb, 1894), p. 469.
 - 14 Cf. Zinaida Gippius-Merezhkovskaia, *Dmitrii Merezhkovskii* (Paris: YMCA-Press, 1951), p. 72. Burenin's articles appeared in *Novoe Vremia* No. 6326 (8/20 Oct 1893) and No. 6340 (22 Oct/3 Nov 1893), and Volynsky himself told the story of the jubilee dinner in 'Pis'mo v redaktsiiu – intsident na iubilee g. Skabichevskogo', *SV*, Apr 1894, pp. 145–7.
 - 15 Zinaida Hippus, 'Soglasnym kritikam', *NP*, July 1904, p. 246.
 - 16 Aleksei Remizov in his commentary to his wife Serafima Pavlovna's dream of Viacheslav Ivanov, 'Petersburg Dreams', pub. A. Pyman in *Aleksej Remizov: Approaches to a Protean Writer*, ed. Greta N. Slobin (Columbus, Ohio: Slavica, 1987), p. 71 (in English, p. 77).
 - 17 A. Volynsky, *Tsarstvo Karamazovykh – N.S. Leskov – Zametki* (Pb, 1901) and *F.M. Dostoevskii. Kriticheskie stat'i* (Pb, 1906; 2nd edn. Pb, 1909).
 - 18 Influential in stimulating interest in Dostoevsky's religious thought was VI. Solov'ev (cf. 'Tri rechi v pamiatii Dostoevskogo', in *Sobranie sochinenii* [hereafter *SS*], 2nd edn. ed. S.M. Solov'ev and E.L. Radlov (SPb, 1911–14), vol. III, pp. 169–200). Merezhkovsky's first approach to Dostoevsky was 'O Prestuplenii i nakazanii', *Russkoe Obozrenie* 2: 3 (1890), pp. 155–86; but much better known is the comparative study, *Khristos i Antikhrisť v russkoi literature: Lev Tolstoi i Dostoevskii*, 2 vols. (SPb, 1901, 1902). He returned to Dostoevsky in 'Prorok russkoi revoliutsii', *Vesy* Nos. 3–4 (1906), pp. 19–47, and in 'Gor'kii i Dostoevskii', *Bylo i budet* (Petrograd, 1915), pp. 26–83. Vasiliĭ Rozanov first attracted the attention of P.P. Pertsov with the publication in book form of *Legenda o velikom inkvizitore* (SPb, 1894). Lev Shestov's *Dostoevskii i Nitche, Filosofiiia tragedii* (SPb, 1903) was first published in *MI*, as was Merezh-

- kovsky's 'Tolstoy i Dostoevsky'. See also Shestov's review 'O knige Merezhkovskogo', *MI* Nos. 8–9 (1901), pp. 132–6. Andrey Bely's 'Ibsen i Dostoevskii', *Vesy* No. 12 (Dec 1906), was a reaction against Merezhkovsky's 'Prophet of Revolution' and Aleksandr Blok touches on the same themes in the article 'Bezvremen'e', *Zolotoe Runo [ZR]* Nos. 11–12 (1906) (also Blok, *SS*, vol. V, pp. 66–82). Viacheslav Ivanov took a more detached view in 'Dostoevskii i roman-tragediia', *Russkaia Mysl'* Nos. 5–6 (1911), and in the same year Bely published his *Tragediia tvorchestva – Dostoevskii i Tolstoi* (Moscow, 1911).
- 19 'Voskresshie Bogi', as the second part of Merezhkovsky's trilogy was called in Russian, began to appear in *Nachalo* No. 1 (1899); Volynsky's *Leonardo da Vinchi* was published by A.F. Marks (Pb, 1900) and a 2nd edn. appeared in Kiev in 1909. Merezhkovsky's book *Voskresshie bogi: Leonardo da Vinchi* bears the publishing date 'SPb, 1901', though, like many books of the period, it was in fact available the previous autumn.
 - 20 For Hippus's account of her relations with Volynsky see her *Dmitrii Merezhkovskii*, pp. 64–73.
 - 21 Volynsky, 'Sovremennaia russkaia belletristika, Literaturnye zametki', *SV*, Feb 1895, p. 340; 'Kritika i bibliografiia', *SV*, Sept 1895, pp. 71–4; 'Literaturnye zametki', *SV*, Sept 1896, pp. 235–47; and 'Kritika', *SV*, Mar 1896, pp. 36–43.
 - 22 Volynsky, 'Literaturnye zametki', *SV*, May 1894, p. 183, and 'Literaturnye zametki', *SV*, July 1896, p. 235.
 - 23 Volynsky, 'O simbolizme i simbolistakh', *SV* Nos. 10–12 (1898), p. 222.
 - 24 Anton Krainyi [Z.N. Hippus], 'N.K. Mikhailovskii', *NP*, Feb 1904, pp. 25–8.
 - 25 Minsky's article 'Starinnyi spor' was originally published in *Zaria* (Kiev) No. 193 (29 Aug 1884). The quotation is from a later book as serialised in *MI*: 'Filosofskie razgovory', *MI* No. 12 (1903), p. 275. Minsky is often credited with the introduction of Nietzschean ideas to Russia on the strength of 'Starinnyi spor', but this is not how his contemporaries saw it. Hippus says it was Prince Urusov who concentrated the attention of the literary élite on the ideas of the German philosopher in a talk given in 1890 (*Dmitrii Merezhkovskii*, p. 63) when, according to Viacheslav Ivanov, 'everyone was beginning to discuss Nietzsche' (Ivanov, *SS*, vol. I, p. 16). Rozanov, in *Russkii Vestnik* Nos. 4–6 (1903), attributes Russian interest in Nietzsche's philosophy to Preobrazhensky's exposition of the critique of altruism in *Voprosy Filosofii i Psikhologii* 1:5 (1982) (Konstantin Leont'ev, *Pis'ma k Vasiliuu Rozanovu* (London: Nina Karsov, 1981), p. 34). Minsky's awareness of Nietzsche is, of course, reflected in 'Starinnyi spor' and *Pri svete sovesti*, but he was hardly a propagandist of Nietzschean ideas and, when he wrote the German philosopher's obituary for *MI* (Nos. 19–20 (1900), pp. 139–47), his attitude was cool. See also Avril Pyman, 'Minsky. A preliminary study of the man in his generation', *Scottish Slavonic Review* No. 2 (1983), pp. 135–63 and Z.G. Mints, "'Starinnyi spor" i simbolizm', *Blokovskii sbornik* No. 9 (Tartu, 1989).
 - 26 Minsky, 'Filosofskie razgovory', *MI* Nos. 10–11 (1903), p. 241. The lines of poetry are from 'Na chuzhom piru', in Minsky, *Stikhotvoreniia* (SPb, 1890), p. 40, and 'Son', *Stikhotvoreniia* (SPb, 1888), p. 89.
 - 27 Minsky, 'Filosofskie razgovory', *MI* No. 12 (1903), p. 263.

- 28 Minsky, *Pri svete sovesti (Mysli i mechty o tseli zhizni)* (SPb, 1890), p. 166.
- 29 *Ibid.*, p. 170.
- 30 Cf. Mikhailovsky, 'O sovesti g. Minskogo' in 'Dnevnik chitatelia', *SV* No. 173 (1880) and 'O sovesti G. Minskogo, strakhe smerti i zhazhde bessmertii', *Russkoe Bogatstvo* No. 10 (1897); also Lev Tolstoy, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii. Iubileinoe izdanie* [hereafter *PSS* (1928–58)], vol. L, p. 196, here quoted from *Lev Tolstoi ob iskusstve i literature*, vol. II (Moscow, 1958), p. 312; also Vladimir Solov'ev, 'Po povodu sochineniia N.M. Minskogo 'Pri svete sovesti'', *VE* No. 13 (1890) (also in *SS*, vol. VI, pp. 241–66).
- 31 Minsky, 'Oblako', *Stikhotvoreniia* (SPb, 1886), p. 141.
- 32 Cf. Gippius-Merezhkovskaia, *Dmitrii Merezhkovskii*, p. 64.
- 33 Cf., for instance, P.P. Pertsov, *Literaturnye vospominaniia, 1890–1902* (Moscow/Leningrad, 1933) and V. Briusov, 'N. Minskii. Opyt kharakteristiki', first pub. *Vesy* No. 7 (1908); *SS*, vol. VI, pp. 235–41.
- 34 Pertsov tells us this in his memoirs (see n. 33), p. 224. Minsky's poem is 'Kak son, proidut dela i pomysly liudei', *Stikhotvoreniia* (SPb, 1896), p. 114.
- 35 A.M. Skabichevsky, *Istoriia noveishei russkoi literatury (1848–1890)* (SPb, 1891), pp. 522–3. Merezhkovsky's 'Vera' was first published in *Russkaia Mysl'* Nos. 3, 4 and 5 (1890).
- 36 An 'autoquote' by Pertsov in his *Literaturnye vospominaniia*, p. 46.
- 37 Merezhkovsky, 'Liubit' narod?', *PSS* (1914), vol. XXII, p. 12.
- 38 Merezhkovsky, 'Avtobiograficheskaia zametka' in *Russkaia Literatura*, ed. Vengerov, vol. III, p. 292.
- 39 Merezhkovsky, 'Starinnye oktavy', an autobiographical narrative poem first pub. *ZR* Nos. 1–3 (1906), but quoted here from *Sobranie stikhov 1893–1910* (originally SPb, 1910, but here Rarity Reprints 11, Letchworth: Bradda Books, 1969), p. 179.
- 40 Gippius-Merezhkovskaia, *Dmitrii Merezhkovskii*, p. 43.
- 41 Rozanov, *Opavshie list'ia, korob pervyi* (first pub. SPb, 1913), quoted here from *Izbrannoe* (1970), p. 20.
- 42 Gippius-Merezhkovskaia, *Dmitrii Merezhkovskii*, p. 49.
- 43 These lines come from different poems, i.e. D.S. Merezhkovsky: 'I khochu, no ne v silakh liubit' ia liudei'; 'O esli by dusha polna byla liubov'iu'; 'Goluboe nebo'; 'Starinnye oktavy'; and 'Oдиночество'; all from *Sobranie stikhov 1883–1910*, pp. 14, 67, 9, 246, 12.
- 44 Merezhkovsky, 'Pustaia chasha', *Sobranie stikhov 1883–1910*, pp. 25.
- 45 Briusov, 'N. Minskii. Opyt kharakteristiki'; *SS*, vol. VI, p. 235.
- 46 Merezhkovsky, 'Deti mraka', originally in *Novye stikhotvoreniia* (SPb, 1896), p. 5; see also *Sobranie stikhov 1883–1910*, p. 7; and 'Morituri', *Sobranie stikhov 1883–1910*, pp. 5–6.
- 47 Rozanov, 'Sredi inoiazychnykh (D.S. Merezhkovskii)', *MI* Nos. 7–8 (1903), p. 68.
- 48 Merezhkovsky, 'Molitva o kryl'iakh', first in *Severnye Tsvety [STs]* No. 2 (1902), p. 103; quoted here from *Sobranie stikhov 1883–1910*, p. 73.
- 49 Merezhkovsky, 'Priznanie', *Sobranie stikhov 1883–1910*, p. 16.
- 50 Merezhkovsky, 'Dvoinaia bezdna', *ibid.*, pp. 65–6; and see also Minsky, 'Net dvukh putei dobra i zla', *Novye pesni* (SPb, 1901), pp. 23–5.
- 51 Lev Tolstoy, *PSS*, vol. LII, p. 76. See also L.D. Opuł'skaia, 'Tolstoi i russkie

- pisateli kontsa XIX-nachala XX v', *LN* 69, Bk I (Moscow, 1961), pp. 103–40, for Tolstoy's attitude to the Merezhkovskys, Bal'mont and Briusov.
- 52 Merezhkovsky, 'Bog', first pub. *Simvoly* (SPb, 1982); quoted here from *Sobranie stikhov 1883–1910*, p. 4.
- 53 Merezhkovsky, *Vechnye sputniki* (SPb, 1897).
- 54 Rozanov, 'Uedinennoe', in *Izbrannoe* (1970), p. 46.
- 55 Merezhkovsky, 'Panteon', first pub. *Sobranie stikhov 1883–1910*, pp. 61–2.
- 56 Briusov, 'Dmitrii Merezhkovskii', *Dalekie i blizkie*, p. 63.
- 57 Merezhkovsky, 'Leda', *Sobranie stikhov 1883–1910*, pp. 77–9.
- 58 Briusov, 'Pis'ma k P.P. Pertsovu 1894–1896 (K istorii rannego simvolizma)' *Teksty i materialy*, Vypusk tretii (Gos. Ak. Khud. Nauk: Moscow, 1927), p. 20. Briusov makes this remark specifically about 'Leda', 'before which I am ready to drop to my knees', p. 19. Letter of 17 Apr 1895.

2 THE NEW POETRY IN ST PETERSBURG

- 1 Aleksandr Blok, letter of 12 Dec 1903 to Andrei Bely, *SS*, vol. VIII, pp. 75–6. In fact, the letter was probably written à propos Hippus's *Collected Poems* which, as usual, would have been available before the date of publication on the title page.
- 2 Olga Matich, *Paradox in the Religious Poetry of Zinaida Gippius*, Centrifuga: Russian Reprintings and Printings, vol. VII (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1972), p. 15.
- 3 Zinaida Gippius, 'Pesnia', first pub. *SV*, July 1895; quoted here from *Stikhotvorenniia i poemy 1899–1918*, 2 vols., compiled, annotated and with an introduction by Temira Pachmuss, Centrifuga: Russian Reprintings and Printings, vol. IV (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1972), pp. 1–2.
- 4 Gippius-Merezhkovskaia, *Dmitrii Merezhkovskii*, pp. 63–4.
- 5 For Hippus's introduction of the *dol'nik* see James Bailey, 'The Versification of Zinaida Gippius', Ph.D dissertation for Harvard University, 1965. Further for the history of the *dol'nik* in Russian Symbolism, see the same author, 'Basic Structural Characteristics of Russian Literary Metres', *Studies presented to Roman Jakobson by his Students* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1968). For the dispute as to whether this innovation was a true *dol'nik* or should be labelled a *pauznik* and still accounted among the syllabo-tonic metres, see Robin Kembell, *Alexander Blok. A Study in Rhythm and Metre* (The Hague: Mouton, 1965), p. 242.
- 6 Gippius, 'Posviashchenie', first pub. *SV*, Mar 1895; here from *Stikhotvorenniia i poemy*, vol. I, p. 3.
- 7 V.P. Burenin, 'Priatel'skie razgovory', *Novoe Vremia*, No. 6875, 2 Apr/3 May, 1895.
- 8 Cf. Gippius-Merezhkovskaia, *Dmitrii Merezhkovskii*, p. 69.
- 9 *Ibid.*, p. 41.
- 10 Gippius, 'Nikogda', written in 1893, first pub. in *Sobranie stikhov* [hereafter Gippius, *SS*]. Bk I (Moscow, 1904), p. 10, pub. by Skorpion; the second book of her collected poems was published by Musagetes in 1910.
- 11 Sergei Makovsky, 'Zinaida Gippius (1869–1947)', *Na Parnasse Serebrianogo Veka* (Munich: TsOPE, 1962), pp. 97, 117.

- 12 Gippius-Merezhkovskaia, *Dmitrii Merezhkovskii*, p. 42. Zlobin's memoir of Hippius, entitled *Tiazhelaia Dusha* (Rockville, Md.: Victor Kamkin, 1970), has been translated by Simon Karlinsky as *A Difficult Soul: Zinaida Gippius*, with an introductory essay and notes by the translator, *Documentary Studies in Modern Russian Poetry* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1980). The poem 'Elektrichestvo', written in 1901, is quoted here from *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy*, vol. I, p. 92.
- 13 Georgii Adamovich, *Odinochestvo i svoboda* (NY: Chekhov Press, 1956), p. 153.
- 14 Cf. Makovsky, *Na Parnasse Serebrianogo Veka*, p. 93, and I. Annensky, 'O sovremennom lirizme', *Apollon* No. 3, (Dec 1909), p. 9.
- 15 Gippius, 'Mezhdū', written in 1905 and dedicated to Dmitrii Filosofov; first pub. in *SS*, vol. II; it is quoted here from *Stikhotvoreniia i Poemy I*, p. 34. (It should be noted that this collection of Hippius's poetry consists of photographic reprints of previous collections, so this is not the first p. 34 in vol. I. Subsequently notes will cite Bks. I or II of *SS*, to which the pagination in the *Stikhotvoreniia i Poemy I* reprint conforms.)
- 16 Marina Tsvetaeva, 'Spiashchii', from 'Iskusstvo pri svete sovsti', *Proza* (NY: Chekhov Press, 1953), p. 384.
- 17 Gippius, 'Neliubov', written 1907, *SS*, vol. II, p. 39.
- 18 Gippius, 'Neobkhodimoe o stikakh', Introduction to *SS*, vol. I, p. iii.
- 19 The words 'The effort of resurrection' are, of course, Pasternak's, not Hippius's; but the stone slab comes from her 'Krik', written 1896, *SS*, vol. I, p. 62.
- 20 Gippius, 'Mgnovenie', written 1898, *SS*, vol. I, p. 96.
- 21 Gippius, 'Zemlia', written 1902, *SS*, vol. I, p. 96.
- 22 Cf. Gippius, 'Grizel'da', written 1895, *SS*, vol. I, p. 22, and 'Bozhii tvar', written 1902, *SS*, vol. I, p. 148.
- 23 Valerii Briusov, 'Ia znaiu udovol'stvie smerti', written circa 1900, *Russkaia stikhotvornaia parodiia XVIII-nachala XX v* (Leningrad, 1960), p. 643. The parody refers back to Hippius's lines 'Ia – eto Ty, o Nevedomyi, / Ty – v moem serdste, Obizhennyi, / Tak podnimi zhe, Nevedomyi, / Dukh Tvoi, Toboiu unizhennyi', from the poem 'Molitva', written in 1897; *SS*, vol. I, p. 52.
- 24 Fedor Sologub 'Plennaia Smert', *Kniga skazok* (Moscow, 1905), p. 6.
- 25 Sologub, 'V mae', written 13 Apr 1893, first pub. *Illustrirovannyi Mir* No. 52 (1893), p. 3. Quoted here from Sologub, *Stikhotvoreniia*, ed. M.I. Dikman (Leningrad, 1975), p. 113. Sologub's *Collected Works, Sobranie sochinenii*, were published first by Shipovnik in 12 vols. (Pb, 1909–12), then (albeit incompletely) by Sirin in 20 vols. (Pb, 1912–14). Poems missed there, or written later and never collected, have been assembled and published with commentary by Gabriele Pauer in *Fedor Sologub, Neizdannoe i nesobranoe*, Slavistische Beiträge, vol. 245 (Munich: Otto Sagner, 1989).
- 26 Sologub, 'Ia slagal eti mernye zvuki', written 2 July 1893, first pub. *Illustrirovannyi Mir* No. 27 (1894), p. 3.
- 27 In order of citation, these lines are from the following poems by Sologub: 'Kogda ia v burnom more plaval', written 23 July 1902, first pub. *STs*, vol. III (1905), p. 160, *Stikhotvoreniia*, pp. 278–9; 'Zmii, tsariashchii nad vselennoiū', written 18 June 1902, first pub. *Mir Bozhii* No. 11 (1902), p. 42, *Stikhotvoreniia*, p. 269; 'Tvorchestvo', written 3 Feb 1893, first pub. *SV* No. 4 (1893),

- p. 52, *Stikhotvoreniia*, p. 109; 'O smert'! ia tvoi . . .', written 12 June 1894, first pub. in the Shipovnik *Sobranie sochinenii*, under the title 'Smerti [To Death]', *Stikhotvoreniia*, p. 120.
- 28 Cf. M. Dikman, introduction to Sologub, *Stikhotvoreniia*, p. 22, n. 1.
- 29 The parodist was Blok: cf. 'Shutochnye programmy zhurnalov – *Novyi put'*', *SS*, vol. VII, p. 442. It is Kornei Chukovskii who points out the theme of the changeling mother in Sologub; see 'Nav'i chary *Melkogo besa*', originally pub. in *Russkaia Mysl'* No. I (1910), but quoted here from *O Fedore Sologube. Kritika. Stat'i i zametki*, compiled by Anastasiia Chebotarevskaiia [repr. from the 1911 original] (Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1983), pp. 35–57.
- 30 Sologub, 'Ia iz uchilishcha prishel', written between 1882 and 1885, pub. for the first time from MS in *Stikhotvoreniia*, pp. 83–2.
- 31 Cf. Sologub, 'Poshel mne god uzhe dvadtsat' vtoroi', written 18 Sep 1884, pub. from MS in *Stikhotvoreniia*, p. 82.
- 32 Sologub's *Tiazhelye sny*, begun in 1883, pub. in *SV* in 1895 and as a separate book the following year, had to wait until 1909 for publication as Sologub wrote it. *Melkii bes*, begun in 1892 and finished in 1902, could not find a publisher at all until war and revolution had somewhat loosened up the censorship. It was accepted for *Voprosy Zhizni [VZh]* and serialised throughout 1905, but was first published in book form by Shipovnik in 1907. Sologub tells how he 'toned down' the description of provincial life in his 'Autobiography' for S.A. Vengerov's *Russkaia Literatura XX veka, 1890–1910*, vol. II, p. 11; the letter to his sister is quoted from M. Dikman's introduction to *Stikhotvoreniia*, p. 12.
- 33 Cf. M. Gofman, *Poety simvolizma* (Pb, 1908), repr. in *Slavische Propyläen*, vol. 106 (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1970), p. 239. Cf. the publication by A.V. Lavrov of Bely's letter to Ivanov-Razumnik on the occasion of Sologub's death, also R.J. Keys in *Andrey Bely. Centenary Papers* (Amsterdam, 1980), pp. 29–30.
- 34 Oral communication: Irina and Eric Prehn, friends of the Metner brothers, told me this story, not of the composer but of his brother Emilii Metner, friend of Andrei Bely and editor of the journal *Dela i dni Musageta*.
- 35 Cf. Gippius, 'Contes d'Amour, Dnevnik liubovnykh istorii 1893–1904', pub. by Temira Pachmuss, *Vozrozhdenie [La Renaissance]*, 1969: No. 210, pp. 57–76; No. 211, pp. 25–47; No. 212, pp. 39–54.
- 36 Sologub, 'O vladychitsa smert'', written 20 Oct 1897, *Stikhotvoreniia*, p. 196.
- 37 Cf. Sologub, 'Likho', written 30 Dec 1891, 26 Jan 1892 and 2 Apr 1893, first pub. *Zhivopisnoe Obozrenie* No. 32 (1895), p. 102; 'Na nem iznoshennyi kaftan', written 21 Dec 1897, first pub. under the title 'Dokuka-vorog', *Zhivopisnoe Obozrenie* No. 47 (1898), p. 939; and 'Nedotykomka seraia', written 1 Oct 1899, first pub. *Sobranie stikhov* (Moscow, 1904), p. 132, in *Stikhotvoreniia*, see pp. 112, 198 and 234.
- 38 Sologub, introduction to his translations of poems by Verlaine: Paul Verlaine, *Stikhi izbrannye i perevedennye F. Sologubom* (Pb, 1908), p. 7.
- 39 Aleksandr Blok, letter to Sologub of 2 Dec 1907, *SS*, vol. VIII, p. 219.
- 40 Cf. Briusov's introduction to Paul Verlaine, *Sobranie stikhov v perevode V. Briusova* (Moscow, 1911), pp. 7–8.
- 41 Sologub, as n. 38, pp. 7, 9.

- 42 Sologub, 'Rifma', written 29 June 1880, pub. from MS, *Stikhotvoreniia*, p. 79.
- 43 Cf. Shestov's astonished reaction to Sologub's capacity to 'howl' in *O Fedore Sologube* (see n. 29), pp. 58–71. The poem which particularly caught Shestov's attention was 'My plenennyi zveri', *Stikhotvoreniia*, p. 313.
- 44 The 'pariah' poems in order of citation are: 'Idti b dorogoiu svobodnoi', written 20 Aug 1897–20 Mar 1898, first pub. *NP* No. 2, (1903), p. 63; 'Ia zhil kak zver' peshchernyi', written 24 Feb 1904, first pub. *Fakely I* (1906), p. 15; 'Vysoka luna gospodnia', written Feb 1905, first pub. *VZh* Nos. 4–5 (1905), p. 45; in *Stikhotvoreniia*, p. see pp. 201, 294, 314. For the cycle 'Kogda ia byl sobakoi', consisting of five poems written 1911–12 and pub. separately in various journals, see *Stikhotvoreniia*, pp. 366–9.

3 RUSSIAN SYMBOLISM ACQUIRES A NAME

- 1 Konstantin Bal'mont, 'Na Zare', in the newspaper *Segodnia* (Riga), 29 Sept 1929, here quoted from Vladimir Orlov's introduction to K.D. Bal'mont, *Stikhotvoreniia*, ed. Vl. Orlov (Leningrad, 1969), p. 13. No edition of Bal'mont's Collected Poems has been completed since the 10-vol. *Skorpion Polnoe sobranie stikhov* (Moscow, 1907–14), but the foundations for one have been laid by Vladimir Markov, in *Kommentar zu den Dichtungen von K.D. Bal'mont 1890–1909*, (Bausteine zur Geschichte der Literatur bei den Slaven, vol. 31, I, II) (Vienna/Cologne: Bohlau, 1988, 1992).
- 2 Bal'mont, 'Pamiati I.S. Turgeneva', written Oct 1893, first pub. *Mir Bozhii* No. 1 (1894), p. 31; quoted here from *Stikhotvoreniia*, p. 87.
- 3 Cf. A.N. Ovsianikov, 'Iz shkol'nykh let K.D. Bal'monta . . .', in N.D. Agrikov ed., 'Shuiskii protivopravitel'stvennyi sbornik', *Trudy Ivanovo-Voznesenskogo gubernskogo nauchnogo obshchestva kraevedeniia*, vypusk 4 (Ivanovo-Voznesensk, 1926), pp. 69–70.
- 4 Bal'mont. 'Tri stikhotvoreniia', *Zhivopisnoe Obozrenie*, 24 Nov/7–18 Dec 1885.
- 5 Bal'mont, 'Zavetnaia Rifma', 3 July 1924, first pub. *Sovremennye Zapiski* (Paris) No. 22, p. 174, quoted from *Stikhotvoreniia*, p. 490.
- 6 Bal'mont, 'Ia kogda-to byl synom zemli', from *Vozdushnobelye*, in *Stikhotvoreniia*, p. 121. This poem, written in Apr 1896, is part of a cycle which bears an epigraph from Blake whom Bal'mont studied avidly in the Taylorian during his stay in Oxford in 1897: 'I tell thee, when I pass away, it is to tenfold life, to love, to peace and raptures holy. Unseen descending weigh my light wings upon balmy flowers.'
- 7 Bal'mont, 'Avtobiografia', in M. Gofman, *Kniga o russkikh poetakh poslednego desiatiletiiia*, (SPb/Moscow, 1909), p. 35.
- 8 Cf. Bal'mont, 'Elementarnye slova o simvolicheskoi poezii', *Gornye vershiny*. Sbornik statei, Book I (Moscow: Grif, 1904), p. 79, where he lists influences from England, America, Scandinavia, Germany, Italy, Russia and Belgium. Of the French he mentions Baudelaire, Villiers de l'Isle Adam, Huysmans, Rimbaud and, grudgingly, Verlaine and Mallarmé, whose importance for Russian Symbolism he considered had been grossly exaggerated. Bal'mont embarked in 1892 on the grandiose task of translating Shelley's lyric poetry,

- drama and narrative poems. The first edition was issued in seven parts between 1893 and 1899.
- 9 For Poe's influence on Russian literature as a whole, see Joan Delaney Grossman, *Edgar Allan Poe in Russia. A Study in Legend and Literary Influence*, Colloquium Slavicum, vol. 3 (Wurzburg: Jal, 1973). The two books of Poe translations by Bal'mont published by Urusov were *Ballady i fantazii* (Moscow, 1895), and *Tainstvennye Rasskazy* (Moscow, 1895). For the poet's tribute to his mentor and patron see Bal'mont, 'Mn. A.I. Urusov (Stranitsa liubvi i pamiati)', *Gornye vershiny*, pp. 103–5. The poems reflecting Urusov's encouragement of Bal'mont's *musique* are 'Cheln tomlen'ia' and 'Pesnia bez slov', undated, both first pub. *Pod severnym nebom* (SPb, 1894), quoted here from *Stikhotvoreniia*, pp. 89 and 90. Cf. Markov's note on 'Cheln tomlenia', *Kommentar zu den Dichtungen von K.D. Bal'mont*, 1, pp. 33–4. Markov considers the poem 'Vlaga', *Stikhotvoreniia*, p. 216, a better example of Bal'mont's alliterative gift.
 - 10 Bal'mont claimed in his 'Avtobiograficheskaiia zametka' (in Vengerov, *Russkaia Literatura XX veka*, vol. I, p. 59), that *The Brothers Karamazov* was the book which had influenced him beyond any other.
 - 11 Bal'mont, 'Ia mechtoiui lovil ukhodiashchie teni', written 1894, first pub. *Russkaia Mysl'* No. 8 (1894), p. 196, *Stikhotvoreniia*, p. 93.
 - 12 Bal'mont, 'Praotets sovremennykh simvolistov', *Gornye vershiny*, p. 43.
 - 13 Bal'mont, 'Pered kartinoi Greko v muzee Prado, v Madride' (I), from the cycle *Akkordy*, written 1897, first pub. *VE* No. 5 (1897), p. 220, quoted here from *Stikhotvoreniia*, p. 132.
 - 14 Bal'mont, 'K Shelli', written Apr 1896, first pub. *Tishina* (SPb, 1898), quoted here from *Stikhotvoreniia*, p. 137.
 - 15 The hypothesis that A. Ourousof's 'L'Architecture secrète des *Fleurs du mal*', in the symposium *Le Tombeau de Charles Baudelaire* (Paris, 1896), influenced the Symbolist perception of the structural function of arrangements of lyric poetry is convincingly argued by Joan Delaney Grossman in *Valery Bryusov and the Riddle of Russian Decadence* [henceforth Grossman, *Bryusov and Russian Decadence*], pp. 63–5.
 - 16 Bal'mont: from part 7 (the Finale) of *Mertvye Korabli*, written 9 Dec 1895, first pub. in 'Pochin'. *Sbornik Obshchestva liubitelei rossiyskoi slovesnosti na 1896 god* (Moscow, 1896), p. 372, quoted here from *Stikhotvoreniia*, p. 117; and 'Slova liubvi', first pub. *V bezbrezhnosti* (1895), quoted from *Stikhotvoreniia*, p. 105.
 - 17 Bal'mont, 'Pered kartinoi Greko v muzee Prado v Madride' (II), written 1897, first pub. *SV* No. 5 (1897), p. 220, quoted here from *Stikhotvoreniia*, p. 132.
 - 18 Bal'mont, 'Za predely predel'nogo', first pub. *V bezbrezhnosti*, quoted here from *Stikhotvoreniia*, p. 112.
 - 19 Bal'mont, 'Mlechnyi Put'', undated, first pub. *V bezbrezhnosti*, quoted here from *Stikhotvoreniia*, p. 109.
 - 20 Bal'mont, 'Kak ia pishu stikhi', undated, first pub. *Feinye skazki* (Moscow, 1905); quoted here from *Stikhotvoreniia*, p. 325.
 - 21 Cf. Andrei Bely, *Nachalo veka* (Moscow/Leningrad, 1933), p. 222 and P.P. Pertsov, *Literaturne vospominaniia* (Moscow/Leningrad, 1933), p. 260.
 - 22 Bal'mont remembered his Populist friends on his way out of Soviet Russia in

- an article, “‘Vidiashchie glaza’”, Pamiati V.G. Korolenko, P.F. Nikolaeva i prof. N.I. Storozhenko’, in the Revel’ (Tallin) newspaper *Poslednie Izvestiia*, 17 Mar 1922, and thereafter in the autobiographical ‘Na zare’, *Segodnia* (Riga), 29 Sept 1929 (both sources referred to in V. Orlov’s introduction to *Stikhotvoreniia*, p. 22, n. 1). Gor’ky’s defence of Bal’mont was published in *Nizhegorodskii Listok*, 14 Nov 1900.
- 23 See the inscription in the copy of *Goriashchie zdannia* presented by Bal’mont to Tolstoy in 1901 (*Biblioteka L.N. Tolstogo v Iasnoi Poliane*, Part I (Moscow, 1958), pp. 37–8). Bal’mont published an account of his visit to Tolstoy in *Vesy* No. 3 (1908), p. 82. Cf. also L.D. Opul’skaia, ‘Tolstoi i russkie pisateli kontsa XIX-nachala XX vv’, LN 69, Bk. 1 (1961), pp. 134–6.
- 24 Cf. Valerii Briusov, *Dnevniki 1891–1910*, ed. I.M. Briusova, intro. N.S. Ashukin (Moscow, 1927), p. 19.
- 25 Bal’mont, ‘Morskoi razboinik’, written 1899, first pub. *Zhizn’* No. 11 (1899), p. 301, quoted here from *Stikhotvoreniia*, p. 149.
- 26 Briusov, letter to P.P. Pertsov of Jan 1905, ‘Pis’mo P.P. Pertsovu’, *Pechat’ i Revoliutsia* No. 7 (1926), pp. 36–50. Briusov made the same point, more fully, in his review of Bal’mont’s later collection, *Budem kak solntse*, written in 1903, repr. in *Dalekie i blizkie* (see esp. pp. 79–80). Also *SS*, vol. VI, pp. 250–8.
- 27 Briusov’s comment on himself is from *Dnevniki*, p. 37, and on his friendship with Bal’mont in ‘Avtobiografia’, Vengerov, *Russkaia Literatura XX veka*, vol. I, p. 111.
- 28 Briusov, *Dnevniki*, p. 12.
- 29 Zainaida Vengerova, ‘Poety simvolisty vo Frantsii’, *VE* No. 9 (1892). I have not gone into great detail on Briusov’s self-imposed apprenticeship to French Symbolism, as it is recorded in his diary and studies of his early career are readily available in Russian and English. He and Blok are the only Russian Symbolists to have had their collected works, carefully indexed and annotated, published posthumously in the Soviet Union: Valerii Briusov, *Sobranie sochinenii* [elsewhere Briusov, *SS*], ed. P.G. Antokol’sky et al. (Moscow, 1973–5). Regular *Briusovskie Chteniia* have been published in the Soviet Union since 1962. Further there is much of interest on Briusov in LN 28 (1937) on Russian Symbolism, and LN 85 (1976) and 98 (1991) are devoted to him entirely. Monographs in Russian are D.E. Maksimov’s *Briusov. Poeziia i pozitsiia* (Leningrad: Sovetskii Pisatel’, 1969) and K. Mochulsky, *Valerii Briusov* (Paris: YMCA-Press, 1962); in English, Grossman’s *Bryusov and Russian Decadence* provides not only a judicious and readable account of Briusov’s life and works but an extensive bibliography. Of still unrivalled importance as an exact comparative study is Georgette Donchin’s perhaps misleadingly titled *The Influence of French Symbolism on Russian Poetry* (The Hague: Mouton, 1958), which is in fact mainly about Briusov, from *Russkie Simvolisty* right through to the closure of *Vesy* in 1909.
- 30 Konstantin Fofanov. Published in 1881, his most influential collection, marking him as a precursor of the Russian Symbolists, was *Teni i tainy* (Shadows and Secrets, 1892). For Fofanov’s influence on the decadents, see F.M. Tsurikova, introduction to K.M. Fofanov, *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy*, *Biblioteka poeta* (Moscow/Leningrad: Sovetskii Pisatel’, 1962), pp. 36–40.
- 31 Joan Delaney Grossman suggests that Briusov’s discovery in the spring of

- 1893 of Verlaine's series of this title, published a decade earlier in Paris, may have been the inspiration behind the way he chose to present *Russkie simvolisty*; see Grossman, *Bryusov and Russian Decadence*, p. 36.
- 32 VI. Solov'ev, 'Russkie Simvolisty', three articles originally pub. in *VE* No. 8 (1894) and Nos. 9 and 10 (1895); also in Solov'ev *SS*, vol. VI (SPb: Izd-vo 'Obshchestvennaia pol'za', 1904), pp. 504–15.
- 33 There is evidence that Briusov thought of backing up the publication of the second volume of *Russkie simvolisty* with an article on Verlaine's poetry. See Grossman, *Bryusov and Russian Decadence*, p. 49, and her source, M.L. Mirza-Avakjan, 'O rabote Briusova nad perevodom "Romances sans paroles" Verlena', *Briusovskie Chteniia 1966 goda* (Erevan, 1968).
- 34 Sergei Makovsky, oral communication.
- 35 Cf. V. Gippius, 'Aleksandr Dobroliubov' in Vengerov, *Istoriia russkoi literatury*, p. 275.
- 36 V. Briusov, *Dnevnik*, pp. 17–18.
- 37 P.P. Pertsov is an invaluable witness to the Silver Age. His activity as anthologist and publisher brought him into contact with almost all the principal figures and his memoirs, *Literaturnye vospominaniia 1890–1902*, are an important source. For the young Muscovite Briusov, Pertsov – as a friend of the Merezhkovskys and a Petersburg publisher – was a valued correspondent.
- 38 A. Dobroliubov', 'Poshlost' i rabstvo', *Natura naturans. Natura naturata*, Tetrads' I-ia (SPb, 1895), quoted from *Sobranie sochinenii* (Moscow, 1900), p. 28.
- 39 From a letter to Briusov's friend M.V. Sarnygin, written before his marriage on 28 Sept 1897, quoted by I.M. Briusova, 'Materialy k biografii Valeriia Briusova', in Briusov, *Izbrannye stikhi* (Moscow/Leningrad, 1933), p. 128, and V. Ia. Briusov, letter of October 1900 to Iasinsky, first pub. by I. Iampol'sky, *Novy Mir* No. 2 (1932), p. 197.
- 40 In four articles on Bal'mont, beginning with an introduction to the collection *Budem kak solntse* (1903) and ending with a review of two other collections, *Zelenyi vertograd* and *Khorovod vremen* (1990), republished in the collection *Dalekie i blizkie*, Briusov defined Bal'mont's strength and ruthlessly exposed the weakness which led to his continuous decline: 'if his poetry does belong to the "new" detached art, this happened without any conscious effort on his part' (p. 73). 'The movement, which in France and Germany created vers libre, which sought new creative techniques, new forms of poetry, a new instrument for the expression of new feelings and ideas hardly touched Bal'mont' (pp. 79–80); '. . . new content does not always lie easily on the Procrustean bed of these regular metres' (p. 80); '. . . Bal'mont could never cast a critical eye over his own work' (p. 81). 'You might think, that he is so sure of his genius, that he is prepared to solve every problem by his "singing power" alone' (p. 91). 'At times it seems as though rhyme had simply deprived Bal'mont of the power of speech, to such an extent does he, for the sake of rhyme, get tied up in words' (p. 95). 'As a writer, as a distinct activist of our literature, Bal'mont has, of course, said his last word' (p. 106). This – Briusov's cruel 'last word' – was written in 1911, but in a letter of 12 Aug 1904 to Andrei Bely, Briusov had excepted Bal'mont and Dobroliubov alone from the accusation of half-heartedness and caution to which he attributed the failures of his gener-

- ation. Cf. 'Perepiska s Andreem Belym 1902–1912', pub. S.S. Grechishkin and A.V. Lavrov, *Valerii Briusov*, LN 85 (Moscow: Nauka, 1976), p. 378.
- 41 Cf. Vl. Markov, 'Odnostroki', *Vozdushnye puti*, Al'manakh III (1963), pp. 242–58.
- 42 The parody is translated and analysed in detail in Grossman, *Bryusov and Russian Decadence*, pp. 43–5.
- 43 Cf. Briusov's letter to Pertsov of 25 Aug 1895 in 'Pis'ma k P.P. Pertsovu' (see n. 26), p. 37.
- 44 For a detailed study of the Russian narrative poem or *poema* see L.K. Dolgoplov, *Poemy Bloka i russkaia poema kontsa XIX nachala XX vekov* (Moscow/Leningrad, 1964).
- 45 Cf. Briusov's letter of 17 Aug 1895, 'Pis'ma k P.P. Pertsovu' (see n. 26), p. 36.
- 46 Briusov, 'Teni', written 1895 and first pub. *Chefs d'œuvre*, quoted here from *Stikhotvoreniiia i poemy*, ed. D.E. Maksimov, intro. M.I. Dikman, Biblioteka Poeta (Leningrad, 1961), pp. 77–8.
- 47 Briusov, letter to P.P. Pertsov of 17 Aug 1895, 'Pis'ma k P.P. Pertsovu' (see n. 26), p. 36.
- 48 Briusov, 'Sumasshedshii', written 17 Jan 1895, first pub. in *Chefs d'œuvre*; quoted here from *Stikhotvoreniiia i poemy*, pp. 88–9.
- 49 Vladislav Khodasevich, 'Briusov', *Nekropol'*. *Vospominaniia* (Paris: YMCA Press, 1976), pp. 26–27. The poem comparing Moscow to a sleeping ostrich is 'Noch'iu', written 20 June 1895, first pub. *Chefs d'œuvre*; quoted from *Stikhotvoreniiia i poemy*, p. 88.
- 50 Cf. the account in Grossman, *Bryusov and Russian Decadence*, p. 77. The quotation is from Briusov's letter to Pertsov of 2 May 1896. See Pis'ma V. Ia. Briusova k P.P. Pertsovu (1927), p. 72.
- 51 P.P. Pertsov, *Literaturnye Vospominaniia*, p. 266, and 'Pis'ma P.P. Pertsovu' (see n. 26), letter of 18 Nov 1895, pp. 47–8.
- 52 A. Emel'ianov-Kokhansky, *Obnazhennye nervy* (Moscow, 1895). Dobroliubov published, in all, three collections: *Natura naturans. Natura naturata* (Pb, 1895); *Sobranie stikhov* (Predislovie I. Konevskogo i V. Ia. Briusova) (Moscow, 1900); and *Iz knigi nevidimoi* (Moscow, 1905). In my own copy of this last book the name of the author Aleksandr Dobroliubov has been crossed out above the title and beneath it is written 'Zapisano Aleksandrom Dobroliubovym'. Studies of this curious preacher-poet include F.D. Reeve, 'Dobroliubov and Bryusov Symbolist Extremists', *Slavic and East European Journal* 8: 3 (Fall 1964), pp. 292–307, K.M. Azadovskii's 'Put' Aleksandra Dobroliubova', *Tvorchestvo A.A. Bloka i russkaia kul'tura XX veka Blokovskii Sbornik*, vol. III, Uchenye Zapiski, Tartuskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta, 459 (Tartu, 1979), pp. 121–46, the introduction by Joan Delaney Grossman to Aleksandr Dobroliubov, *Sochineniia*, Modern Russian Literature and Culture. Studies and Texts, vol. 10, Berkeley Slavic Specialities (Berkeley, 1981), pp. 7–18; E.V. Ivanova, 'Valerii Briusov i Aleksandr Dobroliubov', *Izvestiia Akademii nauk SSSR. Seriiia literaturny i iazyka*, 40: 3, pp and 'Odin iz temnykh viziterov', *Prometey* No. 12 (Moscow, 1980).
- 53 Briusov, 'Pis'ma k P.P. Pertsovu' (see n. 26), letter of 13 Dec 1895, p. 52.
- 54 Dmitrii Merezhkovsky, 'De Profundis', here quoted from *PSS* (1911–13), vol. XV, p. 20. The lines about breaking all 'laws' are from Merezhkovsky's

- 'Deti nochi', *Novye stikhotvoreniia* (SPb, 1896), p. 5. This verse, quoted by the decadent *ad nauseam* during the 1890s, was subsequently deleted from the poem by Merezhkovsky himself. It read: 'Nashi gimny – nashi stony. / My dlia novoi krasoty / Narushaem vse zakony / Prestupaem vse cherty' ('Our hymns are our groans. / For the sake of new beauty / We break all laws / Transgress all boundaries').
- 55 Cf. A.M. Skabichevsky, 'Kurezy i absurdy molodoi kritiki', *Sochinenii*, vol. II (SPb, 1903). Also V. Glinsky's 'Bolezn' ili reklama?', *Istoricheskii Vestnik* No. 6 (1896), and Burenin, in a kind of review of reviews, 'Kriticheskie ocherki', *Novoe Vremia* No. 7352 (16/28 Aug 1896).
- 56 Briusov, *Dnevnik*, p. 29.
- 57 Quoted by D.E. Maksimov, *Briusov. Poeziia i pozitsiia*, pp. 33–4, from the preface to an unpublished 1896 collection which the 23-year-old poet was contemplating under the title 'Juvenilia' (Manuscript Dept, Lenin Library, F. 386, Kart S, ed. 1, l.s).
- 58 Briusov, 'Unomy poetu', first pub. *Me eum esse* (Moscow, 1896), p. 11, quoted here from *SS*, vol. 99.
- 59 Bal'mont, 'Okean', undated, dedicated 'to Valerii Briusov', first pub. (without the dedication) in *Russkoe Obozrenie* No. 5 (1895), p. 206, quoted here from *Stikhotvoreniia*, p. 98.
- 60 Briusov, 'Est' cho-to pozornoe v moshchi prirody', written 1896, first pub. *Me eum esse*, p. 32, here quoted from *SS*, vol. I, p. 112.
- 61 Bely, 'V. Ia. Briusovu', first pub. *Al'manakh Grif* (1903), p. 44, and Briusov, 'Poslednie dumy', written between Sep 1896 and Spring 1897, first pub. without 3rd verse in *Me eum esse*, p. 62.
- 62 According to P.A. Rudnev 86.3 per cent of Briusov's poems can be classed as syllabo-tonic. See 'Iz istorii metriceskogo repertuara russkikh poetov XX – nachala XX v.' in the collection *Teoriia stikha* (Leningrad, 1968), p. 118. Briusov's remark about the lack of acknowledged metre is from a letter of 29 June 1896 to his friend A.A. Kursinskii, quoted at length in the note to *Me eum esse*, in *Stikhotvoreniia i Poemy*, p. 726.
- 63 Quoted from Grossman's translation in *Bryusov and Russian Decadence*, p. 192. Original Russian reference is Briusov's letter of 26 Mar 1899 to Konstantin Sluchevsky, *Literaturnyi Kritik* Nos. 10–11 (1939), p. 235.
- 64 V. Briusov, 'Sborshchikov', written 24 Aug 1898, first pub. as 'Na novyi kolokol' in *Kniga razdumii* (Moscow, 1899); here quoted from *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy*, p. 187. Another experiment with freer native Russian metre published in the same book was 'Demony pyli', *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy*, p. 148.
- 65 See n. 52. Dobroliubov did not, in fact, 'disappear' altogether until shortly before his death during the Second World War. He kept in touch with Briusov's widow Ioanna Matveevna and sister Nadezhda Iakovlevna. He is known also to have stayed with his own sister, Irina Mikhailovna Sviatlovskaiia, for several months in 1937–8. The last recorded trace of him was a postcard addressed to the Sviatlovskys postmarked 2.12.43, Udzhary, AzSSR (i.e. Azerbaidjan). Cf. K.M. Azadovskii, 'Put' Aleksandra Dobroliubova', *Blokovskiy Sbornik*, vol. III, pp. 121–46.
- 66 Gippius-Merezhkovskaia, *Dmitrii Merezhkovskii*, p. 66. Hippius devoted an article to Dobroliubov's poetry after the appearance of the Skorpion *Sobranie*

- stikhov*: 'Kritika liubvi', *MI* no. 1 (1901), pp. 28–34 (also in *Literaturnyi dnevnik* (Pb, 1908), p. 45.
- 67 Briusov, *Dnevnik*, pp. 26–31.
- 68 Khodasevich, 'Briusov', *Nekropol'*, p. 28.
- 69 Briusov, from 'Iunomu poetu', *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy*, p. 96.
- 70 Ivan Konevskoi (I.I. Oreus), 'Mysli i zamechaniia', *Stikhi i proza. Posmertnoe. Sobranie sochinenii (1894–1901)*, with a preface by V. Briusov, 'Mudroe ditia' (Moscow, 1904). For a summary of materials available on Konevskoi see the relevant entry in Victor Terras, *Handbook of Russian Literature* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1985), and Avril Pyman, 'A forerunner of Russian Modernism: Ivan Konevskoy', *Scottish Slavonic Review* No. 14 (Spring 1990), pp. 5–19. Georges Nivat, in the overview of Symbolist poetry which opens the section on Russian Symbolism in *Histoire de la Littérature russe. Le XX^e siècle. L'Age d'argent*, ed. Efim Etkind et al., Centre National des Lettres (Paris: Fayard, 1987) [hereafter *Histoire*] writes with enthusiasm of Konevskoi, distinguishing his poetry as 'toujours admirable' as opposed to the 'aujourd'hui illisibles' Merezhkovsky, Minsky and (oddly) Hippius. Cf. Georges Nivat, 'Le Symbolisme russe', *Histoire*, pp. 77–110, and for Konevskoi, pp. 82–3, 88. LN 98 contains an important publication of the correspondence between Konevskoi and Briusov (1898–1901) by A.V. Lavrov, V.Ia. Morderer and A.E. Parnis, pp. 445–554, with an introductory article by Lavrov, pp. 425–44.
- 71 Briusov, *O iskusstve* (Moscow, 1899), *PSS*, vol. VI, pp. 43–4. The catalyst of Briusov's essay was Lev Tolstoy's 'Chto takoe iskusstvo?' *Voprosy filosofii psikhologii*, Nov/Dec 1897, pp. 979–1027; Jan/Feb 1898, pp. 1–137.
- 72 Briusov from a letter to P.P. Pertsov of 25 Oct 1902, as quoted in the notes to *O iskusstve* in *PSS*, vol. VI, p. 580.
- 73 Briusov, *Dnevnik*, pp. 53–8. Ioanna Briusova made the remark about 'hearing' Briusov's voice in his diaries in her untitled foreword, dated Moscow Dec 1926, to the first publication of the diary.
- 74 Briusov, *Dnevnik*, p. 60.
- 75 Briusov, 'Mudroe ditia', introd. to Konevskoi, *Stikhi i proza*, quoted from Briusov, *SS*, vol. VI, p. 243.
- 76 Konevskoi, first three lines from 'Radonitsa', concluding four from 'Volne-niia', *Stikhi i proza*, pp. 86 and 65.
- 77 Briusov, 'Mudroe ditia', *SS*, vol. VI, p. 243.
- 78 Konevskoi, 'Otкуда sily voli strannye', *Stikhi i proza*, p. 102.
- 79 Konevskoi, *Stikhi i proza*, p. 84.
- 80 Konevskoi, 'Na drugoe utro', *Stikhi i proza*, pp. 58–9.
- 81 See V.Ia. Morderer, 'Blok i Konevskoi', and N.L. Stepanov's article on Konevskoi (originally intended for a 2-vol. Biblioteka Poeta edition of Konevskoi's *Works* which was never published and was eventually destroyed during the siege of Leningrad), with an introduction by A.E. Parnis, all in *Aleksandr Blok: Novye materialy i issledovannia*, LN 92, Bk. 4 (Moscow, 1987), pp. 151–78.
- 82 Konevskoi, 'V podnebes'ii', *Stikhotvoreniia i proza*, p. 24. Makovsky's sympathetic account of his friend 'Ivan Konevskoi' is in *Na Parnase Serebrianogo Veka*, pp. 177–94.

- 83 Konevskoi, *Mechty i dumy* (SPb, 1900), was reprinted by Berkeley Slavic Specialities (Berkeley, 1989), together with Konevskoi's prose contributions to the Skorpion almanac *Severnye Tsvety*.

4 THE FOUNDATION OF *MIR ISKUSSTVA*

- 1 Sergei Diaghilev, letter to A. Benois of 24 May 1897, *Sergei Diaghilev i russkoe iskusstvo. Stat'i, Otkrytye pis'ma, interv'iu. Perepiska. Sovremenniki o Diaghileve v 2-x Tomakh* [hereafter *Diaghilev*], ed. I.S. Zilbershtein and V.A. Samkov (Moscow, 1982), vol. II, p. 26. See also S.P. Diaghilev, 'Evropeiskie vystavki i russkie khudozhniki', originally in *Novosti i Birzhevaia Gazeta* Nos. 232, 235, pp. 23, 26, here from *Diaghilev*, vol. I, p. 56.
- 2 For details of the school see chaps. 16 and 17 of Aleksandr Benois, *Moi vospominaniia v piati knigakh* [hereafter *Benois*], ed. D.S. Likachev (Moscow, 1980), vol. I, pp. 474–99. (Although 'in five books' the memoirs are bound in 2 vols.).
- 3 Benois, vol. I, p. 505.
- 4 Konstantin Somov, letter to A.A. Somova of 17 May 1889, *Konstantin Andreevich Somov. Pis'ma. Dnevnik. Suzhdeniia sovremennikov* [hereafter *Somov*], from the series 'Mir Khudozhnika', ed. Iu. N. Podkopaeva and A.N. Sveshnikova (Moscow, 1979), p. 51.
- 5 Mikhail Kuzmin, *K.A. Somov* (Petrograd, 1916), quoted *Somov*, p. 10.
- 6 Osip Dymov, 'Konstantin Somov', *ZR*, July–Aug–Sep 1906, p. 152.
- 7 Benois, vol. I, p. 505.
- 8 Benois, vol. I, p. 640.
- 9 Benois, vol. I, p. 643.
- 10 Benois, vol. I, p. 654.
- 11 Benois, vol. I, p. 646.
- 12 Diaghilev, 'Opyt khudozhestvennoi otsenki', *MI* Nos. 3–4 (1899), p. 29. For Benois on the role of the galleries, see Benois, vol. I, p. 683.
- 13 Benois, vol. II, p. 786.
- 14 Diaghilev, phrases taken from 1896 articles 'Akvarel'naia vystavka' and 'Finiandskii khudozhnik Edel'fel't', pub. in *Novosti i Birzhevaia Gazeta* No. 8 (8 Jan) and No. 43 (13 Feb) respectively. See *Diaghilev*, vol. I, pp. 49, 52, 50.
- 15 Benois, vol. II, p. 669, n. 9.
- 16 Benois, vol. II, p. 88.
- 17 Diaghilev, 'Evropeiskie vystavki i russkie khudozhniki', *Novosti i Birzhevaia Gazeta* Nos. 232, 235 (23 and 26 Aug). See *Diaghilev*, vol. I, pp. 54–5.
- 18 Benois, vol. II, p. 89.
- 19 A most entertaining and well-informed book on art patronage and the Moscow merchants is Beverley Kean's *All the Empty Palaces. The Merchant Patrons of Modern Art in Pre-Revolutionary Russia*, (London: Barrie and Jenkins, 1983).
- 20 Viktor Vasnetsov, quoted in N.M. Beloglazova, *Abramtsevo Gosudarstvennyi istoriko-khudozhestvennyi i literaturnyi muzei zapovednik* (Moscow, 1987), not paginated.
- 21 For M.K. Tenisheva's account of her association with Benois and *MI*, see her *Vpechatleniia moei zhizni* (Paris, 1933).

- 22 V. Stasov, *Izbrannye sochineniia*, vol. III, p. 198 (quoted in *Diagilev*, vol. I, p. 286).
- 23 Diagilev, 'Po povodu dvukh akvarel'nykh vystavok', *Novosti i Birzhevaia Gazeta* No. 10 (9 Feb 1897), *Diagilev*, vol. I, p. 65.
- 24 Diagilev, 'Peredvizhnaia vystavka', *Novosti i Birzhevaia Gazeta* Nos. 63 and 67 (5, 9 Mar 1897), *Diagilev*, vol. I, p. 68.
- 25 Letter from Diagilev to Benois, April, 1897, *Diagilev*, vol. II, p. 22.
- 26 Letter from Diagilev to Benois of 20 May 1897, *Diagilev*, vol. II, p. 25.
- 27 Benois, vol. II, p. 172.
- 28 Diagilev, letter to Benois of 8/20 Oct 1897, *Diagilev*, vol. II, p. 28.
- 29 Stasov, 'Vystavki', *Novosti i Birzhevaia Gazeta* No. 27 (27 Jan 1898) here quoted from *Izbrannye sochineniia*, vol. III, pp. 218–19.
- 30 Cf., e.g., S.S. Goloushev, writing as 'de Sergy' in *Kur'er* No. 103 (16 Apr 1898) or N.I. Kravchenko, *Novoe Vremia* No. 7864 (18 Jan 1898), both recorded in *Diagilev*, vol. I, pp. 297, 299.
- 31 [Diagilev], 'Nemetskaia pečat' o russikh khudozhnikakh', illus. supplement to *Novoe Vremia* No. 8069 (15 August 1898), pp. 6–7, here quoted from *Diagilev*, vol. I, pp. 76–80. The survey was unsigned but Diagilev's authorship is established by the note on p. 302.
- 32 Mikhail Nesterov's remark was made in a letter to A.A. Turygin of 26 May 1898, *Iz pisem* (Leningrad, 1968), pp. 133–40. Stasov's review of the Russians at the Munich Secession was published in *Novosti i Birzhevaia Gazeta* No. 212 (4 Aug 1898), and Benois's comment on the hostile reaction to the new art is made in Benois, vol. II, p. 189.
- 33 Benois, vol. II, pp. 225–6.
- 34 Dmitrii Merezhkovsky, author's foreword to *PSS (1911–13)*, vol. I, p. iii.
- 35 Cf. Gippius-Merezhkovskaia, *Dmitrii Merezhkovskii*, pp. 76–9.
- 36 Diagilev, editorial for *MI* Nos. 1–2 (1898), p. 2. For the applied arts of the period see William Brumfield, 'The decorative arts in Russian architecture 1900–1907', *Journal of Decorative and Propaganda Arts* [Russian/Soviet Theme issue] No. 5 (Summer 1987), pp. 12–30.
- 37 Cf. N.P. Sobko, letter of 21 Sept 1898 to V.M. Vasnetsov, pub. in *Viktor Mikhailovich Vasnetsov* (Moscow: 1987), p. 276, also Vasnetsov's letter to Stasov of 22 Oct 1898, *ibid.*, p. 156. For Stasov's article, see *Iskusstvo i Khudozhestvennaia Promyshlennost'* Nos. 1–2 (1899), pp. 65–96, and No. 3 (1899), pp. 137–83.
- 38 Somov, in his letters home from Paris in 1898–9, is highly critical of Diagilev, 'magnificent and arrogant to the point of repulsiveness', 'taking on all the airs of a high flyer, obviously engaged in making a career and wanting to be in sole charge of his own pie, baked from ingredients provided by Shura [Benois]'. He sides wholeheartedly with Benois's critical attitude to the first number of *MI*, particularly to the *tone* of Filosofov's sally that 'unfortunate England is threatened by an exhibition of Vereshchagin . . .'. See *Somov*, letters to A.A. Somov of 21 Apr/3 May 1898 and 1/13 Jan 1899, pp. 62, 67.
- 39 Diagilev, letter to A. Benois of 2/14 June 1898, *Diagilev*, vol. II, pp. 31–2.
- 40 *Sbornik pamiati Anny Pavlovnoi Filosofovoi*, vol. I, p. 29.
- 41 *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 338.
- 42 Cf. Nikolai Minsky, 'Filosofskie razgovory', *MI* No. 12 (1903), p. 283, and

- Merezhkovsky, 'Otsy i deti russkogo liberalizma', *MI* No. 23 (1901), p. 127. See also Ivanov-Razumnik's statement that 'The "decadents" of the nineties were, in their own peculiar way, a supplement to the "Marxists" of that same era' (P. Ivanov-Razumnik, *Russkaia literatura ot semidesiatykh godov do nashikh dnei* (Berlin, 1923), p. 361.
- 43 Filosofov, 'Iskusstvo i zhizn', *NP*, July 1903, p. 229, and 'Natsionalizm i dekadentsvo', *MI* Nos. 21–2 (1900), p. 210. The quote about 'the new beauty' is from Merezhkovsky (see chapter 4, n. 54). See also Diagilev, 'Slozhnye voprosy', *MI* Nos. 1–2 (1899), p. 11.
- 44 V.P. Burenin, 'Kriticheskie zametki', *Novoe Vremia* No. 8166 (20 Nov/2 Dec, 1898).
- 45 The 'Pushkin' number of *MI*, Nos. 13–14 for 1899, contains articles by Vasilii Rozanov, 'Zametka o Pushkine', pp. 1–16; Merezhkovsky, 'Prazdnik Pushkina', pp. 11–12; Minsky, 'Zavety Pushkina', pp. 21–36; and Sologub, 'K vserossiiskomu torzhestvu', pp. 37–40.
- 46 Vasilii Rozanov, 'Pamiati Vl. Solov'eva', *MI* Nos. 15–16 (1900), pp. 33–6.
- 47 Gippius-Merezhkovskaia, *Dmitrii Merezhkovskii*, p. 82.
- 48 For the part played by Mamontov's private opera in the promotion of Russian music and the career of Shaliapin see Victor Borovsky, *Chaliapin – A Critical Biography* (NY: Hamish Hamilton, 1988).
- 49 Diagilev, *Russkaia Zhivopis' v XVIII veke. D.G. Levitskii 1735–1822* (SPb, 1902), and A. Benois, *Istoriia russkoi zhivopisi v XIX veke* (SPb, 1902).
- 50 Igor Grabar', *Istoriia russkogo iskusstva*, vol. I (Moscow, 1909). For Grabar's association with *MI* see the relevant pages of his autobiography *Moia Zhizn'. Avtomonografiia* (Moscow/Leningrad, 1937).
- 51 Gippius, 'Sovremennoe iskusstvo', *NP* (1903) and in *Literaturnyi Dnevnik 1899–1907*, pp. 67–74.
- 52 Bely, *Vtoraia Simfonia (Dramaticheskaiia)* (Moscow, 1902).
- 53 Bely, *Nachalo veka* (Moscow/Leningrad, 1933), pp. 194–6.
- 54 Blok, letter to M.S. Solov'ev of 23 Dec 1902, *SS*, vol. VIII, pp. 18–19.
- 55 Nikolai Tarovaty, 'Na vystavke "Mir Iskusstva"', *ZR* No. 3 (1906), p. 124.
- 56 For a more detailed account of Diagilev's contribution to the visual arts in Russia, see John E. Bowlt, *The Silver Age: Russian Art of the early Twentieth Century and the 'World of Art' Group*. Studies in Russian Art History (Newtownville, Mass.: Oriental Research Partners, 1979).

5 FROM MIR ISKUSSTVA TO NOVYI PUT'

- 1 Valerii Briusov, *Dnevniki*, p. 130.
- 2 Dmitrii Merezhkovsky, 'Khristos i antikhris v russkoi literature', *MI* Nos. 11–12 (1901), pp. 296, 299.
- 3 Merezhkovsky's international fame rested on the trilogy of 'historical' novels *Christ and Antichrist* which, at the time *MI* was first mooted in 1898, was only partially written and had had little resonance. It was only after publication in book form, and then principally in translation into various European languages, that his new type of historical novel met with real success. The first volume of *Khristos i antikhris* appeared in French translation in 1900 and earned for its author enthusiastic comparisons with Flaubert and Anatole

France. This initial success was followed up almost immediately by translations into German, Polish, English, Italian and Spanish. Of particular interest to the European reader was the 'Nietzschean' character of Julian the Apostate, and Merezhkovsky was hailed as a worthy successor to the great Russian novelists of the 19th century. The sequels appeared in the main European languages almost before the printers' ink was dry on the Russian originals, as indeed did *Khristos i Antikhrisť v russkoi literature* (1902). There is a bibliography of Merezhkovsky's works in translation and of their reception in the foreign press, compiled by O.Ia. Larin for 24-vol. Sytin *PSS* (1914). *Petr i Aleksei (antikhrisť)*, the third volume of the trilogy, was less well received outside Russia than those about Julian and Leonardo da Vinci, and Merezhkovsky's influence declined from 1905. With his failure to receive the Nobel Prize (awarded to Ivan Bunin) in 1933, it was virtually at an end. The only book in English devoted to Merezhkovsky is C.H. Bedford, *The Seeker, D.S. Merezhkovsky* (Lawrence/Manhattan/Wichita: University Press of Kansas, 1975), with a bibliography of his works in Russian and English translation; B.G. Rosenthal's *Merezhkovsky and the Silver Age* (The Hague: Mouton, 1975) is, as the title suggests, a study of the part he played in the evolution of ideas rather than of his work as a creative writer, as are the majority of special articles devoted to him over recent years. Not published in the Soviet period, Merezhkovsky's works are now in the process of being restored to his countrymen (see Bibliography).

- 4 Vasiliĭ Rozanov, 'Uedinennoe', *Izbrannoe* (Munich, 1970), p. 46.
- 5 Merezhkovsky, 'O novom znachenii drevnei tragedii', *Novoe Vremia* No. 9566 (15/28 Oct, 1902). Rozanov gives us a rather touching picture in "Ippolit" na Aleksandriinskoi stsene' (*MI* No. 9 (1902), pp. 240–8) of Merezhkovsky standing up to speak before the play, his voice lost in the ornate vastness of the Aleksandriinskii theatre, and there is a review of the performance in the chronicle of the same number.
- 6 Interest in ancient Greek tragedy was to a great extent, in Russia as elsewhere, stimulated by Nietzsche's *Die Geburt der Tragödie*, first pub. in 1872.
- 7 See A. Pyman, 'The Church and the Intelligentsia with special reference to the Religious-Philosophical Meetings in St Petersburg 1901–1903', in *Russian Thought and Society 1800–1917*, Essays in honour of Eugene Lampert, ed. Robert Bartlett (Keele: University of Keele, 1984), pp. 181–219, for the purely semantic difficulties which arose between Merezhkovsky and the clergy.
- 8 Briusov, letter to Pertsov of 4 Jan 1904, 'Valerii Briusov i Novyi put', pub. D. Maksimov, *LN* 27–8 (Moscow, 1937), p. 292.
- 9 Rozanov, 'Sredi inoiazychnykh (D.S. Merezhkovskii)' *NP*, Oct 1903.
- 10 Herbert Trench, translator's preface to D.S. Merezhkovsky, *The Death of the Gods* (see n. 3), p. 8.
- 11 M. Maeterlinck, 'The tragical in daily life', *The Treasury of the Humble*, tr. A. Sutro (London: George Allen, 1897), p. 98. For the examples of unfavourable reviews of *Otverzheniĭ* see A. Pogodin, 'Roman D.S. Merezhkovskogo', *Novoe Vremia* No. 6993 (18/30 Aug 1895); V. Mirsky, 'Nasha Literatura', *Zhurnal dlia vsekh*, vol. II (1902), pp. 232–4; T.A. Anichkov, 'Pis'ma o literature', *Russkii Vestnik* No. 1 (1896), pp. 257–88.
- 12 Andrei Bely, *Simvolizm. Kniga statei* (Moscow, 1910), p. 446.

- 13 Cf. Dmitrii Filosofov, 'Ivanov i Vasnetsov v otsenke Aleksandra Benua', *MI* Nos. 9–10 (1901), pp. 217–33, and Aleksandr Benois, 'Otvét G. Filosofovú', *MI* Nos. 11–12 (1901), pp. 301–9.
- 14 Merezhkovsky, 'Pushkin', *PSS* (1914), vol. XVIII, p. 156; originally pub. as a separate brochure (SPb, 1906).
- 15 Merezhkovsky, *Smert' bogov* (the later title for *Otverzheniia*), *PSS* (1914), vol. I, p. 87.
- 16 Merezhkovsky, *PSS* (1914), vol. I, pp. 31, 34.
- 17 Merezhkovsky, *Voskresshie bogi (Leonardo da Vinchi)*, *PSS* (1914), vol. II, p. 30.
- 18 Konstantin Bal'mont, 'Dalekim blizkim', first pub. in *NP* No. 6 (1903), *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy*, p. 290.
- 19 For an account of this journey see Zinaida Gippius, 'Svetloe ozero', *NP* No. 1 (1904), pp. 151–80; also in the collection *Alyi mech'*, *Chetvertaia kniga rasskazov* (SPb, 1906).
- 20 Gippius-Merezhkovskaia, *Dmitrii Merezhkovskii*, p. 114.
- 21 Merezhkovsky, 'Sud'ba Gogolia', *NP* No. 1 (1903), p. 39.
- 22 Merezhkovsky, 'Khristos i antikhrisť v russkoi literature, L. Tolstoi i Dostoevskii', *MI* No. 19–20 (1902), p. 138.
- 23 Rozanov, in a note to N.N. Strakhov, letter 88, quoted by Z. Gollerbach in *V.V. Rozanov, zhizn' i tvorchestvo* (Pb, 1922; reprinted Paris: YMCA-Press, 1976), p. 13.
- 24 Georgii Chulkov, 'Aleksandr Blok i ego vremia', *Pis'ma A. Bloka*, with introductory articles by S.M. Solov'ev, G.I. Chulkov, A.D. Skaldin and V.N. Kniazhnin (Leningrad, 1925), pp. 97–8.
- 25 See V.V. Rozanov, 'Svoboda i vera', *Russkii Vestnik*, Jan 1894; 'Otvét g. Vladimiru Solov'evu', *Russkii Vestnik*, Apr 1894; 'Chto protiv printsipa tvorcheskoi svobody nashlis' vozrazit' storonniki svobody khaoticheskoi?', *Russkii Vestnik*, Jul 1894; and see V. S. Solov'ev, 'Porfirii Golovlev o svobode i vere (Po povodu stat'i V. Rozanova "Svoboda i vera")', *VE*, Mar 1894, *SS*, vol. V, pp. 463–72 and 'Konets spora', *VE*, Jun 1894, also Solov'ev, *SS*, vol. V, pp. 487–512. A further polemic began with Solov'ev's article 'Sud'ba Pushkina', *VE*, Sep 1897, *SS*, vol. VIII, pp. 26–53, to which Rozanov objected in 'Khristianstvo passivno ili aktivno?', (reprinted in the 1899 collection *Religiia i kul'tura* (SPb, 1900 and Paris: YMCA-Press, 1979), pp. 148–59), and continued in the controversy surrounding the *MI* Pushkin number (see chapter 8, no. 4). In 1895, Rozanov published an article on Lev Tolstoy in *Russkii Vestnik* which he afterwards maintained was 'morally right. Only it wrote itself badly, just as everything wrote itself badly at that time . . .' Tolstoy himself did not react in print, but Rozanov's defence of conservative values, and the way he elected to apostrophise Tolstoy by the familiar form as Ty (Thou), so shocked the liberal establishment that Mikhailovsky suggested he should be 'expelled from literature' (see E. Gollerbach, *V.V. Rozanov. Zhizn' i tvorchestvo*, pp. 24–7). Tolstoy was important to Rozanov throughout the 1890s. In 1902, Rozanov visited him on his estate, a visit he described in *Poezdka v Iasnuiu Polianu. Mezhdunarodnyi Tolstovskii Al'manakh* (Moscow, 1909). The great man found him ill-educated. After Tolstoy's death, Rozanov returned to the debate in *L.N. Tolstoi i russkaia tserkov'* (SPb, 1912).

- 26 Rozanov, letter of 29 Aug 1918 to E. Gollerbach published in *V.V. Rozanov, Zhizn' i tvorchestvo*, pp. 93–7.
- 27 Rozanov, 'Legenda o velikom inkvizitore', *Russkii Vestnik*, Jan–Apr 1891, pub. in book form in 1894. Lev Shestov, *Dostoevskii i Nitshe. Filosofii tragedii* (SPb, 1903), photo. reprint in Shestov, *SS*, vol. III, p. 117.
- 28 Anna Lisa Crone, *Rozanov and the End of Literature* (Wurzburg, 1978). Cf. also Renato Poggioli, *Rozanov*, *Studies in Modern European Literature and Thought* (London: Bowes and Bowes, 1962), p. 89.
- 29 Aleksei Remizov, *Kukkha, Rozanovy pis'ma*, first pub. Berlin, 1923; photo. reprint (NY: Serebrianyi vek, 1978), pp. 13–14.
- 30 Rozanov's correspondence with Leont'ev was published in *Russkii Vestnik*, 1903, and with an introduction by B.A. Filippov was reissued in book form as Konstantin Leont'ev, *Pis'ma k Rozanovu* (London: Nina Karsov, 1981).
- 31 Benois, vol. II, pp. 290–1.
- 32 Rozanov, 'Uedinennoe', *Izbrannoe*, p. 7.
- 33 Gippius-Merezhkovskaia, *Dmitrii Merezhkovskii*, p. 81.
- 34 Rozanov's contributions to *Mir Iskusstva* included such titles as 'On ancient Egyptian beauty'; 'Aphrodite-Diana'; 'Fait du jour' (a piece on a religious maniac who set fire to himself to cleanse himself of his sins); 'Stars'; 'The Judas-Tree'; Reviews of an evening of Siamese dancers and of *Hippolytus* on the stage of the Aleksandriinskii theatre; Gogol' and Lermontov; old coins; 'What Oedipus said to Theseus'; 'Paestum, Pompeii and Florence'; 'The feelings for sun and tree in the culture of the ancient Hebrews'.
- 35 Rozanov, *Religiia i kul'tura, sbornik statei* (SPb, 1899).
- 36 Rozanov, 'Uedinennoe', *Izbrannoe*, p. 3.
- 37 'Friedrich Nietzsche', *MI* Nos. 17–18 (1900).
- 38 Rozanov made his statement about Nietzsche's failure to 'charm' in the introduction to Konstantin Leontiev, *Pis'ma k Vasiliu Rozanovu*, p. 24.
- 39 Rozanov, 'K lektsii V. Solov'eva', *MI* Nos. 8–10 (1900), p. 195.
- 40 D.H. Lawrence, review of 'Fallen Leaves' by V.V. Rozanov', first pub. *Everyman* (23 Jan 1930); also in *Phoenix* (1936) and *Selected Literary Criticism*, ed. Anthony Beal (New York: Viking Press, 1956), *D.H. Lawrence's Letters to S.S. Kotliansky*, ed. and intro. by George J. Zytaruk (Montreal: Queen's University Press, 1970) and Zytaruk's *D.H. Lawrence's Response to Russian Literature* (The Hague: Mouton, 1971).
- 41 To understand the Merezhkovskys, or rather, more specifically, Hippus's cult of 'vliublennost', it is necessary to juxtapose her letters, particularly to Filosofov and Kartashev, published in Temira Pachmuss, *Intellect and Ideas in Action*, Centrifuga, Russian Printings and Reprintings, vol. 11 (Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1972), with her 'Contes d'amour' (see chapter 3, n. 34) and 'Dnevnik Zinaidy Nikolaevnoi Gippius: O byvshem', *Vozrozhdenie* No. 217 (Jan 1970), pp. 56–78, also published and annotated by Temira Pachmuss. The Merezhkovskys' 'inner circle' consisted of two triumvirates: Merezhkovsky himself, Hippus and Filosofov; A.V. Kartashev (1875–1960) (in August 1917 Procurator of the Holy Synod, in September Minister of Confessions to Kerensky's Government) and Tat'iana and Natal'ia Hippus. Other people were attracted to these nuclei from time to time, including Andrei Bely, Serafima Pavlovna Remizova and Marietta Shaginian. Rozanov wrote of them with dubious wonder in his *Liudi lunnogo sveta. Metafizika khristianstva*

- (SPb, 1911), a book which led straight on to another with the same subtitle, *Temnyi lik. Metafizika khristianstva* (SPb, 1911).
- 42 For the reception of Rozanov by the Orthodox clergy of his own time see the minutes of the Religious-Philosophical Meetings in St Petersburg 1901–3 (SPb, 196) and his column ‘V svoem uglu’ in the journal *NP* (1903–4); also his book *V mire neiasnogo i nereshennogo* (SPb, 1901).
- 43 There is a vivid account of the first attempt to exclude Rozanov on 19 Jan 1914 from the Religious-Philosophical Society in St Petersburg, an attempt instigated by his old friend and ally Merezhkovsky and at once supported and deplored by Blok, in M.M. Prishvin’s ‘1914-ii god, Dnevnik’, *Literaturnaia Ucheba* (Jan–Feb 1989), pp. 129–30. The reason for the exclusion was that Rozanov, known to have a deep interest in and feeling for Judaism, was writing inflammatory articles on the Jews and blood sacrifice at the very moment when the conscience of Russian Society was (rightly) tormented by the *cause célèbre* involving one Beilis, accused of ritual murder.
- 44 Briusov, ‘Istiny’, first pub. *STs* No. 1 (1901); *SS*, vol. VI, pp. 55–61.
- 45 Aleksei Remizov, ‘Pamiati L’va Shestova’, *Vstrechi* (Paris: Lev, 1981), p. 269.
- 46 Others, most notably, were Nikolai Berdiaev and Sergei Bulgakov. See text pp. 158.
- 47 B. Fondane, *Rencontres avec Léon Chestov* (Paris, 1982), p. 62.
- 48 Shestov, *Shekspir i ego kritik Brandes* (SPb, 1898). The article appeared under the initials L.Sh., ‘Georg Brandes o Gamlete’, *Kievskoe Slovo*, 22 Dec 1896.
- 49 The cause of Shestov’s breakdown remains obscure. In answer to a letter of enquiry, Shestov’s daughter N. Baranova Shestova replied that, although the breakdown does appear to have been the result of some single, traumatic experience, her father had not spoken of it to his children, any more than he had spoken of his experiences at the hand of kidnappers, and that she knew no more than is set out in her book, *Zhizn’ L’va Shestova, po perepiske i vospominaniiam sovremennikov* (Paris: La presse libre, 1983), vol. I, pp. 22–3.
- 50 Shestov, ‘Pamiati velikogo filosofova (Edmund Gusserl)’, *Umozrenie i otkrovenie. Religioznaia filosofia Vladimira Solov’eva i drugie stat’i* (Paris: YMCA-Press, 1964), p. 304. The ‘In Memoriam’ for Husserl was Shestov’s last article. It was first published – posthumously – in *Russkie Zapiski* Nos. 12 and 13 (Dec 1938 and Jan 1939).
- 51 Not published at the time, the article remained in Shestov’s archive and eventually appeared in *Russian Literature Tri-quarterly* No. 16 (1979). Cf. Baranova-Shestova, *Zhizn’ L’va Shestova*, vol. I, p. 18.
- 52 Shestov, ‘Dostoevskii i Nitche. Filosofia tragedii’, *MI* Nos. 9–10 (1902), p. 239.
- 53 B. Fondane, *Rencontres . . .*, pp. 102–3.
- 54 Maxim Gor’ky, *Lev Tolstoy. Iz vospominanii* (Letchworth, 1966), pp. 58–9. Articles comparing Tolstoy and Nietzsche before Shestov’s *Dobro v uchenii Grafa Tolstogo i Fridrikha Nitche* (SPb, 1900) were N.Ia. Grot, ‘Nravstvennye idealy nashego vremeni. Fridrikh Nitche i Lev Tolstoi’, *Voprosy filosofii i psikhologii*, Book 16 (1893), and V.G. Shcheglov, *Graf L.N. Tolstoi, Fridrikh Nitshe – ocherk filosofski-nravstvennogo ikh mirozov’reniia* (Yaroslavl, 1898).
- 55 Nikolai Berdiaev, *Samopoznanie (Opyt filosofskoi avtobiografii)*, 2nd revised edn. (Paris: YMCA-Press, 1949–83), *SS*, vol. I, p. 133. For a comparative

- study of the two authors see James S. Wernham, *Two Russian Thinkers; An Essay on Berdyaev and Shestov* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1968).
- 56 Shestov, letter to S.G. Petit headed Vito, 22 Sep 1897, quoted by N.I. Baranova-Shestova, *Zhizn' L'va Shestova*, vol. I, p. 35.
- 57 For Vladimir Solov'ev's reaction see Shestov's 'Avtobiografia', quoted in *Zhizn' L'va Shestova*, vol. I, p. 42. For the reviews see N.K. Mikhailovsky, *Russkoe Bogatstvo* No. 2/3 (1900), pp. 155–67 and 117–26; Andreevich (E.A. Solov'ev), *Zhizn'* No. 2, and P.P. Pertsov, *MI*, vol. 3, Nos. 1–12 (1900) pp. 105–6.
- 58 Shestov's reviews of the first and second volumes of Merezhkovsky's study of Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, *MI* Nos. 8–9 (1902) and Nos. 1–2 (1903).
- 59 Cf. B. Fondane, *Rencontres . . .*, p. 89.
- 60 The quotations are from the *MI* version of Shestov's 1902 'Dostoevskii i Nitche – Filosofii tragedii' (Nos. 5–6, p. 342, and Nos. 9–10, p. 239). For the allusion to Job's Balances, see Shestov, *Na vesakh Iova* (Paris: YMCA-Press, 1975).
- 61 Cf. N. Baranova-Shestova, *Zhizn' L'va Shestova*, p. 56, for an undated letter to this effect written by Shestov, circa Dec 1902.
- 62 'There are things', Shestov wrote, 'which can be thought, but cannot be spoken of otherwise than in symbols and hints' (*Dostoevskii i Nitche – Filosofii tragedii*, SS, vol. III, p. 208).
- 63 Shestov, *Apofoez bespochvennosti* (SPb, 1905).
- 64 Shestov, *Anton Tchekhov and Other Essays*, trans. S. Koteliansky and J.M. Murry (Dublin and London, 1916), pp. 138–9.
- 65 The Chekhov article Shestov regarded as helpful to the understanding of *Apotheosis*, but self-defeatingly explicit. It was first published in *VZh*, Mar 1905, under the title 'Tvorchestvo iz nichego. A.P. Chekhov'.
- 66 Shestov, 'Dostoevskii i Nitche. Filosofii tragedii', *MI* No. 2 (1902), p. 79 (Introduction).
- 67 Berdiaev, 'Tragediia i obydennost', *VZh*, Mar 1905, pp. 255–88. See B. Fondane, *Rencontres . . .*, p. 66, Remizov's article, 'Po povodu knigi L. Shestova *Apofoez bespochvennosti*', was first pub. in *VZh*, July 1905, p. 204.
- 68 I. Korvin-Khorvatskii, 'Goluboi dym', *Russkoe Voskresenie* (Paris), 23 July 1960. For the young Pasternak's attitude to Symbolism as 'not simply a literary phenomenon [. . .] but a synonym for a whole epoch in art, an expression of innovative thinking and aesthetics' see L. Fleishman on his 1913 paper 'Symbolism and Immortality' in the book *Boris Pasternak The Poet and his Politics* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1990), p. 52.
- 69 Cf. the chapter on 'Shestov and MacDiarmid' in Peter McCarey, *Hugh MacDiarmid and the Russians* (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1987), pp. 162–200. For the poem, Hugh MacDiarmid, *Complete Poems*, with corrections and appendix (Harmondsworth, 1985), p. 412.
- 70 Remizov, commentary to a dream about Shestov in *Aleks.ij Remizov, Approaches to a Protean Writer*, pp. 60–1 in Russian, pp. 64–5 in English.
- 71 Zinaida Hippus, letter of 16–22 Aug 1930 to G.V. Adamovich, pub. by Temira Pachmuss in *Intellect and Ideas in Action*, pp. 400–1.
- 72 Hippus, *Between Paris and St. Petersburg, Selected Diaries of Zinaida Hippus*, trans. and ed. Temira Pachmuss (Chicago and London: University of

- Urbana Press and London University Press, 1973) and 'O byvshem', *Vozrozhdenie* (Paris) No. 217 (1970), pp. 56–8.
- 73 Aleksandr Blok, *SS*, vol. VII, p. 335, unsent letter to Z. Hippus of 31 (18) May 1918.
- 74 Shestov, diary entry written in Kiev, Oct 1919; see N. Baranova-Shestova, *Zhizn' L'va Shestova*, vol. I, p. 169, and B. Fondane, *Rencontres . . .*, p. 160.
- 75 Merezhkovsky, author's foreword to *PSS* (1911–13), vol. I, pp. ii and vi.
- 76 Hippus. 'Khleb zhizni', first pub. in *MI* Nos. 11–12 (1901), pp. 323–34; quoted here from her *Literaturnyi dnevnik 1899–1907*, pp. 17–18 and 30.
- 77 Gippius-Merezhkovskaia, *Dmitrii Merezhkovskii*, p. 77, p. 90.
- 78 *Ibid.*, p. 98.
- 79 Benois, oral communication.
- 80 Blok, 'O Merezhkovskom', *SS*, vol. VI, p. 394.
- 81 For a detailed account of this 'campaign' see D. Maksimov, 'Valerii Briusov i *Novyi Put'*', LN 27–8, pp. 276–98. The quotations are from Briusov, *Dnevniki*, pp. 124, 126, 127.
- 82 Briusov, *Dnevniki*, pp. 127.
- 83 Briusov, *Dnevniki*, p. 134. Excluding complimentary subscriptions, *Novyi Put'* could by Dec 1903 (cf. No. for this month, p. 225) boast 2,558 subscriptions of which 44 were from abroad, 445 from Petersburg, 247 from Moscow and the remaining 1,822 from 87 different provincial towns and districts.
- 84 Rozanov, 'Ser'eznyi kritik', *NP* (Apr 1903), p. 109.
- 85 Anton Chekhov, letters to S.P. Diaghilev of 12 July 1903 and 30 Dec 1902, *Diaghilev*, vol. II, pp. 85 and 81.
- 86 Sergei Diaghilev, letter of 26 July 1903 to Chekhov, *Diaghilev*, vol. II, p. 86.
- 87 Benois, 'Chemu uchit Akademiia khudozhestv', *MI* Nos. 8–9 (1904), pp. 149–54.
- 88 Cf. D. Maksimov, 'Valerii Briusov i *Novyi Put'*', pp. 290–3 for Briusov's letter to Pertsov about consulting Shestov (4 Jan 1903). That Shestov did indeed make an early distinction between 'Idealism' and 'Symbolism' is clear from the posthumously-published article (written 1896), 'Idealizm i Simvolizm "Severnogo Vestnika"', *Russian Literature Triquarterly* No. 16 (1978).
- 89 Starodum [N.Ia. Stechkin], 'Zhurnal'noe obozrenie', *Russkie Vedomosti* No. 4 (1905), p. 604, and Andrei Bely, 'Idealisty i *Novyi Put'*', *Vesy*, Nov 1904, pp. 66–7.
- 90 A.P. Filosofova, letter to M.V. Kamenetskaia of 1 Mar 1905, *Sbornik Pamiati Anny Pavlovnoi Filosofovoi*, vol. I, p. 415.

6 RUSSIAN SYMBOLISM COMES OF AGE

- 1 Konstantin Bal'mont, *Goriashchie zdaniia, lirika sovremennoi dushi* (Moscow, 1900). Some scholars rank Lokhvitskaia (1869–1905) with the transitional poets. See Vl. Markov, 'Russian Crepuscolari: Minsky, Merezhkovskii, Lokhvitskaia', *Russian Literature and History in Honour of Professor I. Serman* (Jerusalem, 1989), pp. 78–80. I would not dispute this, but her role was brief and peripheral whereas they were at the centre of events until 1905.
- 2 The most complete account of S.A. Poliakov is that by K.M. Azadovskii and D.E. Maksimov (who interviewed Poliakov in 1935), published under the title 'Briusov i "Vesy"', in LN 85, pp. 257–324.

- 3 According to the count of Casimir J. Norkelianus, in his study of *Jurgis Kazimirovic Baltrušaitis: a Religious Lithuanian Poet of Russian Symbolism* (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms International, 1981), Baltrušaitis published 411 poems in Russian and 127 in Lithuanian. For the epithet 'rock-like', cf. Bal'mont, dedication of *Goriashchie zdaniia*.
- 4 Cf. Jurgis Baltrušaitis, answer to a questionnaire circulated by the newspaper *Svoboda i Zhizn'* (Moscow, Nos. 11–13, Nov, 3 Dec, 1906), pp. 5–19, quoted in LN 72 (Moscow, 1965), pp. 23–5. For art as a 'transfiguring power', see Baltrušaitis, 'O sushnosti iskusstva i tvorcheskom dolge khudozhnika'. This quotation comes round about from the English translation by C.J. Norkelianus (see n. 3) p. 28, of a Lithuanian translation of the original Russian text of a lecture delivered by Baltrušaitis on 17 Dec 1915 at the Moscow Religious-Philosophical Society. See Norkelianus, 22nn. 13 and 14.
- 5 Valerii Briusov, 'Iurgisu Baltrushaitisu', written Dec 1900, first pub. *Tertia vigilia* (Moscow, 1900) in the section 'Blizkim', SS, vol. I, p. 198.
- 6 Baltrušaitis, 'Molitva', first pub. *STs* (1903), p. 181.
- 7 Baltrušaitis, *Zemnye stupeni. Elegii, pesny, poemy* (Moscow, 1911). This was followed by *Gornaia tropa, Vtoraia kniga stikhov* (Moscow, 1912). For the nickname, see Briusov, *Dnevniki*, p. 111.
- 8 Briusov, *Dnevniki*, p. 74.
- 9 Bal'mont, 'Izbrannyi', from the collection *Goriashchie zdaniia*. See *Stikhotvoreniia*, p. 171, and for 'Ranenyi', p. 172.
- 10 *Stikhotvoreniia* pp. 153–54. Cf. Bal'mont, 'Urody', another sonnet first pub. in *Goriashchie zdaniia*. Ibid p. 173.
- 11 Briusov, 'Avtobiografiia', pp. 113–14.
- 12 Briusov, *Dnevniki*, p. 98.
- 13 Briusov, 'Liubliu ia linii vernost'' from the cycle 'V stenakh', written 13 Nov 1898, first pub. *Tertia vigilia*, see SS, vol. I, p. 171. Also *Dnevniki*, p. 99.
- 14 Andrei Bely, *Nachalo Veka* p. 173, and Briusov, *Dnevniki*, p. 128.
- 15 Briusov, letter to N.M. Minsky of 23 Jan 1901, LN 85, p. 664.
- 16 Bely, *Nachalo veka*, p. 13.
- 17 Gor'ky, letters to Valerii Briusov of 12 Jan and 4/5 Feb, 1901, Gor'ky, *Sobranie sochinenii* (Moscow: Goslitizdat, 1954) [hereafter Gor'ky SS], vol. XXVIII, pp. 149–50.
- 18 Skorpion continued to publish until 1918 and brought out books by Gippius, Sologub, Briusov, Bal'mont, Aleksandr Dobroliubov, Ivan Konevskoi, A. Miropol'sky, Lidia Zinov'eva-Annibal, Viacheslav Ivanov, A. Blok, A. Bely and Mikhail Kuz'min.
- 19 Amongst foreign authors published in translation by Skorpion were Ibsen, Gabriele d'Annunzio, Verhaeren, Knut Hamsun, Charles van Lerberghe, Maeterlinck, Stanislaw Przbyzowski, Oscar Wilde, Verlaine. There were also whimsical excursions into the past, such as Briusov's elegant publication of letters from and to Pushkin (1903) with facsimile reproductions, and Sergei Solov'ev's verse translation from the Latin of Ioannus Secundus, 'The kiss'.
- 20 Briusov, letter of 22 June 1903 to S.A. Poliakov. See Azadovsky and Maksimov, LN 85, p. 261.
- 21 Ibid., p. 273. For comparison, the subscription figure for the established literary monthly *Vestnik Evropy* for the same year is given as 6,424.
- 22 Briusov, *Dnevniki*, p. 132.

- 23 Briusov, letter of 31 Aug, 1904 to L.N. Vil'kina, 'Pis'ma k L.N. Vil'kinoi', pub. S.S. Grechishkin and A.V. Lavrov, *Ezhegodnik Rukopisnogo Otdela Pushkinskogo Doma 1973* (Leningrad, 1976) [henceforward Briusov, 'Pis'ma k L.N. Vil'kinoi'], p. 133.
- 24 Cf., for instance, the lengthy preamble to Briusov's review of Viacheslav Ivanov's *Kormchie zvezdy*, *NP* No. 3 (1903), and his advice to Vil'kina of 4 February 1904 not to imitate Hippius when she might be learning from Knut Hamsun or Przybyszewski who – he claims – are '100,000 times more powerful than the pathetic gunpowder of your Turgenyevs and Chekhovs' (Briusov, 'Pis'ma k L.N. Vil'kinoi', p. 132).
- 25 Bal'mont had originally been asked to write the reviews but Briusov took over from him in 1901 when Bal'mont was forbidden to live in the capital cities and so lost touch somewhat with what was going on in literature. For Briusov's contributions, see S.P. Il'ev, 'Stat'i V. Briusova v zhurnal "The Athenaeum"', *Briusovskie Chteniia* (1971) (Erevan, 1973), pp. 569–79 and *The Athenaeum* No. 3897 (5 July 1902); No. 3949 (4 July 1903); No. 4010 (3 Sept 1904); No. 4068 (14 Oct 1905). For Bal'mont in Oxford, see A. Cross's publication of the reminiscences of the poet's wife, 'Konstantin Bal'mont in Oxford in 1897', *Oxford Slavonic Papers*, vol. XII (1979), pp. 104–16, and S.P. Il'ev, 'Valerii Briusov i Uil'iam Morfill', *V. Briusov i literatura kontsa XIX-XX veka* (Staropol, 1979), pp. 90–106. Bal'mont was invited by William Richard Morfill (1834–1909), Reader in Russian Slavonic (Professor from 1900) at Oxford University, to give a course of lectures (financed by the Ilchester Bequest) at the Taylor Institution in June 1897 and returned several times. It was Morfill who enlisted him to write on Russian poetry for the *Athenaeum*.
- 26 Maksimilian Voloshin, unpub. undated letter to Briusov, written sometime in 1904 (MS Department, the Lenin Library, F386-80-34, 1.3); here quoted from Azadovskii and Maksimov, LN 85, p. 270. See also A.E. Margrian, 'V. Briusov i René Ghil', *Briusovskie Chteniia* (1966) (Erevan, 1968), pp. 511–38, and, in English, Georgette Donchin, *The Influence of French Symbolism on Russian Poetry*.
- 27 For Briusov's first article on Ghil see *Vesy* No. 12 (1904); for the second, five years later, *Russkaia Mysl'* No. 6 (1909).
- 28 From the rough copy of a letter from Briusov to M.N. Semenov of 19 Nov 1904 cited in Azadovskii and Maksimov, LN 85, p. 274 and n. 77, p. 319.
- 29 T.G. Dinesman, introduction to Briusov's 'Perepiska s Emilem Verkharnom 1906–1914', LN 85, p. 554. See also Briusov's letter to Verhaeren of 19 June/2 July 1906, *ibid.*, p. 563.
- 30 V. Briusov, *Dnevnik*, p. 130.
- 31 V. Briusov, 'Rab', written Nov 1900, first pub. as part of the sections 'Ballads' in *Urbi et orbi* (Moscow, 1903), pp. 61–2, *SS*, vol. I, pp. 286–7.
- 32 Boris Sadovskoi, unpub. memoir of *Vesy* (TSGALI G. 464, p. 1, ed. khr. 3, 1.7–8), cited in Azadovsky and Maksimov, LN 85, p. 264.
- 33 A. Bely, *Nachalo veka*, p. 145.
- 34 Vl. Khodasevich, 'Briusov', in *Nekropol'*, p. 33.
- 35 V. Briusov, introduction to *Urbi et orbi*, *SS*, vol. I, pp. 604–5. Blok's review quoting these words was written May 1904 and published in *NP* No. 7 for that year; see A.A. Blok, *SS*, vol. V, pp. 540–5. For Briusov's influence on Blok's

- arrangement of his poems see Joan Delaney Grossman in 'Blok, Briusov and the *Prekrasnaia dama*', *Blok Centennial Conference* (Columbus, Ohio: Slavica, 1984), p. 165; Erich Poynter, *Die Zyklisierung Lyrischer Texte bei Aleksandr A. Blok*, Slavistische Beiträge, vol. 229 (Munich: Otto Sagner, 1988); David A. Sloane *Aleksandr Blok and the Dynamics of the Lyric Cycle* (Columbus, Ohio: Slavica, 1988), and N. Salma, 'K voprosu o meste V. Briusova v russkom simvolizme (Iskusstvo kak poznanie – v lirike i stat'iakh Briusova 1895–1910 gq.)', *Acta Universitatis Szegediensis de Attila Jozsef nominatae, Dissertationes slavicae, Sectio historiae litterarum*, ed. Katalin Szoke, vol. XV (1982), pp. 85–104.
- 36 Briusov, letter to P.P. Pertsov of 1905, *Pechat' i revoliutsiia* No. 7 (1926).
- 37 Briusov, 'K.D. Bal'mont. Chetvertaia stat'ia. *Zelenyi Vertograd i Khorovod vremeni*', a combination of reviews published between 1906 and 1909 first collated in *Dalekie i Blizkie*, here quoted from *SS*, vol. VI, p. 281.
- 38 Cf. Bely, *Nachalo veka*, p. 164.
- 39 Cf. Briusov, 'Miscelanea', which Briusov – possibly inspired by the success of Rozanov's *Opavshie list'ia* and *Uedinennoe* (both of which he reviewed under the general heading 'Russkaia Lirika' in the journal *Sophia* No. 6 (1914)) – had begun to prepare for publication in 1913. See *SS*, vol. VI, p. 389.
- 40 Cf., for instance, Briusov's dismissal of the 'stagnancy' of Bal'mont's *Lebensschauung* in the review of *Khorovod vremeni* (1909), or his impatience with Vil'kina's lack of originality in the review of *Moi Sad* in *Vesy* No. 1 (1907) (also *SS*, vol. VI, pp. 280 and 320–1). The expression 'novyi trepet' occurs in a review of Sergei Solov'ev's *Tsvety i ladan* (Flowers and Incense), *Vesy* No. 5 (1907) (also *SS*, vol. VI, pp. 312–15).
- 41 Cf. Ellis, 'V zashchitu dekadentstva', *Vesy* No. 8 (1907), and the same author's *Russkie simvolisty* (Moscow, 1910), p. 158; also Blok, 'O sovremennom sostoianii russkogo simvolizma', *Apollon* No. 8 (1910) (Blok, *SS*, vol. V, pp. 425–36); also Bely, particularly in the article 'Oblomki mirov', *Vesy* No. 5 (1908) and in the polemical 'Venets ili venok', *Apollon* No. 11 (1910).
- 42 Briusov, 'Istiny', first pub. *STs* (1901), quoted here from *SS*, vol. VI, p. 61.
- 43 Briusov, 'Z.N. Gippius', written Dec 1901, first pub. *Urbi et orbi* under the title 'Nekolebimoi istine', (also *SS*, vol. I, pp. 354–5).
- 44 Bely, *Nachalo veka*, p. 165. Briusov first mentions Potebnia in 'Vladimir Solov'ev, smysl ego poezii', originally in *Russkii Arkhiv* No. 8 (1900), *SS*, vol. VI, p. 218. There is a useful discussion of this influence on Briusov's aesthetics in Maksimov's introductions to *SS*, vol. VI: 'Briusov-Kritik', pp. 15–16.
- 45 Briusov, 'Kliuchi tain', first pub. in *Vesy* No. 1 (1904). See *SS*, vol. VI, p. 93.
- 46 Briusov, 'Sviashchennaia zhertva', *Vesy* No. 1 (1905); see *SS*, vol. VI, pp. 97–9.
- 47 Briusov, letter dated Sept 1902, 'Pis'ma k L.N. Vil'kinoi', p. 128. See also the letter of 12 Aug 1904 to Andrei Bely: 'We all, together with Bal'mont, place the words of the elder Zosima as an epigraph to our works: "Seek ecstasy and frenzy" – but do we seek them? I mean, do we seek them always, boldly, frankly confessing our faith, not fearing martyrdom (O! not newspaper reviews but the true martyrdom of day-to-day condemnation!). We think up all kinds of excuses for our own unrighteousness. I refer to the fact that I have to keep

Vesy and Skorpion going. You ask for four years to make up your mind with due thought. Merezhkovsky has hypocritically invented a whole theory about how essential it is for him to “stay at his post”. And we’re all like that. Only two, maybe, are more courageous: A. Dobroliubov and Bal’mont.’ ‘Perepiska s Andreem Belym 1902–1912’, pub. S.S. Grechishkin and A.V. Lavrov, LN 85, p. 378.

- 48 Letter from Viacheslav Ivanov to Briusov of 3 Mar/19 Feb 1904. See ‘Perepiska s Viacheslavom Ivanovym 1903–1923’, pub. S.S. Grechishkin, N.V. Kotrelev and A.V. Lavrov, LN 85, p. 447.

7 THE TURN OF THE CENTURY

- 1 Andrei Bely. *Na rubezhe dvukh stoletii* (Moscow/Leningrad, 1930), p. 467.
- 2 See Ol’ga Deshart, introduction to Viacheslav Ivanov’s Collected Works, vol. I, p. 41. The quotation is from V. Ivanov, ‘Gnoma’, *Kormchie zvezdy, Sobranie sochinenii*, ed. D.V. Ivanov and Ol’ga Deshart (Brussels: Foyer Chretien, 1971 ongoing) [hereafter *SS*], vol. I, p. 640.
- 3 Viacheslav Ivanov, ‘Iazyk’, *Svet vechernyi*, written 10 Feb 1927 and first pub. as ‘Slovo – plot’, in *Sovremennye Zapiski* No. 65 (1937), p. 160; *SS*, vol. III, p. 567.
- 4 Ivanov, ‘Poet i chern’’, first pub. *Vesy* No. 3 (1904). See *SS*, vol. I, pp. 709–14. Cf. also the role ascribed to Tiutchev in *Zavety Simvolizma*, *SS*, vol. II, pp. 589–603.
- 5 Ivanov, letter to Briusov of 28 Sept/11 Oct 1904, LN 85, p. 462.
- 6 Ivanov, ‘Poet i chern’’, *SS*, vol. I, p. 712.
- 7 Aleksandr Blok, in ‘Tvorchestvo Viacheslava Ivanova’ first pub. in *VZh* Nos. 4–5 (1905), *SS*, vol. V, pp. 7–18, his first full-length article, quotes liberally from ‘Poet i chern’ and other works by Ivanov, including ‘The religion of the suffering God’ as published in *NP*, to explain the impact of *Kormchie zvezdy* and *Prozrachnost’*. Blok’s article is a declaration of discipleship, of readiness to follow Ivanov to the depths of the element of folklore, of myth . . . to where poet and people will ‘recognise one another anew’ (p. 10).
- 8 Ivanov, ‘Taina pevtsa’, written 1912, first pub. *Nezhnaia Taina* (SPb, 1912), *SS*, vol. III, p. 29.
- 9 Cf. Briusov’s review of *Kormchie zvezdy* in *NP* No. 3 (1903), *SS*, vol. VI, pp. 291–9. The *Malaia Biblioteka* series edition of Viacheslav Ivanov’s selected poetry, *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy* introd. by S.S. Averintsev and ed. P.E. Pomirchii (Leningrad, 1976) has a useful list of explanations of classical and other allusions lacking in the Foyer Chrétien *SS* (1971–87).
- 10 The poem in question is ‘Vechernie dali’, *SS*, vol. I, pp. 588–9. The examples of genitive plurals are from Ilya Serman’s discussion of the subject in his ‘Vyacheslav Ivanov and Russian poetry of the eighteenth century’, *Vyacheslav Ivanov: Poet, Critic and Philosopher*, Yale Russian and East European Publications, ed. Robert Louis Jackson and Lowry Nelson, Jr. (New Haven: Yale Center for International and Area Studies, 1986), pp. 198–9.
- 11 For the critic who could not face reviewing Ivanov’s poetry see K. Erberg [K.A. Siunnenberg], ‘Vospominaniia’, pub. S.S. Grechishkin and A.V. Lavrov, *Ezhegodnik rukopisnogo otdela Pushkinskogo Doma na 1977 god*

- (Leningrad, 1979), pp. 129–30. For Remizov's comments see A. Remizov 'Peterburgskie sny', *Aleksej Remizov. Approaches to a Protean Writer*, pp. 76–7, and for Blok's *NP* No. 6 (1904) and in *SS*, vol. V, pp. 538–9.
- 12 Osip Mandel'stam, 'I Shubert na vode, i Mozart v ptich'em game', *Sobranie sochinenii v trekh tomakh*, vol. I (Washington, 1967), p. 200. Omry Ronen in his *An Approach to Mandel'stam* (Jerusalem, 1983) describes memory as 'the fundamental concern of acmeism, the cornerstone, not only of its aesthetic code but also of its message' (p. xii). Although the Acmeists handled memory differently, it was from Ivanov that they learnt its supreme importance (both as Mnemosyne and as Anamnesis). See John E. Malmstad, "'You must remember this": Memory's shorthand in a late poem of Kuzmin', *Studies in the Life and Works of Mixail Kuzmin*, Wiener Slavistischer Almanach, Sonderband 24 (Vienna: 1989), p. 136, n. 3.
 - 13 Velimir Khlebnikov, writing of the 'self-sufficient word' in 'Nasha Osnova', *Sobranie proizvedenii v 5-ti tomakh*, ed. N. Stepanov (Leningrad, 1928–33), vol. V, p. 229.
 - 14 Cf. James West, *Russian Symbolism* (London, 1970) and relevant articles in *Viacheslav Ivanov: Poet, Critic and Philosopher*. Translations of 'Zavety Simvolizma' as 'The precepts of Symbolism' and 'Mysli o Simvolizme' as 'Thoughts about Symbolism' in Ronald E. Peterson's anthology *The Russian Symbolists*; the first, translated by S. Cioran, is also in *The Silver Age of Russian Culture* (Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1971). Ivanov's poetry has found an eloquent advocate in Vladimir Markov (see 'Vyacheslav Ivanov the Poet a tribute and a reappraisal' in *Vyacheslav Ivanov: Poet, Critic and Philosopher*, pp. 49–58). For the correct translation of *Svet vechernyi* see Aleksis Rannit, 'Viacheslav Ivanov and his *Vespertine Light*', *Russian Literary Tri-quarterly* No. 4 (1972), pp. 285–7.
 - 15 Anna Akhmatova, *Sochineniia*, vol. II, (Washington, D.C., 1968), p. 340. *Cor ardens* was Ivanov's third collection of verse, pub. by Skorpion in 2 vols. (1911–12).
 - 16 There have been five international conferences dedicated to Ivanov: at Yale University, 1981; in Rome and Frascati, 1983; at the University of Padua, 1986; at the University of Heidelberg, 1989; and at Geneva, 1992. These have produced several collections of articles: in 1986 *Viacheslav Ivanov: Poet, Critic and Philosopher*, (see n. 10) and the 2-volume *Cultura e memoria: atti del terzo simposio internazionale dedicata a Vjaceslav Ivanov*, ed. Malcovati, Facolta di lettere e filosofia dell'Universita di Pavia, sezione slavistica (Florence: Nuova Italia, 1988).
 - 17 Sergey Averintsev, 'The Poetry of Vyacheslav Ivanov', *Vyacheslav Ivanov: Poet, Critic and Philosopher*, p. 29.
 - 18 Ivanov, 'Mgla' (Darkness), written in 1897, pub. first in *Kormchie zvezdy*, *SS*, vol. I, p. 597.
 - 19 Ivanov, 'Poet i chern'', first pub. *Vesy* No. 3 (1904), *SS*, vol. I, p. 713.
 - 20 *Ibid.*, p. 713.
 - 21 Ivanov, 'Zemlia', first pub. *Kormchie Zvezdy*; *SS*, vol. I, pp. 550–1.
 - 22 A.S. Pushkin, Prologue to 'Ruslan i Liudmila'.
 - 23 Ivanov, 'Schast'e', written in Sochi 20 June 1917, first pub. *Svet vechernyi*, *SS*, vol. III, p. 547.

- 24 Ivanov, 'Iazyk', first pub. *Svet vechernyi*, SS, vol. III, p. 567. Cf. also the analysis of this poem by Tomas Venclova, *Vyacheslav Ivanov: Poet, Critic and Philosopher*, pp. 108–22.
- 25 Ivanov began to lead away from individualism towards Sobornost' in the article 'Kop'e Afiny' (The spear of Athene) in *Vesy* No. 10 (1904), where he already speaks of 'the music of the collective soul' ('Muzyka sobornoj dushi') SS, vol. I, p. 727. For Ivanov the word has cosmic, Dionysian overtones in so far as 'Dionysos is the divine all-unity of Being in its sacrificial disintegration' ('Dionis est' bozhestvennoe vseedinstvo Sushchego v ego zhertvennom razluchanii) and as such is 'related to our religious understanding of the world' ('rodstvennyi nashemu religioznomu miroponimaniuu') (SS, vol. I, p. 718 from the article 'Nitsshe i Dionis', first in *Vesy* No. 5 (1904)). Sobornost', then, means the unity of individuals within the all-unity, the constant ascent and descent, separation and reunion, which – for Ivanov – is the pattern of life ('O niskhozhdanii', *Vesy* No. 5 (1905) and in SS under the title 'Simvolika esteticheskikh nachal', vol. I, pp. 823–30). After 1905, the term sobornost', in connection with another term, mystic anarchism, was often taken in vain. For Ivanov, though, it continued to signify a return, through individualism and refinement, to a forgotten unity. 'Individualism, in its present, *involuntary and unconscious metamorphosis*, is taking on traits of *sobornost'*' ('Individualizm, v svoei sovremennoi, nevol'noi i nesoznatel'noi metamorfoze, usvoiaet cherty sobornosti') he writes in 'Krizis individualizma' (*VZh* No. 9 (1905); SS, vol. I, p. 839). In this book, I have not attempted to stick to one translation, but have used the Russian word or, where suitable, translated according to context. When I translate 'sobornyi' as 'collective' I am using the word in the Jungian, not the political sense.
- 26 Ivanov, 'Fevral' 3', *Rimskii dnevnik*, SS, vol. III, p. 592.
- 27 Ivanov, 'Avgust 5', *Rimskii dnevnik*, SS, vol. III, p. 625.
- 28 Merezhkovsky, letter to V.I. Ivanov of 20 March 1903, G.B.L., F 109, unnumbered, quoted in note to letter 2 of 'Briusov-Ivanov: Perepiska', LN 85, p. 435.
- 29 See Ivanov 'Sentiabr' 7', *Rimskii dnevnik*, SS, vol. III, p. 632.
- 30 Ivanov, 'Litso ili maska' dedicated to Merezhkovsky, originally with an epigraph from the article 'Za ili protiv?' *Novyi Put'* No. 10 (1904), and afterwards as 'Litso', in *Cor Ardens*, SS, vol. II, p. 265. Cf. also letter 27 of 1 Nov/19 Oct 1904 to Briusov, LN 85, pp. 463–4. See also Bely, who rather uncertainly took Merezhkovsky's side in 'Maska', *Vesy* No. 6 (1904), pp. 6–15.
- 31 Cf. Ol'ga Deshart. Introduction to Ivanov, SS, col. I, pp. 73–4.
- 32 Ivanov, letter 26 of 28 Sept/11 Oct, LN 85, p. 462.
- 33 Bely, *Na rubezhe dvukh stoletii*, p. 329. Bely's *Simfonia (2-aia, dramaticheskaiia)* was originally pub. by Skorpion (Moscow, 1902). There are several reprints and a good translation into English by Roger and Angela Keys with preface and notes, published together with Bely's first article for *MI*, 'The forms of art', translated and introduced by John Elsworth (Edinburgh: Polygon, 1986).
- 34 Bely, 'In place of a foreword', *The Dramatic Symphony*, p. 17.
- 35 Bely, *Na rubezhe . . .*, p. 165.

- 36 Briusov, *Dnevnik*, p. 121, n. 1 and Blok, Diary for 2 April 1902, *SS*, vol. VII, p. 44.
- 37 Bely, *Nachalo veka*, p. 247.
- 38 *Ibid.*, pp. 249–50.
- 39 An autoquote. Bely, *Na rubezhe . . .*, p. 19, from a poem originally written in 1903 and published in *Zoloto v lazure* (Moscow, 1904) as ‘My shli v poliakh. Atlasom miagkim rvalo’, then reworked as ‘N.V. Bugaevu 1903–1914’. See Belyi, *Stikhotvoreniia*, vols. I–III, Russian printings and reprintings 49, Centrifuga, ed. John Malmstad [henceforward Malmstad I, II, III] (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1982–), vol. I, p. 281, vol. II, pp. 112–13 and for variants vol. III, p. 79 and pp. 283–4.
- Since this is the most complete and authoritative edition of Bely’s poetry to date, I have referred the reader to it wherever possible. I have further used the complementary *Stikhotvoreniia* (Moscow: 1988), a reprint of Bely’s 1923 *Stikkhotvoreniia*, reissued with an essay ‘O knige Andreia Belogo “Stikhotvoreniia”’ by A.V. Lavrov, and the ‘Biblioteka poeta’, *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy* (Moscow/Leningrad, 1966) introduced by Tamara Khmel’nitskaia. To this last (henceforward Bely, *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy*) I have also given references. Works of interest in English on Bely’s poetry over the last decade are Gerald Janecek’s bilingual edition of *The First Encounter*; contributions by John Elsworth, Janecek, George Kalbous and Boris Christa to *Andrey Bely Centenary Papers*, ed. Boris Christa (Amsterdam: Adolf M. Hakhert, 1980), pp. 68–117, and G.S. Smith’s ‘Bely’s poetry and verse theory’ in *Andrey Bely. Spirit of Symbolism*, ed. John E. Malmstad (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1987), pp. 242–84. In the same book, there is an essay by Roger Keys on the poetic prose of ‘Bely’s symphonies’, pp. 19–59.
- 40 Bely, *Na Rubezhe . . .*, pp. 180–1.
- 41 *Na Rubezhe*, p. 338.
- 42 *Na Rubezhe*, p. 352.
- 43 *Na Rubezhe*, p. 358.
- 44 *Na Rubezhe*, p. 371.
- 45 For all quotations from Bely’s *Simfonia (2-aia, dramaticheskaiia)* in this paragraph I have used Roger and Angela Keys’s translation (see n. 33 above).
- 46 See *Selected Essays of Andrey Bely* (Berkeley Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1985), where Steven Cassedy, the editor, compiler and translator, says in his introduction that ‘My true purpose in producing this book [. . .] was to introduce a major modern thinker to a public that knows virtually nothing about him [. . .]’ (p. xi). The enthusiasm has spread and Bely the thinker and critic now bids fair to obscure Bely the artist, although – as with all Silver Age artist/thinkers – his art and thought are in fact inseparable.
- 47 I quote from Elsworth’s translations of ‘Formy iskusstva’ in A. Bely, *The Dramatic Symphony. The Forms of Art*, p. 173.
- 48 *Ibid.*, p. 176.
- 49 *Ibid.*, p. 90. This quotation is from the *Dramatic Symphony*.
- 50 Bely, ‘Kentavr’, written 1901–2, first published in *Severnye Tsvety* No. 3 (1903). Malmstad I, pp. 192–3; for variants see Malmstad III, pp. 45–6. *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy*, p. 118.

- 51 Bely, 'Na gorakh', written 1903, first pub. *Zoloto v lazure*, Malmstad I, pp. 188–9, variants III, pp. 43–4. *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy*, p. 116.
- 52 Vladimir Maiakovsky, 'Ia sam', *Sobranie Sochinenii v dvenadtsati tomakh*, vol. I (Moscow, 1978), p. 51.
- 53 Cf Bely, 'Vesna', written 1903, first *Zoloto v lazure*, Malmstad I, p. 16 and III, p. 4. *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy*, pp. 104–5.
- 54 Bely, 'Znaiu', written 1901, first published *Zoloto v lazure*. Malmstad I, pp. 294–5, III, p. 82. *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy*, pp. 138–9.
- 55 Bely, 'Dusha mira', written 1902, first in *Zoloto v lazure*. Malmstad I, pp. 125–7, III, p. 28. *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy*, pp. 85–6.
- 56 From Bely, 'Vozmezdie', parts 2 and 3, written in 1901, first published *STS* No. 3 (1903). Malmstad I, pp. 296–8, III, pp. 82–4. *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy*, pp. 139–41. The cycle bears a dedication to Nietzsche and in the manuscript Bely had added: 'Nietzsche is the centaur, Nietzsche is the seagull, Nietzsche is exotic' ('Nitsche – kentavr, Nitshe – chayka, Nitshe – ekzotichen'). The 1904 poem is 'Bezumets', first in *Zoloto v lazure* with dedication to A.S. Chelishchev. Malmstad I, pp. 299–303, III, p. 85. *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy*, pp. 141–2.
- 57 Aleksandr Blok, 'Molitvy', written in March–April 1904 and first pub. in *Stikhi o Prekrasnoi Dame* (Moscow, 1905) (with the exception of 'Nochnaia (Tebe, Chei Sumrak byl tak iarok)', a response to Briusov's 'Mladshim' written at the same time but not published until 1907 in the Almanac *Belye nochii*). *SS*, vol. I, pp. 316–18.
- 58 Bely, 'Zolotoe Runo' 2. 'Pozharom sklon neba ob'iat', written Oct 1903, first pub. (in modified form) *MI* No. 5 (1904) in the article 'Simvolizm kak miropoimanie', *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy*, pp. 73–5.
- 59 The cycle was entitled 'Prezhde i teper'', *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy*, pp. 87–108. Cf. Bely, *Nachalo veka*, p. 206.
- 60 'Steadiness of eye' (Pristal'nost' vzgliada) was one of the *desiderata* enumerated by Blok for Russian Symbolism in 1910. *SS*, vol. V, p. 436.
- 61 Bely, *Na rubezhe*, p. 248.
- 62 Blok, 'Avtobiograficheskaia zametka', *SS*, vol. VII, p. 12.
- 63 Liubov' Blok, *Byli i nebylitsy o sebe i ob Aleksandre Bloke*, pp. 49–50.
- 64 Blok, '31 Dekabria 1900 goda', first pub. *Niva* (1909), *SS*, vol. I, p. 73.
- 65 The expression 'Sokrytyi dvigatel'' occurs in the poem which some anonymous lover of Blok's poetry pinned to the wooden cross which first marked his grave: 'O, ia khochu bezumno zhit'', written 6 May 1909/5 Feb 1914, first pub. *Russkoe Slovo* (22 Mar 1915), *SS*, vol. III, p. 85.
- 66 Blok, 'Ei bylo piatnadsat' let. No po stuku', written 16 June 1903, first published *Slovo* (31 Jan 1904), *SS*, vol. I, p. 283.
- 67 Cf. Blok, *SS*, vol. VII, p. 343 and the letter to his father A.L. Blok of 26 September 1900, in *Pis'ma Al. Bloka k rodnym*, ed. M.A. Beketova (Leningrad, 1927), p. 55.
- 68 Plato, *Timaeus* 30b. For this reference I am grateful to the Abbess Thekla of the Monastery of the Assumption, Normanby, Nr Whitby.
- 69 Blok, 'Veter prinis izdaleka', written 29 Jan 1901, *SS*, vol. I, p. 76.
- 70 Blok, 'Ty otkhodish' v sumrak alyi', 6 Mar 1901, *SS*, vol. I, p. 81.
- 71 Blok, 'Nebesnoe umom ne izmerimo', 29 May 1901, *SS*, vol. I, p. 91.
- 72 Bely, *Nachalo veka*, p. 261.

- 73 Blok, 'Predchuvstvuiu Tebia. Goda prokhodiat mimo', 4 June 1901, first pub. *NP* No. 3 (1903), *SS*, vol. I, p. 94.
- 74 Blok, 'Avtobiografia', *SS*, vol. VII, p. 12.
- 75 For Blok and Konevskoi see V. Ia. Morderer, 'Blok i Ivan Konevskoi', 92, Bk. 4 (Moscow, 1987), pp. 151–78.
- 76 Blok, 'Moi vecher blizok i bezvolen', 27 Mar 1902, first pub. *Stikhi o Prekrasnoi Dame*, *SS*, vol. I, p. 179. Blok first met Hippus on the 26 March and the poem clearly refers to their first 'intimate' conversation. The poem in which he rejects her probing into the connection between his poetry and his private life is 'Prosypaius' ia – i v pole tumanno', 2 May 1903, first pub. *Stikhi o Prekrasnoi Dame*, *SS*, vol. I, p. 279. For more detailed accounts of Blok's complex, lifelong relationship with the Merezhkovskys see Z. Mints, 'A. Blok v polemike s Merezhkovskimi', *Uchenye zapiski Tartuskogo gosudarstvennogo Universiteta*, 535, *Blokovskii sbornik* No. 4 (Tartu, 1980), pp. 116–222, and A. Pyman, 'Aleksandr Blok and the Merezhkovskii', *Aleksandr Blok Centennial Conference*, pp. 237–70.
- 77 Blok, letter to Andrei Bely of 9 Jan 1903 in Aleksandr Blok i Andrei Bely, *Perepiska*, ed. and intro. B.N. Orlov, in the series *Letopisi*, Book 7 (Moscow: Izdanie gosudarstvennogo literaturnogo muzeia, 1940), p. 13 [hereafter *Blok i Bely: Perepiska*].
- 78 For Blok and Briusov see n. 35 to chapter 6.
- 79 Blok, 'Rossiia', written 18 Oct 1908, first pub. *Novoe Slovo* No. 1 (1910), in slightly different form *SS*, vol. III, pp. 254–5.
- 80 Bely, letter of 4 Jan 1903 to A.A. Blok, *Blok i Bely: Perepiska*, p. 7.
- 81 Blok, letter to A.L. Blok of 5 Aug 1902, *SS*, vol. VIII, p. 40.
- 82 Blok, 'Po gorodu begal chernyi chelovek', Apr 1903, first pub. *Almanakh Grif* (1904), *SS*, vol. I, p. 278.
- 83 Blok, letter to S.M. Solov'ev of 20 Dec 1903, *SS*, vol. VIII, p. 79.
- 84 Blok, 'Vot on – riad grobovykh stupenei', written 18 June 1904, first pub. *Stikhi o Prekrasnoi Dame*, *SS*, vol. I, p. 323.
- 85 Blok, 'Vstuplenie', *SS*, vol. II, p. 7. Written on 16 Apr, 1905, this poem was originally called 'Molitva', (Prayer) and Blok situated it after the appearance of 'The Stranger' (see chapter 11) when it was first published in *Nechaiannaia radost'* (Moscow, 1907). The fact that, when he first rearranged his poems into the Three Volumes which he once called 'a trilogy of incarnation' ('vochelovechenia'), Blok made 'Molitva' the 'Introduction' to the second volume, indicates that he wished the 'Ascension' of the Most Beautiful Lady to be seen not so much as a consequence of the appearance of a false, infernal Muse but rather as a deliberate renunciation and thus as a prelude to the whole of the 'second volume'. From 1911 onwards this poem retains its introductory position, confirmed by Blok in *Sobranie sochinenii Aleksandra Bloka* (Petersburg/Berlin: Alkonost, 1922–3), the first three volumes of which he arranged himself and which has served as a model for subsequent editions. It is now possible to read Blok's poetry as arranged in the original collections, from *Stikhi o Prekrasnoi Dame to Vozmezdie* (Petrograd, 1919), in Aleksandr Blok, *Desiat' poeticheskikh knig*, ed. V.P. Enisherlov (Moscow, 1980).
- 86 Bely, letter to Blok of 10 June 1903, *Blok i Bely: Perepiska*, p. 33.
- 87 Bely, *Nachalo veka*, p. 260.

- 88 Blok, 'Dnevnik 1901–1902 goda', *SS*, vol. VII, p. 44, and *Blok i Bely: Perepiska*, p. 4.
 89 Blok, letter to Andrei Bely of 3 Jan 1903, *Blok i Bely: Perepiska*, pp. 4–5.
 90 Bely, letter to Blok of 6 Jan 1903, *Blok i Bely: Perepiska*, p. 8.
 91 Blok, letter to Bely of 15–17 Aug 1907, *SS*, vol. VIII, p. 200.
 92 Blok, 'U zabytykh mogil probivalas' trava', first pub. *NP* No. 5 (1904), *SS*, vol. I, p. 274.

8 THE SOPHIA-MYTH AND THE THEME OF APOCALYPSE

- 1 Viacheslav Ivanov, 'Aleksandru Bloku II', written in the summer of 1912, first pub. *Nezhnaia Taina*, *SS*, vol. III, p. 10.
 2 Vasiliï Rozanov, 'Iz starykh pisem', *VZh* Nos. 10–11 (1905), p. 377.
 3 For Rozanov's uneasy relationship with Vladimir Solov'ev see chapter 6, n. 28.
 4 See Vl. Solov'ev, 'Ideia sverkhcheloveka', *MI* No. 9 (1899), pp. 87–91 and *SS*, vol. VIII, pp. 310–19. Also 'Osoboe chestvovanie Pushkina' first pub. as letter to the editor of *VE*, No. 1 (1899), *SS*, vol. VIII, pp. 320–9. See also the article by Rozanov, continuing the disagreement with Solov'ev chronicled in n. 3: 'Eshche o smerti Pushkina', *MI* nos. 7, 8 (1900).
 5 See Aleksandr Blok, letter to Chulkov of 23 June 1905, *SS*, vol. VIII, p. 128 and Andrei Bely, *Na rubezhe . . .*, p. 389.
 6 Vl. Solov'ev, 'Tri svidaniia' written in 1898 and first pub. in *VE* No. 11 (1898), *Stikhotvoreniia i shutochnye p'esy* [hereafter Vl. Solov'ev, *Stikhotvoreniia* (1968)], ed. D. Tschizewskij et al., *Slavische Propyläen*, Band 18 (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1968), pp. 170–9.
 7 Blok, letter to I.P. Brikhnichev of 26 Aug 1912, *SS*, vol. VIII, p. 401.
 8 Cf. Samuel Cioran's *Vladimir Solov'ev and The Knighthood of the Divine Sophia*; M.A. Lathouwers, *Kosmos en Sophia. Alexander Blok: zijn wereldbeschouwing en het russisch denken*, doctoral thesis for the Catholic University of Nijmegen, printed Groningen, 1962; and Armin Knigge, *Die Lyrik Vl. Solov'ev's und ihre Nachwirkung bei A. Belyj und A. Blok*, *Bibliotheca Slavonica* Band 12 (Amsterdam: Adolf M. Hakkert, 1973). Also Pamela Davidson, *The Poetic Imagination of Vyacheslav Ivanov. A Russian Symbolist's Perception of Dante* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).
 9 Proverbs 8:26, 30–1. See also Desharts' notes to Ivanov, *SS*, vol. III, p. 753.
 10 Vl. Solov'ev, 'Saima. V burii', written Sep or Oct 1894, first pub. *Stikhotvoreniia* (SPb, 1900). In *Stikhotvoreniia* (1968), p. 129.
 11 Vl. Solov'ev, 'Ideia Sverkhcheloveka', *SS*, vol. VIII, p. 318.
 12 Prince S.V. Trubetskoi, 'Smert' V.S. Solov'eva. 31 iulia 1900 g.', *VE* No. 9 (1900), quoted from Vladimir Solov'ev, *Nepodvizhno lish' solntse ljubvi* (Moscow, 1990), p. 389.
 13 Blok, 'Poslednee napatstvie', *SS*, vol. III, p. 273.
 14 See Bely, *Nachalo Veka*, p. 229.
 15 Briusov, 'Vladimir Solv'ev. Smysl' ego poezii', originally *Russkii Arkhiv* No. 8 (1900). *SS*, vol. VI, pp. 218–30.
 16 Briusov, 'K Blizkoi', written in 1903, first pub. *Urbi et orbi*, *SS*, vol. I, pp. 314–15.
 17 Sec P.P. Pertsov, *Rannii Blok* (Moscow, 1922), p. 24.

- 18 Ivanov, dedication of 'Carmen Saeculare', written 1904, first pub. *STs* No. 4 (1905). *SS*, vol. II, p. 286.
- 19 Briusov, 'Kon' bled', written July and Dec 1903, first pub. *NP* No. 5 (1904). *SS*, vol. I, pp. 442–4. In a letter to Pertsov published *Pechat' i Revoliutsiia* No. 7 (1926), p. 42, Briusov claims that Sergei Solov'ev and Andrei Bely, when he read them 'Kon' bled', 'leapt up from their chairs' and Blok acknowledged its influence on his poem of Apocalypse over the city 'Poslednii Den'', written 3 Feb 1904, first pub. *Pereval* No. 7 (1907), then in *Zemlia v snegu* (SPb, 1908) with an epigraph from Briusov's poem. Bely's view of the young Briusov is profoundly coloured by 'Kon' bled' and 'Sumashedshii', the poem in which 'no one is pursuing me'. See *Nachalo veka*, p. 150.
- 20 Briusov. Letter to Blok of Nov 1904 published in *Pechat' i Revoliutsiia* No. 4 (1928), p. 43.
- 21 Briusov, 'Mladshim', written 1903, first pub. *Ezhemesiachnye Sochineniia* No. 4 (1903) under title 'Za ogradoi', *SS*, vol. I, p. 353. Compare Blok's response 'Nochnaia', written Mar–Apr 1904, an invocation to the Most Beautiful Lady 'Pred Kem tomitsiia i skrezheshchet / Surovyi mag moei zemli' ('Before Whom the grim magus of my land / Languishes and grinds his teeth'), *SS*, vol. I, p. 317.
- 22 See Bely, 'Apokalipsis v russkoi poezii', *Vesy* No. 4 (1905), pp. 11–28 and Briusov, 'V zashchitu ot odnoi pokhvaly. Otkrytoe pis'mo Andreiu Belomu', *Vesy* No. 5 (1905), pp. 37–9. *SS*, vol. VI, p. 101.
- 23 Blok, *ZK* No. 65.
- 24 Ivanov, 'Mi fur le serpi amiche', a poem the title of which is from Dante's *Inferno* XXV. 4, from the 'Carmen Saeculare' cycle (see n. 18), *SS*, vol. II, pp. 290–1.
- 25 Briusov, 'Po ulitsam uzkim, i v shume, i noch'iu . . .', written Apr 1901, first pub. *STs* No. 2 (1902). *SS*, vol. I, p. 269.
- 26 Bely, 'Sozidatel', written 1904, from the cycle *V. Briusovu* first published in *Vesy* No. 8 (1906), then in 1909 in the collection *Urna* which is dedicated to Briusov. See *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy*, pp. 280–2 and, for variants, Malmstad III, pp. 197–9; 'Vstrecha', written 1909, in *Urna*; *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy*, p. 285.
- 27 Blok, *ZK* 79. For Blok and Nietzsche see R. Labry, 'Alexandre Blok et Nietzsche', *Revue des Etudes Slaves* No. 17 (Paris, 1951), pp. 201–8; Rolf-Dieter Kluge, *Westeuropa und Russland im Weltbild Aleksandr Bloks* (Munich: Otto Sagner, 1967), chapter 4 on Blok, Nietzsche and Wagner, pp. 84–128; J. Forsyth, 'Prophets and supermen: "German", ideological influences on Aleksandr Blok's Poetry', *Forum for Modern Language Studies* Vol. 13, No. 1 (Jan, 1977), pp. 33–46. Evelyn Bristol, 'Blok between Nietzsche and Soloviev', *Nietzsche in Russia*, pp. 149–59.
- 28 See the letter of 20 Dec 1903 to Sergei Solov'ev in which Blok says of VI. Solov'ev's poems. 'They require love [. . .] When you give them love, they will fill whole years of life and render up a hundred times more than they actually say. It may be they will fill a whole life' . . . this in the context of a comparison with Sergei's poetry, which Blok also 'loves' but finds neither 'supple', nor 'elegant'. *SS*, vol. VIII, p. 78.
- 29 Blok, letter to Evgenii Pavlovich Ivanov of 15 Jun 1904, *SS*, vol. VIII, p. 106.

- 30 VI. Solov'ev, *SS*, vol. VIII, pp. 246–90.
- 31 See Blok's last speech on VI. Solov'ev for the twentieth anniversary of his death in 1920 'Vladimir Solov'ev i nashi dni', first pub. *Zapiski Mechtatelei* Nos. 2–3 (1921), *SS*, vol. VI, pp. 154–9 and letter to Chulkov of 23 June 1905 *SS* VIII.126–29.
- 32 VI. Solov'ev, 'Zhiznennaia drama Platona', *SS*, vol. VIII, pp. 274–5, 275, 281, 285 and 'Ideia sverkhcheloveka', *SS*, vol. VIII, p. 318.
- 33 For the influence of Solv'ev's 'Zhiznennaia drama Platona' on Blok, see David Sloane's in-depth study of Blok's 'structuring' of his poetry to form a poetic autobiography, *Aleksandr Blok and the Dynamics of the Lyric Cycle* (Columbus, Ohio: Slavica, 1988).
- 34 Blok, 'Rytsar'-Monakh, o Vladimire Solov'ev'e', first pub. in the collection *O Vladimire Solov'ev'e* (Moscow, 1911), a speech read at the Tenishev School, 14 December 1910, in honour of the 10th anniversary of Solov'ev's death; *SS*, vol. V, p. 451.
- 35 Bely, 'Materialy k biografii 1900–1902' TsGALI quoted in *Stikhotvorenia*, p. 586.
- 36 Bely, 'Vospominaniia o A.A. Bloke', *Epopeia*, vol. I (1922), p. 138.
- 37 See 'Andrej Belyj: Lettre autobiographique à Ivanov Razumnik', dated 1–3 Mar 1927 published by Georges Nivat, *Cahiers du Monde Russe et Soviétique* 15:1–2 (Jan–Jun 1974), pp. 45–82.
- 38 Bely, 'S.M. Solov'evu', written 1901, first pub. *Zoloto v lazure*, quoted from *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy*, p. 153. Also in Malmstad I, p. 327 with variants III, p. 99.
- 39 Bely, *Pervoe svidanie* written 1921 first published by Alkonost (Petersburg, 1921), *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy*, pp. 405–42. Bely wrote of Solov'ev in all his memoirs and autobiographical pieces published and unpublished, but more specifically in 'Vladimir Solov'ev. Iz vospominanii', *Arabeski* (Moscow, 1911), pp. 387–94.
- 40 See Ol'ga Deshart, Introduction to Viacheslav Ivanov, *SS*, vol. I, p. 16; Henrich Stammler, 'Vyacheslav Ivanov and Nietzsche' in *Vyacheslav Ivanov: Poet, Critic and Philosopher*, pp. 297–312; and, for the poet's own version of events, Ivanov, 'Avtobiograficheskoe pis'mo', *SS*, vol. II, p. 20.
- 41 Ivanov, letter to A.A. Blok of 12 Nov 1908, 'Iz perepiski Aleksandra Bloka s Viach. Ivanovym', pub. N.V. Kotrelev, *Vestnik AN SSSR, Seriiia literatury i iazyka*, vol. 41, No. 2 (1982), p. 168.
- 42 Ivanov, 'Avtobiograficheskoe pis'mo', *SS*, vol. II, p. 20.
- 43 See, for instance, Solov'ev's letter to Rozanov of 28 Nov 1892 (published by Rozanov in 'Iz starykh pisem', *VZh* Nos. 10–11 (1905), pp. 359–90) in which Solov'ev, disclaiming that he is limited by any one profession of faith, 'whether Latin or Byzantine or Augsburg or Geneva', insists that he feels bound, in view of prevalent anti-clericalism, to emphasise the positive significance of the church as 'the stone laid by Christ Himself'.
- 44 Ivanov, 'Avtobiograficheskoe pis'mo', *SS*, vol. II, p. 21.
- 45 The fate of Ivanov's attempts to publish scholarly versions of his studies of Dionysos was catastrophic. One entire edition was destroyed at the printers by shells in World War One. His doctoral dissertation 'Dionis i pradionisiistvo' was printed by the second state typography at Baku in 1923 and is virtually

- unobtainable, though a reprint is planned in the ongoing *Collected Works*. A version he prepared in German for Benno Schwabe was never published. The Second World War intervened and the publisher died. See Ol'ga Deshart, Introduction to *SS*, vol. I, and Prot. Kirill Fotiev, “‘Dionis i pradiosniistvo’ v svete noveishikh issledovanii”, *Cultura e memoria* No. 2, pp. 163–170.
- 46 V. Ivanov, ‘Religioznoe delo Vladimira Solov'eva’, first pub. *Pu'* (M, 1911), *SS*, vol. III, p. 304.
- 47 V. Ivanov, ‘Pamiati Vladimira Solov'eva’, *Rimskii dnevniki*, first pub. in *Svet vechernii* (Oxford, 1962); *SS*, vol. III, p. 621.

9 THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR AND THE 1905 REVOLUTION

- 1 Aleksandr Blok, ‘O sovremennom sostoianii russkogo simvolizma’, first pub. *Apollon* No. 8 (1910), *SS*, vol. V, p. 431.
- 2 Ivan Konevskoi, ‘Po dniam’, *Stikhi i Proza* (Moscow, 1904), p. 9.
- 3 See Valerii Briusov, letter of 20 Sept/3 Oct 1904 to Viacheslav Ivanov, ‘Briusov i Ivanov: Peregipska’, LN 85, pp. 461–2 and Ivanov’s reply of 28 Sep/11 Oct 1904, p. 462.
- 4 See Andrei Bely, ‘Sploshnoi “Feoretik”’, first impressions of Viacheslav Ivanov in *Nachalo veka*, pp. 308–13. For Bely’s relationship with Viacheslav Ivanov see Oleg A Maslenikov, *The Frenzied Poets. Andrey Biely and the Russian Symbolists* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1952) [hereafter Maslenikov, *Frenzied Poets*], pp. 197–216. Also Georges Nivat, ‘Prospero et Ariel. Esquisse des rapports d’Andrej Belyi et Vjaceslav Ivanov’, in *Autour du symbolisme Russe (Vjaceslav Ivanov)*, a special number of *Cahiers du Monde Russe et Soviétique* 25:1 (Jan–Mar 1984), pp. 19–34.
- 5 For the story of the poetic duel, see the introduction to Bely’s correspondence with Briusov by S.S. Grechishkin and A.V. Lavrov, LN 85, pp. 336–9, and (less fully in English) Maslenikov, *Frenzied Poets*, pp. 99–127.
- 6 Briusov, *Ognennyi angel. Povest' XVI Veka*, serialised in *Vesy* Nos. 1–3, 5–12 (1907), Nos. 2, 3, 5–8 (1908) and first published by Skorpion, Moscow, 1908 in two volumes and 1909 in one. In 1927 Prokof'ev composed an opera with a libretto based on Briusov’s novel.
- 7 Cf. Bely, ‘Starinnomu vragu’, written 9 Dec 1904, first pub. *VZh* No. 3 (1905) with dedication to V.B., *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy*, p. 465 and, with variant first line, in LN 85, pp. 337–8. Also Malmstad II, pp. 71–2 and III, p. 366 for variants. For Briusov’s rejoinder from which the quotation in the text is taken see Briusov, ‘Bal'deru II’, originally intended for *Stephanos*, ‘Bal'deru Loki’ (*SS*, vol. I, p. 388) having appeared with a dedication to Bely in *STs*, 1905, pp. 35–6. Evidently the involvement of the lady in the case led Briusov to renounce publication, for ‘Bal'deru II’ appeared only after his death in *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy*, p. 502. The story of Bely, Briusov and Nina Petrovskaja figures in Bely’s memoirs and by Vl. Khodasevich, ‘Konets Renaty’, *Nekropol'* (Paris: YMCA-Press, 1976), pp. 7–25. The best sources, however, are Briusov’s letters to Petrovskaja and her own reminiscences of the affair in LN 85, pp. 773–98, which show Briusov, in particular, in a kinder light. For the reflection of the affair in the novel see S.S. Grechishkin and A.B. Lavrov, ‘Biograficheskie istochniki romana Briusova ‘Ognennyi angel’’, *Wiener Slawis-*

- tischer Almanach* No. 1 (1978), pp. 79–107, Pt. 2, pp. 73–96; Z.G. Mints, ‘Graf Genrikh von Ostergeim i “Moskovskii Rennessans”’. Simvolist Andrei Belyi v “Ognennom angele” V. Briusova’ in *Andrei Belyi Problemy tvorchestva* (M., 1988), pp. 215–40; and M.L. Mirza-Avakian, ‘Obraz Niny Petrovskoi v tvorcheskoi sud’be V. Ia. Briusova’, *Briusovskie chteniia 1983 God* (Erevan, 1985), pp. 223–34.
- 8 Viacheslav Ivanov, letter to Briusov of 24 Feb/9 Mar 1905, ‘Briusov i Ivanov: Perepiska’, p. 473.
- 9 Ivanov, from the poem ‘Noch’ v pustyne’, first pub. *Kormchie Zvezdy, SS*, vol. I, p. 529.
- 10 Ivanov, letter of 29 Aug 1905 ‘Briusov i Ivanov: Perepiska’, p. 479.
- 11 See Nartsis (S.A. Sokolov) review of *Severnnye Tsvety Assiriiskie* in *Iskusstvo* Nos. 5–7 (1905) and note 4 to LN 85, p. 389 for the story of Bely’s defence of Ivanov and quarrel with Sokolov.
- 12 Bely, letter to Briusov of about 28 Sep 1905, LN 85, pp. 386–7.
- 13 Briusov, ‘K tikhomu okeanu’, 27 Jan 1904 first pub. in *Russkii Listok* No. 5088 (29 Jan 1904) then in *Stephanos* but excluded from the retrospective *Puti i pereput’ a* (Skorpion, 1908). Briusov *SS*, vol. I, p. 423. Briusov, letter to P.P. Pertsov of 1 Apr 1904, *Pechat’ i Revoliutsiia* No. 7 (1926), p. 47; P. Pertsov, ‘Briusov v nachale veka (Iz vospominanii)’, *Znamia* No. 3 (1940), p. 253; Briusov, letter of 29 Aug/11 Sept 1904 to V. Ivanov, ‘Briusov i Ivanov. Perepiska’, p. 458; and Briusov, ‘K sograzhdanam’, written Dec 1904, first pub. in *Slovo* No. 22 (22 Dec 1904), *SS*, vol. I, p. 425.
- 14 Ivanov, letter of 14/27 Jan 1905 to Briusov, ‘Briusov i Ivanov: Perepiska’, p. 472.
- 15 Ivanov, ‘Mest’ mechnaia’, written 12 May 1904, first pub. *NP* No. 7 (1904), *SS*, vol. II, p. 251.
- 16 Ivanov, ‘Tsusima’, written 18 May 1905, *VZh* No. 6 (1905), *SS*, II, pp. 252–3.
- 17 Cf., for instance, Briusov, ‘Da! Tsepi mogut byt’ prekrasny’, written Aug 1905, forbidden by the censor and first pub. in Briusov, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii i perevodov* [hereafter Briusov, *PSS*], vols. I–IV, XII–XIII, XV, XXI (SPb, 1913–14), IV, p. 143; *SS*, vol. I, p. 429; ‘Tsusima’, 10 Aug 1905, first pub. *Stephanos*, *SS*, vol. I, p. 426 and ‘Iulii tsezar’, Aug 1905, first pub. *Stephanos*, *SS*, vol. I, p. 427.
- 18 Briusov, ‘Dovol’nym’, 18 Oct 1905, first pub. *Stephanos*, *SS*, vol. I, p. 432. Briusov, ‘Z.N. Gippius’, Dec 1901, first pub. *Urbi et orbi* (1903), *SS*, vol. I, p. 354.
- 19 Briusov, ‘Kinzhalf’, written 1903, first pub. *NP*, No. 10 (1904), *SS*, vol. I, p. 422. For Chulkov’s part in the genesis of Briusov’s ‘revolutionary’ poetry see Georgii Chulkov, *Gody stranstvii* (Moscow, 1930), pp. 101–2.
- 20 Petr Lavrov, ‘Novaia tiur’ma’, *Liutnia* (Leipzig, 1879) provided the stimulus for Briusov’s ‘Kamenshchik’, written 16 July 1901 first pub. *Urbi et orbi* (1903), *SS*, vol. I, p. 329.
- 21 Fedor Sologub, ‘Sobornyi blagovest’, written 28 Nov 1904 and first pub. in the newspaper *Nasha Zhizn’* (29 Nov 1904), *Stikhotvoreniia*, pp. 302–4.
- 22 See Bely, letter of 15 Apr 1904 to Blok, *Blok i Bely: Perepiska*, p. 89 and Blok’s reply of 16 May 1904, p. 91.

- 23 See, for instance, Bely's ecstatic article 'Pevitsa' in *MI* No. 11 (1902), and Blok's letter to Sergei Solov'ev of 1–6 Dec 1903 (*SS*, vol. VIII, pp. 72–3).
- 24 Bely, Letter to Blok of Oct 1904, *Blok i Bely: Perepiska*, p. 109. For Bely's cult of St Seraphim of Sarov see John Malmstad, 'Andrey Bely and Serafim of Sarov (Part One)', *Scottish Slavonic Review*, Special Issue: Russian Modernism, No. 14 (1990), pp. 21–59; '(Part Two)', No. 15 (1990), pp. 59–102.
- 25 Malmstad, in the introduction to his edition of Bely's poems (p. 18), quotes from the unpub. *Rakkurs Dnevnika* Bely's assertion that Tiutchev, Nekrasov and Briusov were his models for the writing of *Pepel'*. Throughout 1904 and 1905, Bely and Blok were learning from these common sources and, at the same time, from each other.
- 26 See N.N. Skatov, "'Nekrasovskaia" kniga Andreia Belogo', *Andrei Belyi. Problemy tvorchestva*, pp. 151–92.
- 27 Bely, 'Vesel'e na Rusi', written 1906, first pub. *Pepel'* (Moscow, 1904); *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy*, pp. 178–9.
- 28 See Bely, *Mezhdru dvukh revoliutsii*, p. 93. The alliance with the Idealists was tactical, not a meeting of true minds. In 1902, Filosofov had pointed out that it was Marxists rather than decadents who were converting to philosophical idealism and that it was enough to read Shestov in *MI* to be convinced that idealism 'would never bloom again in the flower gardens of Russian Literature', *MI* No. 34 (1902), p. 60.
- 29 See Blok's poem 'Ia videl ognennye znaki', *SS* vol. II, pp. 311–13 and Bely's remarks in the margin in *Blok i Bely: Perepiska*, p. 97, from which poem is quoted.
- 30 See *Blok i Bely: Perepiska*, p. 107 and A. Blok, *SS*, vol. II, pp. 151–2, for a slightly modified version.
- 31 See Blok, 'Podnimalis' iz t'my pogrebov', 10 Sept 1904, *SS*, vol. II, p. 417, and Blok, 'V kabakakh, v pereulkakh, v izvivakh', written Dec 1904, first pub. *Vesy* No. 5 (1906); *SS*, vol. II, pp. 159–60.
- 32 Blok, 'Barka zhizni vstala', written Dec 1904, first pub. *Nasha Zhizn'*, 26 Nov 1905, *SS*, vol. II, p. 161.
- 33 See Victor Erlich's classic comparative study of Blok and Briusov: 'The maker and the seer: two Russian Symbolists' in his *The Double Image: Concepts of the Poet in Slavic Literatures* (Baltimore, 1964), pp. 68–119.
- 34 Blok, Letter to S.M. Solov'ev, 21 Oct 1904, *SS*, vol. VIII, pp. 109–10; letter to Bely, 8 Aug 1905, *SS*, vol. VIII, p. 134.
- 35 See Briusov's letter to Blok of Nov 1904 *Pechat' i Revoliutsiia* No. 4 (1928), p. 43 and Blok's to Briusov of 6 Nov 1904, *SS*, vol. VIII, p. 112.
- 36 For the gradual shift in the attitude of contributors to *NP* towards Marxism see D. Maksimov, 'Novyi Put'', in the book, V. Evgen'ev-Maksimov and D. Maksimov, *Iz proshlogo russkoi zhurnalistiki* (Leningrad, 1930), pp. 120–254 and V. Koretskaia "'Novyi put''; 'Voprosy zhizni''", *Literaturnyi protsess i russkaia zhurnalistika kontsa XI – nachala XX Veka. 1890–1904: Burzhuazno-liberal'nye i modernistskie izdaniia* (Moscow, 1982), pp. 179–233.
- 37 Bely, 'Vospominaniia o Bloke', *Epopeia* No. 2, p. 219.
- 38 For Nikolai Berdiaev's account of his relationship with the Merezhkovskys see

- his autobiography *Samopoznanie*, pp. 158–64 and also Hippius's letters to him as published by Temira Pachmuss, *Intellect and Ideas in Action. Selected Correspondence of Zinaida Hippius*, pp. 141–67. Although these letters were written in the emigration (the first on 24 Jan 1923) they do throw some light on the tone of the relationship.
- 39 Berdiaev, *Filosofia Dostoevskogo* (SPb, 1921), reissued as *Mirosozertsanie Dostoevskogo* (Paris, 1923), was published in German translation 1925, in French 1933, in English in 1934, Spanish 1935, Italian 1942 and Swedish in 1948 and has been through many editions in all these languages.
- 40 Berdiaev, *Samopoznanie*, pp. 168–70.
- 41 Berdiaev, 'O novom religioznom soznanii', *VZh*, Sep 1905, pp. 160–66.
- 42 Berdiaev, *Samopoznanie*, pp. 161–4.
- 43 Cf. A. Bely, *Nachalo veka*, p. 438 and A. Remizov, *Kukkha Rozanovy pis'ma*, p. 34.
- 44 Cf. Berdiaev, letter to L. Iu. Rapp, winter 1904–5 in 'Pis'ma molodogo Berdiaeva', pub. D. Baras, *Pamiat' . Istoricheskii sbornik*, Bk. 4 (Paris: YMCA Press, 1981), pp. 244–5.
- 45 See Sologub, 'Vse byli skazany davno zavety sladostnoi svobody', 3–4 Dec 1904, first pub. *VZh* No. 1 (1905), and, quoted here, 'Shut', 2 Nov 1905, first pub. *Zritel'* No. 22 (1905), *Stikhovoreniia*, pp. 306 and 318–9.
- 46 Hippius, 'Moi lunnyi drug', *Zhivye litsa* (Prague, 1925), p. 67.
- 47 Bely, *Nachalo veka*, p. 458.
- 48 For Sologub's attitude to the war see for instance 'Ivan Tsarevich' and 'Zhestokie dni' (both December 1904) and the accomplished parody on Lermontov's 'Borodino', 'Da, byli bitvy' (4 Dec 1904), *Stikhovoreniia*, pp. 304, 305–6, 306–8; for Ivanov's response to the massacre of 9 Jan and subsequent events see 'Astrolog', dated 1905, first pub. *VZh* No. 7 (1905) without the date, *SS*, vol. II, p. 253.
- 49 Bely, *Epopeia* No. 2, p. 209.
- 50 Blok, 'Ia zhivu v otdalennom skitu', written Jan 1905, published *VZh*, No. 6 (1905) and reworked in 1919 as the Bride's Aria in Shaporin's cantata *On the Field of Kulikovo*, *SS*. II. 11. Hippius's comment is recorded by Bely in *Epopeia* No. 2, p. 203.
- 51 Bely, letter of Jan 1905 to his mother, Tsgali, fond 53, opis 1, ed. khr. 358, quoted in a footnote to 'V. Briusov i A. Bely. Perepiska', p. 381.
- 52 Cf. Bely, 'Lug zelenyi', *Vesy* No. 8 (1905), pp. 5–16 and Blok, 'Rus'', written 24 Sep 1906, first pub. *ZR* No. 6 (1907), *SS*, vol. II, pp. 106–7.
- 53 Blok, letter of Jan 1905 to Sergei Solov'ev, *SS*, vol. VIII, p. 117 and Ivanov, 'O "krasnom smekhe" i o "pravom bezumii"', *Vesy* No. 3 (1905), pp. 43–7.
- 54 For an examination of the semiotics of Andreev's affinity with Symbolism see S. Hutchings, 'Discourse, story and the fantastic in the short stories of Leonid Andreyev', *Essays in Poetics* 13:2 (1988), pp. 1–25. This technical analysis of Andreev's prose shows (as perhaps no other methodological approach could do as succinctly and convincingly) how close Leonid Andreev stood to the Symbolists in technique and goes far to explain his association with them. The philosophical and broader cultural premises which informed their work were, however, as Viacheslav Ivanov pointed out, very different. They shared the *modus* but not the *res* (see Ivanov, *SS*, vol. II, p. 621 in the article 'Manera,

- litso i stil'”, first pub. *Trudy i Dni* Nos. 4–5 (1912)). Since the Symbolist *res* was never more than ‘the certainty of things unseen’, there were moments when some of them, Blok particularly, felt inexpressibly close to Andreev, moments when it seemed as though all colours must indeed run into one another to form a single turgid splurge, as though ‘the psychologism of stormstossed individualism’ must triumph over the ‘logic of the universal idea’ (Ivanov, *ibid.*, *SS*, vol. II, p. 626).
- 55 Blok, ‘Pamiati Leonida Andreeva’, written 29 Oct 1919, first pub. *Zapiski Mechtatelei* No. 5 (1922), *SS*, vol. VI, p. 135; for the simile of the drummer see ‘Otvét Merezhkovskomu’, written Nov 1910 but not pub. until after Blok’s death in *Russkii Sovremennik* No. 3 (1926), *SS*, vol. V, p. 445. For Blok and Andreev see V.I. Bezzubov. ‘Aleksandr Blok i Leonid Andreev’, *Blokovskii Sbornik*, vol. I (Tartu, 1964), pp. 226–320.
- 56 Cf. ‘Andrej Bely: Lettre autobiographique à Ivanov-Razumnik’, p. 57. For full ref. see chapter 9, n. 37.
- 57 Merezhkovsky, ‘Teper’ ili nikogda’, *VZh* Nos. 4 and 5 (1905).
- 58 Dmitrii Filosofov, ‘Bratstvo tserkovnogo obnoveniia’, *Slovo i Zhizn’*, *literaturnye spory noveishego vremeni* (SPb, 1909), p. 126.
- 59 Blok, letter to A.L. Blok of 28 March 1905, *SS*, vol. VIII, p. 123.
- 60 Merezhkovsky, letter to L. Vil’kina of May 1905, Arkhiv Instituta Literaturny ANSSR, quoted by B. Meilakh in the article ‘Simvolisty v 1905 godu’, *LN* 27–8, note 195, p. 170. Archive no. not given.
- 61 For this, and other attempts by Merezhkovsky to project the spiritual and social turmoil on to Russian literature see Merezhkovsky, ‘Griadushchii Kham’, *Poliarnaia Zvezda* No. 3 (1905); ‘O novom religioznom deistvii’, *VZh* Nos. 10–11 (1905); ‘Dostoevskii, prorok russkoi revoliutsii’, *Vesy* Nos. 3–4 (1906). *PSS* (1914), vol. XIV, pp. 5–39; 166–87; 188–238.
- 62 Sergei Diagilev, ‘V chas itogov’, *Vesy* No. 4 (1905), p. 456.
- 63 Ivanov, ‘Estetika i ispovedanie’, first pub. *Vesy* No. 11 (1908), *SS*, vol. II, p. 571.
- 64 The close cooperation between Viacheslav and Lidiia is illustrated by the facts that he took an epigraph from her unpublished novel *Plamenniki* to his own poem of the same name (*SS*, vol. I, p. 548), wrote a preface, ‘Novye maski’ to her play *Kol'tsa* and published *Tridtsat' tri uroda* and *Zverinets* himself in *Oreae* (their own publishing house) in 1907 and 1908.
- 65 Bely, ‘Viacheslav Ivanov – siluet’, *Arabeski*, pp. 469, 470.
- 66 See Ivanov, ‘Kop'e Afiny’, *Vesy* No. 10 (1904), *SS*, vol. I, pp. 727–33.
- 67 Ivanov, ‘O niskhozhenii’, *Vesy* No. 5 (1905), pp. 26–36.
- 68 Ivanov, ‘Krizis individualizma’, *VZh* No. 9 (1905), *SS*, vol. I, pp. 831–40, quotation from p. 839. In this article Ivanov points to news from abroad pub. in the Dec number of *Vesy* for 1905 to confirm that the era of extreme individualism was at an end in Western Europe. Everywhere – he claimed – groups of ‘madmen’ were congregating, men who do not – as yet – know ‘the *NAME* which unites them . . .’
- 69 The Promethean ‘way of ascent’ and theomachy – in Ivanov’s imagination – originated in compassion and were controlled by gentleness. ‘The demonic mask does not suit us’, he wrote in ‘Krizis individualizma’. ‘It is more comical than the helmet of Mabrian on any head of ours, who are no more than Alonso

- el Bueno. The constellations themselves have made us (Russians especially) profoundly good-natured at heart. The example leaps to mind [. . .]: he who bequeathed to us the code of immorality (“Imitatio Caesaris Borgiae”) [. . .] was, like Ivan Karamazov, himself overwhelmed by compassion’ (SS, vol. I, p. 840).
- 70 Ivanov, ‘Tantal’, first pub. *STs* No. 4 (1905), SS, vol. II, p. 28.
- 71 See Blok, ‘Tvorchestvo Viacheslava Ivanova’, first pub. *VZh* Nos. 4–5 (1905), SS, vol. V, pp. 7–18.
- 72 Bely, *Nachalo veka*, pp. 316–17.
- 73 Bely, ‘Khimery’, *Vesy* No. 6 (1905), pp. 1–18.
- 74 See Ivanov, ‘O “Khimerakh” Andreia Belogo’, *Vesy* No. 7 (1905), pp. 51–2; Bely, ‘Raz’iasnenie V. Ivanovu’, *Vesy* No. 8 (1905), p. 45 and Bely, letter to Blok, Sep 1905 and Blok to Bely, letter of 2 Oct 1905, *Blok i Belyi: Perepiska*, pp. 140–2.
- 75 Ivanov, review of A. Blok’s *Stikhi o Prekrasnoi Dame*, *Vesy* No. 12 (1904), p. 50.
- 76 Bely, *Mezhdv dvukh revoliutsii*, p. 49.
- 77 Blok, ‘Visia nad gorodom vseirnym’, first pub. *Nasha Zhizn’*, 26 Nov 1905 (confiscated by police); ‘Eshche prekrasno seroe nebo’, first pub. *Nechaiannaia radost’* (Moscow, 1907), both written 18 Oct 1905, SS, vol. II, pp. 175, 176.
- 78 Minsky, ‘Pro doma sua’, *Novaia Zhizn’* [hereafter *NZh*] No. 3 (29 Oct 1905).
- 79 Maksim Gor’ky, ‘Zametka o meshchanstve’, *NZh* (No. 2 29 Oct 1905; No. 3 29 Oct 1905) and for Minsky’s reply, which had to await publication in Paris, where Minsky was soon to find himself in exile: N. Minsky, ‘Intelligentsia i meshchanstvo (otvet M. Gor’komu)’, *Na obshchestvennye temy*, pt. III, (SPb, 1909), pp. 200–5. See also Lenin, ‘Partiinaia organizatsiia i partiinaia literatura’, *NZh* No. 12 (13 Nov 1905).
- 80 See Avrel’ii [V. Briusov] in *Vesy* No. 11 (1905), pp. 61–5; also K.D. Bal’mont, ‘Poet rabochemu’, written Nov 1905 and pub. *NZh* No. 14 (16 Nov 1905), *Stikhotvoreniia*, p. 334. For the full story of Minsky’s editorship of *NZh* see his own account, ‘Istoriia moego redaktorstva’, first pub. in the newspaper *Rus’* (12 March 1906) and in *Na obshchestvennye temy*; B. Meilakh, ‘Simvolisty v 1905 godu’, LN 27–8, ‘Zhurnal’ no-gazetnoe ob’edinenie’ (M, 1937), 167–96.
- 81 See the two articles B. Bugaev, ‘Na perevale’, *Vesy* No. 12 (1905), pp. 68–71, and A. Bely, ‘Ibsen i Dostoievsky’, *Vesy* No. 12 (1905), p. 48. For Merezhkovsky’s letter, see the Manuscript Dept of the Lenin Library. Arkhiv A. Belogo. Bel 19. 9.
- 82 Blok, ‘Viacheslava Ivanovu’, written 18 Apr 1912, first pub. *Russkaia Mysl’* No. 2 (1914), SS, vol. III, pp. 141–2 (see also note, *ibid.*, pp. 549–50, tracing the exchange of books and poems between Ivanov and Blok which began with Ivanov’s ‘Bog v Lupanarii’ (first pub. *ZR* Nos. 2–3 (1909)). See also notes in Ivanov, SS, vol. II, pp. 728–32 and E. Bazzarelli, ‘Blok et Ivanov. Quelques Réflexions’, *Cahiers du Monde Russe et Soviétique* 25:1 (Jan–Mar 1984), pp. 49–59 and E.L. Bel’kind, ‘Blok i Viacheslav Ivanov’, *Blokovskii Sbornik*, vol. II (Tartu, 1972), pp. 365–84.
- 83 Bely, *Mezhdv dvukh revoliutsii*, pp. 62–4.
- 84 See Blok’s letter to Bely of 3 Jan 1906, SS, vol. VIII, p. 146.

- 85 Vsevolod Meierhol'd, Foreword to his *O teatre* (SPb, 1913), reprinted in the collection *Stat'i, pis'ma, rechi, besedy*, vol. I (Moscow, 1968), p. 103.
- 86 Introduction to *Fakely*, *Kniga pervaiia* (SPb, 1906), p. 3, unsigned, presumably by Chulkov. Briusov's review was published in *Vesy* No. 1906 and he also wrote to Blok expressing his disgust with the new Almanac (even his own contribution!) and excepting only Ivanov's poetry, Blok's Balaganchik and 'in part' Leonid Andreev. See Blok, *SS*, pp. 152–3 and note to letter 93, *ibid.*, pp. 577–8. See also Briusov's review of Chulkov's *O misticheskom anarkhizme* in *Vesy* No. 8 (1906), pp. 43–7. He carried on the polemic under the noms-de-plume Avrelii and Pentavr.
- 87 Ivanov, 'Difiramb', *Fakely* No. 1, p. 9. In *SS*, vol. II, p. 242 as 'Ogenostsy (Difiramb)', pp. 239–43. Here the silence of the choir is followed by a reprise of the Oceanides' invocation to Prometheus which – in *Cor ardens* – begins the poem. The omission of the reprise in the journal suggests expectation rather than eternal return. The *Cor ardens* version, however, was not the end of Ivanov's reworking of the subject. He was planning a verse play *Prometheus* which was finally finished towards the end of 1914 and which surrounded the *Fakely* 'Difiramb' with the chorus of Oceanides.
- 88 See also Briusov's approving review of Ivanov's *Eros* in *Vesy* No. 2 (1907).
- 89 Bely's articles over this period were republished in the section 'Literaturnyi dnevnik' (pp. 241–384), in *Arabeski* (Moscow, 1911), with a foreword to the effect that, though he now regretted the sharp tone of some attacks on authors he fundamentally respected, he nevertheless felt the style of the polemic was a fact of recent literary history and had therefore made no attempt to round off the corners 'Vmesto predisloviia', *Arabeski*, vols. I–III.
- 90 See G. Chulkov, 'Ob utverzhdennii lichnosti', first pub. in *Fakely* No. 1 (then in *O misticheskom anarkhizme* (SPb, 1906), reprinted, without Viacheslav Ivanov's introductory 'Ideia nepriatiia mira i misticheskii anarkhizm', (Letchworth: Prideaux Press, 1971) in the series Russian Titles for the Specialist, pp. 8–20. Quotation from p. 53.
- 91 Merezhkovsky, *Le Tsar et la Révolution* (Paris, 1907), p. 7 and p. 220.
- 92 Sologub, 'Den' bezumnyi, den' krovavyi', written 22 Nov 1905, first pub *Plamia* No. 1 (1905), *Stikhotvorenia*, p. 323.
- 93 V. Ivanov, 'G.I. Chulkovu' written in 1919 and sent to Chulkov who was the first to publish it in his *Gody stranstvii* (M, 1930). Also see *SS*, vol. IV, p. 81 and note on p. 721.

10 THE ANTITHESIS

- 1 A way back from extreme individualism (adumbrated in Ivanov's articles on 'sobornost'' and the need for 'grand style' in *Vesy* and elsewhere) was sought from the beginning in the pages of the new periodical *Zolotoe Runo* (1905–9) [hereafter *ZR*]. Blok, in 'Kraski i slova' *ZR* No. 1 (1906) and 'O realistakh' *ZR* No. 6 (1907), called for more simplicity, colour and social concern (*SS*, vol. V, pp. 19–24 and 99–129). Artists, as well as writers, wanted a return to some kind of objective 'cannon' and to the 'national soul'. (See Benois, 'Khudozhestvennye eresi', *ZR* No. 2 (1906); Filosofov, 'Iskusstvo i gosudarstvo', *ZR* No. 6 (1906); and 'Misticheskii anarkhizm: Dekadentsvo, obshchestvennost' i

- misticheskii anarkhizm' *ZR* No. 1 (1906); A. Shervashidze, 'Individualizm i traditsiia: Aleksandru Benua i Morisu Denisu', *ZR* No. 6 (1906); M. Voloshin, 'Individualizm v iskusstve', *ZR* No. 10 (1906); Pavel Muratov 'O vysokom iskusstve' *ZR* Nos. 11–12 (1907), and the attempt by the literary editor G. Tasteven to reconcile all points of view in his 'Nitshe i sovremennyi krizis (Filosofskii etiud)', *ZR* Nos. 7–9 (1907), pp. 110–15; see also chapter 11 of this book and notes for the further working out of this ongoing 'crisis' in the poetry and prose of 1908–10.
- 2 For Dante's influence on Symbolist thinking and imagery see Pamela Davidson, *The Poetic Imagination of Vyacheslav Ivanov. A Russian Symbolist's Perception of Dante*, most particularly 'The Symbolist view of Dante as a poet of Sophia', pp. 72–99. Dante's influence on Blok, often remarked, is examined by Minsky in *Ot Dante k Bloku* (Berlin, 1922) and more particularly with regard to *The Twelve* by P. McCarey and M. Cardines in 'The Harrowing of Hell and Resurrection: Dante's *Inferno* and Blok's *Dvenadsat'*', *Slavonic and East European Review* 63: 3 (July 1985), pp. 337–48. The myth of the pilgrimage through hell was all pervasive and Blok, in his prose of 1905–10, quotes both Ivanov and Briusov as pointers towards Dante: *SS*, vol. V, pp. 10 and 433.
 - 3 A special number of the journal – announced in Oct 1906 – was devoted to this subject in Jan 1907. See William Richardson, *Zolotoe Runo and Russian Modernism 1905–1910* (Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1986), pp. 133–4, and 'Otchet zhiuri po konkursu Zolotogo Runa na teme "D'iavol"', *ZR* No. 7 (1907), p. 74.
 - 4 See *ZR* No. 1 (1906), opening page. In English in *The Russian Symbolists. An Anthology of Critical and Theoretical Writings*, ed. Ronald E. Peterson, p. 200.
 - 5 For Briusov's account of his sessions with Vruble' see Valerii Briusov, 'Posledniaia rabota Vrubelia' in *Vruble'. Perepiska. Vospominaniia o khudozhnike*, ed. E.P. Gomberg-Verzhbinskaia and Iu.N. Podkopaeva (Leningrad-Moscow, 1963), pp. 263–9. Briusov's recollections of Vruble' (who painted him in F.A. Usol'tsev's home for the mentally ill in Moscow) were first published in his book *Za moim oknom* (Moscow, 1913). In fact Vruble' 's last work was not the portrait of Briusov, but an attempt to convey how Ezekiel saw the wheel. It is interesting that the artist, too, died with the memory of the *Purgatorio* uppermost in his mind, imploring the gift granted to Dante at the beginning of his ascent: the emerald eyes which give purity of vision to behold the secrets of the divine.
 - 6 'Ot redaktsii', *Pereval* No. 1 (1907).
 - 7 See n. 1 and Richardson's meticulous account of the journal in *Zolotoe Runo and Russian Modernism*. Briusov's manoeuvres against *ZR* are recounted in Maksimov's and Azadovsky's 'Valerii Briusov i Vesy' in LN 85 and – most vividly – in the section 'Gody polemiki' in Bely's *Mezhdru dvukh revoliutsii*.
 - 8 *ZR* not only published reproductions and commissioned illustrations and portraits, it financed and arranged exhibitions under the name of the Blue Rose (1907), Stephanos (1907) and as the 'Salon Zolotoe Runo' (1908, 1909). Like Diagilev, Riabushinsky sought to make his exhibitions works of art in themselves, embellishing the pictures with fine frames and the rooms in which they were exhibited with flowers and music. The Blue Rose exhibition was

considered the first and only ‘truly Symbolist’ exhibition, but already, according to the young critic Sergei Makovsky, Symbolism was moving in the direction so consistently indicated by Viacheslav Ivanov: towards the creation of myth and therewith towards a return to more popular, archaic form. Amongst the younger artists whom Riabushinsky patronised and whose works figured importantly in his exhibitions were Vasilii and Nikolai Milioti, Pavel Kuznetsov, Nikolai Sapunov, Nikolai Feofilaktov, Martiros Sar’ian, Nikolai Krymov, Artur Fonvizin, Nataliia Goncharova, Mikhail Larionov and David Burliuk. Many artists previously associated with *Mir Iskusstva* also participated in the ZR exhibitions, although Riabushinsky’s relations with these last were almost as troubled as were his relations with the literati.

- 9 See Briusov, ‘Obriad nochi’ and Ivanov, ‘Veneris Fumae’ in *Vesy* No. 1 (1907), pp. 13–16.
- 10 Briusov, *Ognennyi angel*, began serialisation in *Vesy* No. 1 (1907).
- 11 See Bely’s review of Merezhkovsky’s completed trilogy in *Vesy* No. 1 (1908), pp. 73–81. Here, although Merezhkovsky is described as ‘not an artist’ ‘yet not a non-artist’, or rather as ‘not *only* an artist’, it is admitted that his work does point the way to new creative possibilities.
- 12 Andrei Bely, ‘Chekhov’, *Vesy* No. 8 (1904), pp. 1–9. Sologub’s novel *Melkii bes* was first published in book form by Shipovnik (SPb, 1907).
- 13 The solipsistic nature of *Melkii bes* is shown most vividly in Sologub’s dramatisation of his novel. See Fedor Sologub, *Melkii bes Drama v piati deistviakh* edited and with afterword by Stanley J. Rabinowitz, Berkeley Slavic Specialities, vol. 26 (Berkeley, 1988).
- 14 Bely, ‘Okno v vechnost’ [in text ‘Okno v Budushchee’], *Vesy* No. 12 (1904), pp. 1–11.
- 15 Aleksei Remizov’s *Prud* was first published as a separate work by ‘Sirius’ (SPb, 1908) and *Chasy* by EOS (SPb, 1908). For Remizov’s reworking of *Prud* see Alex M. Shane, ‘Remizov’s *Prud*: from Symbolism to Neo-Realism’, *California Slavic Studies*, vol. 6 (1971), pp. 71–82 and Peter Alberg Jensen, ‘Typological remarks on Remizov’s prose’, in *Aleksej Remizov. Approaches to a Protean Writer*, pp. 277–85.
- 16 Aleksandr Blok, letter to Meierkhol’d of 22 Dec 1906 apropos the last rehearsal (before the dress-rehearsal) of *Balaganchik*. *SS*, vol. VIII, p. 169.
- 17 Blok, ‘O sovremennom sostoianii russkogo simvolizma’, *SS*, vol. V, p. 429.
- 18 Bely, *Epopeia* No. 2, pp. 278–9. For the colour of the wine and real-life background see E.P. Ivanov ‘Vospominania i Zapiski ob Aleksandre Bloke’, *Blokovskii Sbornik*, vol. I (1962), p. 406. For Blok’s colour symbolism and the exorcism of ‘lilac’ after 1910 see Johanne Peters, *Farbe und Licht. Symbolik bei Aleksandr Blok*, Slavistische Beiträge (Münich: Otto Sagner, 1981), p. 197, n. 2.
- 19 Blok’s poem, ‘Neznakomka’, written 24 Apr 1906, first pub. *Nechaiannaia Radosť* (Moscow, 1907), *SS*, vol. II, pp. 185–6. The remark about Dante’s ‘first circle’ Blok confided to his notebook under the title ‘Ideas this May’ in 1906. *ZK* 75.
- 20 Blok’s play *Neznakomka*, like *Balaganchik*, was originally written with a production by Meierkhol’d in mind, but it was forbidden for the stage by the censor. Under the title ‘Tri videniia’ (Three visions) the play was finished on 11

- Nov 1906 and was first pub. (as *Neznakomka*) in *Vesy* Nos. 5–7 (1907). Briusov was characteristically delighted at the improvement in Blok's poetry now that the 'most Beautiful Lady' might be supposed to have been revealed as a prostitute. See Blok, *SS*, vol. IV, pp. 72–103.
- 21 V.A. Zorgenfrei, 'A.A. Blok', *Zapiski Mechtatelei* No. 6 (1922), p. 13.
 - 22 Blok, *Korol' na ploshchadi*, written in the summer and autumn of 1906, first pub. *ZR* No. 4 (1907), suffered many reworkings but the version in *SS*, vol. VI, pp. 22–60 is the generally accepted final form. The remark about the play being 'Petersburg mysticism' was made in the last year of his life to Nadezhda Pavlovich and is recorded in her reminiscences of Blok first pub. *Al'manakh Feniks* No. 1 (1922), p. 156, then more accessibly and fully, by Z.G. Mints and I.A. Chernov in *Blokovskii sbornik*, vol. II (1964), pp. 446–506 (for *Korol' na ploshchadi* see p. 485).
 - 23 The atmosphere of Kommissarzhevskaiia's soirées is conjured up in the memoirs of two of her actresses, N.P. Verigina and N.N. Volokhova, 'Vospominaniia o Aleksandre Bloke' and 'Zemlia v snegu' in *Uchenye Zapiski Tartuskogo Gosudarstvennogo Universiteta. 104. Trudy po russkoi i Slavianskoi. Filologii*, vol. IV (1961), pp. 310–77 with an introduction by D.E. Maksimov. The fullest account of Kommissarzhevskaiia's theatre during the 1906 and 1907 seasons is probably K Rudnitsky's 'V Teatre na Ofiterskoi' in *Tvorcheskoe Nasledie V.E. Meierkhol'da* (Moscow, 1978), pp. 137–210 and an amusing sidelight is thrown by E. Binevich's 'Rasskaz v karikaturakh o V.E. Meierkhol'de, rezhissere Teatra V.F. Komissarzhevskoi', in the same publication, pp. 211–35.
 - 24 For Sapunov, Sudeikin and Kuzmin see John E. Malmstad's publication of Sapunov's letters to Kuzmin in *Studies in the Life and Works of Mixail Kuzmin* (Vienna, 1989), pp. 153–259. Also Sudeikin's letter to Meier'khol'd of Dec 1906, LN 92, Bk. 3, p. 263. The quotation is from N.N. Volokhova's 'Zemlia v snegu', p. 373.
 - 25 N.P. Verigina, 'Vospominaniia o Aleksandre Bloke', pp. 312–13.
 - 26 Blok, *ZK*, p. 85–6.
 - 27 All examples from Blok's *Snezhnaia maska* written 29 Dec 1906–13 Jan 1907, first pub. by Oraea (SPb, 1907), *SS*, vol. II, pp. 211–53.
 - 28 Lidiia Zinov'eva-Annibal, letter of 21 Jan 1907 to V.K. Shvarsalon; Ivanov, letter to Briusov of Feb 1907, LN 92, Bk. 3, p. 269. Blok's dedication is reproduced in slightly different forms from Lidiia Dmitrievna's letter and from Ivanov's copy of *Nechaiannaia radost'*, LN 92, Bk. 3, p. 71. Blok in fact wrote '... who opened up to me the snowy, joyous way' (p. 71), probably using 'radostnyi' ('joyous') in the high sense of the title (taken from an icon depicting the Virgin and child turning in forgiveness towards a kneeling sinner), but Zinov'eva-Annibal remembered it more sternly as the 'snowy, necessary way' ('put' snezhnyi i nuzhnyi').
 - 29 Viacheslav Ivanov, 'Tantal', *SS*, vol. II, p. 28.
 - 30 Nikolai Gumilev in a review of Gorodetsky's *Iva* in 'Pis'ma o russkoi poezii', *Apollon* No. 9 (1912), p. 53.
 - 31 See Ivanov, 'O "Fakel'shchikakh" i drugikh imenakh sobiratel'nykh', *Vesy* No. 6 (1906), p. 55.
 - 32 Ivanov, *Eros*, first pub. by Oraea 1907, *SS*, vol. II, p. 382.

- 33 Margarita Woloschin, *Die grüne Schlange* (Stuttgart: Freies Geistesleben, 1954), p. 179. The sonnets to Margarita, *Zolotyie Zavesy*, follow *Eros* in *SS*, vol. II, pp. 283–91, with an epigraph from Petrarch ‘Di pensier in pensier, di monte in monte / Mi guida amor . . .’
- 34 Boris Bugaev, ‘Na perevale IV. Literator prezhde i teper’, *Vesy* No. 10 (1906), pp. 46–9.
- 35 Ivanov, ‘Exit cor ardens’, written in Oct 1907 on the eve of Lidiia’s illness, first pub. *Vesy* No. 4 (1908), then as last poem in the first part of the collection *Cor ardens* (Moscow, 1911). See also *SS*, vol. II, pp. 281–2.
- 36 Kuzmin’s ‘Krylia’ was serialised in *Vesy* Nos. 11 and 12 (1906), then pub. (Moscow: Skorpion, 1907) as a separate book. Bely wrote about *Krylia* in *Pereval* No. 6 (1907), pp. 50–1; in *Vesy* No. 6 (1907), p. 67 and for Ivanov’s *Tsvetnik Or. Koshnitsa pervaya* (SPb, 1907).
- 37 For the exchange of letters (including Blok’s open letter to *Vesy*) for Blok and Bely, *Perepiska*, pp. 189–215. The story of the duel manqué and ensuing reconciliation is told in detail in A. Pyman, *The Life of Aleksandr Blok*, vol. I: *The Distant Thunder* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), pp. 288–97.
- 38 Bely, *Kubok Metelei* (Moscow: Skorpion, 1908), not only parodies Bely’s literary acquaintance but contains erotic scenes which Blok must have known mirrored Bely’s relationship with Liubov’, according to Ivanov ‘the cry of despairing malediction of one unable to say yes to the mysteries of sex’, ‘O knige *Pepel*’), (*SS*, vol. IV, p. 617).
- 39 Blok, ‘Literaturnye itogi 1907 goda’, written Nov–Dec 1907, first pub. *ZR* Nos. 11–12 (1907), *SS*, vol. V, p. 211.
- 40 Fedor Sologub, ‘Teatr odnoi voli’, first pub. in *Kniga o novom teatre* (SPb, 1908), translated by Peterson in *The Russian Symbolists*, pp. 107–21 as ‘The theater of one will’ and by Michael Green as ‘The theatre of the single will’ in *The Russian Symbolist Theatre. An Anthology of Plays and Critical Texts*, ed. and trans. Michael Green (Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1986), pp. 147–62. Green also translates Sologub’s *Pobeda Smerti* (Triumph of Death) and statements on the theatre by Briusov, Blok, Ivanov, Bely and Leonid Andreev as well as plays by Blok, Kuzmin, Annensky, Remizov and Andreev. Sologub’s plays include *Pobeda smerti*, tragediia v 3-x deistviiakh s prologom (SPb, 1908); *Van’ka-kliuchnik i pazh Zhean*, drama v 12-ti dvoinykh stsenakh (SPb, 1909) and *Liubov’ nad bezdnami. Drama v 4-kh deistviiakh* (SPb, 1914).
- 41 Bely, ‘Oblomki mirov’, *Vesy* No. 5 (1908). Here quoted from *Aleksandr Blok i Andrei Bely. Dialog poetov* (Moscow: Vysshiaia Shkola, 1990), ed. M.F. Pianykh, p. 464.
- 42 The classic expression of Ivanov’s views on the drama is contained in the articles ‘Vagner i Dionisovo Deistvo’ and ‘Predchuvstviia i predvestiia’ (the latter partially translated by Green [see n. 37]), first pub. in *Vesy* No. 2 (1905) and *ZR* Nos. 5–6 (1906) respectively. Ivanov never attempted to stage his own poetic tragedies *Tantal* and *Prometei* and regarded his theory of a return to theatre as liturgy as impracticable – except perhaps in some future era of ‘organic culture’ for which it was the poet’s duty to prepare. Bely criticised Ivanov’s ideas and Blok’s practice in such articles as ‘Oblomki mirov’ *Vesy* No. 5 (1908) [from which the quotation in the text is taken p. 65], and ‘Teatr i

- sovremennaia drama' (first pub., like Sologub's 'Teatr odnoi voli', in the collection *Kniga o novom teatre* (SPb, 1908)).
- 43 Ivanov, 'O veselom remesle i umnom veselii', first pub. *ZR* No. 5 (1907), *SS*, vol. III, p. 65. Briusov's view of the artist's service to revolution chimes with Ivanov's: 'A ia, taias', gotovliu miru / Iad, gde ogon' zapechatlen. // On vkhodit v krov', on vkhodit v dushu / Preobrazhaet iav' i son . . . / Tak! ia nezrimo steny rushu, / V kotorykh dukh nash zatochen'. ('But I, in secret, prepare for the world / Poison in which a fire is sealed. // It penetrates the bloodstream and the soul, / It transfigures waking and sleeping . . . / Thus! I covertly break down the walls, / In which our spirit is immured.') Briusov, 'Odnomu iz brat'ev', written between 15–16 July and 20 Aug 1905, first pub. *VZh* No. 9 (1905) in the cycle 'Iz sovremennosti', *SS*, vol. I, p. 428.
- 44 Blok, prologue to *Vozmezdie*, written early Mar 1911, first pub. *Russkaia Mysl'* No. 1 (1917), *SS*, vol. III, p. 301.
- 45 Shestov, *Dostoevskii i Nitche Filosofii tragedii*, *SS*, vol. III (Paris: YMCA-Press, 1971), p. 16.
- 46 See Ivanov, 'O veselom remesle . . .', *SS*, vol. III, p. 75 and Shestov, the conclusion of *Apofoez bespochvennosti*, p. 294.
- 47 Blok, Diary for 2 Jan 1912, *SS*, vol. VII, p. 118.

II 'FROM THE REAL TO THE MORE REAL'

- 1 Aleksandr Blok, 'V severnom more', *Vol'nye mysli*, written summer 1907, first pub. *Fakely* No. 3 (1908), *SS*, vol. II, p. 303.
- 2 Fedor Sologub, 'Niurenbergskii palach'', written 22 Feb 1907, first pub. *Pereval* No. 6 (1907), p. 3, *Stikhotvoreniia*, pp. 341–3.
- 3 Such moods are prevalent throughout Blok's prose and poetry of 1907–8, but see particularly the article 'Ironiia' (Irony), written Nov 1908, first pub. *Rech'*, 7 Dec, 1908, *SS*, vol. V, pp. 345–9, and the poems 'Poety', written 24 July 1908 but first attempted 26 Jun 1903 and first pub. *Krivoie Zerkalo* No. 5 (1909) and 'Druz'iam', also written 24 Jul 1908, first pub. *Russkaia Mysl'* No. 1 (1909), *SS*, vol. III, pp. 125–8.
- 4 Blok, 'O realistakh', written May–Jun 1907, first pub. *ZR* No. 6 (1907), *SS*, vol. V, p. 112.
- 5 Blok, 'O teatre', written Feb–Mar 1908, first pub. *ZR* Nos. 3–4 and No. 5 (1908), *SS*, vol. V, p. 276. See also notes to 'Pesnia sud'by', *SS*, vol. IV, p. 579, for Blok's own remarks about the play.
- 6 Blok, 'Pesnia sud'by. Dramaticheskaiia poema', written Apr 1907–8, reworked 1918, first pub. *Al'manakh Shipovnik* No. 3 (1909) and in radically revised form by Alkonost (Petrograd, 1919). For a final version see *SS*, vol. IV, pp. 103–67. The notes on pp. 578–82 give a step-by-step account of Blok's reluctance to stage the play with Kommissarzhevskaiia, or Meier'hol'd (during his period with the Aleksandriinsky Theatre) or Leonid Andreev (with the Novyi Theatre) and of his persistent eagerness to see it performed by Stanislavsky's MKhT (Moscow Arts Theatre).
- 7 Blok, *Zemlia v snegu*, 'Vместo predisloviia', first pub. *ZR* (M, 1908). In *SS*, vol. II the poems have been reshuffled (by Blok himself when working on his *Second Volume*) and the introduction appears as a supplement pp. 371–4.

- Ivanov, letter to Blok of 12 Nov 1908, pub. in 'Iz perepiski Aleksandra Bloka s Viach. Ivanovym', p. 168.
- 8 See Bely, 'Simvolizm i russkoe iskusstvo', *Vesy* No. 10 (1908), pp. 38–48 first read as lecture in 'Obshchestvo svobodnoi estetiki' on 15 Oct 1908 in Moscow, and Ivanov's reply, 'Estetika i ispovedanie', first published in *Vesy* No. 11 (1908), *SS*, vol. II, p. 568.
 - 9 In 1909, Ivanov published his first collection of articles, *Po zvezdam*, with Oraea in St Petersburg, and in 1916 the second *Borozdy i Mezhi*, with Musagete in Moscow. The fruit of Bely's critical and theoretical labours were also brought together in three collections: *Simvolizm. Kniga statei*, pub. by Musagete (Moscow, 1910); *Lug Zelenyi* pub. by Alcyon (Moscow, 1910) reprint Johnson Reprint Corporation (New York, 1967); and *Arabeski. Kniga statei*, pub. by Musagete (Moscow, 1911).
 - 10 See, for instance, the articles 'Simvolizm' in *Lug zelenyi*, p. 20 and 'Iskusstvo' in *Arabeski*, pp. 215–16, both written in 1908.
 - 11 These thoughts were most clearly expressed in the threefold delineation of the artist's task as 'zhiznetvorchestvo', 'teurgiiia' and 'perezhiwanie' in 'Emblematika smysla', written in Sep 1910. In his biographical letter to Ivanov-Razumnik, Bely writes: 'between 1905 and 1906 I think through a system of Symbolism using a vast heap of papers (the heap was burnt); the extract from the heap was afterwards hastily formulated in 'Emblematics of Meaning', *Lettre autobiographique de A. Belyi à Ivanov-Razumnik*, p. 66.
 - 12 See Ivanov, *SS*, vol. II, pp. 64–5, 72.
 - 13 Ivanov, letter to Blok of 12 Nov 1908, 'Iz perepiski . . .', p. 168.
 - 14 Sergei Solov'ev attacked Blok in the article 'G. Blok o zemledelakh, dolgoborodykh ariitsakh, pare piva, obo mne i o mnogom drugom' in his book *Crucifragium* (Moscow: Skorpion, 1908).
 - 15 Blok, 'Pesnia sub'by', *SS*, vol. IV, pp. 148–9.
 - 16 Blok, *Na pole Kulikovom*, first pub. *Almanakh Shipovnik* No. 10 (1909), *SS*, vol. III, pp. 249–52.
 - 17 See Blok, 'Narod i Intelligentsiia', first pub. as 'Rossiia i Intelligentsiia', *ZR* No. 1 (1909), *SS*, vol. V, pp. 318–28.
 - 18 'Pis'ma N.A. Kliueva k Bloku', publication by K.M. Azadovsky, LN 92, Bk. 4, pp. 427–523. For Blok's subsequent relationship with Nikolai Kliuev, Sergei Esenin, Pimen Karpov, the publishing house 'Zemlia' and the journal *Novoe Vino*, edited by the defrocked priest Brikhnichev, see S. Hackel, *The Poet and the Revolution. Aleksandr Blok's 'The Twelve'* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), index; A. Pyman, *The Life of Aleksandr Blok*, vol. II: *The Release of Harmony 1908–1921* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), index; and the various special studies by V.G. Bazanov, particularly 'Po sledam dnevnikovykh zapisei Aleksandra Bloka (Esenin i Blok)', *V Mire Bloka* (Moscow, 1981); 'Razrushenie legendy', *Russkaia Literatura* No. 3 (1980), pp. 92–114; "'Olonetskii krest'ianin" i peterburgskii poet', pp. 31–83 in his *S rodnoho berega. O poezii Nikolaia Kliueva* (Leningrad, 1990); and K.M. Azadovsky 'Perepiska s Blokom', pp. 57–84 of his *Nikolai Kliuev Put' poeta* (Leningrad, 1990).
 - 19 See Liubov' Blok's letter of 14 Dec 1908 to A A Kubliskaia-Piottukh about this second meeting of LN 92, Bk. 3, pp. 341–2 and Blok's letter to her of the same date, *SS*, vol. VIII, pp. 268–9.

- 20 The collection *Vekhi, sbornik statei o russkoi intelligentsii* (M, 1909) was then in preparation. In a rationalistic manner, it reflected the same awareness that the Intelligentsia had gone seriously wrong in its attitude to the people as that underlying Blok's 1908 articles, Ivanov's 'O russkoi idee' and other works, and Bely's *Serebrianyi golub'*. Struve spoke impatiently of Blok as of one 'who had just woken up' to such questions in 1908–9, the years which marked the final defeat of the 1905 revolution and the beginning of an upturn in Russia's economic development. But see, for instance, Blok's interpretation of Ivanov's 'Zavety Simvolizma': 'Poetry is only a part of the whole . . . Poetry is practical and was practical from the beginning. And all Art . . .' (*ZK*, 168–9). The Merezhkovskys understood this: Struve did not.
- 21 Blok, 'Narod i intelligentsia', *SS*, vol. V, p. 327.
- 22 Cf. Blok's letters to Rozanov of 17 and 20 Feb 1909, *SS*, vol. VIII, pp. 273–7 and the notes pp. 596–7.
- 23 On the same theme are Blok's 'Voprosy, voprosy i voprosy' in *ZR* Nos. 11–12 (1908), *SS*, vol. V, pp. 329–34, 'Ironiia', *Rech'*, 7 Dec 1908, *SS*, vol. V, pp. 345–9 and 'Stikhiia i kul'tura', *Nasha gazeta* 6 Jan, 1909, *SS*, vol. V, pp. 350–9, first read as a lecture in the Religious-Philosophical Society on 30 Dec 1908 together with Ivanov's 'O russkoi idee' (first pub. *ZR* No. 1 (1909) and *SS*, vol. III, pp. 321–38) – which should be read primarily as his response to Blok's obsessive preoccupation with the intelligentsia and the people.
- 24 Bely, letter of 23 Jun 1908 to M.K. Morozova. M.K. Morozova, 'Andrei Bely', publication and commentary by E.M. Buromskaia-Morozova and V.P. Enisherlov, in *Andrei Belyi. Problemy tvorchestva*, pp. 535–6.
- 25 The circle was run by K.P. Khristoforova.
- 26 A. Bely, *Nachalo veka*, p. 320. A rather different account, in which Mintslova appears to dominate the reconciliation with Ivanov is given in the chapter 'Mintslova' in *Mezhdru dukh revoliutsii*, pp. 316–22.
- 27 In 'O knige "Pepel"', *SS*, vol. IV, pp. 615–18 Ivanov appended a sizeable excerpt from his review of Bely's book to the article 'Estetika i ispovedanie', *SS*, vol. II, pp. 566–9. In this article Ivanov formulated his idea of an 'impressionist' and a 'realist' Symbolism, lending both terms a specific, metaphysical significance. *Pepel* Ivanov considered an example of 'realist' Symbolism because he sees it as the book in which Bely overcomes his revulsion for the World and discovers through 'the descent or co-crucifixion of his own super-ego, an objective reality outside himself which he can love'. At the same time, the book is seen as a warning, a dark reflection of contemporary Russia.
- 28 Mintslova is said to have been the prototype for the tragic figure of the eunuch Khors, benevolent but heretical, who sets up Wisdom and occult knowledge against Grace and Providence in Ivanov's epic *Svetomir*. For a more detailed account of her relationship with the Symbolists see M. Carlson, 'Ivanov, Belyi, Mintslova: the Mystic Triangle' in *Cultura e Memoria* No. 1 (Florence, 1988), pp. 63–80. It is not known what happened to Mintslova but it is generally supposed she either committed suicide or entered some closed religious order.
- 29 A. Bely, *Urna* (Moscow, 1909). Among Bely's articles on prosody written over 1909 were 'Lirika i eksperiment'; 'Magiia slov', 'Opyt kharakteristiki russkogo chetyrekhstopnogo iamba' and 'Sravnitel'naia morfologiia ritma russkikh

- lirikov v iambicheskom dimetre'. He also, amidst feverish activity to do with the founding of Musagete, tossed off the less technical studies 'Problema Kul'tury' and 'Emblematika smysla', besides furnishing the collection *Simvolizm*, his first book for Musagete, with an authorial commentary. Of these articles, 'The magic of words', 'The emblematics of meaning' and 'Lyric poetry and experiment' have been translated (with introduction and commentary) by Steven Cassedy in the book *Selected Essays of Andrei Bely*.
- 30 The *leitmotif* of true cartharsis in *Peterburg* has been identified with the 'fiery, feathery-pink clouds' by D.E. Maksimov in his exquisite analysis 'O romane-poeme Andreia Belogo "Peterburg"', Acta Universitatis Szegediensis de Attila Jozsef Nominatae, Dissertationes Slavicae, Sectio Historiae Litterarum, 17 (1985) pp. 31–166. The real continuity between the novels, the occult/mythological subtext, is examined in detail with reference to *The Silver Dove* by Maria Carlson in *Andrey Bely Spirit of Symbolism*, pp. 60–95. Formally, as far as the plot of the two novels is concerned, there is no connection, although sectarians from Tselebeevo are given what might be described as a walk-on part in *Peterburg*. For Bely's contribution to the art of the novel see J.D. Elsworth *Andrey Bely: A Critical Study of the Novels* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).
- 31 What contact there was was friendly, though Bely, as always, was nervous, particularly of Remizov's imps and demons. He did, however, place Remizov's work in *Vesy*, a citadel to which Briusov would never admit him, when he relieved Briusov as editor during the last year of the journal's existence (cf. A. Remizov, *Iveren'*. *Zagoguliny moei pamiati*, ed. O. Raevskaia-Hughes, Berkeley Slavic Specialities, (Berkeley, 1986, p. 235). Remizov's reminiscences are scattered with wondering, lyrical, often extremely funny references to Bely. Bely, having delivered himself of a vividly grotesque portrait of Remizov and his wife Serafima Pavlovna (*Mezhdv dvukh revoliutsii*, pp. 68–9), adds: 'On closer acquaintance with this distinguished writer, the very first lines of whose work I read thrilled me, I began to appreciate him as a person and grew fond of him . . .'
- 32 Bely, *Serebrianyi golub*, (Ann Arbor: Ardis, undated), pp. 60–1. The novel was translated as *The Silver Dove* by George Reavey, according to the translator's preface at the suggestion of Samuel Beckett, with a preface by Harrison Salisbury (NY: Grove Press, 1974). The translation here is mine.
- 33 Remizov's early letters to his wife (published by Antonella D'Amelia, *Europa Orientalis* No. 6 (1987), pp. 242–3, 246) and his book *Vstrechi Peterburgskii Buerak* (Paris: Lev, 1981) are sources for his earliest meeting with Ivanov. From 1904, when Remizov made his second 'illegal' visit to Petersburg to try to get some of his early writing accepted for publication, Ivanov did his best to persuade Briusov to publish Remizov in *Vesy* (LN 85, pp. 466, 477, 494, 497). Briusov resisted, informing Remizov that his ornate 'Russian' style would be like a patch of golden brocade on the 'grey' (European) material of the Symbolist *Vesy* (cf. *Iveren'*, p. 236).
- 34 Bely in *Kriticheskoe Obozrenie* No. 1 (1907). Bely also reviewed *Prud* – less enthusiastically – in *Vesy* No. 12 (1907) (reprinted *Arabeski*, pp. 475–7).
- 35 See Remizov, *Iveren'*, p. 27, for the need to 'know'. For his 'shorn vision' see the letter to N. Kodrianskaia pub. by the recipient in *Aleksei Remizov* (Paris,

- 1959), p. 96 and the title of Remizov's own reminiscences of childhood, *Podstrizhennymi glazami* (Paris: YMCA-Press, 1951).
- 36 *Serebrianyi golub'* was first pub. in *Vesy* in 1909 and then by Skorpion in 1910. *Krestovye sestry* came out in *Al'manakh Shipovnik*, Bk. 13 (1910). For the 'Symphonic structure' see Kodrianskaia, *ibid.*, p. 110.
- 37 The biographical basis of *Krestovye sestry* is in the terrible hurt to Remizov's feelings and finances when he was unjustly accused of plagiarism (for forgetting to name the source of one of his fairytales and in general for the closeness of his adaptations to the folklore locutions of the original). For a long time, he found no-one to take his part and help him to extricate himself from a damaging literary boycott. Cf. 'Vstrechi Peterburgskii buerak' in A. Remizov, *Ogon' veshchei. Pliashchushchii demon. Vstrechi* (Moscow: Sovetskaia rossiia, 1989), pp. 312ff.
- 38 Cf. A. Izmailov. 'Besovskie arabeski (literaturnyi portret A. Remizova)', *Birzhevye vedomosti* (utr. vypusk) No. 12531 (15 Sept 1911), p. 3, quoted by Iu. Andreev in the notes to *Krestovye sestry*, Remizov, *Izbrannoe* (Moscow, 1978).
- 39 Remizov himself compares his writing to weaving in the article '76 risunok pisatelei', *Novoe Russkoe Slovo* No. 15429, NY (25 July, 1954), trans. as 'Aleksey Remizov on drawings by writers . . .', *Leonardo* 13:3 (1980), pp. 236–7. Here he talks of the 'memory of my silken and carpeted homeland' and writes: 'Whether I was a Chinese – and scholars demonstrate my literary kinship with the famous Chinese eleventh-century poet Oi-Yang-Sin, maintaining that we look at the earth and the sky with the same eyes – or a Persian, or neither a Chinese nor a Persian but a Muscovite born and bred, a traveller amidst the wonders of the east – I see and feel coloured silks and embroidered hangings in a quite peculiar way.'
- 40 Remizov, 'Krestovye sestry', *Izbrannoe*, p. 280.
- 41 Remizov, 'Krestovye sestry', p. 289.
- 42 Remizov, 'Zavety', quoted here from A. Remizov, *Ogon' veshchei. Pliashchushchii demon. Vstrechi*, p. 470.

12 RUSSIAN SYMBOLISM AND RUSSIAN LITERATURE

- 1 The best account of the genesis of *Apollon* is still Denis Mickiewicz, 'Apollo and modernist poetics', *The Silver Age of Russian Culture. An Anthology*, ed. Carl Proffer and Ellendea Proffer (Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1971), pp. 360–96.
- 2 Nik T-o, [*Innokentii Annenskii*] *Tikhie pesni* (SPb, 1904). Blok's review was first published in the Literary Supplement to the Newspaper *Slovo* No. 403 (6 March 1906). See also *SS*, vol. V, pp. 619–21. Briusov [Avrelii] wrote about *Tikhie pesni* for *Vesy* No. 4 (1904); see *SS*, vol. VI, p. 619. For Makovsky's remark see S. Makovsky, *Portrety sovremennikov* (NY: Chekhov Press, 1955), p. 253.
- 3 Cf. Bely, *Nachalo Veka*, pp. 324–5 and E. Gertsyk, *Vospominaniia*, p. 60.
- 4 The two volumes of *Cor ardens*, though they contain some superb poetry, provide plenteous material for the Acmeist case against Symbolism and it was with Ivanov's 'Rosa' (on which he was working throughout 1910) in mind that Gorodetsky asserted in 1913 the Acmeists' 'newly-discovered' insistence on the beauty of the rose in its own right. Blok found Gumilev's declaration that the

- 'word is always equal to itself' 'stupid', but psychologically understandable in the face of Ivanov's 'despotism'. For the darkness of life at the Tower following Lidiia's death see Lidiia Viacheslavovna Ivanova, 'Vospominaniia o Viacheslave Ivanove', *Novyi zhurnal* No. 148 (1982), now in book form (NY, 1990). The reminiscences have been translated by Irina Prehn and extracts published and further used in V.N. Blinov's chronology in the section 'Reminiscences and Chronology' of *Vyacheslav Ivanov: Poet, Critic and Philosopher*, pp. 393–474.
- 5 Ivanov, 'Podsteregateliiu' V.V. Khlebnikovu, *Cor ardens*, vol. II (Moscow, 1912), *SS*, vol. II, p. 340.
 - 6 Kuzmin belonged to no school of poetry but his best work was admired by Symbolists and Acmeists alike.
 - 7 This seems the best single comment on Nadezhda Mandel'shtam's and Akhmatova's insistence that Ivanov was *hostile* to the Acmeists. Deshart insists that he loved all three main protagonists of the school. See also Valerii Blinov's 'Viacheslav Ivanov i vozniknovenie akmeizma', *Culture et Memoria*, No. 2, pp. 13–26, and Tomas Venclova's 'Viacheslav Ivanov and the Crisis of Russian Symbolism', *Issues in Russian Literature before 1917*, pp. 205–15.
 - 8 According to Anna Akhmatova in her reminiscences 'Mandel'shtam', *Vozdushnye puti*, vol. IV (1965), p. 31, the name 'acmeism' was decided upon in December 1912 at a meeting of the 'Tsekh Poetov' (Poets' Workshop), a society founded by Gumilev for the discussion of poetic form which existed in parallel and in opposition to the 'Academy'. Bely had spent most of February 1912 at the Tower so the two versions are not necessarily contradictory. Gumilev could have made good his challenge to 'show' Bely and Ivanov 'acmeism' in the following winter 'season' at the 'Poets' Workshop'.
 - 9 The translations first appeared in various periodicals and were then published as a series between 1907 and 1921.
 - 10 Innokentii Annensky, *Melanippa-Filosof* (SPb, 1901); *Tsar Iksion* (SPb, 1902); *Laodamiia* (SPb, 1907) and *Famira-Kifared*, posthumously pub. in 1913.
 - 11 Annensky's *Kniga otrazhenii* and *Vtoraia kniga otrazhenii* (originally SPb, 1906, 1909) were reprinted in the series *Slavische Propyläen*, vol. 50 (Munich, 1969) and as *Kniga otrazhenii*, compiled N.T. Ashimbaeva, I.I. Podol'skaia and A.V. Fedorov (Moscow, 1979). There is also a good selection of his critical articles in Innokentii Annenskii, *Izbrannoe* (Moscow, 1987), with introduction and commentary by I. Podol'skaia.
 - 12 See Blok, *SS*, vol. V, p. 620 and letter to I.F. Annensky of 12 Mar 1906, *SS*, vol. VIII, p. 152.
 - 13 Cf. Ivanov, 'Dve stikhii v sovremennom simvolizme', first pub. *ZR* Nos. 3–4, 5 (1908). See also *Po zvezdam* and *SS*, vol. II, pp. 536–61. The article on Annensky, 'O poezii Innokentiiia Annenskogo', appeared in *Apollon* No. 4 (1910), then in *Borozdy i mezhi*, and *SS*, vol. II, pp. 573–86.
 - 14 Briusov, 'Annenskii. Kiparisovyi larets M. 1910', in *Russkaia Mysl'* No. 6 (1910), then in *Dalekie i blizkie*, pp. 159–60, *SS*, vol. VI, pp. 328–9.
 - 15 Annensky, letter of 6 Mar 1909 to M.A. Voloshin, *Izbrannoe*, pp. 506–7.
 - 16 Annensky, 'On i ia', *Izbrannoe*, p. 119.
 - 17 Annensky, 'Preryvistye stroki', *Izbrannoe*, pp. 170–1.
 - 18 Annensky, letter to T.A. Bogdanovich of 6 Feb 1909, *Izbrannoe*, pp. 504–6.

- 19 Annensky, 'O sovremennom lirizme', *Apollon* Nos. 1, 2 and 3 (1910), pp. 12–42, 3–29, 5–29.
- 20 Ivanov, 'Ultimum vale', first pub. *Apollon* No. 4 (Jan 1904); *SS*, vol. II, pp. 354–5.
- 21 Leon. Bakst, 'Puti klassitsizma v iskusstve', *Apollon* Nos. 2 and 3 (1909).
- 22 See Blok's Notebooks for 1909.
- 21 Konstantin Makovsky, *Na Parnase Serebrianaogo Veka*, p. 151. A selection from the 'Italian poems' were published in *Apollon* No. 4 (Jan 1910), pp. 39–49 with a half-title by N.K. Roehrich and illustrations (of Ravenna and Venice) by G.K. Lukomsky.
- 24 Blok, 'Venetsia', written Aug 1909, first pub. *Apollon* No. 4 (1910). See also *SS*, vol. III, pp. 102–3.
- 25 Blok, letter to A.A. Kublitskaia-Piottukh of 24 Oct 1909, *Pis'ma k rodnym*, vol. I, pp. 276–8, and Voloshin, 'Henri de Régnier', *Apollon* No. 4 (1910), p. 25.
- 26 Gumilev, 'Zhizn' stikha', *Apollon* No. 7 (1910), p. 13.
- 27 Ivanov, 'Dve stikhii v sovremennom simvolizme', *SS*, vol. II, p. 558.
- 28 The title of Blok's last, posthumously published article, written Apr 1921 and originally conceived as a review of the collection *Drakon*, cf. *SS*, vol. VI, pp. 174–84.
- 29 Kuzmin, 'O prekrasnoi iasnosti, zametki o proze', *Apollon* No. 4 (Jan 1910), pp. 5–10.
- 30 Kuzmin's first collection, which included the famous cycle 'Aleksandriiskie pesni' was published under the title *Seti* (Nets) (M, 1908). *Kuranty liubvy* (The Chimes of Love) and *Osennye ozera* (Autumn Lakes) followed in Moscow in 1910 and 1912, then four further collections and the exquisite 'poema' 'Forel' razbivaet led' (The trout breaks the ice) (Pg, 1929). His drama *Komedii. O Evdokii iz Geliopolia. O Aleksee Cheloveke Bozh'em. O Martiniane* (SPb, 1908) was an elegant exercise in mischievously anachronistic stylisation. His sensational novella *Kryl'ia* was serialised in *Vesy* then published by Skorpion in 1907, to be followed by *Priklucheniia Eme Lebefa* in the same year and two books of short stories in 1910. Kuzmin's collected works began to come out in Petrograd 1914, but only seven of a projected nine volumes were published.
- 31 Ivanov, 'Zavety simvolizma', as printed in *Apollon* Nos. 7–8 (1910), pp. 5–20 and reprinted in *Borozdy i mezhi* and in *SS*, vol. II, pp. 588–603, is an amalgam of the lecture he gave at the Academy and one given in the Moscow Society of Free Aesthetics in the same year.
- 32 Blok, 'O sovremennom sostoianii russkogo simvolizma', first pub. *Apollon* Nos. 7–8 (1910), pp. 21–30, *SS*, vol. V, pp. 425–36.
- 33 Briusov, 'O "rechi rabskoi"', *Apollon* No. 9 (1910), pp. 31–4, *SS*, vol. VI, pp. 176–9.
- 34 Bely, 'Venok ili venets', *Apollon* No. 11 (1910), pp. 1–4 of chronicle and *Blok i Bely: Perepiska*, letter of end Aug/beginning Sep 1910, pp. 233ff.
- 35 Sergei Gorodetsky, 'Strana reveransov i ee pupuro-lilovyi Bedeker', *Protiv techeniia* (15 Oct 1910); Merezhovsky, 'Balagan i tragediia', *Russkoe Slovo*, 14 Sep 1910, and Blok's 'Otvét Merezhkovskomu' (not pub. at the time) *SS*, vol. V, pp. 442–5.

- 36 Blok in a letter to Bely of 6 Jun 1911 (*SS*, vol. VIII, p. 344) puts this question of Musagetes' first Anthology; see letters of 25 Jan 1912 for his resistance to *Trudy i dni Musgeta* (*SS*, vol. VIII, p. 383).
- 37 See Blok, letter to A.A. Kublitskaia-Piottukh of 5 Apr 1910, *Pis'ma k rodnym*, vol. II, p. 68, and 'Pamiati V.F. Kommissarzhevskoi', *SS*, vol. V, p. 418. Also Blok's letter to Bely of 17 Apr 1912, *Blok i Bely: Perepiska*, pp. 291–2 and diary for the same day *SS*, vol. VII, p. 140. Blok's later irritation against Gumilev and Acmeism stemmed largely from this very feeling against all 'schools' of art. The post-revolutionary polemic when Blok and Gumilev would wrangle about their different attitudes to poetry at the Poets' Union was clouded by extra-literary differences, just as critical evaluation of it has been clouded by hindsight about Gumilev. As far as the Acmeists' poetry was concerned, Blok was indeed indifferent to Gumiliev's, but deeply moved by Akhmatova's and impressed by Mandel'shtam's. With Gorodetsky he remained on friendly terms but took seriously only his earliest poetry. None of them, he felt, altogether fitted the straight-jacket of the movement's various manifestos – any more than he himself fitted into the 'literary school' of Symbolism. For the last quotation see Blok, *SS*, vol. VIII, p. 344.
- 38 Ivanov, 'Mysli o simvolizme', first pub. in *Trudy i dni Musageta* (1912), pp. 3–10, *SS*, vol. II, pp. 605–14.
- 39 A. Bely, *Na rubezhe*, pp. 194–5. In 1928, however, Bely returned to the more dogmatic concept of Symbolism as a world-view and wrote the posthumously published book, *Pochemu ia stal simvolistom i pochemu ia ne perestal im byt' vo vsekh fazakh moego ideinogo i khudozhestvennogo razvitiia*. Here, Bely appears once more as the misunderstood Boria, led astray by Ivanov's all-embracing and all-reconciling brand of Symbolism in 1904 and combatting Blok's anarchic Symbolism at the centre of which – he felt – was 'the abyss'. The centre, for Bely, is and always was Christ: 'the esoteric of Symbolism is in the discovery of Christ and Sophia in man in a new way' (*ibid.*, pp. 37–8).

Select bibliography of primary sources

The primary sources listed here are not necessarily the best or fullest editions available, though as far as Symbolist authors are concerned I have tried to see that they were so: they are the editions I used and to which references are made in the notes. In addition, I have noted the existence of reprints and of some early *Collected Works* by Symbolist authors to which I have not always been able to obtain access. Articles in journals I have only included when they are (a) of particular importance and (b) not contained in collections or in the major Symbolist periodicals which have been examined in their entirety and to which reference is frequently made in the notes. These are listed at the beginning of the bibliography and regrettably do not include Andrei Bely's and Emilii Metner's *Dela i Dni Musageta* (1912) or Sokolov-Krechetov's *Pereval* (1907).

Also included as primary sources are contemporary memoirs and biographies by close relatives as well as some general works containing documentary evidence such as letters and autobiographies not available elsewhere.

This brief bibliography bears witness to the curious history of Symbolist publishing, printing and reprinting. Works first printed before or shortly after the 1917 Revolution and kept alive since the Second World War by Western reprints have begun to re-emerge in new, often richly annotated form during the last years of the Soviet Union to the present day. Most of these came too late for me to use while writing this book, but I have listed those which came to my notice in a numbered supplement, to which there are cross-references in the main bibliography. I am particularly grateful to Julian Graffy for bringing to my attention many additional titles in his own possession or available in the Library of the School of Slavonic and East European Studies or the Taylorian. Dr Graffy's Addenda are marked with an asterisk.

What will happen now – given the shortage of paper and cash together with the inevitable slimming down and restructuring of research institutes and universities – is hard to forecast. It seems a tragic irony indeed that, just as Russia has become free to explore her past, commercialism and decentralisation bid fair to bring about a drastic curtailment of academic publishing. The promised Book 5 of *Literaturnoe nasledstvo* vol. 92 on Blok is on hold, as is the academic edition of the poet's *Complete Works*. Perhaps the most pressing need is for a *Complete Works* by Andrei Bely, who, as this bibliography bears witness, is being republished in the most haphazard manner in both Russia and the West. Meanwhile, it is devoutly to be wished that YMCA-Press and the Foyer Oriental Chrétien will complete their brave efforts to give us the *Collected Works* of Shestov, Florensky and Viacheslav Ivanov – perhaps in co-operation with Russian scholars and publishers.

'The poetic culture of our age', wrote Boris Pasternak in 1942, 'is a natural outgrowth of Russian Symbolism', as were 'all schools both friendly and hostile which derived from it'. It is my hope that the bibliography of first sources at the end of the next *History of Russian Symbolism* will consist almost entirely of properly prepared and presented *Collected* if not *Complete Works*.

Throughout this bibliography I have used the abbreviations SPb for Saint Petersburg and/or Petersburg, Pg for Petrograd, L for Leningrad and M for Moscow.

PERIODICAL PUBLICATIONS AND ALMANACS

- Al'manakh Grif*. Almanac edited by Sokolov-Krechetov and published by Grif (M, 1903–5).
- Apollon*. Monthly journal ed. by Sergei Makovsky in which the Acmeists gradually succeeded the Symbolists (SPb, 1909–17).
- Fakely* Nos. 1, 2, 3. Almanac. Organ of the 'Mystic Anarchists', ed. by G. Chulkov (SPb, 1906–8).
- Iskusstvo*. Art journal along the lines of *Mir Iskusstva*, published and edited by Sokolov-Krechetov (Kiev, 1905).
- Mir Iskusstva*. Bimonthly organ of eponymous group of artists which also featured Symbolist writers, ed. by Sergei Diaghilev, Dmitrii Filosofov and, in its last year, by Aleksandr Benois and Diaghilev alternately (SPb, 1898–1904).
- Novoe Vremia*. Widely read newspaper published in Petersburg, scanned for references to the Symbolists and to the Religious-Philosophical Meetings over the years 1893 to 1905 inclusive. Source for all quotations from the satirist N.P. Burenin.
- Novyi Put'*. Religious-philosophical and literary journal, published by P.P. Pertsov and edited by Zinaida Hippus and Dmitrii Merezhkovsky and, from autumn 1904, by Nikolai Berdiaev and Sergei Bulgakov (SPb, 1903–4).
- Severnye Tsvety*. Almanac edited by Valerii Briusov and published by Skorpion (M, 1901–22, reprinted, vols. I–IV (1901–11), Munich, 1972).
- Severnyi Vestnik*. Ed. by Liubov' Gurevich. Literary section for the period when Akim Volynsky was literary editor (SPb, 1893–8).
- Vesy*. Symbolist literary-critical monthly periodical ed. by S.A. Poliakov and Valerii Briusov (M, 1904–9).
- Voprosy Zhizni*. Religious-philosophical, political and literary journal published by D. Zhukovsky and edited by Nikolai Berdiaev and Sergei Bulgakov (SPb, 1905).
- Zapiski Mechtatelei*. Symbolist periodical founded in 1919 by Samuil Alianskii (SPb, 1919–21).
- Zolotoe Runo*. Literary-artistic journal published by Nikolai Riabushinsky and edited first by Sokolov-Krechetov, then by G. Tasteven (M, 1906–9).

BOOKS

- Akhmatova, Anna *Sochineniia*, vols. I–II, ed. G.P. Struve and B.A. Filipov, InterLanguage Literary Associates (Washington, 1968).
- Annensky, Innokentii *Kniga otrazhenii* (SPb, 1906); *Vtoraia kniga otrazhenii* (SPb, 1909) in the series *Slavische Propyläen*, vol. 50 (Munich, 1969).

- Kniga otrazhenii*, comp. N.T. Ashimbaeva, I.I. Podol'skaia and A.V. Fedorov (M: Nauka, Literaturnye pamiatniki, 1979). Contains *Kniga otrazhenii: Vtoraia kniga otrazhenii*; addenda; letters.
- Izbrannoe*, with intro. and notes by I.A. Podol'skaia (M, 1987).
- Bal'mont, Konstantin *Gornye vershiny*, sbornik statei (M, 1904).
- Polnoe sobranie stikhov* (M, 1907–14) was not available to the writer. Some idea of its contents could, however, be gathered from Vladimir Markov's *Kommentar zu den Dichtungen von K.D. Bal'mont 1890–1909* in the series *Bausteine zur Geschichte der Literatur bei den Slaven*, vol. 31 I, II (Vienna/Cologne, 1988, 1992).
- Stikhovoreniia*, ed. Vl. Orlov, Biblioteka poeta, Bol'shaia seriia (L, 1969). (See Supplement Nos. 5, 6, 7, 8.)
- Baltrušaitis, Iurgis *Zemnye stupeni. Elegii, pesni, poemy* (M, 1911).
- Baranova-Shestova, N. *Zhizn' L'va Shestova, po perepiske i vospominaniim sovremennikov* (Paris, 1983).
- Bely, Andrei *Arabeski* (originally M, 1911); also reprinted by D. Tschizevsky, *Slavische Propyläen*, vol. 63 (Munich, 1969).
- 'Avtobiograficheskoe pis'mo Ivanovu Razumniku' ('Lettre autobiographique à Ivanov-Razumnik') pub. by Georges Nivat, *Cahiers du Monde Russe et Soviétique* 15: 1–2 (1974), pp. 45–82.
- Chetyre simfonii*, Slavische Propyläen, vol. 39 (Munich, 1971).
- Lug zelenyi* (M, 1910), a collection of articles.
- Pervoe svidanie* (SPb, 1921); facsimile reprinted opposite Gerald Janacek's translation *The First Encounter* with notes and commentary by Nina Berberova (Princeton, 1979). Also in *Stikhovorenia*, vols. I–III and *Stikhovorenia i poemy* (below).
- Peterburg* originally Pg, 1914, then in a revised edition, Berlin, 1922; a third Moscow edition of 1928 was reprinted with an intro. by Dmitrii Tschizewsky in the series *Slavische Propyläen*, vol. 29 (Munich, 1967). The 1916 edition was reprinted in the series *Rarity Reprints No. 1* with an introduction by G. Donchin (Letchworth, 1967). An academic edition with variants and an introduction and notes by L. Dolgoplov was pub. in Leningrad, 1982.
- Pochemu ia stal simvolistom i pochemu ia ne perestal im byt' vo vsekh fazakh moego ideinogo i khudozhestvennogo razvitiia*, written 1928 (Ann Arbor, 1982).
- Serebrianyi golub'*, originally (M, 1910; 2nd edn. Berlin, 1922; reprinted in series *Slavische Propyläen*, vol. 38 (Munich, 1967); also reprinted by Ardis, Ann Arbor; undated). (See Supplement, No. 4.)
- Simvolizm. Kniga statei* (M, 1910 and as repub. by Wilhelm Fink Verlag in the series *Slavische Propyläen*, vol. 62 (Munich, 1969).
- Stikhovoreniia* (M, 1988), a reprint of Bely's 1923 collection of poetry revised during his stay in Berlin, intro. A.V. Lavrov. Complementary to *Malmstad: Stikhovoreniia*, vols. I–III.
- Stikhovoreniia*, vols. I–III, Russian printings and reprintings 49, ed. John Malmstad (Munich, 1982) (one volume of the poetry was not published at the time but the notes are extant to all Bely's poetry pre the revisions of the 1920s and represent the most complete documentation to date).
- Stikhovoreniia i poemy*, intro. and ed. by Tamara Khmel'nitskaia, Biblioteka

- poeta, Bol'shaia seriia (M/L, 1966). References given to this edition and to Malmstad's *Stikhotvoreniia*, vols. I–III.
- 'Teatri i sovremennaia drama', in *Kniga o novom teatre* (SPb, 1908).
- Tragediia tvorchestva – Dostoevskii i Tolstoi* (M, 1911).
- 'Vospominaniia ob Al. Bloke', *Zapiski Mechtatelei* No. 6 (Pg, 1922), pp. 7–122.
- 'Vospominaniia ob Aleksandre Bloke', originally *Epopeia* No. 1 and 2, 3 and 4 (Moscow/Berlin, 1922–3), pp. 123–73; 105–299; 125–310, 61–305. Reprinted in the series *Slavische Propyläen*, vol. 47 (Munich, 1969).
- Vospominaniia v trekh tomakh. Na rubezhe dvukh stoletii* (M/L, 1930). *Nachalo veka* (M/L, 1933). *Mezhdru dvukh revoliutsii*, originally L, 1934 but available also in the *Russian Studies Series*, No. 66 (Chicago, 1966). See also Supplement, Nos. 5, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15.
- Benois, Aleksandr *Moi vospominaniia v piati knigakh*, vols. I–II, ed. D.S. Likhachev (M, 1980).
- Berdiaev, Nikolai *Mirosozertsanie Dostoevskogo* (Paris, 1923), first published in SPb, 1921 as *Filosofia Dostoevskogo*.
- 'Pis'ma mladogo Berdiaeva', pub. D. Baras, in *Pamiat'*. *Istoricheskii sbornik*, Bk. 4 (Paris, 1981), pp. 211–48.
- Samopoznanie (Opyt filosofskoi avtobiografii)* (Paris, 1949) and 2nd revised edn. (as first vol. of *Sobranie sochinenii* (Paris, 1983)).
- Blok, Aleksandr *Desiat' poeticheskikh knig*, ed. V.P. Enisherlov (M, 1980). Restores the order in which Blok's poems were published in his first ten books of poetry – for other editions of Blok's poetry made in his lifetime see n. 85 to chapter 8.
- Pis'ma Aleksandra Bloka*, ed. S.M. Solov'ev (L, 1925).
- Pis'ma Al. Bloka k rodnym*, vol. II, ed. M.A. Beketova (L, 1927).
- Pis'ma k zhene*, ed. V.N. Orlov, vol. 89 in the series *Literaturnoe nasledstvo* (M, 1978).
- Sobranie sochinenii*, vol. I–VIII, ed. V. Orlov et al. (M/L, 1960–3) and *Zapisnye knizhki* (M/L, 1965), de facto the ninth volume of the above but referred to not by number but by initial letters as ZK.
- various materials published in the 4 books of vol. 92 of *Literaturnoe nasledstvo* (M, 1980–7).
- Blok, Aleksandr and Bely, Andrei *Aleksandr Blok i Andrei Bely. Peregovorka*, ed. V.N. Orlov (M, 1946). (See Supplement, No. 15.)
- Blok, Liubov' *Byli i nebylitsy o sebe i Aleksandre Bloke*, ed. I. Paul'mann and L.S. Fleishmann, *Studien und Texte* No. 10 (Bremen, 1977).
- Briusov, Valerii *Dalekie i blizkie* (M, 1912; reprinted Brussels, 1973).
- Dnevnik 1890–1910*, ed. I.M. Briusova, intro. N.S. Ashukin (Moscow, 1927) and an abbreviated form of the diary, trans. ed. and intro. by Joan Delaney Grossman as *The Diary of Valery Bryusov 1893–1905 with Reminiscences by V.F. Khodasevich and Marina Tsvetaeva* in the series *Documentary Studies in Modern Russian Poetry* (Berkeley, 1980).
- 'Pis'ma [A.A. Bloku]', *Pechat' i Revoliutsiia* No. 4 (1928), pp. 37, 42–3; No. 5, pp. 69–71, 74.
- 'Pis'ma k L.N. Vil'kinoi', pub. S.S. Grechishkin and A.V. Lavrov in *Ezhegodnik rukopisnogo otdela Pushkinskogo Doma na 1973 god* (L, 1976), pp. 126–35.

- 'Pis'ma P.P. Pertsova', *Pechat' i Revoliutsiia* No. 7 (1926), pp. 36–50.
- 'Pis'ma k P.P. Pertsovu', *Russkii Sovremennik* No. 4 (1924), pp. 233–4.
- 'Pis'ma k P.P. Pertsovu 1894–1896 [K istorii rannego simvolizma]', *Teksty i materialy*, Vypusk tretii (M, 1927).
- Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, vols. I–IV, XII–XIII, XV and XXI (SPb, 1913–14) was not available to the author.
- Sobranie sochinenii*, vols. I–VII, ed. P.G. Antokol'sky et al. (M, 1973–5). Most references in notes given to this edition. (See Supplement, No. 8.)
- Stikhotvoreniia i poemy*, ed. D.E. Maksimov, intro. M.I. Dikman, Biblioteka poeta, Bol'shaia seriia (L, 1961).
- various publications in two volumes of *Literaturnoe nasledstvo*, vol. 28 (M, 1937) and vol. 85 (M, 1976). The latter is entirely devoted to Briusov. (See also Supplement, Nos. 16, 17, 18.)
- Briusova, I.M. 'Materialy k biografii Valerii Briusova', in Valerii Briusov, *Izbrannye stikhi* (M/L, 1933).
- Chulkov, Georgii 'Aleksandr Blok i ego vremia', in *Pis'ma Bloka*, ed. S.M. Solov'ev (L, 1925), pp. 91–120.
- Gody stranstvii* (M, 1930).
- O misticheskom anarkhizme*, originally, with an introduction 'O nepriiatii mira' by Viacheslav Ivanov, in Petersburg, 1906. Read as reprinted without the introduction in the series *Russian Titles for the Specialist* (Letchworth, 1971). Ivanov's article read in *SS*, vol. III, pp. 80–90, where, as in the collection *Po zvezdam* (SPb, 1909), it is entitled 'Ideia nepriiatii mira'.
- Diagilev, Sergei *Sergei Diagilev i russkoe iskusstvo. Stat'i, otkrytye pis'ma, interv'iu. Perepiska. Sovremenniki o Diagileve*, vol. I–II, ed. and intro. I.S. Zil'bershtein and V.A. Samkov (M, 1982).
- Dobroliubov, Aleksandr *Iz knigi nevidimoi* (M, 1905).
- Sobranie sochinenii*, intro. Ivan Konevskoi and V.Ia. Briusova (M, 1900). (See also Supplement, Nos. 19, 20.)
- Dostoevskii, Fedor *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii v tridsati tomakh* (L, 1972–1990).
- Ellis, Lev *Russkie simvolisty* (M, 1910).
- Erberg, K. 'Vospominaniia', pub. by S.S. Grechishkin and A.V. Lavrov, *Ezhegodnik rukopisnogo otdela Pushkinskogo Doma na 1977 god* (L, 1979), pp. 99–146.
- Filosofov, Dmitrii [with D.S. Merezhkovsky and Z.N. Gippius] *Slovo i Zhizn', literaturnye spory noveishego vremeni* (SPb, 1909).
- Filosofova, Anna *Sbornik pamiati Anny Pavlovnoi Filosofovoi* (1837–1912), vols. I, II (Pg, 1915).
- Fofanov, Konstantin *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy*. Biblioteka poeta, Bol'shaia seriia (M/L, 1962).
- Gippius, Zinaida. *Alyi mech. Chetvertaia kniga rasskazov* (SPb, 1906).
- Between Paris and St Petersburg. Selected Diaries of Zinaida Hippus*, trans. and ed. Temira Pachmuss (Urbana, 1975).
- 'Contes d'Amour, Dnevnik liubovnykh istorii 1893–1904', pub. by Temira Pachmuss in *Vozrozhdenie* (Paris, 1969), Nos. 210, pp. 57–76; 211, pp. 25–47; 212, pp. 39–54.
- Dmitrii Merezhkovskii (Paris, 1951).
- Intellect and Ideas in Action*, translation of a wide selection of her letters by

- Temira Pachmuss (intro. and notes by translator) in the series *Russian Printings and Reprintings*, No. 11 (Munich, 1972).
- Literaturnyi dnevnik 1899–1907* (SPb, 1908), repr. in series *Slavische Propyläen*, vol. 102 (Munich, 1970).
- Stikhotvoreniia i poemy 1899–1918*, vols. I–II, ed. intro. and notes by Temira Pachmuss, *Centrifuga*, Russian Printings and Reprintings, No. 4 (Munich, 1972).
- Zhivye litsa* (Prague, 1925). (See Supplement, Nos. 20a, 21, 22).
- Gertsyk, E. *Vospominaniia* (Paris, 1973).
- Gofman, Modest. *Poety Simvolizma* (SPb, 1908) and in *Slavische Propyläen*, vol. 106 (Munich, 1970).
- Kniga o russikh poetakh poslednego desiatiletiia* (SPb/M, 1909). A documentary compilation.
- Gollerbakh, Z. V.V. *Rozanov, Zhizn' i tvorchestvo* (SPb, 1922; reprinted Paris, 1976). Included as a first source because it is based on Rozanov's letters to the author.
- Gor'ky, Maksim *Sobranie sochinenii*, vols. I–XXX (M, 1949–55).
- Ivanov, Evgenii 'Zapisi ob Aleksandre Bloke', pub. by E.P. Gomberg and D.E. Maskimov, *Blokovskii Sbornik*, vol. I (Tartu, 1962), pp. 344–424.
- Ivanov, Viacheslav 'Iz perepiski Aleksandra Bloka s Viach. Ivanovym', pub. by N.V. Kotrelev, *Vestnik AN SSSR, Serii literatury i iazyka*, vol. 41, No. 2 (1982), pp. 163–76.
- Sobranie sochinenii*, ed. D.V. Ivanov and Olga Deshart, vols. I–IV (Brussels, 1971–87). In process of publication.
- Stikhotvoreniia i poemy*, intro. by S.S. Averintsev and ed. by R.E. Pomirchii, *Biblioteka poeta, Malaia serii*, (Leningrad, 1976).
- Ivanova, Lidiia 'Vospominaniia o Viacheslave Ivanove', *Novyi Zhurnal* Nos. 147 (1982), 1–150 (1983). (See Supplement, Nos. 23, 24.)
- Ivanov-Razumnik, P. *Russkaia literatura ot semidesiatykh godov do nashikh dnei* (Berlin, 1923).
- Khlebnikov, Velimir *Sobranie proizvedenii v piati tomakh*, vols. I–V, ed. N. Stepanov (L. 1928–33).
- Khodasevich, Vladimir *Izbrannaia proza* (NY, 1982).
- Nekropol'*, *Vospominaniia* (Paris, 1976).
- Konevskoi, Ivan *Mechty i dumy* (SPb, 1900; reprinted by Berkeley Slavic Specialities, Berkeley, 1989, together with prose contributions to *Severnye Tsvety*).
- Stikhi i proza. Posmertnoe sobranie sochinenii (1894–1901)*, ed. and intro. by Valerii Briusov (M, 1904; reprinted in the series *Slavische Propyläen*, Munich 1971).
- Kuzmin, Mikhail. Seven volumes of a nine-volume *Collected Works* were published in Petrograd from 1914 but these were not available to the author. (See Supplement, No. 12.)
- Forel'*; *razbivaet led. Stikhi 1925–28* (L, 1929; reprinted Ann Arbor, 1978).
- Proza*, in the series 'Modern Russian Literature and Culture. Studies and Texts' (Berkeley Slavic Specialities, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1984–), 9 vols. so far.
- Sobranie Stikhov*, vols. I–III, ed. John Malmstad and Vladimir Markov (Munich, 1977–8). (See Supplement, Nos. 25, 26.)

- Maiakovsky, Vladimir *Sobranie sochinenii v dvenadsati tomakh*, vols. XII (M, 1978).
- Makovsky, Sergei *Na Parnase Serebrianaogo Veka* (Munich, 1962).
Portrety sovremennikov (NY, 1955).
- Meierkhol'd, Vsevolod *Stat'i, pis'ma, rechi, besedy*, vols. I–II (M, 1968).
- Merezhkovsky, Dmitrii [with Z.N. Hippius and Dm. Philosophoff] *Le Tsar et la Révolution* (Paris, 1907).
Polnoe sobranie sochinenii, vols. I–XVII (SPb/M, 1911–13).
Polnoe sobranie sochinenii, vols. I–XXIV (M, 1914. See Supplement, Nos. 13, 14); reprinted by Georg Olms Verlag, Hildesheim and New York, 1973.
Sobranie stikhov 1893–1910 (SPb, 1910; reprinted in the series *Rarity Reprints*, vol. 2, Letchworth, 1969. See Supplement, Nos. 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33.)
- Mikhailovsky, Nikolai *Literaturnye vospominaniia i sovremennaia smuta*, vols. I–II (SPb, 1900).
- Minsky, Nikolai *Na obshchestvennye temy* (SPb, 1909).
Pri svete sovesti. Mysli i mecht'y o tseli zhizni (SPb, 1890).
Stikhotvoreniia (SPb, 1866), *Stikhotvoreniia* (SPb, 1887), *Stikhotvoreniia* (SPb, 1890). Reprint of 1887 edition in *Russian Titles for the Specialist series* (Letchworth, 1977).
- Morozova, M.K. 'Andrei Belyi', pub. by E.M. Buromskaia-Morozova and V.P. Enisherlov in *Andrei Belyi. Problemy tvorchestva* (M, 1988), pp. 522–45.
- Nesterov, Mikhail *Iz pisem* (L, 1968).
- Pavlovich, Nadezhda 'Vospominaniia ob Aleksandr Bloke', pub. by Z.G. Mints and I.A. Chernov in *Blokovskii Sbornik*, vol. I (Tartu, 1964), pp. 446–506.
- Pertsov, Petr *Filosofskie techeniia russkoi poezii. Izbrannye stikhotvoreniia i kriticheskie stat'i*, compiled by P. Pertsov (SPb, 1896).
Literaturnye vospominaniia 1890–1902, with a foreword by B.F. Porshnev (M/L, 1933).
Rannii Blok (M, 1922).
- Remizov, Aleksei *Akhru. Povest' Peterburgskaia* (Berlin, 1922).
Iveren'. Zagoguliny moei pamiati, ed. O. Raevskaia-Hughes, *Modern Russian Literature and Culture. Studies and Texts*, No. 7, Berkeley Slavic Specialities, (Berkeley, 1986).
'Krestovye sestry', originally in *Al'manakh Shipovnik* No. 13 (Petersburg, 1910), read in *Izbrannoe*, intro. and notes by Iu. Andreev (Moscow, 1978).
Kukkha, Rozanovy pis'ma (Berlin, 1923, photoreprint NY, 1978).
'Na vechernei zare. Perepiska A. Remizova S.S. Remizovoi-Dovgello', ed. A.D. Amelia, *Europa Orientalis* No. 6 (1897), pp. 237–310.
'Peterburgskie sny', pub. A. Pyman in *Aleksei Remizov. Approaches to a Protean Writer*, ed. Greta Nachtailer-Slobin, *UCLA Slavic Studies*, vol. 16 (Columbus, Ohio, 1987), pp. 51–112.
Podstrizhennymi glazami (Paris, 1951).
Prud (SPb, 1908).
'76 risunkov pisatelei', *Novoe Russkoe Slovo* No. 15429 (NY, 1954).
Vstrechi. Petersburgskii Buerak (Paris, 1981). (Supplement, Nos. 34, 35, 36, 37, 38.)
- Rozanov, Vasilii. See Gollerbach, Z. and Remizov, A., *Kukkha, Rozanovy pis'ma Izbrannoe*, ed. E. Zhiglevich (Munich, 1970), includes *Uedinennoe* (first pub.

- Moscow, 1911). *Opavshie list' ia, Korob pervyi* (SPb, 1913), *Korob vtoroi* (SPb, 1915).
- Kogda nachal' stvo ushlo 1905–1906 gg* (SPb, 1910).
- Liudi lunnogo sveta. Metafizika khristianstva* (SPb, 1911). Reprint in *Analecta Slavica*, vol. 12, Jal-Verlag Würzburg, 1977.
- Legenda o velikom inkvizitore* (SPb, 1894).
- Religiia i Kul'tura* (SPb, 1900, reprinted Paris, 1979).
- Temnyi lik. Metafizika khristianstva* (SPb, 1911). Reprint *Analectica Slavica*, vol. 8, Jal-reprint, Würzburg, 1975. Also, with same subtitle, *Liudi lunnogo sveta Metafizika khristianstva, Analectica Slavica*, Jal-reprint, Würzburg, 1977. Both with preface by Georgii Ivask.
- V mire neiasnogo i nereshennogo* (SPb, 1901), see Supplement, Nos. 30, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51.
- Sapunov, Nikolai Letters to M. Kuzmin, pub. by J.E. Malmstad in *Studies in the Life and Works of Mixail Kuzmin* (Vienna, 1989), pp. 153–9.
- Shestov, Lev. The *Sobranie sochinenii*, vols. I–VI undertaken by 'Shipovnik' in Saint Petersburg in 1910 was not available to the author. In general, the publishing of Shestov's works was extremely confused, partly owing to the fact that Shipovnik did not date its publications, partly to frequent first publications in languages other than Russian (see note at back of *Na vesakh Iova* (Paris, 1975) and more particularly Natalie Baranova-Shestova's *Bibliographie – Léon Chestov* (Paris, 1978).
- Apofez bespochvennosti* (SPb, 1905; reprinted in *Sochineniia L'va Shestova*, Paris, 1971). (See Supplement, No. 52.)
- Dobro v uchenii Grafa Tolstogo i Fridrikh Nitche* (SPb, 1900). Reprinted in *Sochineniia L'va Shestova*, vol. II (Paris, 1971). (References to this edition.)
- Na vesakh Iova. Stranstvovaniia po dusham* (Paris, 1975).
- Shekspir i ego kritik Brandes* (SPb, 1898; reprinted as vol. I of the YMCA-Press *Sochineniia L'va Shestova* (Paris, 1971)).
- Dostoevskii i Nitche, Filosofia tragedii* (originally read as serialised in *MI* No. 2 (1902). In book form in SPb, 1903; reprinted by YMCA-Press *Sochineniia L'va Shestova*, vol. III (Paris, 1971).
- 'Idealizm i simvolizm 'Severnogo Vestnika' (Stat'ia-retsenziia napisannaia v 1896), first published in *Russian Literature Triquarterly (RLT)* No. 16 (Ann Arbor, 1978).
- Umozrenie i otkrovenie. Religioznaia filosofia Vladimira Solov'eva i drugie stat'i* (Paris, 1964). (See Supplement, No. 52.)
- Sologub, Fedor *Kniga skazok* (Moscow, 1905). For some stories see Supplement, Nos. 18, 19 and 20.
- Melkii Bes. Drama v piati deistviiakh*, ed. and with afterword by Stanley J. Rabinowitz, *Modern Russian Literature and Culture Studies and Texts*, vol. 26, Berkeley Slavic Specialities (Berkeley, 1988).
- Fedor Sologub, Neizdannoe i nesobrannoe*, collected by Gabriele Pauer, *Slavistische Beiträge*, vol. 245 (Munich, 1989).
- Paul Verlaine, Stikhi izbrannye i perevedennye F. Sologubom* (SPb, 1908).
- Pobeda smerti, tragediia v 3-x deistviiakh* (SPb, 1908).
- Sobranie sochinenii*, vols. I–XII (SPb, 1909–12) and vols. I–XX (SPb, 1913–14, incomplete) were not available to the author.

- Stikhotvoreniia*, ed. M.I. Dikman in the Seriiia Bol'shaia, Biblioteka Poeta (L, 1975).
- 'Teatr odnoi voli', in *Kniga o novom teatre* (SPb, 1908).
- Tiazhelye sny*, originally read as serialised in *Severnyi Vestnik* (1883). It was published as a separate book in 1895 and in unexpurgated form in 1909. (See Supplement, No. 20.)
- Van'ka-kliuchnik i pazh Zhean, drama v 12-ii dvoinykh stsenakh* (SPb, 1909).
- Zhalo smerti* (M, 1904), for some stories see Supplement, Nos. 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62.
- Solov'ev, Sergei 'Vospominaniia ob Aleksandre Bloke', in *Pis'ma Aleksandra Bloka*, ed. S.M. Solov'ev (L, 1925), pp. 9–45.
- Solov'ev, Vladimir *Sobranie sochinenii*, ed. and notes S.M. Solov'ev and E.L. Radlov, vols. I–X (originally SPb, 1911–14; 2nd edn. with 2 supplementary vols. XI and XII, Brussels, 1969–70).
- Stikhotvoreniia i shutochnye p'esy*, ed. D. Tschizevskiy et al., reprinted from the 1922 Moscow edition edited by the philosopher's nephew Sergei Solov'ev, Slavische Propyläen, vol. 18 (Munich, 1968). Another edition edited by Z.G. Mints was republished in the series Biblioteka poeta, Bol'shaia seriiia, intro. and notes by Z.G. Mints (L, 1974). See Supplement, Nos. 63, 64, 65, 66, 67.
- Somov, Konstantin *Konstantin Andreevich Somov. Pis'ma. Dnevniki. Suzhdeniia sovremennikov*, ed. and intro. N. Podkopaeva and A.N. Sveshnikova (M, 1979).
- Stasov, V.V. *Izbrannye sochineniia. Zhivopis', skul'ptura, muzyka*, ed. E.D. Stasova, S.K. Isakov et al., vols. I–III (M, 1952).
- Tenisheva, Maria *Vpechatleniia moei zhizni* (Paris, 1933).
- Tolstoy, Lev *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii, Iubileinoe izdanie*, vols. 1–90 (M, 1928–58).
- Tsvetaeva, Marina *Proza* (NY, 1953).
- Vengerov, S.A. *Russkaia Literatura xx veka 1890–1910*, vols. I–III (M, 1914–16), a compilation with autobiographies by various authors and contemporary articles. Issued in 7 bks. forming 3 vols.; no more after 1916.
- Vengerova, Zinaida 'Poety simvolisty vo Frantsii', *Vestnik Evropy* No. 9 (1892), pp. 115–43.
- Verigina, V.P. 'Vospominaniia o Aleksandre Bloke', pub. by D.E. Maksimov in *Uchenye zapiski Tartuskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta. Trudy po russkoi i slavianskoi filologii*, vol. IV (Tartu, 1961), pp. 310–71; reprinted in *Aleksandr Blok v vospominaniakh sovremennikov*, 2 vols., ed. V. Orlov (M, 1980), vol. I, pp. 410–88.
- Volokhova, N.N. 'Zemlia v snegu', pub. by D.E. Maksimov, *Uchenye zapiski Tartuskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta. Trudy po russkoi i slavianskoi filologii*, vol. IV (Tartu, 1961), pp. 371–7.
- Voloshin, Maksimilian *Liki tvorchestva*, ed. V.A. Manuilov, V.P. Kupchenko and A.V. Lavrov (L, 1988).
- Stikhotvoreniia i poemy*, vols. I–II, ed. B. Filippov, E. Rais and G.P. and N.A. Struve (Paris, 1982, 1984). See also Supplement, Nos. 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75.
- Volynsky, Akim *Bor'ba za idealizm. Kriticheskie ocherki* (SPb, 1900).
- Kniga velikogo gneva* (SPb, 1894).

- 'Literaturnye zametki', in the Petersburg monthly journal *Severnyi Vestnik* (1893–98). Occasionally under 'Kritika i bibliografiia' or other titles.
- 'O simbolizme i simvolistakh', *Severnyi Vestnik* Nos. 10–123 (1898).
- Russkie kritiki* (SPb, 1895), and in the journal *Severnyi Vestnik*.
- Vrubel', Mikhail *Vrubel'*. *Perepiska. Vospominaniia o khudozhnike*, ed. E.P. Gomberg-Verzhbinskaia and Iu. N. Podkopaev (L/M, 1963).
- Voloschin, Margarita *Die grüne Schlange* (Stuttgart, 1954).
- Zinov'eva-Annibal, Lidia *Tridsat' tri uroda* (SPb, 1907).
- Zverinets* (SPb, 1908).
- Zlobin, Vladimir *Tiazhelaia dusha* (Washington, 1970), and trans., intro. and notes by Simon Karlinsky, *A Difficult Soul: Zinaida Gippius* (Berkeley/Los Angeles/London, 1980).

UNPUBLISHED SOURCES

- Andrei Bely. Various letters to Bely in the manuscript department of the Lenin Library: from L.D. Blok Bel. 9.18; from G.I. Chulkov Bel. 25.12; from L.L. Kobylinsky (Ellis) Bel. 25.31; from Z.N. Hippius Bel. 14.6; from A.V. Kartashev Bel. 17.8; from A.A. Kublitskaia-Piottukh, Bel. 18.5; from D.S. Merezhkovsky Bel. 19.9; from V.A. Pestovsky (Piast) Bel. 21.36; from A.M. Remizov Bel. 22.5 and from S.M. Solov'ev Bel. 26.1.
- Andrei Bely. Letters to A.A. Kublitskaia-Piottukh 1907–10 in *Arkhiv A.A. Bloka IRLI F. 654*.
- Aleksandr Blok. Various materials, most published in *Literaturnoe nasledstvo*, vol. 92, Bk. 1–4 or elsewhere since read in Blok archives in *IRLI F. 654* and *TsGALI F.55*.
- L.D. Blok. Letters and telegrams to Blok 22 Nov 1901–18 July 1917 (some of which have since been published with his letters to her in *Literaturnoe nasledstvo*, vol. 89).
- E.P. Ivanov. Letters to him and to his sister M.P. Ivanova from A.A. Kublitskaia-Piottukh, *Arkhiv E.P. Ivanova IRLI F.662*.
- Aleksei Remizov. Various materials in the archive of the late Nathalie Reznikoff (now of her son Georgii Reznikoff), 11 rue du Parc, Cachan, Seine, France.

SUPPLEMENT

Some first sources republished or published for the first time in book form since the completion of the main text of this book.

- (1) *Antologiiia russkoi liriki pervoi chetverti xx veka*, ed. I.S. Ezhov and E.I. Shamurin, intro. Valer'ian Poliansky (M, 1991). The fullest anthology of the period ranging far beyond the Symbolists with information on individual authors and notes by I. Vinokurova and T. Dmitrieva.
- (2) *Russkaia poeziia 'serebrianogo veka' 1890–1917. Antologiiia* (M, 1991). A Symbolist and pre-Symbolist anthology more narrowly focussed than (1).
- (3) Annenskii, Innokentii *Izbrannye proizvedeniia*, intro. and notes A.V. Fedorov (L, 1988).
- (4) Annenskii, I. *Stikhotvoreniia i tragediia*, intro. and notes A.V. Fedorov, *Biblioteka poeta, Bol'shaia seriia* (L, 1990).

- (5) Bal'mont, Konstantin *Stikhotvoreniia* (M, 1989), contains *Budem kak solntse*; *Goriashchie zdaniia*; *Tol'ko liubov'*; *Avtobiografiia*; photographs; articles; with an afterword and notes by D.G. Makogonenko.
- (6) Bal'mont, K. *Stikhotvoreniia* (M, 1990).
- (7) Bal'mont, K. *Zolotaia Rossyp'*. *Izbrannye perevody*, intro. A. Romanenko (M, 1990).
- (8) Bal'mont, K. *Izbrannoe. Stikhotvoreniia. Perevody. Stat'i*, comp., intro. and notes D.G. Makogonenko (M, 1991).
- (9) Bely, Andrei *Izbrannaia proza*, comp. and intro. L.A. Smirnova (M, 1988), contains *Serebrianyi golub'* and extracts from his memoirs.
- (10) Bely, A. *Na rubezhe dvukh stoletii*, intro. and commentary by A. Lavrov (M, 1989); *Mezhdu dvukh revoliutsii*, ed. and commentary by A. Lavrov (M, 1990); *Nachalo veka*, ed. and commentary by A. Lavrov (M, 1990). The last publication is of particular importance as it is compiled from an uncensored version of the 1934 publication, which figures as the first part of this volume, and from extant manuscript written by Bely and/or dictated to his wife during his last illness in an attempt to complete the trilogy.
- (11) Bely, A. *Serebrianyi golub'*, in the series 'Zabytaia kniga' with intro. and notes by M. Koz'menko (M, 1989) together with two of Bely's articles Koz'menko considers essential to the understanding of the novel: 'Lug zelenyi' originally *Vesy* No. 8 (1905), and 'Gogol', *Vesy* No. 4 (1909).
- (12) Belyi, A. *Simfonii*, ed. intro. and annotated by A. Lavrov in the series 'Zabytaia kniga' (L, 1991).
- (13) Belyi, A. *Sochineniia v dvukh tomakh*, intro. V. Piskunov, notes by S. Piskunova and V. Piskunov (M, 1990). Vol. I contains poetry, *Vtoraia simfoniia* and *Serebrianyi golub'*; vol. II contains *Peterburg*; *Kotik Letaev*, *Moskva pod udarom*.*
- (14) Bely, A. *Staryi Arbat: povesti*, with intro. and notes by Vl. B. Murav'ev (M, 1989). Contains excerpts from Bely's memoirs, including the title-piece, all four symphonies and the novel *Kotik Letaev*.
- (15) Blok, Aleksandr and Bely, Andrei *Dialog poetov o Rossii i Revoliutsii* (M, 1990), ed. M.F. P'ianikh. This complements Orlov's 1940 publication of the correspondence between Blok and Bely, restoring cut passages (mainly on religious questions) and introducing compilations of relevant poems and articles which provide an admirable accompaniment to the correspondence particularly, as the title suggests, on the subjects of Russia and Revolution. P'ianikh provides an intro. and notes.
- (16) Briusov, Valerii *Izbrannaia proza*, intro. A.V. Lavrov, ed. and notes S.S. Nikonenko (M, 1989). Contains a wide selection of Briusov's stories and novellae, presented chronologically, to give 'the fullest possible idea of the various periods' of his activities and the entire text of the novel *Ognennyi Angel* as printed in the 7-vol. collected works.
- (17) Briusov, V. *Sredi stikhov, 1894-1924, Manifesty. Stat'i. Retsenzii*, intro. N.A. Bogomolov, comp. N.A. Bogomolov and N.V. Kotrelev (M, 1990).*
- (18) Briusov, V. *Valerii Briusov i ego korrespondenty*, Book 1, *Literaturnoe nasledstvo* 98: 1 (M, 1991) [contains correspondence with Bal'mont, Konevskoi, Kursinskii and others].*
- (19) Dobroliubov, Aleksandr *Sochineniia. Natura naturans. Natura naturata*.

- Sobranie stikhov. Iz al'manakha 'Severnye Tsvety' na 1901, 1902 i 1903 god*, intro. Joan Delaney Grossman, *Modern Russian Literature and Culture, Studies and Texts*, vol. 10, Berkeley Slavic Specialties (Berkeley, 1981).*
- (20) Dobroliubov, Aleksandr *Sochineniia. Iz knigi nevidimoi*, intro. Joan Delaney Grossman, *Modern Russian Literature and Culture, Studies and Texts*, vol. 11, Berkeley Slavic Specialties (Berkeley, 1983).*
- (20a) Gippius, Zinaida *Chertova kukla. Proza. Stikhotvoreniia. Stat'i*, comp., intro. and notes V.V. Uchenaia (M, 1991) [contains an autobiography; 11 stories; poetry; the novel *Chertova kukla*; *Zlatotsvet, Peterburgskaia novella*; and five literary-critical essays].*
- (21) Gippius, Z. *Sochineniia. Stikhotvoreniia. Proza*, ed., intro. and notes by K.M. Azadovsky and A.V. Lavrov (L, 1991). Includes for the first time in the new orthography the collections *Sobranie stikhov 1889–1903*, *Sobranie stikhov. Kniga vtoraia 1903–1909*, *Stikhi Dnevnik 1911–1921*, 3 poems *Iz poslednikh stikhov*, 37 *Iz pokhodnykh pesen*, and a good selection of uncollected poems from her early as well as her emigré period. The commentary makes proper acknowledgement of Temira Pachmuss's pioneering work in rescuing and reprinting Gippius' poetry. The prose features the stories 'Iabloni tsvetut'; 'Miss May'; 'Zerkala'; 'Zhivye i mertvye'; 'Sviataia plot'; 'Nebesnye slova'; 'Sumasshedshaia'; 'Suor Marie (Intermezzo)'; 'Sokatie'; 'Byl i takoi'; 'Lunnye murav'i'; 'Besslovesnaia'; 'O proshlykh'.
- (22) Gippius, Z. *Stikhotvoreniia, Zhivye litsa*, intro. and ed. by N.A. Bogomolov (M, 1991).
- (23) Ivanova, Lidiia *Vospominaniia: kniga ob ottse*, intro. and commentary by John Malmstad (Paris, 1990).
- (24) Ivanova, L. *Vospominaniia. Kniga ob ottse*, pub. and notes John Malmstad (M, 1992).*
- (25) Kuzmin, Mikhail *Izbrannye proizvedeniia*, comp., intro. and notes A.V. Lavrov and R.D. Timenchik (L, 1990). Contains several collections of poetry and some short stories.*
- (26) Kuzmin, M. *Stikhi i proza*, intro. and notes E.V. Ermilova (M, 1989). Includes a selection of poetry, stories and critical prose.
- (27) Merezhkovsky, Dmitrii, *Akropol'. Izbrannye literaturno-kriticheskie stat'i*, comp. and notes S.N. Povartsov (M, 1991).*
- (28) Merezhkovsky, D. *Bol'naiia Rossiia* (L, 1991), essays.*
- (29) Merezhkovsky, D. *Izbrannoe*, comp. and with an afterword by A. Gorlo (Kishinev, 1989). Includes the novel *Petr i Aleksei*, a choice of poems, articles from the collection *V tikhom omute*, 'M. Iu. Lermontov. Poet sverkhchelovechestva' and fragments from 'L. Tolstoi i Dostoevskii. Religiiia'.
- (30) Merezhkovsky, D. *Khristos i Antikhris. Trilogiia* (M, 1989). In four volumes: vol. I, *Smert' bogov (Iulian Otstupnik)*; vol. II, *Voskresshie bogi (Leonardo da Vinchi)*; vol. III, *Voskresshie bogi (Leonardo da Vinchi)*, part 2; vol. IV, *Antikhris (Petr i Aleksei)*.*
- (31) Merezhkovsky, D. *Sobranie sochinenii v chetyrekh tomakh* (M, 1990). In four volumes: vol. I, *Khristos i Antikhris. Trilogiia. I. Smert' bogov (Iulian Otstupnik)*. II. *Voskresshie bogi (Leonardo da Vinchi)*, parts 1–9; vol. II, *Khristos i Antikhris. II. Voskresshie bogi (Leonardo da Vinchi)*, parts 10–17, III. *Antikhris (Petr i Aleksei)*; vol. III, *Tsarstvo zveria. I. Pavel Pervyi. II.*

- Aleksandr Pervyi*; vol. IV, *Tsarstvo zveria. III. 14 dekabria, Rozhdenie bogov, Ital'ianskie novelly, Stikhtovoreniia*.*
- (32) Merezhkovsky, D. *V tikhom Omute. Stat'i i issledovaniia raznykh let*, ed. E. Ia. Danilova (Moscow, 1991). Also includes A. Bely's 'Merezhkovskii. Siluet' from *Arabeski* and Boris Zaitsev's 'Pamiat' Merezhkovskogo. 100 let'.
- (33) Merezhkovsky, D. and Z.N. Gippius. D.S. Merezhkovskii, *14 dekabria*; Z.N. Gippius, *Dmitrii Merezhkovskii*, comp. and intro. O.N. Mikhailov (M, 1990).*
- (34) Remizov, Aleksei. *Neuemnyi buben. Roman, povesti, rasskazy, skazki, vospominaniia*, comp., intro. and notes V. Chalmaev (Kishinev, 1988).
- (35) Remizov, A. *Ogon' veshchei*, intro. and notes V. Chalmaev (M, 1989). Contains *Ogon' veshchei*; *Pliashushchii demon*; *Vstrechi. Peterburgskii buerak*.*
- (36) Remizov, A. *V rozovom bleske. Avtobiograficheskoe povestvovanie. Roman*, intro. and notes V.A. Chalmaev (M, 1990). Contains *Vzvikhrennaia Rus'*; *V rozovom bleske*.*
- (37) Remizov, A. *Povesti i rasskazy*, comp., intro., notes M. Koz'menko (M, 1990).*
- (38) Remizov, A. *Izbrannoe*, comp., notes, afterword A.A. Danilevskii (L, 1991).*
- (39) Rozanov, Vasilii *Apokalipsis nashego vremeni* (M, 1990).*
- (40) Rozanov, V. *Liudi lunnogo sveta. Metafizika khristianstva* (M, 1990).*
- (41) Rozanov, V. *Mysli o literature*, intro, comp, notes A. Nikoliukin (M, 1989).*
- (42) Rozanov, V. *Nesovmestimye kontrasty zhitia. Literaturno-esteticheskie raboty raznykh let*, intro. V.V. Erofeev and commentary by Oleg Dark, useful index of names (M, 1990). Contains, besides many articles on literature beginning with 'Legenda o velikom inkvizitore F.M. Dostoevskogo' the key articles 'Pol kak progressiia niskhodiashchikh i voskhodiashchikh velichin' and 'O sladchaishem Isuse i gor'kikh plodakh mira', as well as excerpts from *Ital'ianskie vpechatieniia, Uedinennoe* and, under the title 'Iz predsmertnykh myslei' – from *Apokalipsis nashego vreneni*.
- (43) Rozanov, V. *O sebe i zhizni svoei*, intro. and notes V. Sukach (M, 1990). Contains *Uedinennoe*; *Smertnoe*; *Opavshie list'ia*; *Apokalipsis nashego vremeni*; essays, letters and documents.*
- (44) Rozanov, V. *Religiia i kul'tura. Uedinennoe* (M, 1990).
- (45) Rozanov, V. *Sochineniia*, ed. A.L. Nalepin and T.V. Pomeranskaia, intro. A.L. Nelepin (M, 1990) with an index of names (but not the pages on which they appear) giving dates and some biographical details and full academic footnotes. A valuable publication containing 'Uedinennoe' 'Mechta v shchelku'; 'Predislovie k "V Sakharne"', 'Iz poslednykh list'ev', a wide selection of articles on culture, the last 'S vershiny tysiacheletnei piramidy' printed here for the first time and Rozanov's letters to Leont'ev, Pertsov and the priest I.I. Fudel' (about Leont'ev's lit. archive) – all published here for the first time.
- (46) Rozanov, V. *Sochineniia*, comp. P.V. Kursanov (L, 1990).*
- (47) Rozanov, V. *Sumerki prosveshcheniia*, comp. and afterword V.N. Shcherbakov (M, 1990).*
- (48) Rozanov, V. *Uedinnoe*, comp., intro., notes A.N. Nikoliukin (M, 1990).*

- (49) Rozanov, V. *Uedinnoe*, comp. A.V. Gienko (M, 1991).*
- (50) Rozanov, V. *Chernyi ogon'* (Paris, 1991).*
- (51) Rozanov, V. *Literaturnye izgnanniki* (London, 1992).*
- (52) Shestov, Lev *Apofeoz bespochvennosti. Opyt adogmaticheskogo myshleniia*, ed. and with preface by I.B. Ivanov (L, 1991). With a chronology.
- (53) Sologub, Fedor *Kapli krovi. Izbrannaia proza*, comp. A. Dorofeev (M, 1992). Also contains 16 stories.*
- (54) Sologub, F. *Melkii bes*, intro. V. Keldysh, notes M. Koz'menko, (M, 1988).*
- (55) Sologub, F. *Melkii bes. Zaklinatel'nitsa zmei – Rasskazy*, intro. N.P. Utekhin (M, 1991). The stories are 'Dva Gotika'; 'Mudrye dary'; 'Telo i dusha'; 'Golodnyi blesk'; 'Zhalo smerti'; 'Krasota'; 'Neutomimost'.
- (56) Sologub, F. *Piat' dram*, Berkeley Slavic Specialties, (Berkeley, 1989). Contains *Pobeda smerti*; *Dar mudrykh pchel*; *Liubvi*; *Van'ka kliuchnik i pazh Zhean*; *Nochnye pliaski*.*
- (57) Sologub, F. *Sobranie sochinenii*, comp. B. Lauer and U. Steltner, vol. I, *Rasskazy (1894–1908)*, comp. U. Steltner, Slavistische Beiträge, vol. 291 (Munich, 1992).*
- (58) Sologub, F. *Svet i teni. Izbrannaia proza*, ed. B.I. Sachenko, intro. O.N. Mikhailov (Minsk, 1988). This publication includes the novel *Melkii bes* and the stories 'Svet i teni'; 'Cherviak'; 'Zador'; 'Ulybka'; 'Prevrashcheniia'; 'Malen'kii chelovek'; 'Golodnyi blesk'; 'V tolpe'; 'Obysk'; 'Loengrin'; 'Zverinyi byt'.
- (59) Sologub, F. *Tiazhelye sny. Roman. Rasskazy*, ed. and intro. M. Pavlova (L. 1990). 9 stories.
- (60) Sologub, F. *Tvorimaia legenda* (M: Sovremennik, 1991).
- (61) Sologub, F. *Tvorimaia legenda [Zabytaia kniga]* (M, 1991). Also contains 8 articles by S.; 6 studies of him, and afterword by L. Sobolev.*
- (62) Sologub, F. *Zakliatie sten. Skazochki i stat'i*. Berkeley Slavic Specialties (Berkeley, 1989).*
- (63) Solov'ev, Vladimir *Filosofia iskusstva i literaturnaia kritika*, comp. and intro. R. Gal'tseva and I. Rodnianskaia, notes A.A. Nosov (M, 1991).*
- (64) Solov'ev, V. *Izbrannoe* (M, 1990).*
- (65) Solov'ev, V. *Literaturnaia kritika*, comp. N.I. Tsimbaev, intro. N.I. Tsimbaev and V.I. Fatiushchenko (M, 1990).*
- (66) Solov'ev, V. *'Nepodvizhno lish' solntse liubvi . . .'. Stikhotvoreniia. Proza. Pis'ma. Vospominaniia sovremennikov*, comp., intro. and notes A. Nosov (M, 1990).*
- (67) Solov'ev V. *Sochineniia*, vols. I–II, comp., ed. and intro. by A.F. Losev and A.V. Gulyga (M, 1988). Second edition 1990.
- (68) Voloshin, Maksimilian *Avtobiograficheskaia proza. Dnevnik*, comp. and with an article and notes by Z.D. Davydov and V.P. Kupchenko (M, 1991).
- (69) Voloshin, M. *Izbrannye stikhotvoreniia*, intro. and notes A.V. Lavrov (M, 1988).*
- (70) Voloshin, M. *Kimmeriia*, intro. and comp. I.T. Kuprianov (Kiev, 1990).
- (71) Voloshin, M. *Koktebel'skie berega*, comp. and intro. Z.D. Davydov (Simferopol', 1990).*
- (72) Voloshin, M. *Putnik po vseleenyim*, comp., intro. and notes V.P. Kupchenko and Z.D. Davydov (M, 1990).*

- (73) Voloshin, M. *Puti Rossii Stikhotvoreniia i poemy*, comp., notes and afterword A. Zorin (M, 1992).*
- (74) Voloshin, M. *Stikhotvoreniia*, comp. V.P. Kupchenko (M, 1989). Contains *Stikhotvoreniia; Selva oscura; Demony glukhonemye; Putiami Kaina*; materials.*
- (75) Voloshin, M. *Stikhotvoreniia. Stat'i. Vospominaniia sovremennikov*, comp. and intro. Z.D. Davydov and V.P. Kupchenko (M, 1991).*

Index*

* Indexing the notes I have not noted places of publication or non-contemporary publishers. This index does not cover the bibliography of first sources. Titles of books and journals are given in shortest recognisable form, editor as ed., publisher as pub., author as au. Journals are abbreviated as in chronology and bibliography. Collected works, verse, etc. are indexed for first full mention only.

- 'Academy', *see* Saint Petersburg, societies:
 Obshchestvo revnitelei
 Khudozhestvennogo slova.
Academy of Sciences of the USSR
 (ANSSSR), xvi.
Acmeism, Acmeist, xii, 165, 189, 326, 335,
 336, (Adamism, 371), 428, 429, 431.
 Drakon (collection of poems published
 by . . .) 436.
Acta Universitatis Szegediensis de Attila
 Jozsef nominatae, Dissertationes
 Slavicae, ed. Katalin Szoke, 427.
Adamovich, Georgii Viktorovich
 (1884–1972), 383, 399; *Odinchestvo
 i svoboda*, 383.
Adskaiia Pochta, satirical journal, (1906),
 266, 360.
Aeshylus (c. 525–456 BC), 22.
Africa, 323, 326; Tunisia, 338.
Agrikov N. D., ed. *Shuiskii
 protivopravitel'stvennyi sbornik*, 385.
Agrippa of Nettesheim, 232.
Akhmatova, Anna (real name Anna
 Andreevna Gorenko) (1888–1966), 73,
 190, 331, 339, 371, 405, 429, 431.
 'Mandel'shtam', 429; *Poema bez gerovia*,
 73; *Sochineniia* (1968), 405.
Aksakov family, nineteenth-century
 Slavophiles, 102, 103.
Al'bov, Mikhail Nilovich, ed *SV*
 (1851–1912), 19, 65.
Aleksai, Tsarevich (1905–18), 251.
Alexander I, Tsar (1777–1825), 115.
Alexander II, Tsar (1818–81), 24, 28,
 229.
Alexander III, Tsar (1845–94), 94, 229.
Alexandria (Alexandrine), 184, 272.
Aliansky, Samuil Mironovich (1891–1974),
 338.
Alkonost, Petrograd publishing house
 (1919–23), 338, 423.
Al'makh dlia vsekh, journal, 373.
Ambulants, Society of, *see* *Peredvizhniki*.
D'Amelia, Antonella, ed. Remizov's letters
 to wife, 427.
Amendola Giovanni, Italian contributor to
 Vesy, (1886–1926), 170, 355.
Americas (American), 288, 385; Aztec, 59;
 Mexico, 58, 170, 358; New York, xvi;
 North America, 6, 226; South
 America, 170; United States of, 58,
 170, 358.
Andreev, Iurii, intro. and ed. Remizov,
 Izbrannoe, 428.
Andreev, Leonid Nikolaevich (1871–1919),
 268, 282, 298, 306, 315, 360, 365, 367,
 416, 417, 419, 423.
 WORKS: 'Krasnyi Smekh', 268, 416;
 'Zhizn' cheloveka' ('Life of a man'),
 298, 306; 'T'ma', 315, 365.
Andreevich, (E. A. Solov'ev), rev.
 Shestov's 'Dobro v uchennii . . .', 399.
Andreyev, Nikolay Efremovich, vii.
Angelico, Fra (Guido di Pietro), 334.
Anichkov, T. A., critic, 'Pis'ma o
 literature', 395.
Annenskii Inokentii Fedorovich (pseud.
 Nik-T-o) (1856(?)–1909), x, 43, 173,
 324, 326–31, 338, 349, 352, 353, 357,
 370, 371, 423, 428, 429.
 WORKS: *Famira-kifared*, 429; *Izbrannoe*,
 429; *Kiparisovoyi larets*, 327; *Kniga
 otrazhenii*, 429; *Melanippa-filosof*.
 Tragediia, 352, 429; 'O sovremennom
 lirizme', 383, 430; 'On i ia', 429;
 'Preryvistye stroki', 429; *Pushkin i
 Tsarskoe Selo*, 349; *Putevye ocherki*,
 353; *Tikhie pesni*, 324, 327, 357, 428;

- Annenskii Inokentii Fedorovich (*cont.*)
trans. Complete Works of Euripides,
327; *Tsar Iksion*. Tragediia v 5-ti
deistviiakh s 5 muzikal'nymi
antraktami, 353, 429.
- D'Annunzio, Gabriele, Italian author
(1863–1938), 19, 401; *Francesca da
Rimini* (trs. by Bruisov), 368.
- Antichrist (The Beast), iii, 127, 129,
130, 138, 157, 227 (as Mangod, 230),
232, 262, 350, *see also* titles of
Merezhkovsky's and Bely's books
and under Apocalypse.
- Antinous, favourite of Emperor Hadrian,
V. Ivanov's nickname for Kuzmin,
326.
- Antokol'sky, M., 102, 103.
- Antokol'sky, Pavel Grigorevich, Sov. poet
and ed. of Briusov's *Sobranie
Sochinenii* (1973–5), 387.
- Antonii (Vadovsky), Metropolitan of Saint
Petersburg, 152.
- Aphrodite (Venus), 110, 128, 130 (Russian
Venus, 214), 231, 237.
- Apocalypse (apocalyptic) x, 161, 176, 205,
209, 217, 230, 232–4, 238; millennial,
239, 411, *see also* titles of Bely's and
V. Ivanov's articles.
- Apollo (Apollonian), 114, 178, 179, 214,
235, 239, 338.
- Apollon*, Petersburg journal (1910–17), x,
323–6, 328–31, 334, 335, 367, 369, 370,
371, 372, 377, 383, 403, 413, 422, 428,
429, 430.
- Apukhtin, Aleksei Nikolaevich (1840–93),
13.
- Argonauts, 209, 210, 222, 224, 247, 305,
316, 355, 357.
- Artsybashev, Mikhail Petrovich
(1878–1927), 287, 360, 363.
'Krovavoe piatno', 360; *Rassказы*, 360;
Sanin, 287, 363.
- Ashimbaeva, N. T., ed. Annensky's *Kniga
otrazhenii*, 429.
- Ashukin, N. S., notes to Briusov's
Dnevnik, 387.
- Askol'dov, S. A. (real name Sergei
Alekseevich Alekseev) (1871–1945),
260, 261.
- Arzamas, 188.
- Asia, Asiatic, Asian, 73, *see also* East.
- Athenaeum*, *The*, London journal, 170,
351, 402.
- Atlantis, 184.
- Australia, 58, 299.
- Austria, Austrian, 356.
Salzburg, 347; Vienna, 184, 347.
- Averintsev, Sergei Sergeivich., ed. and
intro. to V. Ivanov, *Stikhotvoreniia
i poetry* (1976), 404;
'The Poetry of Vyacheslav Ivanov', 405.
- Avrelii, *see* Briusov, V. Ia.
- Avvakum, Protopop (1620–80), 319.
- Azadovskii, K. M., au. 'Put' Aleksandra
Dobroliubova', 389, 390; 'Briusov i
Vesy', 400, 401, 402, 420; 'Pis'ma
N. A. Kliueva k Bloku', 425; *Nikolai
Kliuev. Put' poeta* 425.
- Azerbaidjan, 390; Baku, university of, 340;
Baku state typography, 412.
- Babylon, 184; Whore of, 223.
- Bacchus, 239, *see also* Dionysos.
- Baedeker, 333, 335, 372, 430.
- Baily, James, au. 'The versification of
Zinaida Gippius' (dissertation), 382;
'Basic Structural Characteristics of
Russian Literary Metres', 382.
- Bakst Leon (real name Lev Isaakovich
Rozenberg), Rus. artist, founder-
member of MI (1866–1924), 99, 100,
105, 108, 116, 118, 120–122, 135, 150,
154, 167, 330, 350, 352, 363.
WORKS: 'Puti Klassitsizma v iskusstve'
(article), 330, 430; *Terror antiquus*
(picture), 330.
- Bakulin, *see* Briusov, V. Ia.
- Bakunin, Mikhail Aleksandrovich, Rus.
anarchist (1814–76), 277, 362.
- Balakiriev, Milyi Alekseevich, Rus.
composer, (1836–1910), 104 fn., 378.
- Baldur, 247, 248, *see also* Bely and
Briusov's poems.
- Bal'mont, Dmitrii Konstantinovich
(?–1907), poet's father, 56.
- Bal'mont, Konstantin Dmitrevich
(1867–1942), ix, xvi, 4, 11, 13, 19, 23,
56–66, 69, 70, 71, 73, 74, 77, 79, 80,
83–6, 89, 129, 166–71, 174, 179, 197,
203, 209, 218, 226, 255, 278, 284, 329,
339, 343–6, 348–51, 353, 354, 356, 358,
360, 363, 365, 368, 370, 373, 382,
385–8, 390, 391, 401–4, 418.
WORKS: 'Akkordy' (cycle), 386; 'Aromat
sontsa', 65; 'Avtobiograficheskaia
zametka', 386; 'Avtobiografiia', 385;
Ballady i fantazii (trs. from E. A. Poe),
345, 386; *Budem kak solntse*, 209, 284,
354, 387, 388; 'Byliny', 385; 'Cheln
tomleniia', 386; 'Dalekim blizkim',
129, 396; 'Elementarnye slova o
simvolicheskoi poezii', *Feinye skazki.
Detskie pesenki*, 366, 386; *Gornye
vershiny*, 356, 385, 386; 'Ia kogda-to
byl synom zemli', 385; 'Ia mechtou
lovil ukhodiashchie teni', 38; *Iz*

- chuzhezemnykh poetov* (trs.) 370; 'Izbrannyi', 401; K Shelli, 386; 'Kak ia pishu stikhi', 386; *Khorovod vremen*, 388, 403; *Kniga razdumii*, 89, 160, 165, 349; *Liturgiia krasoty. Stikhiinye gimny*, 360; 'Malen'kii sultan', 351; 'Mertvye korabli', 62, 386; 'Mn. A. I. Urusov (Stranitsa liubvi i pamiati)', 386; 'Morskoi razboinik', 387; 'Na zare', 385, 386; 'Okean', 390; 'Oman', 353; 'Pamiati I. S. Turgeneva', 385; 'Pered kartinoi Greko', 386; *Pesni mstilelia*, 284, 365; 'Poesnia bez slov', 60, 386; *Pod severnym nebom*, 59–60, 70, 203, 344, 386; 'Poet rabochemu', 418; *Polnoe sobranie stikhov* (1908–13), 356, 360, 373, 385; 'Praotets sovremennykh simvolistov', 386; 'Skorpion', 164; 'Slova liubvi', 386; *Sobranie sochinenii*, 368; *Stikhotvoreniia* (Znanie), 363; *Stikhotvoreniia* (1969), 385; *Tainstvennye rasskazy* (trs. from E. A. Poe) 345, 386; *V bezbrezhnosti*, xi, 60–1, 63, 77, 345, 386; 'Vidiashchie glaza', 386; 'Vlaga', 386; 'Vozdushno-belye', 62–3, 385; 'Za predely predel' nogo', 63, 386; 'Zavetnaia rifma', 385; *Zelenyi vertograd. Slova potseluinnyie*, 370, 388, 403; *Zhar pitisa. Svirel' slavianina*, 363, 365; *Zmeinye tsvety* (essays), 373; 'Zvezda pustyni', 63.
- Bal'mont, Vera Nikolaevna, poet's mother (1843–1909), 56.
- Baltic, the, 59, 87, 89, 171.
- Aa (river) 89, 351; Lithuania, Lithuanian, 161, 162, 163, 401; Riga [Latvia], 89.
- Baltrusaitis, Jurgis Kazimirovich (1873–1944), 161–3, 164, 166, 167, 169, 170, 349, 354, 355, 401.
- WORKS: *Gornaia tropa*, 401; 'Molitva', 401, 'O sushnosti iskusstva i tvorcheskom dolge khudozhnika', 401; *Zemnye stupeni*, 162, 401.
- Baranova-Shestova N. (Shestov's daughter and biographer), 398; *Zhizn' L'va Shestova* (1983), 398, 399, 400.
- Baras, D., pub. 'Pis'ma molodogo Berdiaeva', 416.
- Baratynsky, Evgenii Abramovich, Rus. poet, (1800–44), 46, 161.
- Barda, Amy, au. 'La place de Severnyj Vestnik et de A. Volynskij dans les débuts du mouvement symboliste', 378.
- Bartenev, Petr Ivanovich, ed. *Russkii Arkhiv* (1829–1912), 348.
- Bartlett, Robert, ed. *Russian Thought and Society 1800–1917. Essays in honour of E. Lampert*, 395.
- Batiushkov, Pavel Nikolaevich, theosopher, (1864–c. 1930), 210.
- Baudelaire, Charles-Pierre, Fr. Symbolist poet (1821–67), also Baudelairean, 3, 6, 9, 35, 46, 48, 51, 59, 62, 67, 69, 72, 142, 350, 376, 385, 386.
- WORKS: *Le Tombeau de Charles Baudelaire* (essays about him), 376; *Les Fleurs du mal*, 6, 62; 'L'irréparable', 376.
- Bazanov, V. G., Sov. critic, au. books, articles on peasant poets and Symbolists, 425.
- Bazzarelli, E., au. 'Blok et Ivanov . . .', 418.
- Beardsley, Aubrey Vincent, Eng. graphic artist (1872–98), 95, 108.
- Beckett, Samuel, Irish writer resident in France (1906–1989), 427.
- Bedford, C. H. (au. *The Seeker, D. S. Merezkovsky*), 395.
- Beethoven, Ludwig van (1770–1827), 201, 247.
- Beilis, Mendel' (b. 1874), Jewish workman unjustly accused of ritual murder, 396.
- Beketov, Andrei Nikolaevich, Professor, Blok's grandfather (1825–1902), 211, 223.
- Beketova, Mariia Andreevna, Blok's aunt (1862–1938), au. of several books about him and ed. *Pis'ma k rodnym*, 408.
- Belgium, Belgian, 171, 368, 385; Brussels, 180.
- Belinskii, Vissarion Grigor'evich, Rus. lit. critic (1811–48), 20, 21, 379.
- Bel'kind E. L., au. 'Blok i Viacheslav Ivanov', 418.
- Bellini, Giovanni, It. artist (1422–1516), 334.
- Beloglazova, N. M., au. *Abramtsevo* (1987), 392, for Abramtsevo, see Russia.
- Bely, Andrei (real name Boris Nikolaevich Bugaev) (1880–1934), x, xi, xiii, xvi, 11, 13–15, 24, 38, 51, 60, 65, 80, 119, 120, 126, 130, 136, 158, 161, 164, 166, 167, 169, 172, 173, 175, 177–9, 183, 185, 197, 198–211, 212, 214, 215, 218, 219, 221–4, 226–30, 235, 238, 239, 246–9, 250, 254–67, 269, 274–81, 283, 284, 286–8, 290, 291, 296–300, 307–9, 314–20, 322, 324–26, 331, 332, 334–40, 345, 347–59, 363, 364, 366–73, 375, 380, 382, 386, 388–90, 394, 395, 397, 400–18, 420, 421, 423, 425–27, 429–31.

Bely, Andrei (*cont.*)

WORKS: [Antikhrist] 348; 'Apokalipsis v russkoi poezii', 234, 359, 411; *Arabeski*, 417, 419, 425, 427; 'Bagrianiitsa v terniakh', 209; 'Bal'dur-Loki', 248; 'Bezumets', 408; 'Chekhov', 421; 'Dusha mira', 408; 'Embematika smysla', 369, 425, 427; 'Formy iskusstva', 205–6, 223, 406; 'Fridrikh Nitche i predvestiia sovremennosti', 367; *Gibel' senatora* (play from novel *Peterburg*), 339; 'Gody polemiki', 420; 'Ibsen i Dostoevskii', 359, 380, 418; 'Idealisty i Novyi Put'', 400; 'Iskusstvo', 425; 'Iskusstvo budushchego', 367; 'Kamerniai ispoved', 367; 'Kentavr', 407; 'Khimery', 275, 359, 418; 'Khudozhnik kritikam', 297, 365; *Kotik Letaev*, 199, 211, 335; 'Krizis soznania i Genrik Ibsen', 372; *Kubok metelei. 4-aia simfoniia*, 299, 308, 354, 363, 364, 367, 423; 'Kust', 363; 'Lettre autobiographique à Ivanov-Razumnik', 412; 'Lirika i eksperiment', 369, 426, 427; 'Literaturnyi dnevnik', 419; 'Magiia slov', 369, 426, 427; 'Maska', 406; 'Materialy k biografii', 412; *Mezhdv dvukh revoliutsii*, 415, 418, 420, 426, 427; *Moskva*, 209, 335, (Mandrygin, 209); 'Mysl' i iazyk (Filosofia iazyka A. A. Potebni)', 372; 'N. V. Bugaeva', 407; 'Na gorakh', 206–208, 408; 'Na perevale' (under own name B. Bugaev), 359, 418, 423; *Na rubezhe dvukh stoletii*, 404, 406–8, 410, 431; *Nachalo veka*, 386, 394, 401–3, 407–10, 411, 413, 416, 418, 428; 'Nastoiashchee i budushchee russkoi literatury', 315, 369; 'Ne poi, Krasavitsa, pri mne ... A. S. Pushkin (opyt opisaniia)', 370; [Nevidimyi grad], 337; 'Nezhen vostok poblednevshii', 208–9; 'O formakh iskusstva', 353; 'Oblomki mirov', 403, 433; 'Okno v vechnost'', 421; 'Opyt kharakteristiki russkogo chetyrekhstopnogo iamba', 370, 426; 'Panikhida', 256, 363; *Pepel*, xvi, 15, 255, 257, 299, 308, 314, 357, 367, 368, 415, 423, 426; *Pervoe svidanie*, 239, 335; 'Pesnia i sovremennost', 368; *Peterburg* (novel, see also *Gibel' senatora*), 130, 199, 209, 257, 335, 337, 363, 427, (Lipachenko, 209), (Neulovimyi, 255); 'Pevitsa', 415; 'Pis'mo ot studenta estestvennika', 205, 222, 352, 354; *Pochemu ia stal*

simvolistom ... , 431; 'Poet iz mramora i bronzy', 364; 'Poproshaika', 254; 'Prezhe i teper'' (cycle), 408; 'Prishedshii', 354; 'Prizyvny', 354; 'Problema kul'tury', 369, 427; 'Rakurs dnevnika', 415; 'Raziasnenie V. Ivanovu', 418; 'Ritm', 372; 'S. M. Solov'evu', 412; *Serebrianyi golub*, 209, 211, 257, 314, 316–20, 337, 363, 369, 372, 426, (Darial'skii, Petr, 209, 317, 318), (Katia, 317), (Kudeiarov 317, 318), (Matrena, 317), (Todrabe-Graaben, 317); *Severnaia simfoniia. 1-aia geroicheskaia*, 206, 350, 354; 'Sfinks', 359; *Simfonii*, 206, 228, 233, 308, 318; *Simfoniia. 2-aia dramaticheskaiia*, 119, 198–200, 204, 206, 238, 351–3, 394, 406, 407; 'Simvolizm', 425; 'Simvolizm i Pshibyshevskii', 369; 'Simvolizm i russkoe iskusstvo', 307, 425; 'Simvolizm i sovremennoe iskusstvo', 368; 'Simvolizm kak miroponimanie', 210, 408; *Simvolizm. Kniga statei*, 369, 372, 395, 425; 'Sotsial-Demokratia i religiia', 364; 'Sovremennost' i Pshibyshevskii', 369; 'Sozidatel'', 411; 'Sravnitel'naiia morfologiia ritma russkikh lirikov ...', 370, 426; 'Starinnomu vragu', 413; *Stikhotvoreniiia* (1982), xvi; *Stikhotvoreniiia i poemy* (1966), 407; 'Svetovaia skazka', 357; 'Sviashchennye tsvety', 354; 'Teatr i sovremennaia drama', 423; 'Toska po vole', 359; *Tragediia tvorchestva Dostoevskii i Tolstoi*, 372, 380; 'Tragediia tvorchestva Dostoevskogo', 372; *Urna*, xvi, 255, 257, 308, 316, 367, 369, 411, 426; 'V. Briusovu' (cycle), 411; 'V. Ia Briusovu', 390; 'Venets lavrovyi', 363; 'Venok ili venets', 372, 403, 430; 'Veseliie na Rusi', 256, 415; 'Vesna', 408; 'Viacheslav Ivanov – siluet', 417; 'Vol'no-otpushchenniki', 367; 'Vospominania o A. A. Bloke', 412, 415; 'Vozmezdie', 408; *Vozrat. Tret'ia Simfoniia*, 203, 353, 357; 'Zhizn' pesni', 368; *Zoloto v lazure*, 206, 209, 258, 358, 356, 407, 408; 'Zolotoe runo' (cycle), 210, 408; 'Znaiu', 408.

Belyi nochi, Almanac (1907), 365, 408.

Benois, Albert, watercolourist, brother of Aleksandr (1852–1936), 99.

Benois, Aleksandr, artist, memoirist, art-historian, founder-member of MI and Religious-Philosophical Meetings

- (1870–1960), ix, 94–101, 105–10, 112, 115–22, 126, 135, 150, 152, 153, 156, 171, 339, 344, 346, 350, 352, 354, 355, 396, 397, 400, 419, 420.
- WORKS: 'Chemu uchit Akademiia Khudozhestv', 400; *Istoriia russkoi zhivopisi v XIX veke*, 118, 394; 'Khudozhestvennye eresi', 419; *Moi vospominaniia*, 392, 393, 397; 'Otvét G. Filosofov', 396.
- Berdiaev, Nikolai Aleksandrovich, philosopher, ed. of *Novyi Put'* from Nov. 1904 and *Voprosy Zhizni*, contributor to *Problemy Idealizma* and *Vekhi* (1874–1948), 125, 143, 147, 158, 260–63, 353, 355, 358, 360, 398, 399, 415.
- WORKS: *Filosofia (Mirosozertsanie Dostoevskogo)*, 262, 275, 416; 'O novom religioznom soznanii', 262, 358, 416; *Samopoznanie*, 398, 416; 'Tragediia i obydennost', 399.
- Berezovskaia, Anna Eliseevna, wife of Lev Shestov (1870–1962), 140, 143, 347.
- Bezzubov, V. I., au. 'Aleksandr Blok i Leonid Andreev', 417.
- Bible, the (also Holy Writ, Scriptures): Old Testament, 21, 135, 139, 196, 229; Ezekiel, 426; Jacob wrestling, 47; Job, 145, 274, 282; Psalter, 188, 266; Proverbs, 195, 410; Solomon, Song of Songs, 373; New Testament or Gospels, 188, 196; Apocalypse or Book of Revelations, x, 161, 176, 205, 209, *see also* separately under Apocalypse (Apocalyptic).
- Bilibin, Ivan Iakevlich, Rus. artist (1876–1942), 266, 358.
- Binevich, Evgenii, au. 'Rasskaz v karikaturakh o V. E. Meierkhol'de', 422.
- Birlet, Charles, minor official at Fr. Embassy in SPb. Member of MI circle, (1860(?)–1936/7), 99.
- Blake, William, Eng. artist and poet (1757–1827), 61, 385.
- Blinov, Valerii N., au. 'Reminiscences and chronology' (V. Ivanov), 429; 'Viacheslav Ivanov i vozniknovenie akmeizma', 429.
- Blok, Aleksandr Aleksandrovich (1880–1921), x, xiii, xv, xvii, 4, 12, 14, 15, 29, 38, 40, 44, 61, 75, 88, 149, 153, 157, 166, 167, 173, 174, 178, 185, 189, 195, 197, 199, 200, 203, 206, 208, 210, 211–24, 226–8, 230–9, 245, 247, 250, 254, 256–61, 264, 270, 275–85, 287, 289–95, 298–301, 305–7, 309, 311–13, 315–17, 324, 325, 327, 329–31, 333–40, 344, 347–59, 361–7, 369, 371, 372, 374, 375, 378, 380, 382, 384, 394, 398, 400–5, 407–26, 428–31.
- WORKS: 'Avtobiograficheskaia zametka', 408, 409; 'Balaganchik', 281, 361; *Balaganchik* (play), 281, 290–293, 361, 364, 419, 421; 'Barka zhizni', 259, 415; 'Bez bozhestva, bez vdokhnoveniia', 331; 'Bezvremenie', 362, 380; 'Devushka rozovoi kalitki i muravinyi tsar', 362; 'Ditiia Gogolia', 369; 'Dnevnik 1901–1902 goda', 410; *Dnevnik*, 426; 'Dolor ante lucem', 213; 'Druz'iam', 367, 424; *Dvenadtsat'*, 15, 73, 256, 335, 338, 420; 'Ei bylo piatnadtsat' let. No po stuku', 408; 'Eshche prekrasno seroe nebo', 418; 'Fabrika', 219; 'Faina', 293; 'Gamaiun', 350; 'Genrik Ibsen', 367; 'Gimn', 258, 284; 'Golos iz khora', 374; 'Gorod', 359; 'Ia videl ognennye znaki', 415; 'Ia zhivu v otдалennom skitu' (Ariia nevesty), 416; 'Iamby' (cycle), 369; 'Ironia', 367, 424, 426; 'Italijskie stikhi' (cycle), 369, 430; 'Iz gazet', 220; *Korol' na ploshchadi*, 291–3, 362, 364, 422; 'Kraski i slova', 419; *Liricheskie dramy*, 367; 'Literaturnye itogi 1907', 364, 423; 'Meshchanskoe zhitie', 362; 'Moi ogni goriat na vys'iax gor', 206; 'Moi vecher blizok i bezvolen', 409; 'Molityv', 210, 408; 'Na pole Kulikovom', 309–12, 315, 367, 416, 425; 'Na zheleznoi doroge', 374; 'Narod (Rossiia) i intelligentsiia', 312, 313, 338, 425, 426; 'Nebesnoe umom ne izmerimo', 408; *Nechaiannaia Radost'*, 167, 221, 283, 294, 362, 364, 409, 418, 421, 422; 'Nepodvizhnost'', 214, 215; 'Neznakomka', 290, 291, 294, 362, 409, 421, 422; *Neznakomka* (play), 291, 292, 362, 364; 'Nochnaia', 411; *Nochnaia fialka*, 290, 360; *Nochnye chasy*, 374; 'O doblestiakh, o podvigakh, o slave', 367; 'O drame', 364; 'O, ia khochu bezumno zhit'', 408; 'O lirike', 364; 'O liubvi, poezii i gosudarstvennoi sluzhbe', 362; 'O Merezhkovskom', 400; 'O realistakh', 298, 364, 419, 424, 425; 'O sovremennom sostoianii russkogo simvolizma', 309, 333, 334, 336, 372, 403, 413, 421, 430; 'Ob odnoi starinnoi p'ese', 367; 'Osennaia liubov', 364; 'Otvét Merezhkovskomu', 417, 430; 'Pamiati Leonida Andreeva', 417;

- Blok, Aleksandr Aleksandrovich** (*cont.*)
 'Pamiati V. F. Kommissarzhevskoi', 431; 'Perekrestki', 219; *Pesnia sud'by*, 293, 306, 307, 309, 364, 367, 424, 425; 'Pis'ma o poezii', 367; 'Po gorodu begal chernyi chelovek', 219, 220, 409; 'Podnimalis' iz t'my pogrebov', 415; 'Poety', 367; 'Poseshchenie', 374; 'Poslednee naputstvie', 410; 'Poslednii den'', 411; 'Predchuvstviu Tebia', 215, 216, 409; 'Prishletsy', 258; 'Prospaius' ia – i v pole tumanno', 409; 'Puzyni zemli' (cycle), 359; 'Rodina' (cycle), 364; 'Rossiia', 367, 409; 'Rossiia (Narod) i intelligentsiia', 367; 'Rus'', 416; 'Rysar'-monakh, o Vladimire Solov'ev'e', 412; 'Shagi kommandora', 374; 'Shutochnye programmy zhurnalov', 384; 'Skify', 309, 335; *Snezhnaia Maska*, 293, 294, 300, 364, 422; *Sobranie sochinenii* (1963–5); *Sobranie stikhov* (Musagetes, 1914), 376, 418; 'Solntse nad Rossiieu', 367; 'Stikhi o Prekrasnoi Dame' (cycle 'Iz posviashchenii' in *NP*), 157, 167, 354; *Stikhi o Prekrasnoi Dame* (Grif), 167, 213, 214, 231, 236, 276, 356, 408, 409; 'Stikhiia i kul'tura', 367, 426; 'Tvorchestvo Viacheslava Ivanova', 404, 418; 'Ty otkhodish' v sumrak alyi', 408; 'Ty v polia otoshla bezvozzrata', 221; 'U zabytykh mogil', 410; 'Ushcherb', 219; 'V goluboi, dalekoi spal'en'ke', 293; 'V kabakakh, v pereul'kakh, v izvivakh', 259, 415; 'V severnom more', 424; Valerii Briusov, Urbi et Orbi, review of, 402; 'Vechera iskusstv', 367; 'Venetsiia', 430; 'Vesenee', section of *Nechaiannaia Radost'*, 221; 'Veter prinis izdaleka', 408; 'Viacheslavu Ivanovu', 245, 279, 418; 'Visia nad gorodom vsemirnym', 418; *Vol'nye mysli*, 306; 'Voprosy, voprosy i voprosy', 367, 426; 'Vot on, riad grobovykh stupenei', 221, 409; *Vozmezdie*, 369, 424; 'Vse krichali u kruglykh stolov', 219; 'Vstuplenie' (Molitva), 409; 'Za gran'iu proshlykh dnei', 12; 'Zakliatie ognem i mrakom', 364; *Zemlia v snegu*, 307, 315, 367, 411, (as title of Volokhova's memoirs) 422.
- Blok, Aleksandr L'vovich**, Blok's father (1852–1909), 211, 270, 408, 409, 417.
- Blok, Aleksandra Andreevna** (née Beketova, later Kublitskaia-Piottukh), Blok's mother (1860–1923), 211, 212, 224, 347, 425, 430, 431,
- Blok, Liubov' Dmitrievna** (née Mendeleeva) (1881–1939), 12, 208, 212, 213, 217, 219–21, 224, 251, 265, 269, 278, 279, 291, 297–9, 309, 313, 317, 348, 352, 355, 356, 363, 366, 367, 369, 378, 423, 425.
Byli i nebylitsy . . . , 378, 408.
- Blokovskie Sborniki* (Tartu) (III) 389, (IV) 409, (I) 417, (II) 418, (I) 421, (II) 422.
- Blue Rose**, group of 'Symbolist' artists, 57, 167, 420.
- Boecklin, Arnold**, German artist (1827–1901), 99, 119, 161, 206.
- Bogdanov (Aleksandr Aleksandrovich Malinovsky)**, Social Democrat philosopher associated with 'God-building', later founder of 'Proletkul't' (1873–1928), 145.
- Bogdanovich, T. A.**, correspondent of Annensky's, 429.
- Bonnard, Pierre**, Fr. artist (1867–1947), 105, 171.
- Borisov-Musatov, Viktor El'pidiforovich**, Rus. artist (1870–1905), exhibited with MI 1906, 57, 121, 167, 210, 211.
- Borodin, Aleksandr Porfir'evich**, Rus. composer (1833–87), 96, 97, 104 fn..
Prince Igor (Opera), 97, 371.
- Borovsky, Victor**, au. *Chaliapin – A Critical Biography* (1988), 394.
- Borromini, Francesco**, Italian baroque architect (1599–1667), 120.
- Botkin, Fedor**, artist and art patron (1839–1914), 107.
- Bowlt, John E.**, au. *The Silver Age* (1979), 394.
- Brandes, Georg**, literary critic (1842–1927), 141, 142, 146, 345.
- Brett, Katharina**, Cambridge University Press editor, xiv.
- Brikhnichev, Iona Panteleevich**, ed. of journal *Novoe Vino*, correspondent of Blok, 410, 425.
- Bristol, Evelyn**, au. 'Blok between Nietzsche and Soloviev', 411.
- British Academy**, xiv, 192.
- Briusov, Iakov, Kuz'mich**, father of Valerii, 71.
- Briusov, Valerii Iakovlevich** (pseuds. include Avrelii, Bakulin, Durov, Maslov, Pentavr) (1873–1924), ix, xiii, xvi, 10, 23, 27, 30, 35, 36, 38, 47, 53, 56, 61, 62, 66–87, 89, 93, 104, 114, 125, 136, 139, 147, 153–5, 157, 158, 160, 162–80, 185, 187, 188, 196, 199, 200, 201, 204, 216–18, 220, 226, 228, 231–6, 246–55, 258–61, 264, 271, 275, 277, 279, 280, 282–4, 286, 287, 296–9, 306,

- 315, 317, 324, 327, 329, 331–4, 337, 343–52, 354–7, 359–64, 366–8, 370, 371, 377, 382, 387–91, 394, 398, 400–4, 406–11, 413–16, 418 (Avrelii), 419 (Avrelii, Pentavr), 420–4, 427, 428 (Avrelii), 429, 430.
- WORKS: 'A. A. Fet. Iskusstvo ili zhizn'', 377; 'Annenskii. Kiparisovyi larets' (review), 429; 'Assargadon', 252; 'Avtobiografiia', 317, 401; 'Bal'deru', ii, 413; Bal'mont (reviews), 174, 387, 388, 403, (introduction to *Budem kak solntse*), 288; 'Blizkim' (section of *Tertia Vigilia*), 401; *Chefs d'oeuvre*, 72–7, 79, 345, 389; 'Cryptomeria', 73; 'Da, tsepi mogut byt' prekrasny', 414; *Dalekie i blizkie*, 377, 378, 382, 387, 403, 429; 'Demony pyli', 390; 'Dmitrii Merezhkovskii', 382; *Dnevnik*, 387, 388, 390, 391, 394, 400–2, 407; 'Dovol'nym', 414; 'Est' chto-to pozornoe v moshchi prirody', 390; 'F. I. Tiutchev. Smysl' ego tvorchestva', 377; 'Griadushchie guny', 259; 'Ja znaiu udovol'stviia smerti', 47, 80, 383; 'Ispepelennyi', 370; 'Istiny', 176, 398, 403; 'Iurgisu Baltrushaitisu', 401; 'Iunnoy poetu', 79, 176, 390, 391; 'K Blizkoi', 231, 410; 'K sograzhdanam', 414; 'K Tikhomu okeanu', 414; 'Kamenshchik I', 253, 414; 'Kamenshchik II', 254; 'Kinzhal', 253, 351, 414; 'Kliuchi tain', 176, 177, 180, 403; *Kniga razdumii*, 89, 160, 165, 349; 'Kon bled', 233, 411; 'Lik Meduzy', 259; 'Liubliu ia liniu vernost', 165, 401; 'Loki Bal'deru', 247, 357; *Me eum esse*, 79–81, 83, 84, 174, 346, 347, 390; 'Méditations' (cycle) 73, 78; 'Miscelanea', 403; 'Mladshim', 233, 234, 408, 411; 'Mudroe ditia', 86, 356, 391; 'N. Minskii. Opyt kharakteristiki', 381; 'Na novyi kolokol (Borshchikov)', 81, 82, 390; 'Nekolebimoi istine', 403; 'Nenuzhnaia pravda', 353; 'Noch'iu', 389; *O iskusstve*, 84, 85, 347, 391; 'O rechi rabskoi', 373, 430; 'O zakroi svoi blednye nogi', 72; 'Obriad noch', 421; *Ognennyi angel*, 247, 332, 356, 359, 366, 368, 413, 421, (Heinrich, 288), (Renata), 288, (Ruprecht, 288); 'Otvét G. Andreevskomu', 351; Péleas et Mélisande (trs.), 366; 'Perepiska s Andream Belym', 389; 'Perepiska s Emiliem Verkharnom 1906–1914', 402; Pis'ma k L. N. Vil'kinoi, 402; 'Pis'ma P. P. Pertsovu 1894–1896' (1927), 382, 389; Pis'ma P. P. Pertsovu' (1926), 387, 389, 403, 414; 'Po ulitsam uzkim, i v shume, i noch'iu', 411; 'Poslednaia rabota Vrubelia', 420; 'Poslednie dumy', 390; 'Povsednevnost'' (cycle in *Stephanos*), 253; *Puti i pereput'ia. Sobranie Stikhov*, ii, 366, T. II 368, 414; 'Rab', 172, 402; 'Russkaia lirika', 403; *Russkie simbolisty* (with Miropol'sky et al) 66, 68–71, 80, 84, 169, 170, 228, 344, 345, 387, 388; *Sobranie sochinenii* (1973–5), 377; 'Sovremennost'' (cycle in *Stephanos*), 253; *Stephanos (Venok)*, 174, 246, 253, 361, 413, 414; *Stikhii o sovremennosti* (trs) 361; *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy* (1961), 389; 'Sumashedshii', 389, 411; 'Sviashchennaia zhertva', 176, 178, 180, 234, 403; 'Svoboda slova', 359; 'Teni', 74, 389; *Tertia Vigilia*, 81, 165, 167, 349, 401; 'Torzhestvo pobeditelei', 366; 'Tsushima', 414; 'Tvorchestvo', 72; *Urbi et Orbi*, 174, 218, 234, 235, 252, 354, 402, 410, 414; 'V stenakh', 401; 'V zashchitu ot odnoi pokhvaly', 411; 'Vladimir Solov'ev: smysl ego tvorchestva', 231, 350, 403, 410; *Vse napevy*, 334, 370; *Vtoraia tysiacha*, 366; 'Z. N. Gippius', 414; *Zemnaia os'*. *Rasskazy i dramaticheskie stseny* (1901–6), 361, 373.
- Briusova, Ioanna Matveevna (née Runt)**, Briusov's wife and posthumous editor (1881–1951), 71, 347, 370, 388, 390, 391.
- WORKS: ed. *Dnevnik*, 387, 391; ed. *Izbrannye stikhi* (1933), 388.
- Briusova, Nadezhda Iakovlevna (Nadia)**, Briusov's sister and helper with 'Skorpion' and *Vesy* (1881–1951), 165, 169, 390.
- Briusovskie Chteniia*, 387, 402, 414.
- Brummfild, William**, au. 'The decorative arts in Russian architecture 1900–1907', 393.
- Buddhism**, 202, neo-Buddhist, 7.
- Bugaev, Boris Nikolaevich** (see Bely, Andrei).
- Bugaev, Nikolai Vasil'evich** (1837–1903), Bely's father, Professor of Mathematics, 200, 201, 228, 238, 314, 315, 357, 407.
- Bugaeva, Aleksandra Dmitrievna (née Egorova)** (1858–1922), Bely's mother, 201, 209, 267, 271.

- Bugaeva, Klavdia Nikolaevich (née Alekseeva, by first marriage Vasil'eva) (1886–1970), Bely's second wife, 338.
- Bulgakov, Sergei Nikolaevich, philosopher and theologian, otherwise as Berdiaev (1871–1942), 158, 260, 261, 353, 355, 358, 398.
 WORKS: 'Bez plana', 261, *Problemy idealizma* (ed.), 158, 260, 353, 369.
- Bunakov-Fondaminsky, Il'ia Isidorovich, Socialist Revolutionary, later active in Rus. Orthodox Christian Movement (1880–1942), 284.
- Bunin, Ivan Alekseevich (1870–1953), 166, 282, 349, 353, 395; *Listopad*, 353.
- Burenin, Viktor Petrovich (1841–1926), feuilletonist, 21, 40, 114, 379, 390, 394.
 WORKS: 'Kriticheskie ocherki', 390; 'Kriticheskie zametki', 394.
- Burliuk, David Davidovich, Futurist artist (1882–1967), 421.
- Buromskaia-Morozova, E. M., ed. M. K. Morozova, 'Andrei Bely', 426.
- Bykov, P. N. ed. Tiutchev, *Polnoe Sobranie sochinenii*, 377.
- Byzantium, Byzantine, 130, 184, 192, 193, 229, 412; neo-Byzantine, 99.
- Caesar, 146, 162, 252.
- Cahiers du monde russe et soviétique* (Fr. journal), 378, 412, 413, 418.
- Cain, 130, 200.
- Calderon de la Bara, Pedro (1600–81), *La devocion de la Cruz*, 372.
- California Slavic Studies* (US journal), 421.
- Camus, Albert, Fr. writer (1913–60), 146.
- Cardines, M., au. 'The Harrowing of Hell', 420, *see also* McCarey.
- Carlson, Maria, au. 'Ivanov, Bely: Mintslova: the Mystic triangle', 426, on *The Silver Dove*, 427.
- Carmen (opera), 95.
- Carver, Catherine, xiv.
- Cassedy, Steven, intro. ed. and trs.: *Selected Essays of Andrey Bely* (1985), 407, 427.
- Caucasus, 39, 58, 79, 80, 346; Borzhomii, 39.
- Ceres, earth goddess, 193, *see also* Demeter.
- Cervantes, Miguel de, Sp. writer (1547–1616), 22.
- Cézanne, Paul, Fr. painter (1839–1906), 105.
- Chaikovskiy, Petr Il'ich, Rus. composer (1840–93), 96, 97, 116;
 WORKS: Maid of Pskov' (opera), 116; Nutcracker Suite (ballet), 220; Queen of Spades (opera), 97; Sleeping Beauty (ballet), 371.
- Chebotarevskaya, Anastasia Nikolaevna, translator, critic, wife of Sologub (1876–1921), 368, 384.
 ed. of 'O Fedore Sologube. Kritika. Stat'i i zametki' (1917), 384.
- Chekhov, Anton Pavlovich (1860–1904), 13, 36, 65, 125, 146, 156, 166, 270, 321, 360, 363, 399, 400, 402.
Vishnevyy sad, 13.
- Chekhov, Mikhail Aleksandrovich (actor) (1891–1955), 339.
- Chelishchev, Aleksandr Sergeevich, friend of Bely's, musician, 209, 408.
- Cherepnin, Nikolai Nikolaevich, composer and conductor (b. 1873), *Le Pavillon d'Armide* (ballet), 371.
- Chernov, Igor, ed. Pavlovich's reminiscences of Blok, 422.
- Chernyshevsky, Nikolai Gavrilovich, Rus. critic and writer (1828–1889), 20, 22, 277.
- China, Chinese, 59, 161, 428, *see also* East.
- Chopin, Frédéric François (1810–49), Polish composer, 201.
- Christ, Jesus, Christianity, Christian, 2, 5, 26, 32–4, 45, 95, 111, 122, 124, 125–7, 129, 130, 134–6, 138, 139, 150, 153, 155, 157, 196, 200, 202, 209, 222, 227, 229, 230, 232, 235, 237, 238, 240, 241, 251, 262, 264, 274, 276, 282, 283, 290, 308, 309, 313, 318, 338, 339, 350, 354, 358, 373, 412, 431; Christian Brotherhood of Struggle, 269; Fool-in-Christ, 58; Good Shepherd, 130, 155; neo-Christian (neo-Christianity), 154, 161, 261, *see also* Orthodox Church.
- Christa, Boris, ed. 'Andrei Bely centenary Papers' (1980), 407.
- Chtets-deklamator* III, Anthology pub. in Kiev, 373.
- Chukovskiy, Kornei Ivanovich, critic and children's poet, (1882–1969), 363, 378, 384.
 WORKS: 'Aleksandr Blok' in *Liudi i Knigi*, 378; 'Nav'i chary *Melkogo besa*', 384.
- Chulkov, Georgii Ivanovich, minor poet, founder of 'Fakely' (1879–1939), 131, 253, 260, 263, 264, 272, 279–84, 287, 298, 299, 350, 351, 355, 357, 360, 361, 370, 377, 396, 410, 412, 414.
 WORKS: 'Aleksandr Blok i ego vremia', 377, 396; *Gody strantsvii*, 414, 419; *Kremnisti put'*, 280, 357, 419; 'O misticheskom anarkhizme' in *Fakely* I, 282; 'O misticheskom anarkhizme, 282–4, 359, 361, 419; 'Ob utverzhenii lichnosti', 419; *Taiga*, 295.
- Chulkova, Nadezhda Grigor'evna, Chulkov's wife (1874–1961), 280, 360.

- Cicero, 202.
- Cioran, Samuel, trs. V. Ivanov 'The precepts of Symbolism', 405;
 au. *Vladimir Solov'ev and the Knighthood of the Divine Sophia*, 416.
- Classic, classicism, 310, 330.
- Clarism, 333, 335, 371, 373 *see also* Kuzmin.
- Commedia del Arte, 281, 361; Columbine, 219, 291; Harlequin, 219, 224, 281, 291; Pierrot, 224, 291, 293.
- Constantinople, 271 *see also* Byzantium.
- Cranach, Lukas, Ger. painter (probably the Elder, 1472–1553), 95.
- Crone, Anna Lise, au. *Rozanov and the End of Literature* (1978), 397.
- Cross, A. au. 'Konstantin Bal'mont in Oxford in 1897', 402.
- Cui, Cesar Antonovich, composer, theoretician of 'The Mighty Five' (1835–1918), 104.
- Cumming, Christine, xiv.
- Czechoslovakia, Czech, 58; Prague, 370; Slovak, 59.
- Dante, Alighieri (1265–1321), 198, 285, 291, 336, 410, 411, 420, 421.
 WORKS: (Beatrice, 285); Inferno, 198, 285, 411, 420; Paradiso, 338; Purgatorio, 285, 420.
- Darov, *see* Briusov.
- Darwin, Charles, Darwinism, 321, 364.
- Davidson, Pamela, au. *The Poetic Imagination of Viacheslav Ivanov* (1989), 410, 420.
- Decembrists, 115.
- Dégas, Hilaire-Germain Edgard, Fr. painter (1834–1917), 119.
- Delibes, Leo, composer (1836–91); Sylvia, 117.
- Demeter, earth goddess, 273; *see also* Ceres.
- Denis, Maurice, Fr. painter (1870–1943), 106, 171, 420.
- Derzhavin, Gavriila Romanovich, Rus. poet (1743–1816), 190.
- Deshart Ol'ga, ed. of Viacheslav Ivanov *Sobranie Sochinenii*, 1971–ongoing, 404. Intro. to SS 404, 406, 410, 412, 413, 429.
- Devil, 46–9, 53, 129, 212, 228, 252, 286; Demon as fallen angel, 289; Demonic, 294, 332, 420; Devil's advocate, 296, 300.
- Diagilev, Sergei Pavlovich (1872–1929), ix, 3, 93, 96–9, 101, 104–12, 114–22, 131, 144, 145, 153, 154, 156, 157, 170, 173, 270, 277, 288, 340, 345–53, 355, 360, 363, 366, 368, 371, 373, 377, 392, 393, 394, 400, 420.
- WORKS: 'Akvarel'naia vystavka', 392; 'Evropeiskie vystavki i russkie khudozhniki', 392; 'Finlandskii khudozhnik Edel'fel't', 392; 'Nemetskaia pechat' o russkikh khudozhnikakh', 393; 'Opyt khudozhostvennoi otsenki', 392; 'Peredvizhnaia vystavka', 393; *Russkaia zhivopis' v XVIII veke. D. G. Levitskii 1735–1822*, 394; 'Slozhnye voprosy', 377, 394; 'V chas itogov', 417.
- Dikman, M. I., ed. Fedor Sologub, *Stikhotvorenia* (1975), 384; ed. Briusov, *Stikhotvorenia i poemy* (1961), 389.
- Dinesman T. G. ed. 'Perepiska Briusova s Emiliem Verkharnom 1906–1914', 402.
- Dionysos, Dionysian, 78, 157, 162, 169, 176, 179, 196, 214, 234, 235, 236, 239, 241, 273, 275, 276, 281, 285, 292–4, 299, 308, 318, 338, 353, 354, 360, 406, 408, 412, 420.
- Diotima, *see* Plato.
- Dmitrievskaia, Dariia Mikhailovna, V. Ivanov's first wife, 240.
- Dobroliubov, Aleksandr Mikhailovich, Symbolist poet (1876–1944), ix, 23, 40, 69, 70, 71, 77, 80, 82, 83, 85, 86, 88, 153, 164, 165, 167, 169, 173, 179, 333, 343–51, 360, 388–90, 401, 404.
 WORKS: *Iz Knigi Nevidimoi*, 360, 389; *Natura naturans – Natura naturata*, 23, 77, 345, 388, 389; 'Poshlost' i rabstvo', 388; *Sobranie stikhov*, 164, 349, 350, 388, 389.
- Dobroliubov, Nikolai Aleksandrovich, Rus. literary critic (1836–1861), 20, 21, 367.
- Dobroliubova, Mariia Mikhailovna, sister to Aleksandr D., betrothed to Leonid Semenov (d. 1906), 69.
- Dobuzhinsky, Mstislav Valer'ianovich, Rus. artist, member of MI from 1901 (1875–1957), 111, 121, 265–6, 282, 358, 365, 366.
- Dolgoplov, L. K., au. *Poemy Bloka i russkaia poema ...* (1964), 389.
- Don Juan, Don Juanism, 42, 71.
- Donchin, Georgette, au. *The Influence of French Symbolism on Russian Poetry*, 387, 402.
- Dostoevsky, Fedor Mikhailovich (1821–81), 1, 2, 10, 12–13, 22, 26, 32, 42, 51, 75, 80, 115, 124, 127, 131, 134, 137, 142, 144, 145, 149, 158, 184, 194,

- Dostoevsky, Fedor Mikhailovich (*cont.*)
219, 227, 261, 262, 277, 278, 315, 318,
332, 336, 350, 351, 355, 372, 375, 377,
379, 380, 396–9, 417, 418, 424.
WORKS: [*Bednye liudi*] (Devushkin, 321);
[*Besy*] (Ivan Tsarevich, idea of, 70,
103), (Kirillov, 51, 80, 133),
(Stavrogin, 70), (Verkhovenskii, Petr,
70); *Bratiia Karamazovy*, 60, 386,
(Alesha, 133), (Grand Inquisitor, 131,
133, and *see* Rozanov), (Ivan, 133,
418), (Zosima, 60, 194, 403); *Dnevnik
pisatel'ia*, 115, 137; 'G-in – bov i
vopros ob iskusstve', 378; [Idiot]
(Nastasia Filippovna, 134); [*Igrok*]
(Polina, 134); [*Podrostok*] (Versilov, 2);
Polnoe sobranie sochinenii (1972–90)
375; [*Prestuplenie i Nakazanie*]
(Raskolnikov 133); *Zapiski iz podpol'ia*
(Chelovek iz podpol'ia, 3, 145), 137,
149, 150, 375.
- Duncan, Isadora, Am. dancer (1878–1927),
269.
- Dürer, Albrecht, Ger. artist (1471–1528),
95.
- Durnov, Modest Aleksandrovich, poet,
artist, friend of Bal'mont's
(1868–1928), 89, 167, 253, 349.
- Dutch, 319.
- Dymov, Osip, au. 'Konstantin Somov',
392.
- Dzerzhinsky, Feliks Edmundovich,
founder of Cheka (1877–1962), 280.
- East, Eastern, orient, oriental, 3, 59, 100,
104, 130, 184, 202, 230, 252, (Far East,
245), 250, 268, *see also* China, Asia,
Japan.
- East Indies, 58.
- Edelfelt, Albert, Finnish artist (1854–
1905), 392.
- Eden, paradise, 98, 198.
- Egypt, Egyptian, 135, 192, 228, 313, 338,
353, 365; Cairo, 71.
- Einstein, Albert, scientist (1879–1955), 202.
- Eisenstein, Sergei, film director
(1898–1948), *Ivan the Terrible*, 256.
- El Greco (real name Domenico
Theotocopuli) painter (1541–1614),
61, 63, 386.
- Eliasberg, correspondent of *Vesy* in
Germany, 170, 355.
- Ellis, (real name Lev L'vovich
Kobylnsky), theoretician of
Symbolism (1879–1938), 209, 248,
279, 283, 352, 363, 370, 372, 403.
WORKS: *Russkie simvolisty*, 372, 403; 'V
zashchitu dekadentsva', 403.
- Elsworth, John, trs. and intro. A. Bely,
'The forms of art', 406; contributor
to *Andrey Bely. Centenary papers*,
407; au. *Andrey Bely: a Critical Study
of the Novels*, 427.
- Emelianov-Kokhansky, Z., minor poet,
imitator of Briusov, 77, 137, 389.
WORKS: 'Gimn sifilisu', 77; 'Iz nasilovanie
trupa', 77; *Obnazhennyye nervy*, 77,
389.
- England, English, Anglo-Saxon, 6, 49, 53,
58, 81, 94, 106, 125, 170, 186, 190–2,
346, 347, 355, 375, 376, 385, 387, 393,
395, 401, 402, 416.
- Cambridge, xi, xiv, xv; Cornwall, 190,
192, 347; Durham, University of, xiv;
London, 184, 347, 353, 378, (British
Museum, 228); Manchester, 57;
Oxford, 190, 346, 349, 353, 385, 402,
(Taylorian Institute, 346, 402);
University of Oxford, 402.
- Enisherlov, V. P. ed. A. Blok. *Desiat'
poeticheskikh knig*, 409.
ed. 'M. K. Morozova – Andrei Bely',
426.
- Epopoia* (Berlin emigré journal), 412, 415,
416, 421.
- Erberg, K. (real name Konstantin
Aleksandrovich Siunnenberg)
(1871–1942), *Vospominaniia*, 404.
- Erlich, Ia: I., Petersburg thinker
(1874–1925), 86, 153.
- Erlich, Victor, au. 'The Maker and the
Seer: two Russian Symbolists', 415.
- Ern Vladimir Frantsevich, with V. P.
Svenitsky founder of Christian
Brotherhood of Struggle (1881–1917),
269.
- Eros, 110, 213, 231, 237, 271, 295, 296,
299, 325.
- Esenin, Sergei Aleksandrovich
(1895–1925), 425.
- Essays in poetics* (journal, Keele), 416.
- Estonia; Tartu, University of, xiv, and
see also *Blokovskie Sborniki*; Revel
(Tallin), 374.
- Etkind, E., ed. *Histoire de la littérature
russe. Le XX^e siècle. L'âge d'argent*,
377, 391.
- Euclid, 320.
- Euphorion, 89.
- Euripedes (484–406? BC), 326, 327.
- Europa Orientalis*, Italian journal, 427.
- Europe, Western Europe, European (also,
when synonymous, West, Western),
1–3, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11, 40, 42, 58, 83, 93,
100–3, 106, 107, 109, 112, 122, 125–7,
130, 137, 148, 161, 170, 174, 177, 184,

- 186, 187, 203, 226, 246, 257, 269, 272, 284, 286, 317, 321, 336, 340, 345–7, 363, 369, 392, 394, 411, 427.
- Evgen'ev-Maksimov, V., au. *Iz proshlogo russkoi zhurnalistiki* (1930), 415.
- Existentialism, existentialist, 139, 148.
- Ezhegodnik Imperatorskikh Teatrov za 1899–1900*, annual, 117.
- Ezhegodnik rukopisnogo otdela Pushkinskogo Doma*, annual, 402, 404.
- Ezhemesiachnye sochineniia*, journal, 411.
- Fakely, publishing house and almanac (1906–1908), 145, 280, 282, 298, 360, 361, 364, 366 (Almanac 2), 419 (Almanac 1), 422, (Fakel'shchiki), 427.
- Fascism, 340.
- Fedorov, A. V., ed. *Annenskii, Kniga otrazhenii*, 429.
- Feofilaktov, Nikolai Petrovich, Rus. artist, favourite of Briusov (1878–1941), 121, 167, 421.
- Fet, Afanasii Afanas'evich (real name Shenshin) (1820–1892), 10, 11–13, 27, 58, 61, 67, 73, 75, 78, 166, 178, 203, 218, 377, 378.
- WORKS: 'Kogda moi mechty, za gran'iu proshlykh dnei', 12, 378; 'Shepot. Robkoe dykhanie', 12, 328.
- Filippov, B. A., ed. *Mandel'shtam, Sobranie sochinenii*, 376; ed. K. Leontiev. *Pis'ma k Rozanovu*, 397.
- Filippovs, wealthy Moscow family; patrons of 'Skorpion', 165.
- Filosofov, Dmitrii Vladimirovich (1872–1940), ix, 94–6, 101, 107, 110–15, 117, 118, 121, 122, 125, 126, 144, 150, 151, 154–6, 158, 166, 227, 260, 262, 265, 269, 344, 347–51, 353–6, 358, 364, 383, 393, 394, 396, 397, 415, 417, 419.
- WORKS: 'Bratstvo tserkovnogo obnoveniia', 417; 'Iskusstvo i gosudarstvo', 419; 'Iskusstvo i zhizn'', 394; 'Ivanov i Vasnetsov v otsenke Aleksandra Benya', 396; 'Misticheskii anarkhizm: Dekadentstvo, obshchestvennost' i misticheskii anarkhizm', 419.
- Filosofova, Anna Pavlovna (née Diagileva), D. V. Filosofov's mother (1837–1912), 2, 108, 113, 158, 375, 393, 400.
- Finland, Finnish, 107–10, 268, 295; Gulf of, 306; Lake Saima, 229, 271; Exhibition of Russian and Finnish artists, 107–10, 347.
- Fleishman, L. S., ed. *Liubov' Blok, Byly i nebylitsy*, 378; au. 'Symbolism and immortality', 399.
- Fletcher, *see* Volynsky.
- Florensky, Father Pavel Aleksandrovich, mathematician, mystic, theologian, friend of A. Bely (1882–1939), xi, 24, 339, 357.
- Fofanov, Konstantin Mikhailovich, Symbolist precursor, Petersburg poet (1862–1911), 67, 68, 165, 166, 349, 387; *Teni i tainy*, 67, 68, 387. *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy* (1962), 387.
- Fondane, Benjamin, disciple of Lev Shestov, 150; au. *Rencontre avec Léon Chestov*, 398–400.
- Fonvizin, Arthur, Rus. artist (1882–1973), 421.
- Formalism, xii, 370.
- Forsyth, James, au. 'Prophets and supermen: "Germel" ideological influences in Aleksandr Blok's poetry', 411.
- Forum for Modern Languages*, Scottish journal, 411.
- Fotiev, Prof. Kirill, au. "'Dionis i pradionisosstvo" v svete noveishikh issledovanii', 413.
- France, Anatole (real name Anatole Francois Thibault, 1844–1924), 394.
- France, French, xi, 5–9, 22, 27, 39, 53, 58, 59, 67–9, 73, 88, 95, 99, 105, 125, 142, 148, 170, 171, 188, 226, 269, 279, 286, 319, 322, 327, 340, 343, 344, 348, 368, 370, 385, 387, 388, 394, 416.
- Biarritz, 349; Paris (Parisian), 42, 99, 100, 105, 107–9, 112, 121, 161, 169, 171, 184, 186, 230, 246, 278, 279, 297, 321, 322, 323, 335, 339, 340, 349, 353–5, 358, 359, 361, 363, 365, 368, 370, 371, 373, 378, 388, 399; Bon Marché, 105; Châtelet theatre, 371; Comédie Française, 105; Ecole russe, 169; Grand opéra, 105, 366, 368; Noisy-le-Grand (suburb), 339; Passy (suburb), 359; Sorbonne, 323; Universal Exhibition of 1901, 117; Versailles, 96, 109.
- Frank, Semen Ludvigovich, Rus. philosopher associated with *Vekhi* group (1877–1950), 260.
- Freud, Sigmund (1856–1939), 138, 184; Freudian, 49; pre-Freudian, 6.
- Gaia, Earth goddess, 193. *See also* Ceres, Demeter.
- Gapon, Father Georgii Apollonovich (1870–1906), 265.

- Gauguin, Paul, Fr. artist (1848–1903), 73, 105.
- Gautier, Théophile, Fr. Parnassian poet (1811–1872), 6, 69; preface to Baudelaire, *Fleurs du mal*, 6.
- George, Stephan, Ger. Symbolist poet (1868–1933), 170.
- Georgia, Georgian, 161.
- Germany, also German, Germanophile, 6, 10, 49, 53, 58, 59, 61, 81, 89, 94, 101, 106, 107, 109, 111, 125, 137, 141, 170, 185, 186, 201, 212, 226, 235, 239, 240, 247, 272, 288, 317, 319, 338–40, 348, 355, 356, 369, 371, 373, 376, 380, 385, 388, 393, 395, 411, 416.
- Augsburg, 412; Bad Nauheim, 212, 347, 355, 369; Bayreuth, 96, 347; Berlin, 99, 109, 140, 170, 338, 340, 349, 350, 354, 363, 369, 376; Berlin, University of, 140; Cologne, 109, 348, 354; Dresden, 370; Düsseldorf, 109; Frankfurt-am-Main, 369; Heidelberg, 348; Jena (Romantics) 226; Munich, 99, 109, 110, 345, 363; Munich Secession, 99, 101, 102, 393; Nüremberg, 306, 347.
- Gershenzon, Mikhail Osipovich, Rus. critic and thinker, ed. *Vekhi* (1869–1925), 299, 364.
- Gertsyk, Evgeniia Kazimirovna (1878–1944), *Vospominanii*, 428.
- Ghil René (real name René Guilbert), Fr. poet, contributor to *Vesy* (1862–1925), 171, 355, 368, 370, 402.
- De la poésie scientifique, 370.
- Gifford, Henry, xiv.
- Gippius, see Hippisus.
- Glazunov, Aleksandr Konstantinovich, composer and conductor (1865–1936) ‘Raymonde’, 371.
- Glinka, Mikhail Ivanovich, composer (1804–1857), 96.
- Glinsky, V., au. ‘Bolezn’ ili reklama’, 390.
- Gnostic, see Valentinian.
- God, 25, 32, 34, 41, 45–8, 54, 63, 110, 124, 125, 129, 130, 135, 144, 145, 151, 162, 193–5, 202, 209, 210, 213, 229, 239, 248, 271, 274, 308, 328, 329; God-builders, 145, 312, 367; God-seekers, 144, 318, 328, 366.
- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von (1749–1832), 141, 210, 226, 288, 336, *Faust* 288, (Gretchen, 288).
- Gofman, Modest Liudvigovich (1887–1959), 172, 381.
- WORKS: *Poety simvolizma* 1908, anthology ed. by G., 384; au. *Kniga o russkikh poetakh poslednego desiatiletiia* (1909), 385.
- Gogol’, Nikolai Vasil’evich (1809–1852), also Gogolian, 10, 32, 103, 115, 120, 132, 152, 198, 307, 312, 317, 318, 345, 369; Gogol’ no of *Vesy*, 370.
- WORKS: *Mertvye dushi*, 152; [*Shinel’*] (Akakii Akakievich, 321); [*Strashnaia mest’*] (Pani Katerina, 307).
- Gollerbach, Erikh Fedorovich, au. V. V. *Rozanov Zhizn’ i Tvorchestvo* (1895–1942), 396, 397.
- Goloushev, S. S. (de Sergy), 393.
- Golovin, Aleksandr Iakovlevich, Rus. painter, theatre-designer (1863–1930), 107, 118, 119, 350.
- Golubkina, Anna Semenovna, Rus. sculptor (1864–1927), 119, 350.
- Gomberg-Vezhbinskaia, E. P., ed. *Vrubel’ . Perepiska. Vospominania*, 420.
- Goncharova, Nataliia Sergeevna, Rus. artist (1881–1962), 421.
- Gor’ky, Maksim (real name Aleksei Maksimovich Peshkov) (1868–1936), 65, 125, 145, 164, 166, 264, 270, 277, 280, 282, 298, 312, 315, 338, 351, 357, 358, 361, 362, 365–7, 386, 398, 401, 418.
- WORKS: *Ispoved’*, 366; ‘Zametka o mechchantsve’, 418.
- Gorodetsky, Sergei Mitrofanovich, Rus. poet (1884–1967), 173, 279, 295, 296, 298, 312, 331, 335, 361, 362, 365, 371, 428, 431.
- WORKS: *Iar*, 295, 362; *Iva*, 422; *Perun*, 295, 365; ‘Strana reveransov i ee purpurno-lilovyi Bedeker’, 430.
- Gourmont, Rémy de, Fr. writer (1858–1915), 171, 203, 355.
- Grabar’, Igor Emmanuilovich, artist and art-historian (1871–1960), 118, 394.
- WORKS: *Istoriia russkogo iskusstva* (1909), 394; *Moia zhizn’ . Avtomonografia*, 394.
- Graffy, Julian, xiv.
- Grechishkin, S. S., pub. Briusov, Bely ‘Perepiska’ (1976), 389, 404, 413.
- pub. Briusov ‘Pis’ma k L. N. Vil’kinoi’, 402; pub. Briusov, V. Ivanov ‘Perepiska’, 404; pub. ‘Vospominaniia K. Erberga’, 404; au. ‘Biograficheskie istochniki romana Briusova “Ognennyi angel”’, 413.
- Greece, Grecian, Greek, Hellenic (anc. and mod.) 9, 26, 34, 36, 42, 78, 125, 127, 128, 136, 170, 185, 187, 190, 192, 193, 196, 206, 213, 229, 236, 269, 271, 278, 281, 295, 326, 327, 353, 355, 361, 395.
- Acropolis, 33; Athens, 34, 148, 184, 186, 192, 240; Eleusis, 275; Mycaenae, 275; Olympus, 135, 353; Parthenon, 188, 343.

- Green, Michael, ed. and trs. *The Russian Symbolist Theatre* (1986), 423.
- Grif, Moscow Symbolist publishers (1903–1913), 167, 172, 247, 249, 255, 288, 353–7, 364, 365.
- Almanac Grif, 354, 359, 360, 365, 366, 369, 385, 390.
- Grigor'ev, Apollon Aleksandrovich, Rus. poet (1822–64), 259.
- Grossman, Joan Delaney, 386–9, 390.
WORKS: *Edgar Allan Poe in Russia* (1973), 386; *Valerii Briusov and the Riddle of Russian Decadence*, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390; intro. to Aleksandr Dobroliubov, *Sochineniia*, 389; 'Blok, Briusov and the Prekrasnaia Dama', 403.
- Grot, N. Ia., 'Nravstvennye idealy nashego vremeni, Friderikh Nitche i Lev Tolstoy', 398.
- Gumilev, Nikolai Sergeevich, Rus. Acmeist poet (1886–1921), 13, 173, 323, 324, 326, 330, 331, 335, 336, 338, 360, 361, 370, 371, 373, 378, 422, 429–31.
WORKS: *Pis'ma o russkoi poezii*, 371, 422; *Put' Konkvistadorov*, 360; *Zhemchuga*, 371; 'Zhizn' stikha', 430.
- Gurevich, Liubov', 19; 'Istoriia Severnogo Vestnika', 379.
- Hackel, Father Sergei, au. *The Poet and the Revolution. Aleksandr Blok and the Twelve*, 425.
- Hafiz, Shams al-Din Muhammad, Persian lyric poet, (?1326–90), Hafizites, 295.
- Hamlet, see Shakespeare.
- Hamsun, Knut, Norwegian writer (1859–1952), 167, 171, 402.
- Hannibal, Peter the Great's 'Moor', 273.
- Harrison, William, xiv.
- Hauptmann, Gerhart, German playwright (1862–1946), 167, 347.
- Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich, German idealist philosopher (1770–1831), 132.
- Heine, Heinrich, German poet (1797–1856), 226, 313.
- Helen of Troy, 36.
- Helmholtz, German Ludwig Ferdinand, German physicist, physiologist and psychologist (1821–94), 220.
- Henn am Rhyn, Otto, au. *A history of German Culture*, 94.
- Heredia, José-Maria de, Fr. poet (1842–1905), 73.
- Hippius, Natalia Nikolaevna, sculptor, sister to Zinaida H. (1880–1963), 397.
- Hippius, Tatiana Nikolaevna artist, sister to Zinaida H., (1877–1957), 397.
- Hippius, Vladimir Vasil'evich, minor poet, critic and friend of A. Dobroliubov. Cousin of Zinaida H. interested in New Religious Consciousness (1876–1941), 69, 110, 165, 166, 343, 344, 346, 388.
- 'Aleksandr Dobroliubov', 388.
- Hippius, Zinaida Nikolaevna (main pseud. as critic, Anton Krainyi) (1869–1945), ix, xvi, 19, 21–4, 27, 29, 33, 38–47, 51, 53, 55, 60, 61, 69, 77, 80, 83, 85, 101, 110, 111, 115, 116, 118, 123, 125, 131, 136, 141, 149–51, 153, 154, 157, 163–8, 176, 179, 184, 204, 205, 216, 217, 222, 223, 226–8, 260–2, 267, 275–80, 283, 286, 297, 315, 331, 340, 343, 345, 347–53, 356, 358, 359, 361, 362, 366, 371, 373, 377–82, 390, 391, 393, 394, 396, 397, 399–403, 409, 416.
WORKS: *Alyi mech'*, 362, 396; 'Bozhiia tvar''', 46, 383; *Chernoe po belomu*, 366; 'Contes d'amour', see Pachmuss; *Dmitrii Merezhkovskii*, 41, 379–83, 390, 393, 396, 400; 'Elektrichestvo', 43, 131, 383; 'Grizel'da', 383; 'Khleb zhizni', 400; 'Krik', 383; 'Kritika liubvi', 391; 'Literaturnyi dnevnik', 366, 391, 400; *Makov svet*, 366; 'Mezhdū', 43–4, 283; 'Mgnovenie', 383; 'Miss May', 72; 'Molitva', 383; 'Neliubov'', 45, 383; 'Neobkhodimoe o stikhakh', 383; 'Nikogda', 383; *Novye liudi*, 77, 345, 350, 362; 'O byvshem', see Pachmuss; 'Pesnia', 23, 38–40, 44, 77, 141, 345, 382; 'Posviashchenie', 23, 40, 77, 345, 382; 'Slishkom rannie', 165; *Sobranie stikhov I* 356, II 373, I and II 382–3; 'Soglasnym kritikam', 373; 'Sovremennoe iskusstvo', 394; *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy 1899–1918* (1972), 282, 283; 'Svetloe ozero', 396; 'Sviataia krov'', 165, 179; 'Torzhestvo v chest' smerti', 377; 'Zemlia', 383; *Zerkala. Vtoraia kniga rasskazov*, 347, 349; *Zhivye litsa*, 340, 416, see also under Merezhkovsky, D. S. (Merezhkovskys). The book *Dmitrii Merezhkovskii* was the only publication under his name: Hippius-Merezhkovskaia.
- Histoire de la Littérature russe. Le XXe siècle. L'Age d'argent* (1987); 377, 391, see also under various editors as *Histoire*.
- Hoffmann, E. T. A., German writer of fantastic tales, (1776–1822), Hoffmannesque, 94.

- Hofmannsthal, Hugo von, Austrian poet and playwright (1874–1929), 170, 299.
- Holbein, Hans, the Younger, German painter (1497–1543), 95.
- Holy Land, 338.
 Emmaus, 196, 240; Golgotha, 193, 194; Jerusalem, 148, 192; Jordan, 196, Palestine, 192, 353.
- Holy Spirit, 202.
- Holy Synod, 136, 151, 269.
- Holy Trinity, 149, 358.
- Husserl, Edmund Gustav Albert, German philosopher, friend of Lev Shestov (1859–1938), 139, 148, 398.
- Hutchings, S., au. 'Discourse and the fantastic in the short stories of Leonid Andreyev', 416.
- Huysmans, Georges Charles (Joris-Karl), Fr. aesthete writer (1848–1907), 171, 203, 243, 385;
 (Des Esseintes, 376).
- Iakunchikova, Maria Vasilievna, artist, one of MI's 'Russian Parisians' (1870–1902), 107, 109.
- Iakutiia, Iakut, 161.
- Iampol'skii, I., pub. Briusov's letter to Iasinsky, 388.
- Iaremich, Stepan Petrovich, MI artist and art-historian (1869–1939), 151.
- Iavlensky, *see* Jawlensky.
- Ibsen, Henrik, Norwegian playwright (1828–1906), 6, 61, 161, 164, 167, 200, 261, 283, 315, 347, 349, 376, 380, 401, 418.
 WORKS: *Brand*, 206; *Hedda Gabler*, 292; 'When we dead awaken', 161, 164, 349.
- Icarus, 261.
- Iksul, Baroness, patron of literature and drama, 366.
- Il'ev, S. P., au. 'Stat'i V. Briusova v zhurnale "The Athenaeum"', 402.
 'Valerii Briusov i Uil'iam Morfill', 402.
- Illustrirovannyi mir*, Rus. journal, 383.
- Imagists, 335.
- Impressionism, impressionist(ic), 99, 105, 203, 305, 227; neo-Impressionist, 105.
- India; Delhi, 184.
- Ioannus Secundus, 'The Kiss', 401.
- Ionesco, Eugene, Fr. absurdist writer of Romanian origin (1912–94), 148.
- Ireland, Irish, 130.
- Iskusstvo*, Kievan art journal, 1905, 249, 286, 359, 414.
- Iskusstvo i Khudozhestvennaia Promyshlennost'*. Rival journal to *MI* founded by N. P. Sobko in 1898, 172, 393.
- Istoricheskii vestnik*, learned journal, 390.
- Italy, Italian, Italianate, 22, 42, 89, 97, 111, 127, 128, 170, 275, 281, 313, 316, 330, 333, 334, 336, 338, 340, 343, 348, 353, 368, 370, 371, 385, 395, 416, 430.
- Assisi, 369; Capri, Isle of, 42, 348; Florence, 128, 330; Foligno, 369; Lakes, 348; Livorno, 192, 349; Marina de Pisa, 369; Milan, 369; Naples, Bay of, 143; Neopolitan, 369; Orvieto, 369; Padua (Collegio Borromeo), 340; Perugia, 369; Pisa, 369; Ravenna, 369, 430; Rome (geographical location), 140, 142, 186, 192, 239, 341, 343, 344, 367, 372 (Tarpeian Rock, 311), *see also* under Rome (ancient); Siena, 369; Spoleto, 369; Turin, University of, 5; Venice, Venetian, 94, 330, 340, 363.
- Iuzhnoe Obozrenie*, Rus. journal, 349.
- Ivan the Terrible (1530–1584), 116, (film) 256.
- Ivanov, Aleksandr Andreevich, Russian painter (1806–1858), 126.
- Ivanov, Dmitrii Viacheslavovich, son of Viacheslav Ivanov, ed. of his *Collected Works* (b. 1912), 316, 340, 404.
- Ivanov, Evgenii Pavlovich, friend of Blok, memorist (1879–1942), 358, 421;
 'Vospominaniia i zapiski ob Aleksandre Bloke', 421.
- Ivanov, I. B., ed. 1991 edition of Shestov's *Apofoez bezpochvennosti*, 375.
- Ivanov, Viacheslav Ivanovich (1866–1949), x, xii, 10, 13, 88, 157, 167, 169, 176, 179, 180, 184–98, 214, 215, 225–8, 231, 232, 234, 235, 239, 240, 241, 245–9, 250–2, 264, 266, 269–80, 282–4, 287, 292, 294–301, 307, 308, 313–16, 320, 322–38, 340, 343–50, 353–6, 359–62, 364, 365, 368–71, 373–5, 377, 379, 380, 401, 402, 404–6, 410–14, 416–27, 429.
 WORKS: 'Aleksandru Bloku', 410; 'Apokaliptika i obschestvennost', 249; 'Astrolog', 266, 416; 'Avgust 5', 406; 'Avtobiograficheskoe pis'mo', 412; 'Bog v Lupenarii', 418; *Borozdi i mezhi*, 377, 425, 429, 430; 'Carmen saeculare', 232, 410; *Cor ardens*, 190, 283, 373, 405, 406, 419, 423, 428; 'Diframby', 282, 292, 329, 333, 419; 'Dionisu' (section in *Kormchie zvezdy*) 193; *Dionis i pradiionisistvo* (Doctoral thesis for University of Bakou), 412; 'Dostoevskii i romantragediia', 380; 'Driady', 197; 'Dve stikhii v sovremennom simvolizme', 430;

- 'Ellinskaiia religiiia stradaiushchego boga', 355; *Eros*, 295, 296, 362, 419, 422, 423; 'Estetika i ispovedanie', 417, 425, 426; 'Exit cor ardens', 423; 'Fevral' 3', 406; 'G. I. Chulkovu', 419; 'Gnoma', 404; 'Iazyk' ('Slovo-plo'), 195, 196, 404, 406; 'Ideia nepriatii mira i misticheskii anarkhizm', 419; 'Iskusstvo i simvolizm' (section of *Borozdy i mezhi*), 377; 'Kop'e Afiny', 406, 417; *Kormchie zvezdy* 167, 169 (as 'first collection', 'first book of poetry', 186), 188, 189, 192, 275; 'Litso', 406; 'Litso ili maska', 406; 'Manera, litso, i stil', 416–7; 'Mest' mechnaia', 414; 'Mgla', 190–2, 405; 'Mi fur le serpi amiche', 411; 'Mysli o simvolizme', 336, 377; *Nezhnaia taina* 189, 372, 404, 410; 'Nishch i svetel', 296; 'Nitche i Dionis', 406; 'Noch' v pustyne', 414; *Novye maski*, 417; 'O Fakel'shchikakh i drugikh imenakh soberatel'nykh', 422; 'O khimerakh Andreia Belogo', 418; 'O knige *Pepel'*, 423, 426; 'O krasnom smekhe i o pravom bezumii', 416; 'O nepriatii mira' (Sonnet in *Fakely* I) 282, (preface to G. I. Chulkov's *O Misticheskomo Anarkhizme*) 282, 359, 361; 'O niskhozhdenii' ('Simvolika esteticheskikh nachal' in *SS*) 406, 417; 'O poezii Innokentii Annenskogo', 370, 429; 'O russkoi ideii', 426; 'O sovremennykh nastroieniakh . . .', 249, 359; 'Pamiatii Vladimira Solov'eva', 413; *Perepiska iz dvukh uglov*, 335; *Po zvezdam*, 325, 370; 'Podsteregateliiu', 325, 429; 'Poet i chern' [180], 186, 404, 405; 'Predchuvstvie i predvestie', 362, 423; 'Prometei', 423; *Prozrachnost'*: *vitoraia kniga liriki*, 167, 188, 189, 246, 275, 356, 404; 'Religiia stradaiushchego boga' (series of articles for N. P.), 157, 240, 404; 'Religioznoe delo Vladimira Solov'eva', 413; 'Rimskie sonety' (cycle), 335; 'Rimskii dnevnik' (major section of *Svet vechernyi*) 241, 335, 406, 413; 'Roza', 428; 'Schast'e', 194, 405; 'Slovo – plot', see 'Iazyk'; *Sobranie sochinenii*, 190, 377; *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy* (1976), 190, 404; *Svet vechernyi*, 189, 194, 404; *Svetomir* (epic, poetic prose), 335 (Otrada, 372), (Khors, 426); 'Taina pevtsa', 404; 'Tantal', 356, 418, 422, 423; 'Trista tridsat' tri soblazna', 287; 'Tshshima', 414; 'Ultima vale', 330, 430; 'Vagner i deistvie', 423; 'Vechernye dali', 404; 'Veneris Fumae', 421; 'Zavety simvolizma', 332, 372, 374, 377, 404, 405, 426, 430; 'Zemlia', 193, 194, 405; 'Zimnye Sonety' (cycle) 190, 335; 'Zolotye zavesy' (cycle) 362, 423; for I's concept of 'Sobornost', see 406; conferences on I, 405.
- Ivanov-Razumnik, Razumnik Vasil'evich, historian of literature and friend of Blok, Bely and Remizov (1878–1946), 51, 238, 394, 412, 417, 425.
- Russkaia literatura ot semidesiatykh godov do nashikh dnei* (1923), 394.
- Ivanova, Evgeniia Viktorovna, au. 'Valerii Briusov i Aleksandr Dobroliubov', 399.
- 'Odin iz temnykh viziterov', 384.
- Ivanova, Lidiia Viacheslavovna, V. Ivanov's daughter (1896–1985), 325, 326, 340, 429.
- 'Vospominaniia o Viacheslave Ivanove' (serialised version (1982–1983) of *Vospominaniia. Kniga ob otse* (1992)).
- Izmailov, A., au. 'Besovskie arabeski (lit. portret A. Remizova)', 428.
- Jackson, Robert Louis, ed. *Vyacheslav Ivanov. Poet, Critic and Philosopher*, 404.
- Jakobson, Roman, 'Studies presented to J . . .', 382.
- Janecek, Gerald, contr. to *Andrey Bely. Centenary papers* (1980), 407.
- Japan, Japanese, 177, 245, 250, 266, 274, 318; Tshshima, 251; see also under Russo-Japanese War.
- Jawlensky, Alexej von, Russian painter associated primarily with German Blaue Reiter group (1864–1941), 121.
- Jensen, Peter Alberg, au. 'Typological remarks on Remizov's prose', 421.
- Jesus of Nazareth, see Christ.
- Jew (Jewish, Israel, Judaism, Judaizing, Judaic, Hebrew), 21, 100, 136, 140, 150, 229, 398; Bar Mitzvah, 138; anti-Semitic, 139.
- St John the Baptist (the Forerunner, Predtecha), 195.
- St John the Theologian, 205.
- Jones, Malcolm, xiv.
- Joyce, James Augustine Aloysius, Irish writer (1882–1941), 322.
- Judas, 227.
- Julian the Apostate, see Merezhkovsky.
- Jung (Jungian), 51, 134, 184, 210, 406.
- Kafka, Franz, Austrian writer (1883–1924), 322; Kafkaesque, 198.

- Kalbous, Georg, contrib. to *Andrey Bely. Centenary Papers* (1980), 407.
- Kamenetskaia, M. V., correspondent of A. P. Filosofova, 400.
- Kant, Immanuel, German philosopher (1724–1804), Kantian, 2, 8, 19, 31, 141, 145, 206, 213, 226, 261, 353; neo-Kantian, 142, 226, 276.
Critique of Practical Reason, 141; *Critique of Pure Reason*, 141; categorical imperative, 146.
- Karamzin, Nikolai Mikhailovich (1766–1797), Karamzinian, 88.
- Karlinsky, Simon, ed. and trs. V. A. Zlobin, *Tiazhelaia dusha (A Difficult Soul)*, 383.
- Karpov, Pimen Ivanovich, Rus. peasant writer (1887–1963), 425.
- Kartashev, Anton Vladimirovich (lit. pseudonym Romansky), contributor to *NP* (1875–1960), 157, 397.
- Kautsky, Karl, theoretician of Social Democracy (1854–1938), 226.
- Kean, Beverley, au. *All the Empty Palaces* (1913), 392.
- Kemball, Robin, au. *Aleksandr Blok, A Study in Rhythm and Metre* (1964), 382.
- Kerensky, Aleksandr Fedorovich, Rus. statesman, prime minister from July to October 1917 (1881–1970), 340.
- Keys, Roger, intro. and trans. (with Angela Keys) of A. Bely *Simfoniia (2-ia, dramaticheskaiia)*, 406, 407.
- Khesin, 172.
- Khlebnikov, Velimir Vladimirovich, Rus. Futurist poet (1885–1922), 88, 189, 322, 325, 370, 371, 405, 429.
'Nasha osnova', 405.
- Khludov, F. V., Rus. merchant, 158.
- Khmel'nitskaia, Tamara, ed. and intro., to Andrei Bely, *Stikhovoreniia i poemy* (1966), 407.
- Khodasevich, Vladislav Felitsianovich, Rus. poet and critic (1886–1939), 75, 83, 173, 175, 338, 357, 377, 389, 391.
WORKS: *Izbrannaia proza*, 377; 'O simvolizme', 377; *Nekropol'*, 389, 391, 402, 413.
- Khristorova, Kleopatra Petrovna, Moscow theosopher, 426.
- Khudozhestvennye Sokrovishcha Rossii*, antiquarian journal ed. by Aleksandr Benois (1900–3), 98, 117, 156.
- Kierkegaard, Soren, Danish philosopher (1813–55), 139, 148.
- Kievskoe Slovo*, Kiev newspaper, 345, 398.
- Kipling, Joseph Rudyard, Eng. poet and writer (1865–1936), *The Brushwood Boy*, 49.
- Klingsor, 235.
- Kliuev, Nilolai Alekseevich, Rus. peasant poet (1887–1937), 312, 425.
- Kluge, Rolf-Dieter, au. *Westeuropa und Russland im Weltbild Aleksandr Blok*, 411.
- Kniazhnin, Vladimir Nikolaevich (real surname Ivoilev), minor poet and lit. historian (1884–1942), in *Pis'ma A. Bloka* (1925), 396.
- Knigge, Armin, au. *Die Lyrik VI. Solov'ev's und ihre Nachwirkung bei A. Belyi und A. Blok* (1973), 410.
- Kodrianskaia, Nataliia, au. *Aleksei Remizov*, 427, 428.
- Koiransky brothers, Aleksandr Arnol'dovich (1884–1968) and Boris Arnol'dovich (1882–1920), minor decadents, 172, 255.
- Koktebel', 338, 339, 395.
- Kommissarzhevskaiia, Vera Fedorovna, Rus. actress (1864–1910), 292, 293, 295, 362, 363, 366–8, 374, 422, 423.
- Kommissarzhevskii, Fedor Fedorovich, brother to above, theatrical producer and director (1882–1954), 292.
- Kondrat'ev, Genadii Petrovich, director of Mariinsky Theatre in 1890s, 100.
- Konevskoi, Ivan (real name Ivan Ivanovich Oreus), (1877–1901), ix, 84–9, 153, 164–7, 169, 173, 179, 216, 217, 226, 246, 346–349, 351, 356, 389, 391, 401, 413.
WORKS: *Kniga razdumii*, 89, 165, 349; *Mechty i dumy*, 88, 349, 391; 'Mysli i zamechaniia', 391; 'Na drugoe utro', 391; 'Otkuda sily voli strannye', 391; 'Perepiska' (with Briusov), 391; 'Po dniam', 413; Preface to Dobroliubov's *Sobranie sochinenii*, 164, 389; 'Radonitsa', 391; Russian Symbolism (paper on), 346; *Stikhi i proza*, 86, 356, 391, 413; 'V podnebes'ii', 391; 'Volneniia', 391.
- Koretskaia, V., au. "'Novyi put'", "'Voprosy Zhizni'", 415.
- Korolenko, Vladimir Galaktionovich, Rus. Populist writer (1853–1921), 65, 313, 387.
- Korovin, Konstantin Alekseevich, Rus. artist exhibited with MI from Exhibition of Finnish and Russian artists to 1906 (1861–1939), 102–4, 107, 116.
- Korvin-Khorvatskii, I., au. 'Goluboi dym', 399.

- Kosmopolis* (journal), 348.
- Koteliansky, S. S., trs. V. V. Rozanov, 397; trs. Shestov (with J. M. Murray), 399.
- Kotrelev, N. V., pub. Briusov and Viach. Ivanov-Perepiska, 404; pub. 'Iz perepiski Aleksandra Bloka s Viacheslavom Ivanovym', 412; *see also Literaturnoe Nasledstvo*.
- Kovalenskaia, Aleksandra Grigor'evna, grandmother to Sergei Solov'ev and model for Baroness Todrabe-Graaben in *Serebrianyi golub'*, (1829–1914), 317.
- Krainyi, Anton, *see* Hippus.
- Krasin, Leonid Borisovich, Social Democrat contributor to *Novaia Zhizn'* (1870–1926), 358.
- Kravchenko, N. I., 393.
- Kriticheskoe obzrenie*, journal ed. Gershenzon (1907–9), 299, 364, 369, 427.
- Krivoie zerkalo* (satirical journal), 424.
- Kropotkin, Petr Alekseevich, Rus. anarchist writer (1842–1921), 57.
- Krymov, Nikolai Petrovich, Rus. artist (1884–1958), 365, 421.
- Kublitsky-Piottukh, Frants Feliksovich, Rus. career soldier, Blok's father-in-law (1860–1920), 212.
- Kuprianovsky, P. V., au. 'Poety-Simvolisty v zhurnale "Severnii Vestnik"', 378; 'Iz istorii rannego russkogo simvolizma', 378; 'K probleme: Simvolisty i legal'nye marksisty', 378–9.
- Kur'er*, 393.
- Kursinsky, Aleksandr Antonovich, ed. *ZR* (1873–1949), 287, 361, 366, 390.
- Kuzmin, Mikhail Alekseevich (1872–1936), 173, 190, 292, 297, 324–6, 331, 332, 334, 361, 364, 368, 370–3, 401, 405, 422, 423.
- WORKS: 'Aleksandriinskie pesni' (cycle), 292, 430; *Forel' razbivaet led*, 430; 'K. A. Somov', 392; 'Kartonnii domik', 365; *Komedii o Evodokii iz Gellipolia*, 365, 430; *Krylia*, 297, 361, 423, 430; *Kuranty liubvi*, 371, 430; 'O prekrasnoi iasnosti (zametki o proze)', 331–2, 371, 430; *Osenne ozera*, 430; *Prevrannaia povest'* (cycle), 365; *Priklucheniia Eme Lebefa*, 365, 430; *Seti*, 368, 430; *Sobranie sochinenii* (9 vols.), 430; 'Ten' Fillidy (Egipetskaia povest')', 365; *Studies in the Life and Works of ...* (1989), 422.
- Kuznetsov, Pavel Varfolomeevich, Rus. painter (1878–1968), 121, 421.
- Labry, R., au. 'Alexandre Blok et Nietzsche', 411.
- Laforgue, Jules, Fr. poet (1860–1887), 67, 69.
- Lalique, maker of opaque glass and modernist artefacts, 112.
- Lampert, Eugene, *Essays in honour of*, 395.
- Lanceray, Evgenii Evgenevich, Rus. artist, member of MI from 1899 (1875–1946), 100, 105, 115, 265.
- Lanceray, Nikolai Evgenevich, Rus. artist, member of MI, brother of above (18?–1932), 100, 265.
- Lang, Aleksandr, *see* Miropol'sky.
- Lapeza, David, trs. *N. Gumilev on Russian Poetry*, 378.
- Larin, O. Ia., bibliographer of Merezhkovsky's works in trs., 195.
- Larionov, Mikhail Fedorovich, Rus. artist (1881–1964), 421.
- Lasalle, Ferdinand, German socialist (1825–1864), 59.
- Lathouvers, M. A., au. *Kosmos en Sophia*, 410.
- Latin, 34, 72, 127, 185, 193, 330, 401, 412, *see also* Rome, ancient.
- Lavrov, A. V., pub. Briusov and Bely in 'Perepiska', 389, 404, (intro. 413); pub. Briusov and Konevskoi-'Perepiska', 391; pub. Briusov and Viach. Ivanov-'Perepiska', 404; pub. 'Vospominaniia K. Erberga', 404; ed. and intro. Andrei Bely, *Stikhotvoreniia* (1988), 407; au. 'Biograficheskie istochniki romana Briusova *Ognennii angel'*.
- Lavrov, Petr Lavrovich, Populist writer (1833–1900), 253, 402; 'Novaia tiurma', 414.
- Lawrence, D. H., English writer (1885–1930), 138.
- WORKS: rev. V. Rozanov *Fallen Leaves*, 397; *D. H. Lawrence's Letters to S. S. Koteliansky*, 397; *D. H. Lawrence's Response to Russian Literature*, 397; *Selected Literary Criticism*, 397.
- Leconte de Lisle, Charles-Marie-René, Fr. poet (1818–1894), 67, 73.
- Leibniz, Gottfried Wilhelm, Ger. philosopher (1646–1715), 79, 83.
- Lenin, Vladimir I'lich (real surname Ul'ianov) (1870–1924), 277, 358, 359. 'Partiinaia organizatsiia i partiinaia literatura', 359, 418.
- Leonard*, US art journal, 428.
- Leonardo da Vinci, Italian artist (1452–1519), 2, 223, 333, 380; 'Mona

- Leonardo da Vinci (*cont.*)
 Lisa', 155; *see also* under book titles and as character under Merezkhovskiy and Volynskiy.
- Leontiev, Konstantin Nikolaevich, Rus. writer and thinker (1831–91), 135, *Pis'ma k Rozanovu*, 397.
- Lerberghe, Charles von, 401.
- Lermontov, Mikhail Iurevich, Rus. poet, dramatist and prose writer (1814–41), 29, 46, 61, 67, 95, 115, 138, 183, 218, 253, 416.
 WORKS: 'Borodino', 416; *Demon*, 61, 62; 'Duma', 29; 'Kinzhalt', 253; 'Kogda volnuetsia zhelteishchaia niva', 138; *Mtsyri*, 62.
- Leskov, Nikolai Semenovich, Rus. writer (1831–95), 318, 379.
- Levitan, Isaak Il'ich, Rus. painter (1860–1900), 102, 103, 107, 255.
- Levitsky, Dmitrii Grigor'evich, Rus. painter (1735–1822), 98, 118, 394; *see also* Diagilev.
- Leto 1895*, *see Russkie simvolisty III* under Briusov.
- Liebknecht, Wilhelm, Ger. socialist journalist (1826–1900), 56.
- Likhachev, D. S., ed. Benois, *Moi vospominaniia*, 392.
- Likiardopoulo, Mikhail Fedorovich, journalist and translator active in *Vesy*, (1883–1925), 170, 355, 366.
- Literaturnaia ucheba*, Sov. now Rus. journal, 398.
- Literaturno-khudozhestvennyi sbornik studentov Sankt-Peterburgskogo universiteta*, 355.
- Literaturnoe Nasledstvo* (LN), ed. the late I. S. Zilbershtein, subsequently (from Vol. 98) by N. V. Kotrelev, Vols. 27–8 (1937), 387, 395, 400, 417, 418; Vol. 69 Bk I (1961), 382; Vol. 72 (1965), 401; Vol. 85 (1976), 387, 400, 401, 402, 404, 405, 413, 414, 420, 427; Vol. 92, Bks 1–4 (1980–7), 377, 391, 409, 422, 425; Vol. 98 (1991) 387, 391.
- Literaturnyi raspad* (1908), 315, 366.
- Lokhvitskaia, (Nina) Mirra Aleksandrovna, Rus. poet (1869–1905), 160–400.
- Loki, jealous fire-god of Norse mythology, 235, 247, 248.
- Lombroso, Cesare, Italian forensic scientist, inspired Nordau, 5.
- Lomonosov, Mikhailo Vasile'vich, Rus. poet (1711–65), 190.
- Lovtsky, German musician, friend of Shestov, 144, 146.
- Lucifer, 130.
- Lugovskoi, Vladimir Aleksandrovich, Sov. poet, (1901–57), 256.
- Lukomsky, Georgii Kreskentevich, Rus. artist (1884–1954), 430.
- Lunacharsky, Anatolii Vasil'evich, Bolshevik politician, author and critic (1875–1933), 145, 312.
- Luther, Arthur, Ger. specialist on Rus. literature, active in *Vesy*, 170, 355.
- Luther, Martin, Ger. religious reformer (1483–1546), also Lutheran, 41, 205, 228.
- McCarey, Peter, au. 'Shestov and McDiarmid' in *Hugh MacDiarmid and the Russians*, 399.
 WORKS: with Cardines M., 'The Harrowing of Hell and Resurrection, Dante's *Inferno* and Blok's *Dvenadtsat'*', 420.
- MacDiarmid, Hugh, Scottish poet (1892–1978), 148, 399.
- Machiavelli, Nicolo, Italian writer (1469–1527), 22.
- Mackintosh, Charles Rohnie, Scottish modernist interior designer, 112.
- Maeterlinck, Maurice, Belgian writer (1862–1949), 19, 67, 68, 72, 125, 142, 171, 347, 360, 401.
 WORKS: *Stikhi. Peleas i Melizand* trs. and intro. Briusov, 360; *Treasury of the Humble*, 395.
- Maiakovsky, Vladimir Vladimirovich, Rus. Futurist poet (1893–1930), 207. 'Ia sam', 408.
- Maikov, Apollon Nikolaevich, Rus. poet (1821–97), 13, 42, 78.
- 'Makovsky, Konstantin Egorovich, Rus. painter (1839–1915), 232.
- Makovsky, Sergei Konstantinovich, Rus. poet, memorist, ed. of *Apollon* (1878–1962), 42, 43, 89, 233, 324, 328, 331, 360, 367, 382, 383, 388, 421, 430.
 WORKS: *Na Parnasse Serebrianogo Veka*, 382, 383, 391, 430; *Portrety sovremennikov*, 428; *Sobrannie stikhov*, 360.
- Maksimov, Dmitrii Evgen'evich, vi, 387, 389, 390, 400–3, 415, 420; Briusov i "Vesy", 400, 402, 420.
 WORKS: 'Briusov-kritik', 403; *Briusov. Poeziia i Pozitsiia*, 387, 396; "'Novyi Put'", 415; 'O romane-poeme Andreia Belogo "Peterburg"', 427; ed. Briusov, *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy*, 389.
- Malcovati, Fausto, ed. *Culture e memoria: atti de terzo simposio dedicato a Vjaceslov Ivanov*, 405.

- Maliavin, Filipp Andreevich, Rus. artist exhibiting with MI 1899–1906 (1869–1940), 107.
- Maliutin, Sergei Vasilievich, Rus. artist exhibiting with MI from 1899 to 1903 (1859–1937), 107.
- Mallarmé, Stéphane, Fr. poet (1842–98), 67–9, 72, 203, 327, 385.
- Malmstad, John E., au. ‘Andrei Bely and Seraphim of Sarov’, 415.
WORKS: ed. *Andrei Bely – Spirit of Symbolism* (1987), 407; ed. *Andrei Bely Stikhotvoreniia* (1982–), xvi, 407, 408, 411, 412, 415, 422; pub. letters from Sapunov to Kuzmin, 422; au. ‘You must remember this’, 405; *see also* Kuzmin.
- Malraux, André, Fr. writer (1901–76), 148.
- Mamontova, Elizaveta Grigor’evna (née Alekseeva), wife of below, 102.
- Mamontov, Savva Ivanovich, merchant patron, master of Abramtsevo (*see* under Russia) (1841–1918), 102–4, 122, 116, 161, 347, 348, 394.
- Mandel’shtam, Nadezhda Vladimirovna (née Khazin), memorist, wife of below (1899–1980), 429.
- Mandel’shtam, Osip. Rus. Acmeist poet (1891–1938), 4, 88, 189, 325, 326, 331, 370, 371, 429, 431.
WORKS: ‘Erfurtovskaia programma’, 376; ‘I Shubert na vode ...’, 405; *Sobranie sochinenii v trekh tomakh*, 376, 405.
- Margrian, A. E., au. ‘V. Briusov i René Ghil’, 402.
- Markov, Vladimir, xvi; au. *Kommentar zu den Dichtungen von K. D. Bal’mont 1890–1909*, 385, 386; ‘Odnostroki’, 389; ‘Russian Crepuscolari: Minskii, Merezhkovskii, Lkhvitskaia’, 400; ‘Vyacheslav Ivanov the Poet, a tribute and reappraisal’, 405.
- Mars, god of war, 128.
- Marx, Karl. Ger. social theorist (1818–83), 58, 114, 140, 226, 260, 261, 276, 359; Marxism, 4, 25, 358; Marxists, 153, 158; ex-Marxist, 353, 358, 415; ‘Erfurt Programme’, 4.
- Mary, Mother of God, Theotokos, Holy Virgin, 193, 310, 333, 422.
- Mary Magdalene, 196.
- Maslenikov, Oleg A., au., *The Frenzied Poets*, 413.
- Maslov, V. A., *see* Briusov, V. Ia.
- Maslova, Elena (d. 1893), 68.
- Matich, Olga, au. *Paradox in the Religious Poetry of Zinaida Grippius*, 382.
- May, Karl Ivanovich, proprietor of school attended by ‘Nevsky Pickwickians’, 94.
- Meierkhof’ d, Vsevolod Emil’evich, Rus. Theatre director (1874–1940), 280, 281, 292, 293, 298, 299, 309, 361, 362, 367, 372, 419, 421–3.
WORKS: *O teatre* (1913), 419; *Stat’i, pis’ma, rechi, besedy* (1968), 419; *Tvorcheskoe nasledie V. E. Meierkhof’ da* (1978), 422.
- Meilakh, V, au. ‘Simvolisty v 1905 godu’, 417, 418.
- Meinigen theatre, Ger. company, 97.
- Mekk, Vladimir Vladimirovich von, artist and art patron, 118, 119.
- Mel’nikov-Perchersky (real name Pavel Ivanovich Mel’nikov, pseud. Andrei Perchersky), Rus. writer (1818–83), 318.
- Mendelev, Dmitrii Ivanovich, Rus. chemist (1834–1907), 212, 219.
- Mendeleva, Liubov’ Dmitrievna, *see* Blok.
- Mephistopheles, Mephistophelian, 99, 130, 163, 235.
- Mercur de France*, Fr. lit. journal, 171, 290, 354.
- Mercury, messenger of the gods, 276.
- Merezhkovskaia, Zinaida Nikolaevna, *see* Hippus.
- Merezhkovsky, Dmitrii Sergeevich (1865–1941), also Merezhkovskys, ix, xi, xiii, 4, 7–9, 11, 13–15, 19–24, 27–37, 38, 40–3, 51, 53, 55, 60, 68, 70, 73, 77, 78, 83, 85, 101, 110, 111, 113–15, 118, 119, 122–31, 133–9, 141, 144–6, 149–58, 164–6, 176, 179, 184, 195–7, 199, 200, 204, 205, 209, 216, 223, 226–28, 230, 232, 235, 248, 250, 255, 259, 260–7, 269–71, 275, 276, 278–80, 282, 283, 287, 288, 297, 298, 300, 311–13, 315, 318, 324, 326, 328, 333, 335, 337, 340, 343–64, 366, 367, 371, 373, 375–82, 388–91, 393–401, 406, 409, 415, 417–21, 426, 430.
WORKS: *Aleksandr I*, 371; *Antikhrisť*. *Petr i Aleksei*, 129, 157, 355, 360, 395, (Afros’ka 126, 128), (Aleksei, 126–9, 179), (Petr, 127, 128); ‘Avtobiograficheskaia zametka’, 381; ‘Balagan i tragediia’, 335, 373, 430; ‘Bog’, 32, 382; ‘Bol’naia Rossiia’, 373; *Bylo i budet*, 379; ‘De Profundis’, 389; ‘Dekadentsvo i obschestvennost’’, 362; ‘Deti mraka’, 381, 390; ‘Dostoevskii–prorok russkoi revoliutsii’, 278, 363, 379, 417; ‘Dva

- Merezhkovsky, Dmitrii Sergeevich (*cont.*)
 puti', 31–2; 'Dve tainy russkoi poezii: Nekrasov i Tiutchev', 14, 377, 378; 'Dvoinaia bezdna', 381; 'Gogol' i chort', 124, 354, 361; 'Goluboe nebo', 381; 'Gor'kii i Dostoevskii', 379; 'Griadushchii kham', 270, 358, 361, 417; 'I khochu, no ne v silakh liubit' ia liudei', 381; *Ippolit* trs. 118, 124, 125, 352; *Khristos i antikhris*t, trilogy, see also separate volumes under own titles, 111, 124–31, 133, 196, 318, 345, 394, 395, 421; *Khristos i antikhris*t v russkoi literature. L. N. Tolstoi i Dostoevskii. Vol. II *Religiia L'va Tolstogo i Dostoevskogo*, 115, 124, 131, 350, 379, 394, 395, 396, 399; Vol. I, 353; Vol. II, 144, 351, 352; *Le Tsar et la révolution*, 366, 419; 'Leda', 35–6, 78, 382; 'Liubit' narod?', 381; *Liubov' sil'nei smerti. Italijskie novelly XV veka*, 352; 'Misticheskie dvizheniia nashego veka', 344; 'Molitva o kryliakh', 381; 'Morituri', 381; *Ne mir no mech*, 366; 'Net dvukh putei dobra i zla', 381; *Novye stikhotvoreniiia*, 23, 35, 78, 345, 381; 'O Chekhove', 358; 'O esli by dusha polna byla liubov'iu', 381; 'O novom religioznom deistvii', 417; 'O novom znachenii drevnei tragedii', 124, 352, 395; 'O prestuplenii i nakazanii', 379; 'O prichinakh upadka i o novykh techeniiax v sovremennoi russkoi literature', xiii, 7, 13, 113, 343, 344, 376, 377, 379; 'Odinochestvo', 381; 'Otsy i deti russkogo liberalizma', 394; *Otverzheniia*, 22, 23, 32, 77, 78, 128, 129, 345, 396; (Death of the Gods, 125), (Julian, 129, 395), (Psyche, 130); 'Panteon', 33–4, 111, 382; *Pavel I*, 366; 'Pesnia Vakhantov', 77, 344; *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii 1911–13*, 111, 376, 377, 393, 400; 'Prazdnik Pushkina', 394; 'Priznanie', 281, 381; 'Pushkin, 390; 'Pustaia chasha', 381; *Simvoly*, 7, 28, 32, 35, 68, 78, 343, 376, 382; *Sobranie stikhov (1883–1910)*, 373; *Starinnye oktavy*, 362, 381; *Stikhotvoreniiia (1882–1902)*, 352; 'Sud'ba Gogol'ia', 396; 'Sviataia Sofiia', 358; 'Umytye ruki', 358; *V tikhom omute*, 366; *Vechnye sputniki*, 33, 124, 346, 382; *Vera*, 27, 28, 381; *Voskresshie bogi (Leonardo da Vinci)*, 22–3, 33, 129, 346, 349, 352, 380, 396, (Leonardo, 129, 395), (Mona Cassandra, 128); 'Za ili protiv?', 196, 197, 406.
- Merezhkovsky, Sergei Konstantinovich, father of above, 28.
- Methner, Emilii Karlovich, (pseud. Vol'fing) Rus. writer of German origins, friend of A. Bely and ed. of 'Musagetes' (1872–1936), 210, 317, 353, 357, 367, 369, 384.
- Metner, Nikolai Karlovich, composer, brother of above (1880–1951), 210, 378, 384.
- Michelangelo (real name Michel Angelo Buonarrotti), Italian artist (1475–1564), 'Leda and the Swan', 35.
- Mickiewicz, Denis, au. 'Apollo and Modernist poetics', 428.
- Mikhailovsky, Nikolai Konstantinovich, Populist critic and journalist (1842–1904), 7–9, 23, 24, 26, 27, 101, 113, 132, 144, 344, 379, 381, 396, 399.
- WORKS: 'Le mouvement littéraire en Russie', 379; *Literaturnye vospominaniia i sovremennaia smuta*, 376; 'O sovesti g. Minskogo', 281; 'Russkoe otrazhenie frantsuzskogo simvolizma', 344, 376, also, untitled, 7–9.
- Milioti, Nikolai Dmitrievich, Rus. artist, exhibited MI 1906 (1874–1962), 121, 421.
- Milioti, Vasilii Dmitrievich, Rus. artist, brother of above, exhibited MI 1906, managed art section of ZR and, from 1906, was close associate of Vesny, 121, 421.
- Mill, Stuart, Eng. empiricist philosopher (1806–73), 132.
- Minerva, goddess of Wisdom, 214.
- Minsky (real name Nikolai Maksimovich Vilenkin) (1855–1937), ix, xvi, 8, 19, 23, 24–7, 30–2, 36–8, 42, 49, 51, 53, 81, 110, 111, 115, 136, 141, 145, 147, 164–6, 226, 227, 273, 277, 278, 284, 346, 348, 350–2, 358, 361, 375, 376, 380, 381, 391, 393, 394, 400, 401, 420;
- WORKS: *Al'ma*, 350; 'Filosofskie razgovory', 351, 360, 376, 380, 393. 'Gimn rabochikh', 278; 'Intelligentsiia i meshchanstvo (otvet M. Gor'komu)', 418; 'Istoriia moego redaktorstva', 418; 'Kak son proidut dela i promysly liudei', 381; 'Lish' to, chto my schitaem skuchnym snom', 26; 'Mgnovennykh obrazov besslednoe mel'kanie', 26; 'Na obshchestvennye temy', 418; *Novye pesni*, 352; 'O svobode religioznoi sovesti', 352; 'Oblako', 381; 'Ot Dante k Bloku', 420; *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, 357;

- 'Poslednaia ispoved', 24; *Pri svete sovesti*, 25, 346, 380, 381; 'Pro doma sua', 418; 'Starinnyi spor', 24, 380; *Stikhotvoreniia* (1883), 346; *Stikhotvoreniia* (1896), 346, 381; 'Zavety Pushkina', 394; concept of 'Meonism', 25–6; *see also Novaia Zhizn'*.
- Mints, Zara Grigor'evna, xiv.
- WORKS: au. 'Blok i russkii simbolizm', 377; au. 'A. Blok v polemike s Merezhkovskimi', 409; au. 'Graf Genrich von Ostergem i "Moskovskii Rennans"'', 414; ed. N. Pavlovich's reminiscences of Blok, 422.
- Mintslova, Anna Rudol'fovna, theosophist, for a short time, 1908–10, extremely influential in Symbolist circles (1860–1910?), 314–16, 324, 365, 368–70, 372, 426.
- Mir Bozhii*, Petersburg, Marxist-orientated journal (1892–1906), 22, 350, 383, 385.
- Mir Iskusstva* (*MI*) Petersburg journal (1898–1904) and (MI) Exhibiting Society of Artists (1898–1906) revived 1910–24, last one-off exhibition in Paris, 1927, ix, xiii, xvi, 3, 24, 72, 93, 98–101, 105, 110–19, 121–5, 131, 135–7, 139, 144, 145, 150, 153, 155–7, 159, 160, 165, 167, 168, 170, 176, 200, 203, 205, 210, 223, 227, 232, 237, 255, 265, 271, 286, 323, 332, 347–55, 358, 375–7, 379, 380, 391–400, 406, 408, 410, 415, 421.
- Miropol'sky (real name Aleksandr Lang), minor poet, friend and collaborator of Briusov, 68, 167, 255, 344, 353, 401.
- Lestvitsa*, 253; *see also* under Briusov, *Russkie simvolisty*.
- Mirsky, V., au. 'Nasha Literatura', 395.
- Mirza-Avakjan, M. L., au. 'O rabote Briusova nad perevodom "Romances sans paroles" Verlena', 388; au. 'Obraz Niny Petrovskoi v tvorcheskoi sud'be V. Ia. Briusova', 414.
- Mochulsky, Konstantin, au. *Valerii Briusov*, 387.
- Mommsen, Theodor, Ger. professor at University of Berlin, distinguished Latinist and historian of culture, taught Viacheslav Ivanov (1886–91) and praised his dissertation 1896 (1817–1903), 184, 186, 343.
- Monet, Claude, Fr. artist (1840–1926), 189.
- Morderer, V. Ia., pub. Briusov and Konevskoi – *Perepiska*; au. 'Blok i Konevskoi', 391, 409.
- Moréas, Jean (real name Iannis Papadiamantopoulos), Fr. poet of Gr. origin, theoretician of Symbolism (1856–1910), 67.
- Moreau, Gustave, Fr. painter (1826–98), 99, 119.
- Morfill, Sir William, 355, 402.
- Morozova, Margarita Kirillovna (née Mamontova, wife of Mikhail Abramovich Morozov (1870–1903)) (1873–1958), 276, 351.
- 'Andrei Belyi', 426; *see also Put'* and Religious-philosophical society (Moscow).
- Morris, William, Eng. theoretician and practitioner of applied art, (1834–96), 112.
- Moscow, xiii, 38, 56, 58, 59, 65–70, 76, 85, 93, 101–4, 106–8, 119, 131, 140, 153, 155, 156, 160–4, 167, 169, 171, 173, 176, 188, 198, 200, 203, 205, 210, 211, 216, 224, 230, 232, 246, 248, 249, 255, 261, 264, 269, 278, 279, 287, 314, 316, 317, 319, 326, 335, 337, 338, 343–6, 348–51, 353–5, 357–9, 362, 363, 365–9, 371, 372, 374, 388, 400, 401, 425, 428, 430.
- Aquarium (restaurant), 163; Bol'shoi theatre, 173; Café Grec, 173; Hotel Metropole, 173; Iauza (river), 76; Iushkov pereulok (off Il'inka), first offices of Skorpion, 164; Khudozhestvennyi theatre (Moscow Arts Theatre), 97, 164, 301, 339, 347, 353, 367, 423; Krasnaia ploshchad', 276; Kuchino (suburb), 338; Kuznetskii most', 60; Malyi theatre, 368; Novodevichii Monastery, 238, 239; Ostankino, 348; Polivanov gymnasium (Briusov's and Bely's school), 67, 343; Politechnicheskii Museum, 364, 367; Prensia (district), 276, 287, 358, 359; Stroganov Institute, 119; Tverskoi Boulevard, 173; University of Moscow, 58, 66, 119, 131, 140, 161, 169, 200–2, 230, 276, 344, 349, 350, 357, 377; Societies in Moscow: Literaturno-khudozhestvennyi kruzhok, 353, 367, 369; Obshchestvo liubitelei rossiiskoi slovesnosti (Society of Amateurs of Russian letters), 369, 370; Obshchestvo liubitelei zapadnoi literatury (Society of Amateurs of Western Literature), 66; Obshchestvo svobodnoi estetiki (Society of Free Aesthetics), 364, 425, 430; Tovarishchestvo Moskovskikh Khudozhnikov (originally 'Thirty-six artists'), 119, 121, 358.

- Moses, Mosaic, 25, 206, 308.
Moskovskie simvolisty 1894–5, see Briusov.
- Mosse, George L., trs. of Nordau
Degeneracy, 376.
- Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus, Austrian composer, (1756–91), 211.
Münchener neueste Nachrichten (Ger. newspaper), 109.
- Muratov Pavel, au. 'O vysokom v iskusstve', 420.
- Musagetes, Symbolist publishing house founded by Bely and Emilii Metner (1910–17), 317, 325, 334, 335, 369, 371–4, 377, 382, 425, 431.
 Alcion (musical section of M.), 317, 372, 425; Logos (philosophical section of M.), 317, 427; *Trudy i dni*, almanac pub. by Musagetes, 335–7, 431.
- Musset, Alfred Louis Charles de, Fr. poet (1810–57), 142.
- Mussolini, Benito Amilcare Andrea, It. dictator (1883–1945), 340.
- Mussorgsky, Modest Petrovich, Rus. composer (1839–81), 96, 368.
 WORKS: *Boris Godunov* (opera), 368; 'Trepak' (song), 255.
- Muther, Richard, Ger. art-historian (1860–1909), *Geschichte der Malerei in XIX Jahahundert*, 100, 101, 344.
- 'Mystic anarchism', 271, 274, 278–81, 297, 298, 308, 314, 316, 359, 362–4.
- Nabis, group of Fr. artists, 171, 355.
- Nabokov, Vladimir Vladimovitch, Rus. emigré writer (1899–1977), 322.
- Nachalo*, Rus. journal, 348, 380.
- Nadson, Semen Iakovlevich, Rus. poet (1862–87), 14, 30, 41, 67.
- Nansen, Fridtjof, Norwegian explorer (1861–1930), 'Fram', 62.
- Napoleon, Napoleon-figure, 252.
- Narbut, Vladimir Ivanovich, Acmeist writer (1888–1944), 371.
- 'Narodnaia Volia', terrorist splinter-group of Populist 'Zemlia i Volia' organisation, 24, 58.
- Nasha zhizn'*, Rus. newspaper (1904–6), 414, 418.
- Nechaev, Sergei Gennadievich, Rus. revolutionary (1847–82), 57.
- Neimann, conductor of Wagner operas, 96.
- Nekrasov, Nikolai Alekseevich, Rus. poet (1821–78), 14–16, 27, 61, 62, 67, 141, 218, 255, 259, 284, 299, 307, 359, 377, 415.
 WORKS: *Komu na Rusi zhit' khorosho?*, 61; 'Korobeiniki', 307; 'O dvukh velikikh greshnikakh' (Kudeiar), 15; 'Rytsar' na chas', 15.
- Nelson, Lowry Jn., ed. *Vyacheslav Ivanov. Poet, Critic and Philosopher*, 404.
- Nemirovich-Danchenko, Vladimir Ivanovich, theatrical director co-founder with Stanislavsky of Moscow Arts Theatre (1858–1943), 97, 347.
- Nero, Roman Emperor (37–68), 120.
- Nesterov, Mikhail Vasil'evich, Rus. artist (1862–1942), 99, 103, 107, 109, 110, 321, 393; *Iz pisem*, 393.
- New Zealand, 58.
- Nicholas II, also 'the Tsar' (1868–1918), 117, 264–6, 348, 351.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich, Ger. philosopher (1844–1900), Nietszschean, x, 3, 6, 11, 23, 66, 78, 83, 85, 114, 115, 124, 125, 135, 137, 138, 142–5, 157, 160–2, 167, 173, 203, 206–8, 210, 214, 227, 235, 237, 238, 241, 261, 275, 283, 315, 327, 348–53, 355, 364, 375, 376, 380, 395, 397–9, 406, 408, 411, 420, 424.
 WORKS: *Beyond Good and Evil*, 142; *Birth of Tragedy from the Spirit of Music*, 124, 214, 235, 239, 395; *Gay science, The*, 376; *Genealogy of Morals*, 142; *Thus spake Zarathustra*, 137, 142, 206, 207, 238, 375.
- Nikolaev, P. F., lecturer at University of Moscow helpful to Bal'mont, 65, 387.
- Niva*, Rus. journal (1870–1917), 22, 408.
- Nivat, Georges, ed. of *Histoire*, 377.
 WORKS: au. 'Le Symbolisme russe', 391; au. 'Prospero et Ariel. Esquisse des rapports d'Andrej Belyi et Vjaceslav Ivanov', 413; pub. A. Bely 'Lettre biographique', 412.
- Nizhegorodskii Listok*, Rus. local newspaper, 65, 386.
- Noah, 193.
- Nomocanon (Kormchaia kniga), Orthodox devotional book, 166.
- Nordau, Max (real surname Südfeldt), cosmopolitan critic (1849–1925), 1, 5–9, 376.
Entartung (Degeneracy) 5–9, 376; Rus. trs. as *Vyrozhdenie* (1894), 376.
- Norkelianus, Casimir, au. *Jurgis Kazimirovic Baltruzajtis*, 401.
- Norse, 193.
- North Pole, 62.
- Norway, Norwegian, 161, 171.
- Notovich, O. K., 109.
- Nouvel, Walter Fedorovich, Nevsky Pickwickian involved with *MI*, lifelong friend of Diagelev (1871–1949), 94, 96, 97, 99, 107, 110, 112, 113, 115, 135, 150, 153.

- Novaya zhizn'*, SPb. Bolshevik newspaper ed. N. Minsky (1905), xvi, 277, 284, 358, 418.
- Novalis (real name Friedrich von Hardenberg), Ger. Romantic poet (1772–1801), 226.
- Novoe russkoe slovo*, NY emigré newspaper, 428.
- Novoe Vremie*, Rus. newspaper (1868–1914), 21, 40, 109, 114, 139, 346, 347, 352, 379, 390, 393, 395.
- Novosti dnia*, Rus. newspaper, 70.
- Novosti i birzhevaia gazeta*, Rus. newspaper, 101, 109, 346, 393.
- Novyi Put' (NP)* Petersburg journal (1903–4), ix, xvi, 24, 72, 123, 125, 131, 136, 137, 146, 152, 154–60, 167–9, 174, 180, 196, 197, 205, 216, 218, 227, 240, 246, 254, 260, 261, 263, 271, 280, 298, 352–8, 379, 380, 384, 394–6, 398, 400, 402, 404–6, 410, 411, 414.
- Novyi zhurnal*, NY emigré journal, 429.
- Nurok, Alfred Pavlovich, Nevsky Pickwickian associated with *MI* (1852–1936), 99, 112, 115.
- October Manifesto, 245, 252, 263, 276, 277, 284, 306, 359, 360.
- Old Believers (Old Ritualists, Schismatics), 126, 311, 326, *see also* Orthodox Church; Sectarians.
- Olenina-d'Algeim, M. A., Rus. singer (1869–1970), 255, 317, 353.
- Ophiel, era of, 232.
- Opul'skaia, L. D. au. 'Tolstoi i russkie pisateli kontsa XIX-nachala XX v', 381–2, 387.
- Opyty*, NY emigré journal, 378.
- Oraea (Ory), private publishing house founded by Viach. Ivanov (1906–19), x, 294, 362, 364–6, 370, 417, 422, 425, *see also* *Tsvetnitsa Or*.
- Orestes, 236.
- Oreus, *see* Konevskoi.
- Orlov, Vladimir Nikolaevich, intro. to K. D. Bal'mont, *Stikhotvoreniia*, 385, 386; ed. and intro. *Aleksandr Blok i Andrei Belyi, Perepiska*, 409; ed. Aleksandr Blok. *Sobranie sochinenii* (1963–5).
- Orpheus, Orphic, 196, 301.
- Orthodox Church, I, 49, 82, 122, 124–5, 134–6, 139, 140, 150–3, 155, 157, 188, 229, 230, 261–3, 265, 269, 270, 321, 350, 351, 358.
- Osiris, 318.
- Ossian (real name James Macpherson), Scottish trs. and composer of Gaelic ballads (1736–96), 188.
- Ostroukhov, Iliia Semenovich, Rus. painter and collector (1858–1929), 103.
- Ostroumova-Lebedeva, Anna Petrovna, Rus. artist, founder-member of *MI* (1871–1955), 111.
- Otechestvennye zapiski*, Rus. journal (1839–84), 14.
- Ovsianikov, A. N., au. 'Iz shkol'nykh let K. D. Bal'monta', 385.
- Oxford Slavonic Papers*, 402.
- Pachmuss, Temira, au. *Intellect and Ideas in Action*, 397, 399, 416.
- ed. and trs. *Between Paris and St Petersburg. Selected Diaries of Zinaida Hippus*, 399; pub. Z. N. Gippius 'Contes d'amour', 384, 397; pub. 'Dnevnik Z. N. Gippius: O byvshe'm', 397, 399; ed. Zinaida Gippius *Stikhotvoreniia i poemy 1899–1918*, 382.
- Pacific Ocean, 252.
- Pallas Athene, 41.
- Pamiat'. Istoricheskii sbornik (Paris emigré collections) Kn.4, 416.
- Pan (Peter Pan), 128, 199, 247.
- Papini Giovanni, It. writer and art-historian associated with *Vesy* (1881–1956), 170, 355.
- Parmenides, *see* Plato.
- Parnassian, 3, 69, 73, 177, 282, 305, 311, 343.
- Parnis, A. E., pub. Briusov and Konevskoi *Perepiska*; intro. to L. N. Stepanov's article on Konevskoi for Biblioteka poeta.
- Pasternak, Boris Leonidovich, Rus. poet (1890–1960), 148, 383, 399.
- Boris Pasternak. The Poet and his Politics*, 399.
- Pauer, Gabriele, ed. Fedor Sologub, *Neizdannoe i nesobrannoe*, 383.
- Paul, I., Tsar (1754–1801), 115.
- St Paul the Apostle, 34.
- Paul'mann, I., ed. Liubov' Blok, *Byli i nebylitsy . . .*, 378.
- Paulus, Adolf, Ger. exhibition organiser (Munich Secession), 101, 109.
- Pavlova, Karolina Karlovna, Rus. poet (1807–93), 166.
- Pavlovich, Nadezhda Aleksandrovna, Rus. poet and memorist (1895–1975), 422.
- Pechat' i Revoliutsiia*, Sov. journal (1921–30), 387, 410.
- Peredvizhniki, the society of artists known in English as Ambulants or Wanderers (1870–1923), 101, 103, 106–8, 255.

- Perepletchikov, Vasilii Vasil'evich, Rus. artist, exhibited with *MI*, 1899–1903 (1863–1918), 102, 103.
- Pereval*, Rus. symbolist journal (1907), 286, 361, 364, 365, 411, 420, 423, 424.
- Persia, Persian, 161, 428.
- Pertsov, Petr Petrovich, writer, publisher, memoirist (1868–1947), 24, 70, 76–8, 110, 111, 124, 125, 131, 136, 144, 153–5, 158, 164–6, 168, 173, 232, 250, 254, 260, 345–7, 349, 352, 355, 379, 381, 388, 389, 391, 399, 400, 403, 410, 411, 414.
- WORKS: *Filosofskie techeniia v russkoi poezii* (ed.), 24, 78, 131, 346; *Literaturnye vospominaniia 1890–1902*, 381, 388, 389; *Molodiia poeziia* (ed.), 24, 70, 77, 165, 345; *Rannii Blok*, 410; see also Briusov, V. Ia., for letters to P.
- Perun, anc. Slav god of thunder, 187.
- Peter I, the Great, Tsar (1672–1725), 128–30, 156, 269, 273; Petrine, 94.
- Peters, Johanne, *Farbe und Licht-Symbolik bei Aleksandr Blok*, 421.
- Petersburg, see Saint Petersburg.
- Petersen, Ronald E., xv; *The Russian Symbolists* (1971), 405, 420, 423.
- Petit, S. G., correspondent of Lev Shestov, 399.
- Petrarch (Petarca), Francesco, It. poet (1304–74), 423.
- Petrashevsky (real name M. V. Butashevich-Petrashevsky) early Rus. socialist (1821–66), 42.
- Petrovskaia, Nine Ivanovna, writer, wife of S. Sokolov-Krechetov, prototype of Renata in Briusov's *Fiery Angel*, 271, 288, 354, 354–7, 359, 370, 413.
- Petrovsky, Aleksei Sergeevich, trs. and friend of Andrei Bely (1881–1958), 205, 210, 316.
- Pianykh, M. F., ed. *Aleksandr Blok i Andrei Bely. Dialog poetov*, 423.
- Pilate, Pontius, 138.
- Pirozhkov, Mikhail Vasilievich, Merezhkovsky's publisher in SPb (1867–1926), 366.
- Plamia*, Rus. journal (1918), 358, 419.
- Plato, anc. Gr. philosopher (c. 428 to c. 348 BC), also Platonic, Platonism, 3, 9, 45, 88, 135, 149, 203, 213, 214, 217, 221, 225, 229, 231, 236, 237, 241, 271, 296, 325, 350, 408.
- WORKS: *Dialogues*, 213, 236, (Diotima, 213, 273); *Laws*, 236; *Parmenides*, 148; *Phaedrus*, 236; *Republic*, 236; *Symposium*, 236; *Timaeus*, 408.
- Plehve, Viacheslav Konstantinovich, Minister of the Interior assassinated in 1904 (1846–1904), 255.
- Pleshcheev, Aleksei Nikolaevich, Rus. poet, writer and critic (1825–93), 42.
- Plotinus, Alexandrine Neoplatonist, (205–70), 148, 149.
- La Plume*, Fr. journal, 354.
- Pobedonostsev, Konstantin Petrovich, Rus. statesman, Procurator of the Holy Synod from 1880–1901 (1827–1907), 151, 152.
- Pochin'*. *Sbornik Obshchestva ljubitelei Rossiiskoi slovesnosti na 1895*, 386.
- Podkopaeva, Ia. N., ed. Somov, *Pis'ma. Dnevnik . . .*, 392; ed. Vrubel'. *Perepiska. Vospominanii*, 420.
- Podol'skaia, I. I., ed. Annensky. *Kniga otrazhenii*, 429; *Izbrannoe*, 429.
- Poggioli, Renato, au. *Rozanov*, 397.
- Pogodin, A., au. 'Roman D. S. Merezhkovskogo', 395.
- Poland, Polish, 59, 100, 161, 171, 340, 355, 395; Warsaw, 69; Warsaw University, 211.
- Polenov, Vasilii Dmitrievich, artist and theatre designer associated with Abramtsevo (1844–1927), 102, 103, 107.
- Polenova, Elena Dimitrievna, Rus. artist and craftworker, closely associated with Abramtsevo (1850–1898), 103.
- Poliakov, Aleksandr Aleksandrovich, brother of S. A. P., factory owner, 163–5, 246, 300, 400.
- Poliakov, Sergei Aleksandrovich, trs., and proprietor of Skorpiion and *Vesy* (1874–1942), 160, 163–71, 349, 354, 355, 360, 370, 401.
- Poliarnaia zvezda*, Rus. journal (1905–6), 417.
- Polonsky, Iakov' Petrovich, Rus. poet (1819–98), 13–15, 61, 378; 'Vechernyi zvon', 13–14, 15, 218, 376; *Stikhovoreniiia* (1957), 378.
- Pomirchii, P. E., ed. Viach Ivanov *Stikhovoreniiia i poemy*, 404, see also Averintsev.
- Populism, Populist, 19, 21, 23–5, 27, 28, 66, 79, 101, 108, 114, 115, 135, 153, 158, 253, 307, 308, 312, 313, 331, 386; neo-Populist, 154, 254, 307.
- Portugal, Portuguese, 59; Lisbon (earthquake), 12.
- Potebnia, Aleksandr Afanas'evich, philologist and philosopher (1835–91), 177, 372, 403.
- Poynter, Erich, au. *Die Zyklisierung*

- Lyrischer Texte bei Aleksandr A. Blok*, 403.
- Pre-Raphaelite, 103, 104, 203, 321.
- Prehn, Eric, Rus. emigré artist in tradition of *MI*, his wife, Irina, 384, Irina P. trs. of Lidia Ivanova's reminiscences of her father, 429.
- Prishvin, M. M., Rus. writer (1873–1954), au. '1914–ii Dnevnik', 398.
- Problemy idealizma* 1902, ed. Bulgakov S., 158, 210, 253, 369.
- Proffer, Carl and Ellendea, eds. *The Silver Age of Russian Culture. An Anthology*, 428.
- Prokofiev, Sergei Sergeevich, Rus. composer (1891–1953), *Dance of the Oprichniki*, 256; opera *Ognenniy angel*, 413.
- Prometheus, 282, 417, 419, 423.
- Prosveshchenie (publishing house), 370.
- Protiv techeniia*, Rus. newspaper, 430.
- Proust, Marcel, Fr. writer (1871–1922), 322.
- Przybyszewski Stanislaw, Polish writer (1868–1927), 167, 317, 360, 366, 368, 369, 401, 402.
- Sobranie sochinenii* (Skorpion), 360; 'Vechnaia skazka', 366.
- Pushkin, Aleksandr Sergeevich, Rus. poet (1799–1837), 2 fn., 10, 61, 67, 78, 79, 95, 97, 115, 141, 160, 178–80, 183, 186, 193, 194, 218, 227, 306, 348, 349, 370, 394, 396, 401.
- WORKS: 'Chern'' [180], 186; *Evgenii Onegin*, 61; 'Poet', 178, 180, 186; *Ruslan i Liudmila*, 405.
- Put'*, Moscow publishers, run by M. Morozova, 413.
- Puvis de Chavannes, Pierre Cécile, Fr. painter (1824–98), 99, 119, 171.
- Pyman, A., au. 'A forerunner of Russian modernism: Ivan Konevskoy', 391; 'Aleksandr Blok and the Merezhkovskiiis', 409; 'The Church and the Intelligentsia with special reference to the Religious-Philosophical Meetings [...] 1901–1903', 395; *The Life of Aleksandr Blok*, I 423, II 425; 'Minsky, a preliminary study of the man in his generation', 380; pub. 'Remizov. Petersburg dreams', 379.
- Rabinowitz, Stanley, T., ed. Fedor Sologub, *Melkii bes. Drama*, 42.
- Rabotnikov (friend of L. Shestov), 143.
- Rachinskaia, Anna Alekseevna (mistress of Bobrovka, friend of A. Bely, d. 1916), 316.
- Rachinskii, Georgii Alekseevich, Rus. writer and thinker, president of Moscow Rel. Phil. Society, friend of Bely, brother of above (1859–1939), 352, 369.
- Radlov, E. L., coeditor with S. M. Solov'ev of VI. Solov'ev's *Sobranie Sochinenii*, 379.
- Raevskaia-Hughes, Olga, ed. *Remizov Iveren'*, 427.
- Rannit, Aleksis, au. 'Viacheslav Ivanov and his Vespertine Light', 405.
- Rapp, L. Iu, wife of N. Berdiaev, 416.
- Rat'kov, Sasha (Filosofov's brother-in-law?), 107.
- Realists, Realism, 288–90, 305, 306, 310; Socialist Realism, 322; Neorealism, xii.
- Reavey, George, trs. of Bely's *Serebrianyi golub'*, 427.
- Rech'*, Rus. newspaper (1906–17), 367, 424, 426.
- Redon, Odilon, Fr. artist (1840–1916), 171.
- Reeve F. D., au. 'Dobrotliubov and Briusov. Symbolist Extremists', 389.
- Regne des regnes*, Fr. journal, 379.
- Régnier, Henri de, Fr. poet (1864–1936), 163.
- Religious-Philosophical Meetings in Saint Petersburg (1901–3), 131, 149, 150–3, 155, 157, 195, 217, 227, 351–3; Minutes of, 398.
- Religious Philosophical Societies in SPb, Moscow, Kiev from 1906 onwards: in SPb 311, 312, 366, 367, 398, 426; in Kiev, 261; in Moscow, 372, 401.
- Remizov, Aleksei Mikhailovich, Rus. writer (1877–1957), x, 22, 146, 147–9, 173, 188, 189, 255, 260–3, 272, 280, 281, 290, 299, 312, 318–20, 322, 331, 332, 340, 353, 358–60, 365, 368, 373, 379, 398, 405, 416, 421, 423, 427.
- WORKS: *Besovskoe deistvie*, 299, 366; *Chasy*, 289, 368, 421; *Chortov log i polunoshchnoe solntse. Rasskazy i poemy*, 368; 'Chto est' tabak?', 368; *Iveren': Zagoguliny moei pamiati*, 427; *Krestovye sestry*, 320, 321, 428, (Marakulin, 321), (Burkov's House, 321), (Plotnikov, 321); *Kukkha. Rozanovy p.s' ma* 397, 416; *Limonar'*, *sirech' lug dukhovnyi*, 320, 365; 'Morshchinka', 365; 'Na etape', 354; 'Neuemnyi buben'', 373; 'Pamiati L'va Shestova', 398; 'Peterburgskie sny', 379, 399, 405; 'Po povodu knigi L. Shestova *Apofeoz bespochvennosti*',

- Remizov, Aleksei Mikhailovich (*cont.*)
398; *Podstrizhennymi glazami*, 428;
Posolon', 320, 355; Sochinenii, 73;
Tsar Maksimilian, 299; *Vstrechi*, 398,
427, 428; 'Zavety', 428; '76 risunki
pisatelei', 428.
- Remizova-Dovgello, Serafima Pavlovna,
wife of above (1876–1943), 260, 272,
379, 397, 427.
- Revolution, 1905 (First Russian
Revolution), viii, 15, 69, 212, 217, 241,
245–84 (throughout as chapter
heading), 322, 299–301, 305, 317, 318,
333, 335, 337, 357, 366;
post-revolutionary, 315.
Bloody Sunday, Jan 9, 245, 263, 264,
267, 313, 357, 359, 416; *see also*
October Manifesto.
- Revolution, 1917, 1, 126, 135, 194, 241,
264, 284, 318.
February R., 284; October coup, 339,
340.
- Revue des Etudes Slaves*, Fr. journal, 411.
- Riabushinsky, Nikolai Pavlovich,
merchant patron, proprietor of ZR,
(1876–1951), 286, 298, 360, 364, 420,
421.
- Richardson, William, au. *Zolotoe Runo and
Russian Modernism 1905–1910*, 420.
- Rilke, Rainer Maria, Ger. poet
(1875–1926), 178.
- Rimbaud, Arthur, Fr. poet (1854–91), 4,
67, 69, 72, 233, 327, 385.
- Rimsky-Korsakov, Nikolai Andreevich,
Rus. composer (1844–1908), 97, 104
fn., 144, 371; *Pskovitianka*, 371.
- Roehrich, Nicolas (Rus. sp. Rerikh,
Nikolai Konstantinovich), Rus.
painter (1874–1947), 119, 350, 430.
- Roman, Omry, au. *An approach to Mandel'-
stam*, 465.
- Roman-Catholic, Catholic, 150, 185, 241,
340; neo-Catholicism, 99; Pope of
Rome, 230.
- Romanov (dynasty), 277.
- Romanov, Ivan Fedorovich (pseud. Rtsy),
Slavophile journalist, friend of
Roazanov and contributor to *NP*
(1861–1913), 136.
- Romantic, Romanticism, 3, 53, 59, 61, 115,
133, 184, 226, 253, 307, 329, 330, 331;
neo-Romantic, 97, 99, 259; Romantic
irony, 228, 233.
- Rome (ancient), Roman, Eternal City, 120,
184, 192, 193, 251, 339, 341, 343, 356.
Pantheon, 33; Rubicon, 359; Third
Rome, 252; *see also* Latin.
- Rosenthal, Bernice Glatzer, au. *Nietzsche
in Russia*, 376; au. *Merezhkovsky and
the Silver Age*, 395.
- Roslavlev, Aleksandr Stepanovich, minor
Rus. poet (1883–1920), 172.
- Roazanov, Vasilii Vasil'evich (pseud.
Varvarin) (1856–1919), ix, 1, 15, 29,
33, 111, 115, 124, 125, 131–9, 140, 147,
151, 155–7, 179, 227, 262, 276, 313,
339, 343–48, 350, 352, 354, 357, 359,
370, 373, 375, 376, 378–82, 394, 395–7,
400, 410, 412, 416, 426; (Varvarin,
139).
- WORKS: *Apokalipsis nashego vremeni*,
135, 339; *Dekadenty. kriticheskii etiid*,
357; 'Eshche o smerti Pushkina', 410;
'Ipolit na Aleksandriinskoj stsene',
395; *Italianskie vpechatleniia*, 370; 'Iz
starykh pisem', 410, 412; 'K lektsii Vl.
Solov'eva', 397; 'Khrisianstvo
passivno ili aktivno?', 396; *Kogda
nachal'stvo ushlo*, 373; *Krasota v
prirode*, 343; 'L. N. Tolstoi i russkaia
Tserkov', 396; *Legenda o Velikom
Inkvizitore*, 133, 345, 375, 379, 397;
Literaturnye ocherki, 348; *Liudi
lunnogo sveta*, 397; *Mesto khristianstva
v istorii*, 354; *Metafizika khristianstva*,
373; *Oponimanii*, 132–3; *Opavshie
list'ia*, 137, 381, 403; 'Otv et g. VI. S.
Solov'evu', 396; 'Pamiati Vl.
Solov'eva', 394; 'Poezdka v Iasnuiu
Polianu', 396; *Priroda v istorii*, 350;
'Psikhologiiia nashego otnosheniia k
raskolu', 346; *Religiia i Kul' tura*, 348,
396; *Russkaia tserkov'*, 371; *Semeinnyi
vopros v Rossii*, 354; 'Sereznyi kritik',
400; 'Sredi inoiazychnykh (D. S.
Merezhkovskii)', 381, 395; *Sumerki
prosveshcheniia*, 348; 'Svoboda i
vera', 396; *Temnyi lik*, 135, 373, 398;
'Tsel' chelovecheskoi zhizni', 376;
Uedinennoe, 137, 378, 382, 395, 397;
V mire neiasnogo i nereshennogo, 352,
398; 'V svoem uglu', 137, 157, 354,
398; 'Zametka o Pushkine', 394.
- Rudnev, P. A., au. 'Iz istorii
metricheskogo repertuara russkikh
poetov XX – nachala XX v.', 390.
- Rudneva, Varvara Dmitrievna, Roazanov's
second wife (1864–1923), 134, 262.
- Rudnitsky, K. au. 'V teatre na
Offiterskoi', 422.
- Rus'*, newspaper (1903–8), 418.
- Ruskin, John, Eng. aesthete (1819–1900),
203.
- Russia, Russian, x, xi, xii, 5–9, 12, 14, 20,
21, 24, 40, 41, 44, 51, 53, 55, 57–9, 66,
67, 73, 81–3, 88, 93–7, 99–113, 115–17,

- 119, 121, 122, 124–7, 130, 131, 134–41, 143, 146–9, 151, 167–71, 173, 176, 183, 185–91, 198, 202, 205, 217, 218, 225, 230, 234, 235, 240, 241, 245, 246, 248, 250, 251, 254–6, 259–61, 263–5, 267–74, 278, 280, 283–7, 290, 295–7, 299, 300, 305, 307–23, 327, 329, 332–4, 338–40, 345–9, 354–6, 359, 361–3, 366–9, 371–3, 375–8, 380, 385, 387, 392, 393, 395, 398, 400–2, 411, 415, 418, 426.
- Abramtsevo**, 102–4, 112, 116, 346; **Belyi**, 343; **Boblovo**, 219, 348; **Bobrovka**, 316, 369, 370; **Bogdanovskoe**, 95; **Bogoliubi**, 372; **Dedovo**, 255, 257, 317, 348, 363, 367, 369; **Diveevo**, 255, 275, 357; **Franz Joseph Land**, 62; **Izumudrii Poselok**, 369; **Kazan**, 113; **Kitezh**, 129, 337; **Kostroma**, 131; **Luga**, 352; **Nizhnyi Novgorod**, 357; **Olonetsk**, 347; **Oskochnoe**, 95; **Penza**, 96, 113; **Port Arthur**, 184; **Praslovo**, forest of, 211; **Saint Sergius**, monastery of, 102; **Sarov**, 255, 357; **Serebrianyi Kolodez'**, 195, 314, 351, 354, 357, 363, 367, 372; **Shakhmatovo**, 211, 213, 214, 271, 312, 353, 357, 359, 363, 367, 369, 374; **Shuia**, 57, 94; **Siberia (Siberian)**, 41; **Smolensk Province**, 343; **Solovetskie Islands**, 82; **Solovki**, 349, 351; **Suide**, 366; **Ust-Sysol'sk**, 320, 353; **Vladimir**, 56, 58; **Volga**, 131, 326; **Vologda**, 353; **Vytegr**, 343; **Zagor'e**, 296, 365; *see also* **Moscow**; **Saint Petersburg**; **Ukraine**.
- Russian Association of Proletarian Writers (RAPP)**, 339.
- Russian Literature (Journal AN SSSR (now RAN) Pushkin House)**, 425.
- Russian Literature Triquarterly, US journal**, 398, 400.
- Russkaia literatura XX veka (dooktiabriskii period) (1968)**, 378, 379.
- Russkaia Mysl'**, **Rus. journal (1880–1918)**, under **P. B. Struve** and **A. A. Kizevetter** from 1905 and **Struve** from 1910, 145, 261, 312, 366, 367, 369, 370, 373, 380, 381, 386, 402, 418, 424, 429.
- Russkie Simvolisty**, I, II, III, 1894–5, *see* **Briusov**.
- Russkie Vedomosti**, **Rus. newspaper**, 158, 400.
- Russkie zapiski**, **Rus. emigré journal**, 398.
- Russkii Arkhiv, Moscow journal (1863–1917)**, 231, 348, 350, 410.
- Russkii Listok**, **Rus. periodical**, 250, 414.
- Russkii Sovremennik**, **Rus. periodical**, 416.
- Russkii Vestnik**, **Rus. journal (1856–1906)**, 345, 378, 380, 395–7.
- Russkoe Bogatstvo** **Rus. journal (1876–1918)**, in **Nov. 1914** became **Russkie Zapiski**, 7, 65, 144, 376, 381, 399.
- Russkoe Obozrenie**, **Moscow journal (1890–1908)**, 379, 390.
- Russkoe Slovo**, **Moscow newspaper (1894–1917)**, 139, 373, 408.
- Russkoe Voskresenie**, **Rus. emigré newspaper (Paris)**, 399.
- Russo-Japanese War 1904–5**, x, 69, 156, 158, 241, 245–84 (chapter-heading), 274, 318, 355, 413, 416.
- Rutebeuf**, **Fr. Medieval playwright and poet (1250–1280)**, 300; *Le Miracle de Théophile*, 300.
- Sabashnikova**, *see* **Voloshina**.
- Sade**, **Donatien Alphonse François, Marquis de (1740–1814)**, 99.
- Sadovskaia, Kseniia Mikhailovna, Blok's first love (1862–1925)**, 347.
- Sadovskoi, Boris Aleksandrovich**, **minor Rus. poet and critic (1881–1945)**, 173, 357, 370, 402.
- Saint Petersburg, Petersburg, Petrograd**, xiii, xv, xvii, 2, 38, 42, 49, 50, 53–6, 67–70, 76, 85, 88, 93, 94, 96, 97, 99, 101, 103, 105–10, 112, 115–21, 125, 128–31, 143–5, 152, 153, 155, 156, 160, 161, 164, 166–8, 173, 184, 189, 199, 203, 211, 212, 214, 216–18, 235, 249, 254, 257, 258, 261, 264, 268, 270, 272, 273, 276–81, 292, 295, 299, 306, 311, 314, 315, 321, 323, 325, 329, 335, 337, 340, 343, 344, 347–51, 356–73, 388, 398–400, 425, 427.
- Academy of Arts**, 101, 119, 265; **Aleksandriinsky Theatre**, 117, 118, 124, 395, 423; **Andreevskoe uchilishche**, 365; **Apollon's offices (Moika canal)**, 324; **Bronze horseman**, *see* **Mednyi vsadnik**, below; **Conservatoire**, 166; **Dom Muruzi (Merezhkovsky's flat on Liteinyi Prospekt)**, 260, 262, 263, 265, 267, 272; **Dom pesni**, 368; **Duma**, 227, 351; **Fontanka**, 328; **Grenadier Guards Barracks**, **Blok's home until 1906**, 212, 258, 265, 267, 352, 362; **Hermitage Museum**, 94; **Islands**, 264, 268; **Malaia Nevka**, tributary of **Neva**, 267; **Mariinsky theatre**, 265, 352, 353; **Mednyi Vsadnik**, 277; **Nemetskaia sloboda**, 94, 95; **Neva**, 128, 130, 264; **Nevsky Prospekt**, 119; **Novyi teatr**, 364, 423; **Passazh**, 119; **Petrogradskaia storona**, 212, 357, 362; **Pushkin House**

- Saint Petersburg (*cont.*)
 (IRLI), xiv; Rozhdestvenskii school, 343; Russkii Muzei, 116; Saltykov-Shchedrin Library, xiv; Starinyi teatr, 364, 365; Stieglitz Rooms, 106, 107; Tavricheskaia ulitsa, 359; Tavricheskii dvorets (Tauride palace), 249, 270; Tenishev school (academy) 67, 315, 367, 411; Tenishev Hall, 369; Theological Academy, 153; Tower, the, Viach Ivanov's flat, 188, 225, 249, 271–3, 278, 280, 290, 292, 298, 299, 314, 324, 326, 331, 337, 359, 361, 362, 365, 370, 371, 372, 429; University of, 211–13, 254, 346, 348, 352; Vvedensky school, 344; Zimnyi dvorets (Winter Palace), 277.
- Palaces around Saint Petersburg, 96, 115, 157; Oranienbaum, 96; Pavlovsk, 96; Peterhof, 96; Tsarskoe Selo, 96, 98, 324, 326, 249, 370.
- Societies in Saint Petersburg.
 Filosofovskoe obshchestvo, 351; Geograficheskoe obshchestvo, 152; Kruzhok molodykh, 364; Literaturnoe obshchestvo, 362, 313, 367; Nevsky Pickwickians, 93, 98, 105, 111, 114; Obshchestvo pooshchreniia iskusstv, 117, 121; Obshchestvo revnitatei Khudozhestvennogo slova (akademiia), 324, 326, 330–3, 335, 369–72, 274, 429, 430; Russkie Akvarelisty, 99, 106; Svobodno-ekonomicheskoe obshchestvo, 265, 368; Tsekh poetov, 326, 335, 429; *see also* Religious-Philosophical Meetings; Religious Philosophical Societies; *Mir Iskusstva*.
- Salisbury, Harrison, 427.
- Salma, N., au. 'K voprosu o meste Briusova v russkom simvolizme', 403.
- Saltykov-Shchedrin, Mikhail Evgrafovich (pseud. N. Shchedrin), Rus. satirical writer (1826–1889), 12, 378.
- Samkov, V. A., ed. *Sergei Diagilev i russkoe iskusstvo*, 392.
- Sanskrit, 59, 161.
- Sapunov, Nikolai Nikolaevich, Rus. artist exhibited with MI 1902 and 1906, work for theatre includes sets for Blok's *Balaganchik* (1880–1912), 121, 292, 421, 422.
- Sarian, Martiros Sergeevich, Armenian artist exhibited with MI 1906 (1880–1972), 121, 421.
- Sarnygin, M. V., correspondent of Briusov, 388.
- Savanarola, Girolamo, Italian Dominican often seen as embodiment of Church's opposition to secular art (1452–98), 297.
- Savinkov, Boris Viktorovich (lit. pseud. V. Ropshchin), SR Terrorist, Minister of War in last weeks of Provisional Government (1879–1925), 255, 284, 340.
- Scandinavia, Scandinavian, 6, 41, 59, 100, 171, 355, 385, *see also* under separate countries.
- Schick, Maximilian (1884–1968?), 170, 172, 355.
- Schiller, Friedrich, Ger. poet and writer (1759–1805), 178.
- Schlegel, Karl Wilhelm Friedrich von, Ger. philosopher associated, together with his brother August Wilhelm, with Jena Romantics (1772–1829), 226.
- Schopenhauer, Arthur, Ger. philosopher (1788–1860), 3, 49, 69, 79, 83, 177, 202, 203, 206, 226, 261, 347.
 WORKS: *The World as Will and Representation*, 49.
- Schtuck, Franz von, Ger. artist (1863–1928), 206.
- Scotland, Scottish Baronial, 103.
- Scott, Walter, Scottish poet and novelist (1771–1832), 127.
- Scottish Slavonic Review*, Glasgow journal, 391.
- Sectarians, 311, 312, 317, 351.
 Dobroliubovtsy, 82–3; Khlysty, 267; Molokane, 351; *see also* Bely, *Serebrianyi golub*.
- Segodnia*, emigré newspaper (Riga), 385, 386.
- Semenov, (real name Leonid Dmitrievich Semenov-Tian-Shanskii), Rus. poet and revolutionary, (1880–1917), 254, 264, 266, 355, 357, 359.
- Semenov, Evgenii Petrovich, author of 'Lettres russes' to *Mercure de France*, (real name Solomon Moisevich Kogan), 'Le mysticisme anarchique', 298.
- Semenov, Mikhail Nikolaevich, trs., journalist, founder-contributor to *Vesy* (1872–1952), 167, 169, 171, 355, 360, 402.
- St Seraphim of Sarov (1759–1833), 255, 357, 415.
- Sergeev-Tsensky, Sergei Nikolaevich (real name Sergeev), Rus. writer (1875–1958), 282.
- Sergei Aleksandrovich, Grand Duke, governor-general of Moscow assassinated in 1905, 269.

- Sergei (Starogorodtsky) (1867–1944), Bishop of Iamburg, Rector of SPb Theological Academy, later Locum Tenens then Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church, 153.
- St Sergius (c. 1314–1392), 102, 103.
- Serman, Ilya, ed. *Histoire*, 377.
- WORKS: 'Vyacheslav Ivanov and Russian Poetry of the eighteenth century', 404; *Russian Literature and History in Honour of Professor I. Serman*, 400.
- Serov, Valentin Aleksandrovich, Rus. artist, founder-member of MI (1865–1922), 102–5, 107–9, 115, 116, 118, 119, 265, 348, 350, 358.
- Serusier, Paul, Fr. artist, founder of Nabi group, 171.
- Seurat, Georges Pierre, Fr. artist (1859–91), 105.
- Severnye Tsvety*, Pushkin's literary journal (1825–32), 160.
- Severnye Tsvety*, Skorpion Almanac (1901–5, 1911), ix, xiii, xvii, 160, 163, 164, 166–8, 175, 176, 212, 217, 247, 249, 283, 333, 349, 352–5, 381, 383, 392, 398, 403, 407, 411, 413, 414, 418.
- Severnyi Vestnik*, SPb. journal (1885–98), pub. L. Ia. Gurevich with A. Volynsky lit. ed. from 1891–98, ix, xiii, 19, 20, 22–4, 37, 55, 56, 65, 68, 77, 111, 136, 141, 164, 343–7, 376, 378, 380–4, 386, 400.
- Shaginian, Marietta Sergeevna, Armenian poet and writer (1888–1982), 397.
- Shakespeare, William (1564–1616), 22, 141, 142, 145, 146, 347, 355.
- WORKS: *Julius Caesar*, 355; *Hamlet*, 236, 345, 348; *Ophelia*, 348.
- Shaliapin, Fedor Ivanovich, Rus. singer (1873–1938), 116, 368, 394.
- Shane, Alex M., au. 'Remizov's *Prud*: from Symbolism to Neo-Realism', 425.
- Shaporin, Iurii Aleksandrovich, Rus. composer (1887–1966), 'On the Field of Kulikovo' (Cantata to Blok's poem), 416.
- Shcheglov, V. G., au. *Graf L. N. Tolstoi, Fridrikh Nitshe*, 398.
- Shcherbatov, Sergei Aleksandrovich, merchant patron of 'Sovremennoe iskusstvo', 118.
- Shcherbov, P. E. (pseudonym Old Judge), Rus. caricaturist, 108, 116.
- Shervashidze, A., au. 'Individualizm i traditsiia: Aleksandru Benua i Morisu Denisu', 420.
- Shelley, Percy Bysshe, English poet (1792–1822), 59, 61, 191, 385, 386; 'The Cloud', 191.
- Shestov Lev (real name Ieguda Leib Shvartsman) (1866–1938), ix, xi, 4, 5, 115, 133, 136, 139–50, 156, 158, 184, 228, 261, 262, 301, 340, 343, 345–8, 350, 351, 354, 355, 360, 365, 368, 373, 375, 376, 379, 385, 397–400, 415, 424.
- WORKS: *Afiny i Ierusalim*, 148; *Anton Chekhov and other Essays*, 398; *Apofoez bezpochvennosti*, 146–8, 355, 360, 375, 376, 399, 424; 'Avtobiografiia', 399; *Dobro v uchenii Grafa Tolstogo i Fridrika Nitshe*, 142, 228, 349, 398; *Dostoevskii i Nitshe: filofosfiia tragedii*, 115, 144, 145, 147, 350, 351, 379, 397–9, 424; 'Georg Brandes o Shekspire', 398; 'Idealizm i simvolizm v *Severnom Vestnike*', 141, 346, 355, 376, 400; 'Iulii Tzesar Shekspira', 146, 355; *Na vesakh Iova*, 148, 399; *Nachala i kontsy*, 148, 368; 'O knige Merezhkovskogo', 386; 'O Fedore Sologube', 385; 'Pamiati velikogo filofosfova (Edmund Gusserl)', 398; 'Pokhvala gluposti', 366; *Potestas clavium*, 148; 'Predposlednie slova', 366; *Shekspir i ego kritik Brandes*, 141, 142, 146, 347, 349, 398; *Sobranie sochinenii*, 376; *Sola fide*, 148; 'Turgenev', 355; 'Tvorchestvo iz nichego. A. P. Chekhov', 360, 399; 'Umozrenie i otkrovenie', 398; *Velikie kanuni*, 148, 372; 'Vlast' idej', 146.
- Shipovnik, SPb. publishing house, friendly to Symbolists, founded by Leonid Andreev (1907–17), 268, 298, 299, 360, 362–65, 367, 368, 383, 384, 365, 370, 373, 421.
- Almanac Sh.3, 315, 423; Almanac Sh.10, 370, 425; Almanac Sh.13, 428.
- Shvarsalon, Vera, daughter of L. D. Zinov'eva-Annibal by her first marriage, third wife of Viach. Ivanov (1890–1920), 294, 316, 340, 365, 370, 372, 422.
- Shvarts, Evgenii L'vovich, Sov. playwright and memoirist (1896–1958), 339.
- Shvartsman, see Shestov.
- Sicily, 111.
- Signorelli, Luca, It. painter (c. 1441 to c. 1524), 334.
- Silver Age of Russian Culture, The*, anthology of texts in English, 405.
- Sirin, SPb. Symbolist publishers founded by M. I. Tereshchenko and his sisters (1913–14), 335, 383.

- Skabichevsky, Aleksandr Mikhailovich, Rus. lit. critic (1838–1910), 21, 27, 78, 379, 381, 398.
- WORKS: *Istoriia noveishei russkoi literatury 1848–1890*, 381; 'Kurezy i absurdy molodoi kritiki', 390.
- Skaldin, Aleksei Dmitrievich, Rus. writer (1885–1943), 396.
- Skatov, N. N., au. "'Nekrasovskaia" kniga Andreia Belogo', 415.
- Skorpion, Moscow Symbolist publishing house founded by Sergei Poliakov, Iurgis Baltrušaitis and Valerii Briusov (1899–1916), ix, x, xiii, 90, 155, 160–73, 200, 204, 206, 221, 232, 246–9, 255, 282, 283, 287, 295, 349, 353–7, 359, 360, 362, 364–9, 371–3, 382, 385, 390, 392, 401, 404, 405, 413, 423, 428, 430; *see also Severnye Tsvety* (almanac) and *Vesy* (journal), both published by S.
- Skriabin, Aleksandr Nikolaevich, Rus. composer (1872–1915), 162, 300.
- Slav, Slavonic (inc. Church Slavonic), slavonicism, slavonic, 187, 188, 189, 295, 319.
- Slavonic and East European Review*, London journal, 389, 420.
- Slavophile, 103, 115, 132.
- Sloane, David A., au. *Aleksandr Blok and the Dynamics of the Lyric Cycle*, 403, 412.
- Slobin, Greta N., ed. *Aleksej Remizov: Approaches to a Protean Writer*, 379.
- Slovo*, Rus. newspaper (1904–9), 357, 408, 414, 428.
- Slovo o polku Igoreve* (*Lay of the Host of Igor*), 187.
- Sluchevsky, Konstantin Konstantinovich, Rus. poet (1837–1904), 13, 166, 390.
- Sobko, N. P., ed. *Iskusstvo i Khudozhestvennaia Promyshlennost'*, 112, 393.
- Socrates, Gr. philosopher, 236.
- Sokolov, Sergei Aleksandrovich (pseud. Krechetov), Rus. Symbolist pub. and ed. (1879–1936), 172, 247, 249, 286, 383, 354, 358, 361, 366, 414.
- Alaia kniga. Stikhotvorenii*, 366; *see also* Grif, *Iskusstvo* and *Pereval*.
- Sologub, Fedor (real name Fedor Kuz'mich Teternikov), ix, xvi, 19, 20, 23, 44–55, 61, 73, 77, 80, 81, 85, 110, 111, 136, 164, 166, 167, 173, 179, 218, 226–8, 250, 254, 261, 263, 264, 266, 278, 283, 284, 287, 288, 290, 292, 298–300, 306, 329, 339, 343, 345, 346, 348, 349, 356, 358–61, 363–5, 368, 370, 373, 383–5, 394, 401, 414, 416, 419, 421–4.
- WORKS: *Avtobiografiia*, 384; 'Baranchik', 179; 'Chelovek cheloveku diavol', 365; 'Da, byli bitvy', 416; *Dar mudrykh pchel*, 293, 363, 365; 'Den' bezumnyi, den' krovavyi', 419; 'Dokuka-vorog', 384; 'Ia iz uchilishcha prishel . . .', 50, 384; 'Ia slagal eti mernye zvuki', 383; 'Ia zhil , kak zver' peshchernyi', 385; 'Idti b dorogoi svobodnoi', 385; *Istlevaushchie luchiny*, 365; 'Ivan Tsarevich', 416; 'K vserossiiskomu torzhestvu', 394; *Kniga skazok*, 360; 'Kogda ia byl sobakoi' (poem) 55, 339, (cycle) 385; 'Kogda ia v burnom more plaval', 383; 'Likho', 52, 384; *Liubov' nag bezdnami*, 423; *Liubvi*, 365; Mair, 49; *Melkii bes* (novel), 50, 52, 173, 288, 289, 290, 298, 299, 358, 365, 384, 421; (Nedotykomka, 52, 289); (Peredonov, 52, 289, 339); (Rutilov sisters, 289); (Sasha, 289); (Varvara, 289); (Volodin, 289); *Melkii bes* (drama), 421; 'My plenennye zveri', 385; 'Na nem iznoshennyi kaftan', 384; *Nav'i chary. Tvorimaia legenda*, 365, 370; Nedotykomka seraia', 384; 'Niurembergskii palach', 306, 424; 'O smert', ia tvoi . . .' (Smerti), 384; 'O, vladychitsa smert''', 384; Oile, 49; *Paul Verlaine. Stikhi izbrannye i i perevedennye F. Sologubom*, 384, and for S's trs. of Verlaine, 53–4, 368; *Plamennyi krug*, 368; *Pobeda smerti. Nochnye pliaski*, 368; *Politicheskie skazochki*, 363; 'Poshel mne god uzhe dvadtsat' vtoroi', 384; 'Rifma', 385; 'Shut', 263–4, 416; 'Smert' po objavlenu', 365; 'Sobornyi blagovest'', 254, 263, 414; *Sobranie sochinenii* (Shipovnik 1909–12, Sirin 1912–14) 370, 383; *Sobranie stikhov* (1904), 384; *Stikhi – kniga pervaia*, 77; *Stikhotvorenii* (1975), 383; 'Teatr odnoi voli', 299, 423, 424; *Teni*, 77, 344; *Tiazhelye sny*, 33, 50, 77, 345, 346, 384; 'V mae', 383; *V tolpe*, 376; 'Vse byli skazani davno', 314; 'Vysoka luna gospodnia', 54; *Zhalo smerti. Rasskazy*, 356; 'Zhestokie dni', 416; 'Zmii' (cycle) 48, 365; 'Zmii, tsariashchii nad vselennoi', 383; *see also* Pauer, Gabriele.
- Solov'ev, Mikhail Sergeevich, trs. ed., brother to Vladimir S., (1862–1903), 120, 203–5, 216–18, 222, 224, 232.

- 238, 257, 267, 345, 348, 350, 351, 354.
- Solov'ev, Sergei Mikhailovich, son of above, minor poet, critic and ed., 81, 203–5, 209, 218, 220, 222, 224, 232, 236, 238, 255, 257, 259, 271, 309, 317, 345, 348, 350, 364, 367, 377, 379, 394, 396, 403, 409, 411, 415, 416, 425.
- WORKS: *Crucifragium*, 425; 'G. Blok o zemledelakh ...', 425; *Pis'ma Bloka* (ed.) 377, 396; *Tsvety i ladan*, 364; trs. of Ioanus Secundus 'The Kiss', 401.
- Solov'ev, Vladimir Sergeevich, Rus. philosopher and poet (1853–1900), Solov'evite, x, 10, 13, 26, 68, 72, 115, 127, 132, 135, 137–9, 144, 154, 161, 166, 174, 176, 186, 186, 195, 197, 198, 204, 205, 208, 213–15, 218, 221–4, 227–41, 253, 308, 311, 332, 340, 345, 346, 348, 350, 352, 374, 379, 381, 388, 394, 396–9, 408, 410–12.
- WORKS: 'Ideia sverkhcheloveka', 227, 348, 410; 'Osoboe chestvovanie Pushkina', 410; 'Po povodu sochinenii N. M. Minskogo "Pri svete sovesti"', 281; 'Porfirii Golovlev o svobode i vere', 396; *Povest' ob Antikhriste*, 227, 230, 232, 350; 'Nepodvizhno lish' solntse ljubvi', 410; 'Russkie simvolisty', 72, 345, 388; 'Saima', 229, 410, 412; *Sobranie sochinenii*, 238, 379, 410; *Stikhotvoreniia* (1900), 214, 227, 231, 350, 352, 410; *Stikhotvoreniia i shutochnye p'esy* (1968), 410; 'Sud'ba Pushkina', 396; 'Tri rechi v pamiati Dostoevskogo', 379; *Tri svidanii*, 238, 279, 410; 'Zachem slova?' 72; 'Zhiznennaia drama Platona', 236–7, 350.
- Solov'eva, Olga Mikhailovna, artist and trs., wife of Mikhail S. (1855–1903), 203–6, 208, 218, 222, 224, 232, 238, 267, 345, 348, 351, 354.
- Solov'eva, Poliksena Sergeevna (pseud. Allegro), Rus. writer and ed. of children's journal *Tropinka*, sister of Vladimir S., (1867–1924), 154.
- Somov, Konstantin Andreevich, Rus. artist, founder-member of MI, (1869–1939), 94, 95, 96, 100, 105, 107–9, 112, 114, 120, 122, 167, 210, 295, 368, 392, 393.
- Pis'ma-Dnevniki*, 392.
- Sophia (Sophianic) (Eternal Feminine; World Soul; Divine Wisdom; Maiden of the Rainbow Gates; Most Beautiful Lady; Woman Clothed with the Sun; Old Testament Wisdom; Aphrodite Urania), x, 196, 209, 214, 216, 219, 220, 221–4, 228–9, 231, 234, 237, 238, 241, 253, 266, 269, 279, 281, 284, 285, 290, 291, 308, 317, 422, 431.
- Saint S., 184; *Journal S.*, 402.
- Soviet Union, Soviet, Soviets, 162, 336–9, 395; anti-Soviet 340; Soviet Russia, 386.
- Sovremennik*, Rus. journal (1836–66 and 1911–15) 10, 363, 365, 367.
- Sovremennye zapiski*, emigré journal (Paris), 385, 404.
- Spain, Spanish, 58, 59, 61, 273, 349, 356, 395, 416.
- Godaveri, 73; Madrid (Prado Museum), 386.
- Spencer, Herbert, Eng. philosopher (1820–1903), 41, 206.
- Spinoza, Benedictus (Baruch) de, Dutch philosopher (1632–77), 141.
- Stammler, Henrich, au. 'Vyacheslav Ivanov and Nietzsche', 412.
- Stanislavsky, Konstantin (real name Konstantin Sergeevich Alekseev, 1863–1938), 97, 116, 281, 298, 305–7, 309, 311, 347, 367, 423.
- Starodum, (real name N. Ia. Stechkin), Rus. journalist, 158, 400.
- Starye gody*, SPb. antiquarian journal ed. by Sergei Makovsky and A. Benois (1907–16), 98, 323.
- Stasiulevich, Mikhail Matveevich, ed. *Vestnik Evropy* from 1866 to 1903, historian and journalist, owner of typography (1826–1911), 44.
- Stasov, Vladimir Vasil'evich, Rus. art critic, associated with Ambulants (1824–1906), 101, 104, and fn., 166, 108, 109, 112, 393.
- Izbrannye sochineniia*, 393; 'Vystavki', 393.
- Steiner, Rudolph, Ger. founder of Anthroposophical society (1861–1925), 232, 314, 338, 365.
- Stepanov, N. L., intr. to [unpublished] 2 vols. of Konevskoi's works in *Biblioteka Poeta* series eventually pub. in *LN 92 Bk4* (1987), 391.
- ed. Velimir Khlebnikov *Sobranie proizvedenii v 5-tomakh*, 405.
- Stevenson, Robert Lewis (1850–94), 73.
- Stolypin, Petr Arkadievich, Rus. statesman (1862–1911), 245, 366.
- Storozhenko, Nikolai Il'ich, Professor of Moscow University, from 1894 to 1901 Chairman of 'Obshchestvo ljubitelei rossiiskoi slovesnosti' (see under Moscow) (1836–1906), 65, 386.

- Strada, V., ed. *Histoire*, 377.
- Strakhov, Nikolai Nikolaevich, Rus. Slavophile writer (1828–96), 132, 396.
- Strindberg, August, Swedish playwright (1849–1912), 164, 167.
- Struve, Gleb Petrovich, ed. Mandel'shtam *Sobranie sochinenii*, 376, 378, au. 'From the archives of Nikolai Gumilev', 378.
- Struve, Nikita, ed., *Vestnik YMCA* (Paris), au. interview with Anna Akhmatova, 190.
- Struve, Petr Bergardovich, liberal journalist, associated with ex-Marxist idealists and sole ed. *Russkaia Mysl'* from 1910 (1870–1944), 145, 161, 276, 312, 358, 360, 367, 426.
- Sudeikin, Sergei Iur'evich, Rus. artist, exhibited with Diagilev in Paris 1906 and with Blue Rose and ZR (1882–1946), 292, 422.
- Superman, 63, 130, 138, 155, 227, 229, 237, 241; Mangod as opposed to Godman, 137.
- Surikov, Vasilii Ivanovich, Rus. historical painter (1848–1916), 112.
- Suslova, Apollinaria Prokofevna, prototype for Dostoevsky's demonic heroines, first wife of Rozanov (1840–1918), 134.
- Suvorin, Aleksei Sergeevich, Rus. conservative journalist, publisher of *Novoe vremia* (1844–1912), 7, 42, 157.
- Svenitsky, Valentin Pavlovich, Rus. writer and Church reformer (1879–1931), 219.
- Sveshnikova, A. N., ed., Konstantin Andreevich Somov, *Pis'ma Dnevnik* . . . , 392.
- Sviatopolk-Mirsky, Minister of the Interior during 1905 Revolution (1857–1914), 255.
- Svoboda i kul'tura*, newspaper ed. S. L. Frank, P. B. Stuve, Apr./May 1906, 360.
- Svoboda i zhizn'*, Moscow newspaper (1906), 401.
- Sweden, Swedish, 89, 161, 416.
- Switzerland, 88–9, 143, 145, 338, 348, 356, 372, 373.
Coppet, 373; Geneva, 169, 246, 248, 251, 272, 350, 355, 356, 370, 412;
Goetheanum, 338; Lausanne, 348.
- Symbolism, Symbolist – throughout.
- Syn Otechestva*, Rus. newspaper (1862–1891), 264.
- Szoke, Katalin, see Acta Universitatis Szegediensis.
- Tahiti, 105.
- Taine, Hippolyte Adolphe, Fr. positivist philosopher and lit. critic (1828–93), 141.
- Tarovatii, Nikolai Iiakovlevich, art ed. *Iskusstvo* and ZR (1876–1906), 286, 358, 394; 'Na vystavke "Mira Iskusstva"', 394.
- Tartar, Tartar yoke, 97, 309.
- Tasso, Torquato, It. poet (1554–95), 177.
- Tasteven, Genrich, sec of ZR (1880–1915), 286, 287, 361, 420, 'Nitsshe i sovremennyi krizis', 420.
- Taylor, Kevin, Cambridge University Press editor, xiv.
- Teffi, Nadezhda (real name Nadezhda Aleksandrovna Buchinskaia, née Lokhvitskaia, younger sister of Mirra L.), Rus. writer (1872–1952), 278.
- Teliakovsky, Vladimir Andreevich, successor to Volkonsky as director of Imperial theatres (1861–1924), 118.
- Tenisheva, Princess Mariia Klavdievna, patroness of arts and crafts, subsidized *MI* 1898–9 (1867–1928), 105, 106, 108, 112, 116, 156, 347, 348, 392.
Vpechatleniia moei zhizni, 392.
- Ternavtsev, Valentin Aleksandrovich, official of Holy Synod, founder member of Rel. Phil. Meetings in SPb. (1901–3) associated also with *NP* (1866–1944), 136, 151.
- Terras, Victor, ed. *Handbook of Russian Literature*, 391.
- Thai, 59.
- Thekla, Abbess, 408.
- Tikhomirov, Lev Aleksandrovich, Rus. lit. critic (1852–1923), 379.
- Tishchenko, Fedor Fedorovich (pseud. Tarasenko (1858–?)), Ukrainian writer, 369.
- Tiutchev, Fedor Ivanovich, Rus. poet (1803–73), 10–11, 14, 27, 67, 73, 78, 116, 161, 186, 187, 192, 218, 259, 332, 377, 404, 415.
WORKS: 'Den'i noch', 11; 'More i utes', 192; 'O chem ty voesh', vetr nochnoi', 18; *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii* (1911), 377; 'Silentium', 10.
- Tolstoy, Aleksei Konstantinovich, Rus. poet, playwright and novelist (1817–75), 188.
- Tolstoy, Aleksei Nikolaevich, Rus/Sov. writer (1883–1945), au. *Petr I*, 130.
- Tolstoy, Lev Nikolaevich, Rus. writer (1828–1910), 1, 7, 22, 26, 28, 32, 65, 84, 85, 95, 115, 124, 131, 132, 142–5, 151, 152, 261, 262, 277, 315, 345, 347–51, 356, 367, 372, 374, 376, 378–82, 387, 391, 396, 398, 399,

- WORKS: [*Anna Karenina*] (Karenin, 28); *Chto takoe iskusstvo?*, 84, 347, 391; *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii (1928–58)*, 281; *Smert' Ivana Il'icha*, 143, see also *Biblioteka L. N. Tolstogo v Iasnoi Poliane*, 387; *Mezhdunarodnyi Tolstovskii Al'manakh*, 371, 396.
- Trench, Herbert, trs., preface to Merezhkovsky, *The Death of the Gods*, 395.
- Trubetskoi, Prince Evgenii Nikolaevich (1863–1920), 119, 350.
- Trubetskoi, Prince Sergei Nikolaevich, brother of above (1862–1905), 'Smert' V. S. Solov'era', 410.
- Trud*, Rus. journal, 22.
- Tsar, Tsarevich, see under first names.
- Tschizewskij, Dmitrij, ed., VI. Solov'ev. *Stikhovoreniia i shutochnye p'sey*, 410.
- Tsekh poetov, see Saint Petersburg Societies.
- Tsurikova, F. M., intro. to K. M. Fofanov, *Stikhovoreniia i poemy*, 387.
- Tsvetaeva, Marina Ivanovna, Rus. poet (1892–1941), 44, 45, 173, 338, 339, 383.
- WORKS: 'Spiashchii', 383; *Proza*, 383.
- Tsvetnitsa Or*, (according to some sources 'Tsvetnik'), almanac of the publishing house Oraea (1907), 362, 365, 423.
- Turgenev, Ivan Sergeevich, Rus. writer (1818–83), 5, 56, 57, 95, 146, 273, 385, 402.
- WORKS: *Ottsy i deti* (Bazarov, 21); *Rudin*, 36.
- Turgeneva, Asia (Anna Alekseevna), artist, first wife of A. Bely, later anthroposophist (1890–1966), 317, 338, 367, 369, 372.
- Turygin, A. A., correspondent of Nesterov, 393.
- Tyrkova, Anna, au. 'Anna Pavlovna Filosofova i ee vremia', 375.
- Uchenye zapiski Tartuskogo Gosudarstvennogo Universiteta, 422.
- Ukraine, 140, 320.
- Kiev, 140, 146, 240, 261, 317, 343, 350, 358, 364; Kiev, University of, 140; Kiev, Great Monastery, 240; Odessa, 320.
- Ulianov, Nikolai Pavlovich, Rus. artist, pupil of Serov, exhibited at 1906 MI exhibition and later with Blue Rose and ZR (1875–1949), 121.
- Uariate, Branch of Roman Catholic Church in W. Ukraine and elsewhere which makes concessions to Eastern Orthodoxy on ritual and custom, 230, 340.
- Urusov, Prince Andrei, Moscow aesthete and connoisseur of West European literature (1843–1900), 59, 62, 63, 65, 166, 350, 380, 386; as A. Ourousof, *L'Architecture secrète des fleurs du Mal*.
- Ushkov, M. K., merchant, patron of *Apollon*, 324.
- Usol'tsev, F. A. (Vrubel's doctor), 420.
- Uspensky, Aleksandr Petrovich, priest and theologian, friend of Rozanov (1854–1922), 132.
- Uspensky, Vasilii Vasilievich (pseud. Bartenev), student, later professor, at SPb. Theological Academy and contributor to *NP*, 157.
- Valentinian gnostics, 229.
- Valentinov, N. (real name Nikolai Vladislavovich Vol'skii), Rus. revolutionary, journalist, memorist (1879–1964), 359.
- Valloton, Felix, Swiss (Fr.) artist (1865–1925), 106, 171.
- Van Bevers, Fr. littérateur, 171.
- Van Gogh, Vincent, Dutch artist (1853–90), 105.
- Vannicola, G., It. contributor to *Vesy*, 170, 355.
- Varvarin, see Rozanov.
- Vasnetsov, Apolinarii Mikhailovich, Rus. artist (1856–1933), 102, 103, 107.
- Vasnetsov, Viktor Mikhailovich, Rus. artist, brother of above and, like him, a member of Mamontov's Abramtsevo circle (1848–1926), 101–4, 107, 112, 113, 126, 392, 393.
- Vekhi*, collection of articles reappraising traditions of Russian radical intelligentsia, ed. M. O. Gershenzon (1909), 369, 426.
- Venclova, Tomas, analysis of Vyach Ivanov's 'Iazyk', 406; au. 'Viacheslav Ivanov and the Crisis of Russian Symbolism', 429.
- Vengerov, Semen Afanasievich, historian of literature (1855–1920), 367, 377, 379, 381, 384, 386, 387, 388.
- ed. *Russkaia literature XX veka* (1890–1910), 379, 381, 384, 386–8.
- Vengerova, Zinaida Afanas'evna, lit. critic, sister of above (1867–1941), au. 'Poety simvolisty vo Frantsii', 8, 67, 68, 141, 343, 344, 348, 376, 387.
- Vereshchagin, Vasilii Vasilievich, Rus. painter (1842–1904), 393.

- Verhaeren, Emile, Belg. poet (1855–1916), 163, 167, 171, 172, 368, 401, 402; *Helène de Sparte* (Briusov's trs.), 368, see also Briusov.
- Verigina, Valentina Petrovna, actress of Kommissarzhevskaja's theatre (1882–1974), 'Vospominaniia o Aleksandre Bloke', 422.
- Verlaine, Paul, Fr. poet (1844–1896), 19, 35, 53, 54, 67, 68, 69, 74, 142, 163, 203, 301, 368, 385, 388, 401.
WORKS: 'Le ciel est, pardessus le toit ...', 368; *Romances sans paroles*, 68; *Musique – Art poétique*, 35, 301; see also Sologub, Briusov.
- Vestnik AN SSSR seriia literatury iazyka*, journal, 412.
- Vestnik Evropy*, Rus. journal (1866–1918), xvii, 8, 26, 67, 143, 144, 345, 348, 376, 381, 386–8, 396, 401, 410.
- Vesy*, Moscow, Symbolist journal (1904–9), ix, x, xiii, 24, 155, 158, 160, 161, 163, 167–71, 173, 176, 178, 180, 186, 246, 249–52, 260, 270, 275, 277–9, 282, 283, 286–8, 296–8, 315–17, 323, 330, 354–72, 379–81, 387, 400, 402–6, 411, 413, 415–23, 425, 427, 428, 430.
- Viardot, Pauline (née Garcia), Spanish singer (1821–1910), 273.
- Vielé-Griffin, Frances, Franco-American poet (1864–1937), 69.
- Viking, 87, 88.
- Vil'kina L. (real name Liudmila Nikolaevna Vilenkina), minor poet and trs., wife of Nikolai Minsky (1873–1920), 402, 403, 417; *Moi sad* (Briusov's review of), 403.
- Villiers de l'Isle Adam, P. H., Compté de, Fr. poet (1840–89), 385.
- Vladimir Aleksandrovich, Grand Duke (1847–1909), 100, 108, 265.
- Vladimir St (Vladimir I) (956–1015), 241.
- Vladimirov, Vasilii Vasil'evich, artist friend of Bely's (1880–1931), 209.
- Volkonsky, Prince Sergei Mikhailovich, briefly Director of Imperial Theatres at turn of century, brought in then sacked Diaghilev (1860–1937), 117, 118.
- Vol'nitsa*, Rus. journal, 363.
- Volokhova, Nataliia Nikolaevna (real surname Anfyterova), actress of Kommissarzhevskaja's theatre, inspiration of Blok's *Snezhnaiia Maska, Zemlia v snegu, Faina'* (1880?–1965), 292, 293, 299, 364, 367, 422.
'Zemlia v snegu' (reminiscences of A. Blok), 422.
- Voloshin, Maks (full name Maksimilian Aleksandrovich Kirienko-Voloshin), Rus. poet, artist, Paris correspondent of *Vesy* (1877–1932), 169, 171, 172, 190, 230, 331, 338, 354, 355, 362, 365, 402, 420, 430.
WORKS: 'Henri de Regnier', 430; 'Individualizm v iskusstve', 420; *Izbrannoe*, 429.
- Voloshina, Margarita Vasil'evna, (née Sabashnikova), artist, wife of above, anthroposophist, inspiration of Viach. Ivanov's *Zolotyie zavesy* (1882–1973), 296, 314, 362, 365, 370.
under Ger. sp. Woloschin, *Die grüne Schlange*, 423.
- Volynsky (real name Fletcher, Akim L'vovich), ed. of lit. section of *Severnyi Vestnik*, Idealist thinker and writer (1863–1926), ix, 8, 19–24, 31, 36, 37, 39, 42, 77, 78, 111, 142, 343, 346, 350, 352, 357, 359, 376, 378, 379, 380.
WORKS: 'Bor'ba za Idealizm', 350, 379; *F. M. Dostoevskii – Kriticheskie stat'i*, 22, 379; *Kniga velikogo gneva. Kriticheskie stat'i – zametki – polemika*, 357, 379; 'Kritika i bibliografiia', 379, 380; *Leonardo da Vinci*, 23, 386; 'Literaturnye zametki', 376, 379, 380; 'Narodnichestvo i liberalizm', 379; 'O simbolizme i simbolistakh', 380; 'Sovremennaia russkaia belletristika. Literaturnye zametki', 380; *Tsarstvo Karamazovykh – N. S. Leskov. Zametki*, 22, 352, 379.
- Voprosy filologii i psikhologii*, Rus. journal (1889–1918), 84, 376, 380, 391, 398.
- Voprosy zhizni*, successor to *NP* (1905), xvii, 145, 158, 227, 240, 249, 261, 263, 269, 272, 280, 283, 288, 289, 357–60, 369, 384, 399, 406, 410, 412–18, 424.
- Vozdushnye puti*, emigré almanac pub. USA, 389, 429.
- Vozrozhdenie*, emigré journal (Paris), 384.
- Vremia*, Rus. journal pub. F. M. and M. M. Dostoevsky (1861–63), 378.
- Vrubel', Mikhail Aleksandrovich, Rus. artist, exhibited with MI 1898–1906 (including Russo-Finnish and Paris exhibitions) and was leading artist in *ZR* (1856–1910), 99, 103, 104, 107, 108, 119, 120, 121, 161, 220, 232, 287, 290, 332, 333, 374, 420; *Vrubel'*. *perepiska. Vospominaniia o khudozhnike*, 420.
- Vsevolozhsky, Ivan Aleksandrovich, director of Mariinsky theatre, 117.

- Vuillard, Eduard, Fr. artist (1868–1940), 106, 171.
- Wagner, Richard, Ger. composer (1813–83), Wagnerian, 88, 96, 99, 118, 162, 235, 268, 294, 411, 423.
WORKS: *Götterdämmerung*, 118; *Liebestod*, 294; *Parsifal*, 347; *The Ring cycle*, 96, 105, 268, (Brunhilde, 269), (Siegfried, 269), (Wotan, 268); *Die Walküre* 105, 353.
- War, First World, 240, 337.
War, Second World, 240, 340, 341.
War, *see* under Russo-Japanese.
- Watteau, Antoine, Fr. artist (1684–1721), 95.
- Wernham, James S., *Two Russian Thinkers, [...] Berdiaev and Shestov*, 399.
- West, *see* Europe.
- West, James, au. *Russian Symbolism*, 405.
- Wiener Slawistischer Almanach*, 413–4.
- Wilde, Oscar Fingal O'Flahertie Wills, Eng. poet, writer and wit (1854–1900), 69, 108, 137, 203, 366, 401.
WORKS: *De Profundis*, 360; *Florentine Tragedy*, 366.
- Yeats, William Butler, Irish poet (1865–1939), 'Leda', 35.
- Vgdrasil, sacred ash, 193.
- Zamiatin, Evgenii Ivanovich, Rus. writer (1884–1937), 322.
- Zamiatina, Mariia Mikhailovna, house-keeper of the Ivanov family, close personal friend of Lidiiia Zinov'eva-Annibal, largely entrusted with bringing up her children (1865–1919), 326.
- Zapiski mechtatelei*, Symbolist journal (1919–22), 338, 412, 417, 422.
- Zaria*, newspaper, Kiev, 386.
- Zemlia*, publishers (1918–19), 425.
- Zeus, 41.
- Zhenskaia lira* (SPb. anthology of poems by women), 373.
- Zhivopisnoe Obozrenie*, journal, 385.
- Zhizn'*, almanac (1908), 384, 399.
- Zhukovsky, Dmitrii Evgenevich, pub. of *Voprosy Zhizni* (1868–1943), 263, 358.
- Zhukovsky, Vasilii Andreevich, Rus. poet (1783–1853), 4.
- Zhupel*, satirical journal (1905–6), 266, 280, 282, 358.
- Zhurnal dia vsekh*, Rus. journal (1896–1906), 22, 360, 395.
- Zilbershtein, I. S., ed. *Sergei Diagilev i russkoe iskusstvo*, 392, *see also Literaturnoe Nasledstvo*.
- Zinov'ev, Aleksandr Aleksandrovich, nephew of Zinov'eva-Annibal, dedicatee of V. Ivanov's 'Mest' mechnaia' (d. 1905), 251.
- Zinov'eva Annibal, Lidiiia Dmitrievna, writer, wife of Viach. Ivanov, hostess at Tower (1866–1907), 167, 239, 240, 246, 249, 251, 271–3, 294–7, 308, 314, 316, 324, 326, 340, 344, 347, 349, 353, 356, 362, 364, 368, 401, 417, 422, 433.
WORKS: *Kol'tsa*, 273, 356, 417; [*Plammeniki*] 273, 417; *Tragicheskii zverinets*, 273, 295, 364, 417; *Tridsat'tri uroda*, 273, 295, 362, 364, 417.
- Zlobin, Vladimir Ananievich, minor poet, biographer of Z. Hippius (1894–1967), 43, 149, 383.
Tiazhelaiia dusha, 383.
- Znanie, 'Realist' publishers (1898–1913), and almanacs (1904–13), 164, 166, 268, 298, 306, 315, 360, 363–6; trs. from 165 Almanac, 414.
- Zolotoe Runo* (1906–9), x, xvii, 114, 210, 286, 287, 298, 299, 307, 315, 323, 360–5, 367, 371, 380, 381, 392, 394, 416, 418–20, 422–5, 429.
Otzyv zhiuri po konkursu zhurnala ZR na teme "D'iavol'", 420.
- Zorgenfrei, Vilgel'm Aleksandrovich, Rus. writer, friend of Blok (1882–1938), au. 'A. A. Blok', 422.
- Zritel'*, Rus. newspaper, 358, 416.
- Zytaruk, George J., au. *D. H. Lawrence's Response to Russian Literature*, 397.
ed. D. H. Lawrence's *Letters to S. S. Koteliansky*, 397.